

## Country Report The Netherlands

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## Introduction

This is the Country Report of the Netherlands for the period from 2012 to 2019. The Netherlands country report was planned for 2019. The drafting started in 2018 using the IHRA questionnaire in use at that time. The Dutch delegation has chosen to answer the questions by theme – not entirely in the order in which they appear in the questionnaire – so as to avoid redundancies in the answers. The report was drawn up under the editorship of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS). The members of the Dutch delegation to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) contributed to the report, as did various war and other museums, memorial centres, interest groups and other Dutch government entities.

Chapter 1 describes developments in the Netherlands from 2012 to 2019 in relation to education on, remembrance of, and research into the Holocaust and in relation to the fight against antisemitism. Chapter 2 deals with the way the Netherlands approaches the IHRA's particular areas of focus, namely its working definitions both of Holocaust denial and distortion, and of material related to the Holocaust. Chapter 3 deals with the topic of genocide. Chapter 4, which concludes the report, gives a glimpse of what lies ahead: what the future holds for Holocaust remembrance in the Netherlands, and what the expectations are for international cooperation.

For the convenience of the readers the table below shows the question numbers from the questionnaire and the corresponding paragraph or paragraphs.

Question in IHRA questionnaire	Paragraphs in country report The Netherlands
1	1.2
2	1.4, 1.7, 2.5
3	1.2
4	1.5
5	2.7
6	1.7, 1.8, 1.10, 3.1
7	1.12
8	1.2.2
9	1.8
10	1.8
11	1.7.5
12	1.7.5, 1.10
13	1.9, 3.1
14	1.9
15	2.1, 2.2
16	2.4, 2.5
17	2.6
18	2.6
19	2.8
20	3.1
21	3.2
22	4.1
23	4.2
24	4.3

25	4.4
26	4.4

## 1 Progress in the period from 2012 to 2019

A brief introduction to the Dutch context is necessary for a good understanding of the answers to the questions underlying the country report. This introduction aims to give a brief and concise overview of WWII in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, even as it is recognized that this gives an incomplete picture, with little room for nuance. It then offers a description of remembrance culture, of the organization of the various entities involved in WWII, liberation, freedom or conflicts after WWII, and of the educational system in the Netherlands. The questions are answered by theme, with reference to the question numbers.

### 1.1 The Netherlands in World War II

Even now, 75 years after its end, World War II (WWII) is still a moral reference point for the Netherlands. Remembrance of the Holocaust in the Netherlands takes place for the most part in the context of commemorations of WWII.

#### 1.1.1 *Invasion*

For the Netherlands, WWII started on 10 May 1940, when Nazi Germany invaded the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg. After five days of fighting, the Dutch armed forces surrendered on 15 May 1940, the day after Rotterdam was bombed. The government, which had hoped to preserve the neutrality of the Netherlands just as it had done in World War I, fled to London to carry on the fight against Nazi Germany from there. The occupiers organized a civilian, not a military, administration in the Netherlands.

#### 1.1.2 *Exclusion and murder*

The Nazis introduced in the Netherlands, step by step, a policy of identifying, excluding, imprisoning, and murdering Jews, Sinti and Roma, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, people with disabilities and political opponents. The exclusion of Jews from Dutch society gradually took the form of ever-increasing anti-Jewish measures.

The Jewish community in the Netherlands was hit extremely hard, even by comparison with other countries in Western and other parts of Europe. Of the 140,000 Jews who had been living in the Netherlands before the War, 102,000 were murdered in the Nazi extermination and concentration camps – three-quarters of all Jews in the Netherlands. Approximately 5,000 Jewish survivors of the camps were repatriated. 28,000 Jews went into hiding. Of these, 16,000 survived the war. A large number of those in hiding were tracked down (due to betrayal, found out by accident or otherwise) and deported, others perished due to the final combat activities, a minority died while in hiding and some left their hiding place to try and flee the country, sometimes with success. Other Dutch Jews were deported from Belgium and France, committed suicide, died in hiding, were executed, or died during military actions or acts of resistance. Some managed to escape deportation by formally changing their Jewish origin in official records, for example through what was known

as the Calmeyerlist.<sup>1</sup> Others escaped by fleeing Nazi persecution and finding refuge in such countries as Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom

On 19 May 1944, 245 Sinti and Roma were deported from Westerbork to Auschwitz. Only 30 of them survived the war. This is the sole solid fact about the fate of Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands during WWII. At the raid of 16 May 1944, the Dutch police worked with a broad definition of “gypsies”. As a result, caravan dwellers native to the Netherlands were sent back home from Westerbork and escaped deportation.

The registration of Sinti and Roma was inadequate at the time. Many Sinti and Roma were not registered and it is unclear to what extent the Dutch government and later the Nazis were able to improve the registration during the war. The "residential addresses" on the transport list of 19 May 1944 often turned out to be incorrect, and names are incomplete and incorrect. In 1938, according to the monthly magazine *Bevolkingsboekhouding*, there was a maximum of 12,000 persons living in 2,800 caravans. These 12,000 caravan dwellers were Sinti and Roma, indigenous caravan dwellers and caravan dwellers who circumvented the housing law. At the time, the government just registered “gypsies” without distinguishing between the various subgroups or even their national origin. Many Sinti came from the border regions with neighbouring countries, some even from France. Particularly in the south of Limburg, Sinti and Roma continued to cross the borders until the war, despite the ban on border crossing.

Besides the raid on 16 May 1944, Sinti and Roma were arrested by the Dutch police at other occasions and subsequently imprisoned in camps including camp Vught, camp Amersfoort and camp Erika. It is unclear how many of them were deported from the Netherlands. In the camp registers Sinti and Roma were classified as 'anti-socials' rather than as 'gypsies'. Dutch Sinti and Roma were also deported via Kazerne Dossin from Belgium, such as the eldest sister of Settela Steinbach. Despite the fact that Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands were prosecuted during the war, a large part of them managed to escape deportation to Westerbork and thus further deportation to Auschwitz-Birkenau. There is no known research into the number of Dutch Sinti and Roma that survived the war.

### 1.1.3

#### *Collaboration*

From the very first days of the German occupation, Dutch officials and administrators were not only spokespersons for or interlocutors with the occupiers but were also actively involved in planning and carrying out the Holocaust. Almost all 200,000 officials signed the Aryan Declaration. Civil Registry officials in 1,050 municipalities registered citizens with a Jewish background.

In 1943, the Nationaal Socialistische Beweging (NSB), the Dutch Nazi party, counted more than 100,000 members. Some 25,000 men volunteered for the Waffen-SS, more specifically the Wiking division, the Vrijwilligerslegioen or Landstorm Nederland.<sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Petra van den Boomgaard, *Voor de nazis geen Jood. Hoe ruim 2500 Joden door ontduiking van rassenvoorschriften aan de deportaties zijn ontkomen*, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Roekel, Evertjan van. *Veldgraauw: Nederlanders in de Waffen-SS*. 496 pages. 2019

<sup>3</sup> Other, older studies have suggested slightly higher numbers or included rejected volunteers. The presented numbers find general consensus in The Netherlands

Only 30-40% of these volunteers had been a member of the NSB or some other national-socialist movement prior to enlisting in the Waffen-SS. The majority enlisted without having previously demonstrated any explicit support for the Nazis. This recruitment from circles beyond those of known Nazi-collaborators suited the strategy of the Waffen-SS, which sought not to weaken the existing national-socialist organisations in The Netherlands. During the war, and especially when the odds turned against the Nazis, the criteria for volunteers to join the Waffen-SS became less strict. Nevertheless, the Waffen-SS rejected volunteers that did not meet the criteria until early 1945. There are no reliable statistics about rejected volunteers for the Waffen-SS.

After the war some 10,000 volunteers were imprisoned. Many of them were not convicted, partially due to the fact that they were minors at the time of enlisting. These youngsters had often been members of Jeugdstorm, the youth organization of the NSB, before volunteering for the Waffen-SS. Extensive research into the role of Dutch citizens in the Waffen-SS and their prosecution is expected once the Central Archive of Special Jurisdiction (CABR) is fully accessible.

At least some of the several hundreds of Dutch volunteers, especially those in the Wiking division, were involved in acts of mass murder, genocide in 1941. Diaries of some of the volunteers document the participation in these atrocities in, in particular the killings in Tarnopol in July 1941 and in Mariopol later that same year. There are no verified references for involvement of Dutch volunteers in any other mass murders in Eastern Europe; such involvement cannot be excluded nor confirmed.<sup>4</sup>

After the War, the Bureau Bijzondere Rechtspleging initiated more than 400,000 investigations into Dutch citizens suspected of collaboration and/or betrayal. The investigations led to 6,806 convictions for serving in the Nazi army. A further 3,283 people were convicted of helping the enemy and another 1,344 of treason. Two defendants in 'political' cases were sentenced to death and actually executed: Anton Mussert, the leader of the NSB (May 1946) and Max Blokzijl, a journalist and Nazi-propagandist (March 1946).

The death penalty was imposed on Dutch persons who had committed crimes such as collaboration, the denouncement of Jews, active service in the SS, and violent crimes in their role as camp guards or police officers. All Germans that faced the death penalty were highly placed officials during the occupation. The majority of the initial death sentences were changed into life imprisonment by the court of appeal. From 1946 onwards, the Dutch government adopted a policy of limiting the number of executions by means of pardon. In the early 1950s, Queen Juliana exerted extra pressure to change several death sentences into life sentences, including those of four Germans accused of war crimes.

#### 1.1.4

##### *Resistance*

Although the vast majority of the population in the Netherlands was anti-German, the number of Dutch people who were actively engaged in resistance was 5% or so, roughly the same as the number of collaborators. The last year of the war saw a rapid growth in the number and size of illegal organizations and underground newspapers.

<sup>4</sup> Roekel, Evertjan van. Veldgrauw: Nederlanders in de Waffen-SS. 496 pages. 2019

This active resistance ranged from sabotage and liquidations to the delivery of illegal papers and assistance to people in hiding.

People who rescued and helped people in hiding faced different retributive actions by the occupier. Some were briefly imprisoned, as was often the case for hide-out providers, others were sentenced to imprisonment in a concentration camp (in either the Netherlands or Germany) and there were also rescuers who were sentenced to death with immediate execution. The latter two groups usually performed a variety of rescuing and resistance activities, including logistics, underground communications, clandestine press, armed resistance, the falsification of documents, carrying out courier-tasks, providing hide-out locations, etc.

Approximately 20,000 people were arrested in connection with such activities. Some 4,400 resistance workers were killed in captivity in concentration camps in Germany, while around 570 resistance workers were killed in Nazi camps in the occupied Netherlands. Between 2,000 and 3,000 resistance workers were executed while in prison. Although the resistance work included the rescue of persecuted Jews, that was not the exclusive focus of the movement. Exact numbers on rescuers of Jews among the larger group of resistance workers are not available.

During the first years of the War there was little active resistance, except by communists, left-wing radicals and a few national Christian groups. One of the most significant operations in this period was the 1941 February Strike, a rare mass action in Amsterdam and surroundings against the first raids against Jewish compatriots. Most Dutch people initially adopted a passive and accommodating attitude, in the spirit of the relatively peaceful, civil relations that were typical in the country before 1940. It was not until 1943 that resistance against the occupiers took on any substantial significance, in parallel with the increasing repression and the massive deployment of Dutch men and goods in the 'total war' proclaimed by the Nazis. In particular, the Arbeitseinsatz and the mass evasion – 300,000 people went into hiding – were major triggers for the growth of resistance. For Dutch Jews, this change was too late, coming as it did in 1943: the vast majority had already been deported by then.

Up until 2019, Yad Vashem has recognized almost 6,000 Dutch people as Righteous among the Nations.

### 1.1.5

#### *Liberation*

Of the Dutch population, 2.32% died during the War. In the Dutch East Indies, the figure was 5.76%. The Allies<sup>5</sup> liberated the southern part of the Netherlands in the second half of 1944. The liberation of the rest of the Netherlands followed in the first months of 1945, after the Winter of Hunger, which cost the lives of about 20,000 civilians. On 4 May 1945, the German admiral Von Friedeburg capitulated on the Lüneburger Heide on behalf of the German troops in the Netherlands and in parts of Northwest Germany. On 5 May 1945, in Hotel De Wereld in Wageningen, the Canadian general Foulkes and the German general Blaskowitz signed the capitulation document that had been drawn up the day before.

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<sup>5</sup> American, Belgian, British, Canadian, French, Norwegian and Polish troops liberated the Netherlands.

WWII impacted and affected Dutch society profoundly. Approximately half a million men performed forced labour mainly on German soil because of the Arbeitseinsatz. An estimated 30,000 of them died. The deployment of the Dutch merchant fleet for warfare cost the lives of 3,400 Dutch seafarers. Several cities lay in ruins, and because of the construction of the Atlantic Wall, the German defence line along the European coast, more than half a million people were forced to move or were made homeless.

#### 1.1.6

##### *War in the Dutch East Indies, Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles*

The Dutch East Indies, now Indonesia, was a Dutch colony when WWII started. The Japanese army occupied the area from February 1942, and locked up the Dutch and other Europeans in internment camps. There was scarcity and hunger both within and outside the camps. Indonesian, European and Indo European men were also forced en masse to work on the Burma-Siam or the Pakan Baru railway line. Jews were locked up in separate camps such as Tangerang and Adek.

The Japanese occupation ended with the Japanese surrender on 15 August 1945, but the violence went on all the same. Independence fighters proclaimed the Republic of Indonesia on 17 August 1945, and declared themselves independent. A war of decolonization followed. It lasted until 27 December 1949, when the Netherlands, under considerable international pressure, had to recognize the independence of the Republic of Indonesia.

The other colonies, Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles, remained largely outside the War. However, both supplied raw materials – bauxite and oil – to the Allies.

#### 1.1.7

##### *Reception of Jews in the Netherlands after the War*

Holocaust survivors who managed to return to the Netherlands after the War had a hard time and were met with a cold reception. The Dutch wanted to forget about the War and leave the past behind them. Antisemitism was also stronger immediately after the War than it had been before the occupation. There was no interest in the stories of Jewish survivors, and efforts to secure restitution of stolen property, such as houses, furniture, or art, often came to nought. Attaining guardianship of Jewish orphans required legal proceedings and sometimes even lawsuits.

In keeping with international discussions on how to deal with Jewish property and assets, the Dutch government commissioned several studies in the 1990s. These revealed that successive governments and Dutch society were insufficiently aware of what had been done to the Jewish community during the War.

## 1.2

### **Remembrance culture in the Netherlands**

This section deals with questions 1 and 3 of the country-report questionnaire, Please describe the progress made in your country in the last five years in meeting the commitments of the 2000 Stockholm Declaration and subsequent IHRA decisions. In answering describe any challenges to progress which were encountered, for example societal, political, legal, economic and organizational. What future challenges to progress do you envisage?

What are the main societal challenges you are encountering? Are these local problems which require local solutions or do they merit an international approach?

The Dutch government has traditionally been wary of controlling or influencing remembrance culture. The government regards commemoration and remembrance primarily as a matter for civil society and local communities. In taking this stance, the government creates space for a remembrance landscape with a differentiated story, in which various remembrance communities and events, including local events, have their place.

Through the Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei, the Government of the Netherlands facilitates and finances the three national commemorations: remembrance of the Holocaust on 27 January; Remembrance Day and Liberation Day on 4 and 5 May, respectively; and the remembrance on 15 August of the end of the War in Asia. UN Security Council Resolution 60/7 of 1 November 2005<sup>6</sup> and the insistence of the Netherlands Auschwitz Comité have been important in achieving recognition of a national Holocaust day of remembrance, on the Sunday that falls closest to 27 January. The fairly recent recognition of the Holocaust remembrance as a national commemoration shows that Dutch remembrance culture is not static.

The annual calendar of the Netherlands includes many moments to commemorate the dead of WWII and the Holocaust. The Dutch tradition of commemoration and remembrance arose largely from private and local initiatives immediately after the War.<sup>7</sup> In the aftermath of the War, a national perspective dominated remembrance culture, in which there was hardly any room for Holocaust survivors, but which was primarily devoted, rather, to the resistance and the military. In the Netherlands, remembrance of the Holocaust started evolving only in the 1960s. In recent decades, attention has focused on the war in the Dutch East Indies, the systematic murder of the Jews, Sinti and Roma, active neglect of people with a mental disability, and the suffering of other groups that the National Socialists considered inferior. Even more recently, there has been space for the stories of perpetrators and their children, as well as of bystanders, and for discussions about this aspect of the legacy of the War in the Netherlands.

Memories of the War are kept alive by stories from eyewitnesses, commemorations, celebrations, memorial stones, monuments including war monuments, memorial centres, war museums, films, theatre productions and historical novels. Society's attention to the subject is at its peak around National Remembrance Day on 4 May and during the celebration of National Liberation on 5 May.

The Netherlands has more than 4,000 memorials to WWII and to subsequent conflicts in which the Netherlands was involved.<sup>8</sup> Most of the monuments are in remembrance of WWII. Almost 1,000 monuments were erected during or shortly after WWII (up to and including 1950). And the memory of the War is still alive. This is underscored by the fact that 759 new monuments have been erected since 2000. Every year around 2,500 national, regional and local commemorations take place. Of these, 1,500 take place on 4 May in one of the 355 municipalities.<sup>9</sup> These figures illustrate the local,

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.un.org/en/holocaustremembrance/docs/res607.shtml>

<sup>7</sup> Ilse Raaijmakers, *De stilte en de storm* (Maastricht, 2014)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.4en5mei.nl/oorlogsmonumenten/monumenten\\_zoeken](https://www.4en5mei.nl/oorlogsmonumenten/monumenten_zoeken)

<sup>9</sup> E. Somers, *De oorlog in het museum: herinnering en verbeelding*, Zwolle (2014)

neighbourhood-specific and private character of the commemoration and remembrance of the War in the Netherlands.

In 2014, there were more than 80 war museums that told the story of WWII or parts of it. They differed greatly in terms of size, presentation, and public. Almost a quarter of those museums are managed by professional staff.<sup>10</sup> Volunteers play an important role in these museums, facilitating guided tours, exhibitions and business operations.

### 1.2.1 *Commemorations in the Netherlands*

The remembrance of the victims of the war and the celebration of the liberation have been intentionally separated. The Netherlands commemorates its war dead on the eve of 5 May: on 4 May at 20:00. Across the length and breadth of the country, two minutes of silence is observed.

WWII is the substantive basis for the National Commemoration on 4 May. However, since the 1960s, military victims of conflicts in which the Netherlands was involved after WWII have also been commemorated. The National Commemoration is organized by the Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei. It takes place on Dam Square in Amsterdam and is attended by the King and Queen as well as members of parliament and the Cabinet. During the ceremony on Dam Square wreaths are laid for different victim groups. One of them is dedicated to victims of persecution; Sinti, Roma and Jews are explicitly mentioned.

The official Memorandum for Remembrance Day on 4 May reads: ‘During the national commemoration of Remembrance Day we remember all – civilians and soldiers – who have been killed or murdered in the Kingdom of the Netherlands or anywhere else in the world in war situations or during peacekeeping operations since the outbreak of the World War II.’<sup>11</sup>

Almost every year there is renewed public debate in the media about this memorandum and which victims should be commemorated. For example, in 2017, one group wanted to include in the memorandum refugees who had died on their way to Europe. In 2018 another small group attempted to disrupt the two-minute silence to draw attention to the victims of what they said were war crimes committed by Dutch soldiers in the Dutch East Indies.

At the same time as the National Commemoration in Amsterdam, hundreds of municipalities and committees organize local commemorations. In the Netherlands, the approach to these commemorations and celebrations is very much bottom up and local. This means that on 4 May, people commemorate in their own communities, in their own way and on 5 May, they celebrate the liberation and freedom in their own way and communities. Generally one can state that the Dutch commemorate Holocaust victims in the broader context of WWII, which means that the stories and histories of different groups all come together on 4 May.

The Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei provides content and advice to those who organize local commemorations and celebrations. The organizers are however free to decide

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<sup>10</sup> idem pp. 29 – 45.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.4en5mei.nl/english/4-may>

what they want to do and how they want to do it. The same system applies to other commemorations in the Netherlands such as the National Holocaust Remembrance, the Roma Genocide Remembrance Day and the National Remembrance 15 August 1945.

On 5 May the Netherlands celebrates its liberation and freedom, because on that date in 1945 the German occupiers in the country surrendered. On that day, the Netherlands celebrates the absence of war, the restoration of the rule of law after WWII, and the fact that this enables us to live in freedom. Incidentally, part of the Kingdom, namely the Dutch East Indies, was still occupied by Japan on 5 May. On 15 August 1945 the Dutch East Indies was also liberated, after which WWII turned into a war of decolonization that would last until 1949.

There is considerable support for the remembrance events on 4 May: in 2017, 88% of Dutch people said they had participated in the events of the two previous years by observing two minutes of silence, or following the National Commemoration through the media, while 54% of Dutch people took part in the Liberation Day festivities in 2015 or 2016. The Liberation Day Festivals in the country (in which 66% of people took part) and the lighting of the freedom fire in Wageningen are the best-known activities.<sup>12,13</sup>

Besides 4 and 5 May the remembrance calendar also includes the liberation of the former Dutch concentration camps: Westerbork on 12 April, Amersfoort on 19 April and Vught on 8 September. The commemorations of the deportations from the Jewish Psychiatric Hospital Apeldoornsche Bosch on 21 January, of the transport of children to Sobibor on 7 June, and of Kristallnacht on 9 November, as well as the commemorations of the liberation of specific concentration camps such as Dachau, Natzweiler, Neuengamme, Ravensbrück, and Sachsenhausen are also marked on the remembrance calendar.

On 4 and 5 May, the Joods Cultureel Kwartier and the Amsterdams comité 4 en 5 mei reach more than 12,000 participants across the country with more than 300 small-scale commemorations or gatherings at Open Jewish Houses/Houses of Resistance.<sup>14</sup>

### 1.2.2 *Holocaust commemorations*

This subsection deals with question 8 of the country-report questionnaire, How widespread are Holocaust Remembrance events or is this remembrance confined to a single national ceremony?

Just as with other commemorations, Holocaust commemorations in the Netherlands are often run by private non-governmental organizations. The Nederlands Auschwitz Comité organizes the National Holocaust Remembrance, which is held each year in Amsterdam on the Sunday closest to 27 January. The remembrance ceremony is attended by the Prime Minister and the State Secretary for Health, Welfare and Sport, who is responsible in the Cabinet for the War Victims and WWII Remembrance portfolio, as well as by foreign ambassadors, and various organizations and interested

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.4en5mei.nl/media/documenten/nationaalvrijheidsonderzoekdraagvlakdeel2019.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://tweedewereldoorlog.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Eindrapport-doelgroepenonderzoek-2018-Platform-WO2-Motivaction.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.openjoodshuizen.nl/nl/overojh>

parties. The annual remembrance is broadcast live on national television.

At the ceremony that took place on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the Dutch government took a long-awaited step in confronting the Netherlands' wartime past. On Sunday, 26 January 2020, Prime Minister Mark Rutte apologized for the fact that civil servants working in the Netherlands during the Nazi occupation had not done more to prevent the deportation and murder of more than 100,000 Jews. "And yet it was, all in all, too little. Too little protection. Too little help. Too little recognition. [...] With the last survivors still among us, I apologize today, on behalf of the government, for the actions of the government back then. I am doing this in the full realization that no words can ever capture the enormity and sheer horror of the Holocaust."<sup>15</sup>

The Prime Minister made this apology in the year that marked the anniversary of 75 years of freedom in the Netherlands, when some of the Holocaust survivors were still alive (and some of them still are to this date). The general intention of the apologies was to express recognition and assume responsibility, rather than pointing the finger at the government officials from the past, with the wisdom of hindsight. At the time of the occupation government officials went along with the occupying forces, hoping to be able to do some good somewhere. But in 2020, the Cabinet and the Prime Minister decided to no longer hide from what happened. The reactions to the apologies were predominantly positive, with a lone critical note.<sup>16</sup> The apologies did not trigger a public debate.

On behalf of 32 Jewish organizations, the Yom ha-Shoah Committee organizes the annual commemoration of Yom ha-Shoah Ve-Hagevurah on the Hebrew date of 27 Nisan. The day has been observed every year since 1966 in the Hollandsche Schouwburg, the Umschlagplatz of Amsterdam, where 46,000 Jews were imprisoned before being deported in 1942 and 1943. The commemoration includes the recital of the Yizkor, the lighting of commemorative candles, music, and the recital of the kaddish. The Israeli National Anthem, the Hatikva, and the Dutch National Anthem, the Wilhelmus, are sung at the end of the ceremony.

Herinneringscentrum Kamp Westerbork (the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre) has been organizing the 'Reading the 102,000 Names' commemoration every five years since 2005, during which the names of the 102,000 Jews, Sinti and Roma who were deported from the Netherlands and subsequently murdered are read continuously on the former camp grounds for six days and five nights. The names are read by relatives, citizens, and ministers – and in 2015 the King also read out names. The reading out of names can be followed on a live stream.

On 9 November there is also the remembrance, in Amsterdam, Utrecht and other cities, of Kristallnacht (the Reichspogrom). Among the local Holocaust commemorations, those that are focused on the deportation of Jewish citizens from specific towns and villages should also be mentioned.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.government.nl/documents/speeches/2020/01/26/speech-by-prime-minister-mark-rutte-at-the-national-commemoration-at-the-auschwitz-monument-amsterdam>

<sup>16</sup> <https://nos.nl/artikel/2320322-acties-op-historische-excuses-rutte-gepast-moment-en-groots-gebaar.html>

Since 2004, the Nederlands Auschwitz Comité, the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust, and Genocide Studies, and the Sociale Verzekeringsbank (SVB) have organized the 'Never Again Auschwitz' lecture. The lecture is held on the Wednesday prior to National Holocaust Remembrance Day. The address is given by an internationally renowned speaker. In recognition of their work, they also are also presented with an award on this occasion. The recipients of the most recent awards, and the years in which they gave the address, are as follows: Philippe Sands (2019), Deborah Lipstadt (2018), Timothy Snyder (2017), Romeo Dallaire (2016), Abram de Swaan (2015), Luis Moreno Ocampo (2014), Beate Klarsfeld (2013) and Christopher Browning (2012).

### 1.2.3 *Engagement of the public*

A study conducted in 2015<sup>17</sup> shows that there is continuing interest in the Holocaust and in all aspects of WWII. Eighty-five percent of those polled felt that WWII is relevant not only to those who lived through it, but also to later generations. Seventy percent felt that knowledge of WWII contributes to a better understanding of the world we now live in. At least 39% of those surveyed specifically indicated that they are interested in WWII. People associate the War mostly with the Holocaust. In response to a question about who the Holocaust is associated with, 81% of young people said Adolf Hitler and 43% said Anne Frank.

In 2017, a focus-group survey showed that more than 30% of the Dutch population is keenly interested in WWII, that another 30% has just a passing interest in it, and that other groups make up those in the middle in terms of the level of interest they have, but in order to reach these, a different approach is needed for each one.<sup>18</sup>

## 1.3 **Organisation of War and Holocaust remembrance in The Netherlands**

The areas on which the IHRA focuses in the Netherlands span several ministries. The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) is the coordinating department for the theme 'War Victims and Remembrance of WWII'. In this role, VWS is responsible for memorial centres and war museums. The Dutch perspective on War and Holocaust Remembrance does not only focus on historical or educational aspects, or on setting up and supporting museums. It also aims to do justice to the history of WW II, its survivors and their relatives and to preserve it, keeping the story alive for future generations, and connecting it with contemporary issues. VWS is the coordinating department, because of its responsibility for the care for war victims and Holocaust survivors. The Ministry works closely together with other departments.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) is responsible for education including cultural education, museums, heritage and the policy on archives. The fight against discrimination, including antisemitism, is a policy area covered by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW). The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) is the coordinating department for tackling discrimination. The Ministry of Justice and Security (JenV) takes care of the criminal side of discrimination, antisemitism and Holocaust denial and distortion.

In addition to the role played by the Government of the Netherlands, the provincial and municipal governments support institutions for war remembrance and

<sup>17</sup> Kenniscentrum Oorlogsbronnen, *De Nederlandse belangstelling voor de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, Amsterdam, 2015

<sup>18</sup> <https://tweedewereldoorlog.nl/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Eindrapport-doelgroepenonderzoek-2018-Platform-WO2-Motivaction.pdf>

commemoration. As well as public funding, this area of policy can count on support from private funds. The most prominent of these is the *vfonds*, the national fund for peace, freedom and veterans' care. It contributes to projects run by the war and resistance museums and to Liberation Day festivals.<sup>19</sup>

The organizations involved in the commemoration and remembrance of WWII and the Holocaust have joined forces. The Stichting Musea en Herinneringscentra 40-45 (SMH)<sup>20</sup> is a partnership of 15 museums and memorial centres in the Netherlands. Platform WO2 is a network of organizations comprising the NIOD – the Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies – Netwerk Oorlogsbronnen, Stichting Musea en Herinneringscentra 40-45, the Oorlogsgravenstichting, the Stichting Liberation Route Europe, and the Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei. Platform WO2, which has been in existence since 2016, works to keep the memory of WWII alive for future generations. The SMH and Platform WO2 receive funding from VWS.

VWS finances five memorial centres on an ongoing basis: Amersfoort, Vught, Westerbork, the Oranjehotel and the Nationaal Museum Sophiahof. The centres at Amersfoort, Vught and Westerbork are located on or near the sites of former Nazi concentration camps. Dutch Jews, Sinti and Roma were assembled in Westerbork, a central transit camp, for deportation to concentration and extermination camps.

On 7 September 2019 the Oranjehotel<sup>21</sup> in The Hague was officially opened. The Nazis used this location to imprison Jewish and other resistance fighters, among others. The Nationaal Museum Sophiahof tells the story of War and the internment camps in the Dutch East Indies.

In 2016 and 2019, the Dutch government gave subsidies to the Nationaal Holocaust Museum, part of the Joods Cultureel Kwartier (JCK), and to the Holocaust Memorial of Names. The JCK also manages the Joods Historisch Museum, the Portuguese synagogue, and the Hollandsche Schouwburg, from where Jews from Amsterdam were deported to Westerbork. VWS gives the Anne Frank House an institutional subsidy. OCW subsidizes the restoration and conservation of monuments and provides subsidies to museums such as the Joods Historisch Museum under the Heritage Act.

VWS also manages a comprehensive system of benefits and pensions for war victims. In 2019, over €268 million was paid out on pensions and benefits for war victims and the commemoration of WWII. Of this sum, almost €243 million went on war benefits and pensions.<sup>22</sup> The Sociale Verzekeringsbank implements these funding schemes. The table below shows the schemes, and describes the objective of each.

<sup>19</sup> [www.vfonds.nl](http://www.vfonds.nl)

<sup>20</sup> The following museums are affiliated with the SMH: the Airborne Museum Hartenstein, Bevrijdingsmuseum Zeeland, Fries Verzetsmuseum, HC Kamp Westerbork, Indisch Herinneringscentrum Sophiahof, Museon, the Joods Cultureel Kwartier, Rotterdam Museum 40-45 NU, The National Monument Kamp Amersfoort, Camp Vught National Memorial, Nationaal Onderduikmuseum, Oorlogsmuseum Overloon, Verzetsmuseum Amsterdam, and Vrijheidsmuseum.

<sup>21</sup> The 'Oranje' in 'Oranjehotel' is also a reference to the royalist stance of some of the resistance fighters.

<sup>22</sup> National budget for the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, Article 7 (2020)

Abbreviation	Full title	Target group
<b>Wuv</b>	Wet Uitkeringen Vervolgingslachtoffers (Law on Benefits for Victims of Persecution) 1940-1945.	Financial support for people persecuted in Europe or Asia during WWII.
<b>Wubo</b>	Wet Uitkeringen Burger-Oorlogsslachtoffers (Benefits Act for Civilian Victims of the War) 1940-1945.	Financial support for people who had violent wartime experiences as civilians in Europe or Asia during WWII, or who were the victims of riots or strife during the Bersiap period (15 August 1945 to 27 December 1949) in the former Dutch East Indies.
<b>Wbp</b>	Wet Buitengewoon Pensioen (Extraordinary Pension Act).	Financial support for people who took part in the resistance against the occupying forces in Europe during WWII. Widows, widowers and the minor children of members of the resistance may also be eligible for financial support.
<b>Tvp</b>	Tijdelijke Vergoedingsregeling Psychotherapie (Temporary Compensation Scheme for Psychotherapy)	A scheme that covers expenses for war victims' children who need psychotherapy.

#### 1.4 Policy developments from 2012 to 2019

This section deals with question 2 of the country-report questionnaire, What are the most important policy statements on commemoration, education or hate speech/crimes over the last five years?

In the period from 2012 to 2019, there were two cabinets in the Netherlands. A cabinet of the VVD (conservative-liberals) and the PvdA (social democrats) was in power from 2012 to 2017. Since October 2017, the Cabinet has been made up of the VVD, the CDA (Christian Democrats), D66 (social-liberals) and ChristenUnie (Social Christians). The coalition agreement of the current government, 'Confidence in the Future', contains specific references to the importance of the rule of law and the fight against antisemitism and other forms of discrimination<sup>23</sup>: "A democratic society can function only if we draw the line when others' freedoms are under threat, and if everyone joins in and fights discrimination. There is no place in our society for homophobia, antisemitism, Islamophobia, honour crimes, genital mutilation, child marriages, forced marriages, the sowing of hatred, or violence against dissidents or minorities".<sup>24</sup>

The Government of the Netherlands and organizations that are active in Holocaust remembrance, education about and research into the Holocaust and the fight against antisemitism and antigypsyism are committed to embedding an awareness of the history of WWII and the Holocaust in Dutch society so that this awareness lasts. The importance of doing this for the long term is growing now that the survivors of, and eyewitnesses to, the Holocaust and WWII are slowly but surely leaving us.

In the Netherlands, the subjects IHRA focuses on span several departments in terms of policy. The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) is the coordinating department for Remembrance of the War.

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/sites/default/files/atoms/files/regeerakkoord20172021.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Idem, p. 54.

#### 1.4.1 *Policy development at VWS*

Two topics received the most policy-oriented attention during this period. The first was a topic outside the scope of IHRA and that is not discussed in detail in this report. It concerns the situation in the former colony, the Dutch East Indies – present-day Indonesia – during WWII, and the subsequent period of decolonization. In 2015, the Cabinet put various measures and procedures in place, such as the Backpay scheme, collective recognition, and the subsidy scheme for collective recognition of citizens of the Netherlands from Molucca and the former Dutch East Indies.

The second topic, which falls entirely within the IHRA's remit, are the recommendations of the Cohen Commission, which are the result of a request made of various organizations in the field at the end of 2014 by the then State Secretary for Health, Welfare and Sport. The State Secretary requested a framework for embedding and safeguarding the memory of WWII in Dutch society. The NIOD, the Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei, the Oorlogsgravenstichting, the Stichting Musea en Herinneringscentra 40-45 and the Stichting Liberation Route Europe formed a commission chaired by the former State Secretary and Mayor of Amsterdam, Job Cohen – the Cohen Commission, as it is known.

This commission issued two reports: *Versterking van de herinnering WOII* (on 27 March 2015) and *Eindrapport Commissie Versterking Infrastructuur Herinnering WOII* (2016). These reports outline various trends, both in Dutch society and in the modes of remembrance. These trends highlight the importance of renewal, and underscore the need to improve how remembrance is embedded. There have been a number of trends and developments, namely:

- Eyewitnesses are passing away: the generation that witnessed the War is getting smaller and smaller. As a result, the mode of remembrance will change.
- Even as the War recedes into the past, interest in it remains high and is in fact growing. There is a need for authentic places (*lieux de mémoire*) and for connections to be made to current events.
- The demographic make-up of Dutch society has changed dramatically and will continue to do so. By way of illustration, in 1972, 9.2% of the Dutch population had an immigrant background, whereas in 2016, this number had risen to 22.1%. A significant number of Dutch people thus have a different frame of reference and context when it comes to WWII.
- There are more and more possibilities for getting the story across in an appropriate way in various forms (virtual reality, social media, and so on) and for reaching different and more-diverse target groups.
- Not enough attention is being paid to the fact that this was a World War. The focus is largely on what happened in the Netherlands itself. Stakeholders tend to work on the basis of what is available, such as in a museum collection, rather than on the basis of what society wants.
- There is a need to digitize sources so that these silent witnesses remain permanently accessible and usable for future generations.

The Cohen Commission also felt that in order to keep the memory of WWII alive, cooperation is needed among organizations in the fields of research, museum

presentations, education on commemoration, and paying homage and commemorating. The commission set different ambitions for each of these four areas.

Finally, the Commission emphasized that the organizations involved in promoting the remembrance of WWII should cooperate more effectively in the future, and to this end it sketched out a framework consisting of a platform for the entire sector, to direct developments and work in tandem on common themes across domains.

In his progress report of 3 November 2016 to the Dutch House of Representatives, the then-State Secretary outlined his policy proposals based on the reports by the Cohen Commission.<sup>25</sup> It is clear from the report that VWS will support Platform WO2. The letter goes into further detail on the four aforementioned areas: knowledge; museums; commemoration and paying homage, and education. Developments in these areas will be discussed in more detail in this country report. Another topic the aforementioned progress report covers is completion of the process of bringing about restorative justice, in particular for all communities who lived in the Dutch East Indies, as well as for the Sinti and Roma. It also discusses the care of, and support for, members of the resistance and victims of war, as well as international developments.

The progress report of 1 November 2018<sup>26</sup> to the House of Representatives outlines the policy areas the current government is emphasizing:

- Education: Platform WO2 is the stakeholder best placed to offer as much educational support as possible by helping tell the story of WWII. The aim of the Platform WO2 is for everyone to at least once visit a war museum, attend a commemoration and go to a memorial centre during their teens.
- Broader outreach to target groups: the challenge is to reach new target groups and to make the story of WWII understandable for all target groups.
- Promoting the use of sources through new media: the enormous collections of documents, completed forms, drawings, photographs and maps, and other materials from the War are to be found in numerous archives at the Netherlands and abroad. The Netwerk Oorlogsbronnen (NOB) pursues the digitization of collections and facilitates connections among the individual archives that hold them. Digital access is essential for reaching the new generations.
- Memorial centres: investing in the greater visibility of, and improved access to, memorial centres that have national significance for remembrance of the terrible experiences of WWII.
- 75 years of freedom: the importance of celebrating 75 years of freedom is considerable – all the more so because there are fewer and fewer survivors still with us. This is the time to reflect on the atrocities of that period, and on the importance of the freedom that followed.

All organizations involved have started working on the suggestions of the Cohen Commission. VWS is planning an evaluation of the implementation of the measures suggested by the Cohen Commission in 2021. Covid-19 delayed the start of the evaluation.

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<sup>25</sup> Parliamentary Papers 20454, No. 123

<sup>26</sup> Parliamentary Papers 20454, No. 134 (1 November 2018)

In the period from 2012 to 2019, the Dutch authorities – the national government, and provinces and municipalities – made funds available for the commemoration and remembrance of WWII and the Holocaust. The table below shows the largest incidental expenditures of the Government of the Netherlands during this period.

<b>Government contributions in the period from 2012 to 2019</b>	<b>Amounts are in €</b>
Holocaust Memorial of Names	8.3 million (2016 and 2019)
Nationaal Holocaust Museum	5.6 million (2016)
75 years of freedom	24 million (2018 and 2019)
Investing in Holocaust education	2 million (2019) <sup>27</sup>
Maintenance and restoration of Jewish cemeteries	2.5 million
Canon network, network of museums displaying objects from the Canon of the Netherlands	0.7 million
Improving accessibility to emotionally charged history through project funding via the Mondriaan Fund	1 million <sup>28</sup>

Academic activities, publications and activities aimed at a general audience are financed through the regular financial arrangements.

#### 1.4.2

##### *Policy developments by other departments*

In the Netherlands, the subjects IHRA focuses on span several departments in terms of policy. This section describes the deployment of other departments on specific subjects that fall within the area the IHRA focuses on.

The government's vision of 2017 on civic values, the defence of democracy, social cohesion and the interconnectedness of these illustrates how strong WWII is as a moral reference point in Dutch society. The government indicated that the Netherlands would never want to live through the experiences of WWII again: a dysfunctional constitutional state, the murder of minorities, political opponents and people with a disability on an industrial scale; and the persecution of dissidents. These experiences should make society aware of the dangers of anti-democratic behaviour. The government assigns a special role to the symbols and commemoration of the Holocaust and its victims.<sup>29, 30</sup>

In 2016, the then-Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations published, also on behalf of all ministers involved, the National Action Plan to Combat Discrimination<sup>31</sup> to combat racial discrimination. Ways to measure community anti-discrimination policies were also announced. A special study will be carried out with a view to creating a separate article on hate crimes in the Penal Code.

Combating antisemitism is an integral part of the broader efforts within the Cabinet's approach to fighting discrimination. Preventive policy focuses on promoting interreligious dialogue and raising awareness in education and in the football world.

<sup>27</sup> Parliamentary Papers 20454, Nos. 125, 143, and 147.

<sup>28</sup> OCW Parliamentary letter 17641064 "Visie Erfgoed uit de Tweede Wereldoorlog". (5 November 2019)

<sup>29</sup> Parliamentary Papers 29279, No. 371 (31 January 2017)

<sup>30</sup> Parliamentary Papers 20454, No. 125 (27 January 2017)

<sup>31</sup> Parliamentary Papers 25544 and 30950, No. 775 (21 June 2018); 3095, No. 156 (25 April 2018); 30950, No. 84 (22 January 2016); 29544 and 25883, No. 523 (16 May 2014); and 30950, No. 42 (16 January 2014).

Enforcement policy focuses on measures to increase the willingness to report incidents and press charges, to improve the registration of incidents and understanding of them, and to enable effective investigation and prosecution. In addition, various departments engage in frequent dialogue with key figures and organisations within the Jewish community.

Up until 2019, no separate action plan to combat antisemitism was drawn up by the Dutch government; it followed a generic approach to fight discrimination including specific measures to counter antisemitic and anti-muslim behaviour and afro-racism. At the end of 2019, two Members of the House of Representatives, one from the VVD and one from the ChristenUnie, submitted an initiative note (Initiatiefnota voor een effectievere aanpak van antisemitisme/Initiative note on a more effective approach towards combating antisemitism) which was adopted by the House of Representatives (see section 1.5.1). A parliamentary debate ensued on 1 July 2020, during which the House of Representatives asked for the development of a separate action plan to combat antisemitism and the appointment of a national coordinator for combating antisemitism. At the same time a parliamentary debate took place on the broader issue of racism (a fallout of the killing by the police in the U.S., of George Floyd). The House of Representatives asked for a number of actions to be taken, among which, possibly, the appointment of a national coordinator on combating racism and hate crime. The government has promised to respond to this request before the end of the year.<sup>32</sup>

On 16 October 2020, the Minister of Justice and Security decided that a national coordinator for combating antisemitism is to be appointed. By the time of writing this report further details about the position to be created are being worked out.

In 2016, the then-Minister of Education, Culture and Science presented the House of Representatives a vision for the implementation of policy on looted art. The restitution policy in its present form originated in 2001 with the establishment of the Advisory Committee on the Assessment of Restitution Applications for Items of Cultural Value and WWII in order to advise on restitution applications as independently as possible and to facilitate the restoration of rights. The main intention expressed in the Letter to the House of Representatives of 2016 was to separate research and advice on the restitution of looted art.<sup>33</sup> This intention led to the establishment of the Restitution of Items of Cultural Value and the WWII Expertise Centre. The Expertise Centre is located at the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies and was launched on 1 September 2018. In this way the knowledge and skills acquired in connection with research on looted art are bundled and sustainably anchored in an independent academic organization. It was also announced at the time that the restitution policy would be evaluated in 2020.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Parliamentary Papers 35164, No 10 (1 July 2020)

<sup>33</sup> Parliamentary Papers 25839, No. 42

<sup>34</sup> Here is a link to information in English on the restitution policy:  
<https://english.cultureelerfgoed.nl/topics/restitution-policy>

In 2019, this led to a request for advice to the Council for Culture.<sup>35</sup> An independent commission chaired by Jacob Kohnstamm is currently conducting an evaluation.<sup>36</sup>

## 1.5 Political developments

This section deals with question 4 of the country-report questionnaire, What are the main political challenges you are encountering?

This paragraph gives a picture of the kinds of issues in relation to WWII that were discussed in parliament in the period from 2012 to 2019. The issue of the Dutch East Indies and the celebration of 75 years of freedom in 2020 commanded the greatest attention in the House of Representatives in the period from 2012 to 2019. The increasing sense of insecurity among the Jewish community was another major topic. Although, the trend in the number of reported incidents, including violent incidents, does not seem to corroborate this for this period, the feeling of insecurity has resulted in the paper on the antisemitism initiative note discussed in this section. This section will also cover topics related to WWII that garnered some attention from the parliament during the reporting period.

### 1.5.1 *Combating antisemitism*

In 2019, Members of the House of Representatives Yesilgöz-Zegerius (VVD) and Segers (Christen Unie) submitted an initiative note to the Committee for Justice and Security. They view antisemitism as an international problem: 'In many European countries we see that the number of violent anti-Jewish incidents has been alarmingly high and rising for some years now. And unfortunately, history has taught us that this violence is symbolic of something much deeper – that it's often just the tip of the iceberg. Antisemitism is hidden in malicious prejudices and age-old stereotypes that seep into our society. Jews are therefore often referred to as 'the canary in the coalmine': if antisemitism emerges, it will be about more than a hatred of Jews: society as a whole will be utterly poisoned, and one minority or group will follow the next.'<sup>37</sup>

The initiators asked, among other things, that, following the example of other countries, a National Anti-Semitism Coordinator be set up for a fixed period of two years with a view to streamlining and directing the approach to antisemitism while also advising the government and the House of Representatives on an effective approach.

Despite the fact that the debate on the initiative note was not yet concluded, the government, pursuant to the note and to supplement existing policies, in 2019 made a budget of €3 million available for additional measures to combat antisemitism in the period 2019 - 2021.

### 1.5.2 *75 years of freedom*

The celebration of 75 years of freedom is seen by many as a pivotal point in the culture of remembrance. The War is becoming more and more of a historical event as

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/brieven/2019/12/17/brief-aan-de-raad-voor-cultuur-inzake-adviesaanvraag-voor-beleidsevaluatie-restitutie-roofkunst-tweede-wereldoorlog>

<sup>36</sup> Parliamentary Papers 25839, No. 42.

<https://www.raadvoorcultuur.nl/actueel/nieuws/2020/03/11/evaluatiecommissie-restitutiebeleid-nazi-roofkunst-tweede-wereldoorlog-ingesteld>

<sup>37</sup> Parliamentary Papers 35164, No. 2 (14 March and 8 November 2019), p. 1.

the group of people who have experienced it themselves becomes smaller and smaller. Parliament has called on the government to pay ample attention to the celebration of 75 years of freedom.

On 31 August 2019, the celebration of 75 years of freedom started with a programme in Terneuzen in which the Battle of the Scheldt and the liberation of the Southern Netherlands were central. The national programme runs until October 2020 and includes memorial services, celebrations and other activities focused on the end of the war in the European and Asian parts of the Kingdom as it was then.<sup>38,39</sup>

In his 2018 Speech from the Throne to mark the start of the parliamentary year, King Willem-Alexander referred to the commemoration of 75 years of liberation in 2019. He emphasized the post-war history that tells a story of progress and improvement, and the democratic values anchored in the Dutch constitutional state: equality, tolerance, freedom and legal certainty.<sup>40</sup> In 2019, the King offered this reflection during his Speech from the Throne: 'Seventy-five years on, the values of freedom, democracy and the firm rule of law seem self-evident. But anyone looking at the world will realize how remarkable it is to live in a country where people can feel safe, where freedom goes hand in hand with tolerance and a sense of responsibility, and people can still spare something for others. Although antagonisms sometimes seem to predominate in public debate and on social media, everyday reality is different for most of us. The Netherlands remains a country of volunteers and sensible compromises where quite some common ground can be found. Young and old alike; on the shop floor and in the boardroom; in Willemstad, Amsterdam and places between, people want to take part and make their contributions. It is this that binds us, and it is this that we should cherish together.'<sup>41</sup>

Given these 75 years of freedom, the government invested a one-time amount of €15 million in a subsidy scheme in 2019. The goal of the investment is to ensure continued attention to WWII, even if eyewitnesses are leaving us, in a way that appeals to and fascinates young people both now and in the future. The funding is intended for the modernization of a number of war museums and memorial centres, for innovative forms of presentation, for research into the history of WWII, and for facilitating digital access to sources and archives.

### 1.5.3

#### *German benefits related to WWII*

Benefits the German government pays to Dutch citizens, victims and collaborators gave rise to debate and questions from the Dutch House of Representatives. First, benefits to victims. Three hundred Dutch former forced labourers receive disability benefits from Germany. The Netherlands raised taxes on this benefit, and that led to a public outcry. In 2018, it was decided that the government would stop taxing the benefits of the former forced labourers, according to a joint statement by the State Secretaries of Finance and of Health, Welfare and Sport.<sup>42</sup> Germany also pays pensions to Dutch citizens who served with the Wehrmacht or the Waffen-SS during WWII, as well as to their surviving relatives. This led to public debates in 2013, 2015

<sup>38</sup> Parliamentary Papers 20454, No. 145, Parliamentary Papers 20454-34.

<sup>39</sup> As a result of the Corona crisis, from mid-March 2020 on the festivities could no longer take place.

<sup>40</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/toespraken/2018/09/18/troonrede-2018>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/toespraken/2019/09/17/troonrede-prinsjesdag-2019>

<sup>42</sup> Parliamentary Papers 34785, No. 85 (18 May 2018).

and 2019. Apart from the whole question of appropriateness, it was not immediately clear whether the recipients of these pensions had been paying any taxes on the amounts they had been receiving. Disability benefits that are not taxed in Germany and that are paid to Dutch nationals who have served in German units are not taxed in every case in the Netherlands because not enough information on this score is exchanged between the two countries.<sup>43</sup>

#### 1.5.4 *Holocaust distortion and denial*

In the Netherlands, judges rely on the section on group defamation, 137 (c) of the Penal Code, in cases of Holocaust denial and distortion. Holocaust denial and distortion hardly finds any resonance in the Netherlands.

During a debate in the House of Representatives in December 2016, the issue of broadening the freedom of expression was discussed. Most parties were opposed because they feared that the Holocaust would be denied and distorted, and that various forms of discrimination would be possible.<sup>44</sup>

#### 1.5.5 *Heritage*

The personal witnesses that give depth, meaning and a face to the horrors of WWII and the Holocaust through their stories, are leaving us with the deaths of the first generation of victims and eyewitnesses. The disappearance of that generation also affects the way we commemorate the War. The silent witnesses of the horrors remain as our heritage. The Dutch government and various organizations and institutions have enormous collections of documents, drawings, photographs and maps from the War, among other things. This heritage is lasting tangible evidence of the atrocities of WWII and the Holocaust. Precisely because this heritage will soon be the only tangible evidence of WWII, it is necessary to make it easy for a broadly interested public to find, access and use it.

The younger generations expect digital access to material and underlying sources. To this end, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports (VWS) has been subsidizing the Network Oorlogsbronnen (NOB) since 2016. This network connects the collections of 110 institutions and provides the digital backbone for connecting sources and collections and making them easy to find. The digital connection of source material from the War guarantees the preservation of everyone's identity and ownership of the data. NOB currently offers access to more than 11 million digital artefacts that tell stories about people, locations, events and times. The specially developed platform not only provides the connections among the data but also places the data in context: it explains events and people so that users can better understand the sources. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) contributes to this remembrance heritage in various ways, as described in the Parliamentary Letter on the vision of heritage from WWII.<sup>45</sup> For example, €2.5 million has been made available for the restoration of Jewish cemeteries, often orphaned because of WWII, €730,000 is available for the canon network of museums and €1 million for the Mondriaan Fund

<sup>43</sup> Parliamentary Papers 2012 – 2013, No. 2042. Parliamentary Papers 2014 – 2015, No. 2799. Letter from the State Secretary for Finance, 2019-0000149485.

<sup>44</sup> [https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/plenaire\\_verslagen/kamer\\_in\\_het\\_kort/voorstel-tot-verruiming-vrijheid-van-meningssuiting](https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/plenaire_verslagen/kamer_in_het_kort/voorstel-tot-verruiming-vrijheid-van-meningssuiting)

<sup>45</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2019/11/05/kamerbrief-inzake-visie-erfgoed-uit-de-tweede-wereldoorlog>

for projects on controversial heritage. OCW also finances the restoration and conservation of monuments through various schemes. For example in 2019, €2 million has been made available for the Portuguese Synagogue and the Beth Haim Cemetery.

#### 1.5.6 'Controversial heritage'

The designation in 2018 of the 'Mussert Wall' as a national monument gave rise to a lot of discussion between supporters and opponents. The Wall was a central part of a National Home that the Nationaal Socialistische Beweging (NSB), the Dutch Nazi party, had built on the Veluwe in the mid-1930s. Between 1936 and 1940, NSB members, including Mussert, delivered their so-called Hedge Speeches there. Supporters of the designation as a national monument felt that memories of the dark side of our past also deserve a place on the list of national monuments.<sup>46</sup> Opponents mainly wanted to prevent this location from becoming a place of pilgrimage for the extreme right.

In 2019, several Members of the House of Representatives inquired about how the Seyss-Inquart bunker should be dealt with in view of the redevelopment and sale of the complex. The MPs wanted to make sure there would be a suitable function for the bunker. The bunker is part of the Atlantic Wall and had already been designated as a National Monument, with all the associated legal consequences. The Parliamentary Letter of 5 November 2019 on the vision of the Minister of Education, Culture and Science regarding WWII heritage explains the heritage policy on the War. In this connection it was agreed that, until the Chief Government Architect has drawn up guidelines for dealing with the sale of national monuments, no irreversible steps will be taken regarding the Seyss-Inquart bunker. The guideline has now been finalized and sent to the House of Representatives as an appendix to the policy response to Explorations of Heritage Themes by Government Service for Cultural Heritage.<sup>47</sup>

### 1.6 Restorative justice

The process of restorative justice, recovery and restitution has still not been completed, and also influenced policy in the period from 2012 to 2019. A dissertation from 2017 states that the processes of realizing restorative justice and restituting looted Jewish property had started immediately after the war. The Dutch government, the stock exchange, banks and insurance companies have been involved in these processes since 1945. The author reports that bringing about restorative justice involves a great deal of effort and runs into considerable setbacks. It is slow and bureaucratic, with a lot of red tape. It is certainly not the case that Jews who have been dispossessed automatically get their property back.<sup>48</sup>

#### 1.6.1 Government of the Netherlands

A few days after the signing of the Stockholm Declaration in January 2000, the Dutch government apologized for the frosty reception that Jewish Holocaust survivors in the Netherlands had received.<sup>49</sup> In March 2000, the House of Representatives received a

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.niod.nl/nl/nieuws/niod-pleit-voor-behoud-muur-van-mussert>

<sup>47</sup> 2019Z05840 (26 March 2019 22 May 2019), Parliamentary Papers 32820, No. 321 (5 November 2019).

<sup>48</sup> Christiaan Ruppert. *Eindelijke restitutie: De totstandkoming van Nederlandse akkoorden over joodse oorlogstegoeden (1997-2000)*. 2017 (AUP), p. 3.

<sup>49</sup> <https://www.rd.nl/oud/vp/000129vp01.html>

letter from the government responding to the recommendations of five advisory committees regarding restorative justice.<sup>50</sup> Following the recommendations and discussions with the Jewish communities, and the Sinti and Roma communities, the Government of the Netherlands reached several agreements. Those with the Jewish community set compensation at €181.5 million in total. The Sinti and Roma communities received a compensation of €13.6 million. How the matter of looted art is being handled is described earlier in this report.<sup>51</sup>

Since the start of the expanded restitution policy, the Restitutions Committee has issued 156 recommendations up to and including 2018. Of the 156 recommendations, 93 concerned the granting of all or part of the application for restitution. Up to the end of 2018, it was recommended that a total of about 460 objects be returned to rightful owners or their surviving relatives.<sup>52</sup>

### 1.6.2 *Local authorities*

In March 2014, the NIOD published the results of an investigation into the Amsterdam ground-rent issue.<sup>53</sup> The investigation had been prompted by press reports in the spring of 2013. It emerged that, after WWII, the municipality of Amsterdam fined Jewish citizens who had returned from concentration camps or from hiding, for ground-rent payments they had not made during the War. This led to a public discussion about whether the municipality of Amsterdam had acted correctly and morally towards returning Jewish citizens. A study was commissioned in response.<sup>54</sup>

In September 2015, the municipality of Amsterdam promised that Jewish Amsterdammers who had been fined for not paying their ground rent during the War could apply for reimbursement.<sup>55</sup> An amount of 10.8 million euros was made available by the City Council of Amsterdam on 14 July 2016 as a collective concession to the Jewish community.<sup>56</sup> This compensation was distributed among more than 50 Jewish initiatives such as the National Holocaust Museum and a new Holocaust Memorial of Names, which has yet to be constructed. A year later, The Hague City Council decided to set up a restorative-justice scheme for Jewish owners and their next of kin in respect of property, including the matter of ground rent.<sup>57</sup> Since 2018, the NIOD has also been investigating how the matter of property held by Jews has been dealt with in Rotterdam.

<sup>50</sup> Parliamentary Papers 25839, No 13 - <https://zoek.officielebekendmakingen.nl/kst-25839-13.html>

<sup>51</sup> Parliamentary Papers 25839, No. 42.

<sup>52</sup> <https://www.restitutiecommissie.nl/adviezen.html> - voor informatie over de adviezen

<sup>53</sup> Ground rent is the money paid by the owner of real estate pays to the owner of the ground on which the real estate is built. The Dutch term for the yearly cost of ground rent is 'canon'. The owner of the real estate owing ground rent, can redeem the canon on a yearly basis, for the duration of the ground rent term or in perpetuity.

<sup>54</sup> De erfpachtkwestie in Amsterdam (1945-1960). 2014, Hinke Piersma, Jeroen Kemperman (NIOD) - [https://pure.knaw.nl/portal/files/5879262/2014\\_PiersmaKemperman\\_DeErfpachtkwestieInAmsterdam\\_rap\\_port.pdf](https://pure.knaw.nl/portal/files/5879262/2014_PiersmaKemperman_DeErfpachtkwestieInAmsterdam_rap_port.pdf).

<sup>55</sup> <https://www.parool.nl/nieuws/gemeente-betaalt-erfpachtboetes-aan-joodse-gedupeerden-toch-terug~ba178b60/>

<sup>56</sup> <https://www.amsterdam.nl/bestuur-organisatie/college/burgemeester/persberichten/commissie-joodse-erfpachttegoeden/>

<sup>57</sup> R. te Slaa, 'Daar dit een immorele aanslag is'. *De bonding van de gemeente Den Haag tegenover Joodse eigenaren van onroerend goed 1940-1955* (Den Haag 2017)

### 1.6.3 *Businesses*

During WWII, the Dutch railway system Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS) cooperated in the deportation of Jews to Westerbork. The NS is a company that used to be state-owned and that was privatized in the 1990s. Holocaust survivor Salo Muller fought for years for compensation for victims of the Holocaust and their descendants. In 2019, a commission chaired by Job Cohen advised the NS to provide benefits to those whose families had been deported via the Dutch railway network to concentration or extermination camps. NS has followed the advice. The scheme provides a benefit of €15,000 for a survivor, €7,500 for widows, widowers and children and €5,000 for children born after 8 May 1945.<sup>58</sup>

## 1.7 **Education in the Netherlands**

This section deals with question 2 and 6 of the country-report questionnaire, What are the most important policy statements on commemoration, education or hate speech/crimes over the last five years?

What are the major historical debates arising out of study of the Holocaust and the genocide of the Roma? How does the Holocaust fit into educational curricula? How does the genocide of the Roma fit into the educational curricula? What are the main textbooks and teaching materials? Have these changed in recent years?

Article 23 of the Dutch Constitution governs freedom of education. Paragraphs 2 and 7 are relevant to the explanatory notes in this report.

Paragraph 2. Teaching is free, [...]

Paragraph 7. Denominational general primary education, which meets the conditions laid down by law, is funded from the public purse in the same way as public education.

Teaching is free, and denominational education is funded in the same way as public education. However, all education that is funded must meet requirements under the law. There are thus requirements in the Netherlands governing what schools must teach their students during a specific period. The ways in which schools and teachers in primary and secondary education impart knowledge to their students involve professional, decentralized choices that are appropriate to the education level and the type of school involved.

## 1.8 **WWII and the Holocaust in education**

The constitutional freedom of education means that schools and teachers are free to choose the way in which they teach subjects to children. The legal requirements regarding the curriculum in primary education – the educational content prescribed – are regulated through core objectives and attainment targets, among other things. The history of politics during the interwar period in Europe as well as the rise of the Nazi party in Germany and the NSB fascist party in the Netherlands are part of the curriculum. The curriculum also prescribes the discussion of 'racism and discrimination that have led to genocide, in particular in relation to the Jews'. The genocide on Sinti and Roma is thus not explicitly mentioned, but 'suggested' in the curriculum.

<sup>58</sup> <https://commissietegemoetkomingns.nl/app/uploads/2019/08/uitkeringsreglement-nl.pdf>

In addition to the curriculum, Platform WO2 has developed a reference framework<sup>59</sup> for education on WWII. Platform WO2 explicitly pleads for a global perspective on WWII and for discussion of all the groups victimized by the Nazis. The first set of elements of the framework explicitly deal with the political and societal context in The Netherlands and the rest of the world prior to WWII: the clash of ideologies, the global scale of WWII, the impact of the War on every part of daily life. The second set deals with systematic exclusion, terror and genocide. The reference framework is being used by memorial centres and war museums.

The Holocaust is usually first taught in primary education from the age of 10. WW II and the Holocaust are taught in all years of secondary education, although this is dependent on the educational level.

The Canon of the Netherlands (2006) is part of the core objectives for primary and secondary education, which apply to all pupils. The Canon of the Netherlands is a chronological series of 50 historical themes that are important as a foundation for education in history in both primary and secondary schools. Among the themes that are relevant to this report are WWII 1940 – 1945, Anne Frank, and Indonesia 1945 – 1949.<sup>60</sup> WWII is the most popular aspect of the Canon among schoolchildren.<sup>61</sup>

In July 2019, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science tasked an independent commission to review the Canon. In the explanatory memorandum on his decree, the Minister indicated that "the concept of windows as a vista onto history works well. The recalibration is therefore mainly about reviewing choices that were made and texts that were selected 12 years ago on the basis of insights that were in currency at that time".<sup>62</sup> The commission published the results of this recalibration on 22 June 2020.<sup>63 64</sup>

At the end of 2019, the Cabinet sent a revised bill to the House of Representatives to clarify the citizenship remit for schools. The proposal specifies the objectives of citizenship education, which is compulsory for all schools. The aim of civic education is to increase mutual understanding among pupils as well as their knowledge of each other's cultures and religions, to combat intolerance, and to teach them respect for and knowledge of the basic values of the democratic rule of law.<sup>65</sup>

In the period from 2012 to 2019, one research conducted in 2017 by the Department of History of the Erasmus University in Rotterdam on the education and teaching materials on WWII and the Holocaust from the period 1960-2010 was critical about the subjects covered by the teaching materials and the way in which subjects are

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.tweedewereldoorlog.nl/over-deze-portal/referentiekader/>

<sup>60</sup> A chronological series of 50 historical themes that are important to the foundations of education in history, as determined by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture in 2006.

<sup>61</sup> OCW Parliamentary letter 17641064 "Visie Erfgoed uit de Tweede Wereldoorlog" (5 November 2019)

<sup>62</sup> Government Gazette 2019, 36876

<sup>63</sup> Parliamentary Paper 32 820, No. 338 (18 February 2020).

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2020/06/22/herijking-canon-van-nederland> [www.canonvannederland.nl](http://www.canonvannederland.nl) Parliamentary Papers 32 820 No 338 (18 February 2020)

<sup>65</sup> Parliamentary Papers 35 352 No 2 (28 November 2019)

<https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/wetsvoorstellen/detail?id=2019Z23710&dossier=35352>

dealt with.<sup>66</sup> However, a study by the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO) gives a more nuanced view than the researcher's.<sup>67</sup> It is not up to the government to explain this difference of opinion: the Government of the Netherlands has no opinion on the content of teaching materials or their use as a matter of principle. After all, the constitutional freedom of education also has to do with the choice of teaching materials and the appointment of teachers.

The researcher of the Erasmus University indicates that in the practice of Dutch education on history, some remarkable changes in the treatment of the Holocaust occurred. According to the research, teaching on WWII and the Holocaust has become more emotionally charged, and more individually and morally focused over the years. The research shows that some teaching methods depicted Dutch Jews as 'others' who were represented as having a separate place in pre-war Dutch society. The researcher observes stereotypes and generalizations in other school textbooks and notes that Nazi illustrations and terminology are still used.

Another point of criticism concerns the choice of subjects and the how they are treated in the teaching materials. Even though researchers of the Erasmus University have conducted extensive research in the past two decades into topics such as the role of the NSB, the deeper analysis of perpetrators, betrayal, as well as aiding, abetting and collaboration by various groups and organizations in Dutch society, the fact is that these topics, according to the researchers, remain underdeveloped in the teaching of Dutch history and in school textbooks. They argue that the 'transnational' approach to education about WWII and the Holocaust is a development that, in the Netherlands, still seems a far cry from reality. Life in the ghettos and the mass murders in the Soviet Union are often neglected or insufficiently elaborated on. The actions of Einsatzgruppen or the Aktion Reinhardt in centrally occupied Poland are almost entirely absent from school textbooks. Most textbooks are 'Auschwitz-focused', and the euthanasia programmes are largely ignored, as is the question of why many of the actual murders took place in Eastern Europe. The result is that many Dutch schoolbooks, from a historical perspective, lack different perspectives on representations of the Holocaust. It should be noted in this respect that the teaching time available in primary and secondary education is limited (for all subjects) and that it is therefore inevitable that choices in teaching materials have to be made.

The researcher refers to historical studies which show that many Dutch people were committed to the German war effort, that most Dutch civil servants followed German orders, that many ordinary civilians were mostly 'passive bystanders', and that some were actively involved in the persecution of the Jews. In the researcher's opinion, these themes remain underdeveloped in many of the teaching methods used in the Netherlands. The perspective in these books is that of the Netherlands as a victim of Nazi oppression.

### 1.8.1 *Teaching material*

The constitutional freedom of denominational education concerning the choice of teaching materials implies that the Dutch government does not control the content of

<sup>66</sup> See Marc van Berkel, *Plotlines of Victimhood: The Holocaust in German and Dutch Textbooks 1960-2010* (Rotterdam 2017) (<https://repub.eur.nl/pub/100839>).

<sup>67</sup> Jeroen Bron et al., (2015), *Oorlog en dekolonisatie. Heroriëntatie op de Tweede Wereldoorlog en de dekolonisatie van Nederlands-Indië*. Enschede: SLO. (<https://slo.nl/publicaties/@4291/oorlog-dekolonisatie/>)

teaching materials. The Dutch school textbook market is a free market. Provided they adhere to the principles of the curriculum, anyone who wants to write and/or publish a textbook is entitled to do so. Publishers generally work with a team of expert authors.

The researcher whose findings are outlined above believes that the quality of Holocaust presentations in Dutch textbooks is problematic. The textbooks sometimes contain factual errors and omissions, and there is no discussion of moral issues or any attempts at empathy. He argues that it is difficult for young people to understand from school books why the Jews were the main victims of the Holocaust. Moreover, the perspective of the victims is largely absent. Some of these shortcomings are related to the implicit or explicit conflation of the terms *concentration camp* and *extermination camp*. According to the researcher, the Netherlands is not unique in this respect. The UNESCO report *The International Status of Education about the Holocaust*, which was put out 2015, concludes that the quality of educational programmes and textbooks on the Holocaust around the world is unsatisfactory.<sup>68</sup> The aforementioned SLO study states that the students actually do have an interest in this topic and that it is being treated in class.<sup>69</sup>

### 1.8.2

#### *Education*

In addition to formal education, memorial centres and war museums offer additional educational programmes for schools. The aforementioned Cohen Commission, which formed the basis for Platform WO2, states: ‘Education should build a bridge between what happened in WWII and developments taking place in society today. In addition to building up knowledge, this also involves interpretation.[...] Given the key role of education, the Commission’s position is that, in keeping with the skills to be learned in education, it is not only about knowledge but also about thinking, reflecting and acting.... It is not only gaining knowledge that is key, but also learning how to think critically and how to behave towards yourself and others in a “free” country.’<sup>70</sup>

In the aforementioned progress report to the House of Representatives, the State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport said that one goal of a broad education was to support schooling and academic training.<sup>71</sup> Platform WO2 has a coordinating and facilitative role to play in providing education, through various methods, about WWII. In 2018, Platform WO2 formulated an educational vision. Its members chose to use the dismantling of the democratic rule of law as the key starting point for education about WWII. Platform WO2 aims for the public, but especially young people, to be able to make their own connections between, on the one hand, the significance of the abolition of the rule of law in WWII, as well as the lawlessness and persecution – including in the Holocaust – that went with it, and, on the other, what all of this means to them in the here and now. For the practical elaboration of the vision for education, the Platform WO2 has drawn up a reference framework for WWII, a set of eight essential elements that constitute the core of education about WWII.

<sup>68</sup> Parliamentary Papers 29544, No. 603 (13 April 2015); kst-34300-VIII-124 No 70 (22 December 2015); ah-tk-20142015-1480 (6 March 2015).

<sup>69</sup> Jeroen Bron et al., (2015), *Oorlog en dekolonisatie. Heroriëntatie op de Tweede Wereldoorlog en de dekolonisatie van Nederlands-Indië*. Enschede: SLO. (<https://slo.nl/publicaties/@4291/oorlog-dekolonisatie/>)

<sup>70</sup> Eindrapport Commissie Versterking Infrastructuur Herinnering WOII, 2016, p. 19.

<sup>71</sup> Parliamentary Papers 20454, No. 134 (1 November 2018).

In 2018, the Stichting expertisecentrum leerplanontwikkeling (SLO) published a study on the place of WWII in the Dutch curriculum for primary and secondary education.<sup>72</sup> The researchers concluded that WWII is treated primarily within history as a discipline. However, history is a compulsory subject neither in all years of secondary education, nor in higher or academic education. It is nevertheless compulsory for all types of school and all levels of education to give substance within the curriculum to the concept of citizenship. Platform WO2 thus wants to use the citizenship mandate in primary education to offer teachers guidance in educating pupils about, and have them learn based on, WWII. The study also found that there is enough material available for primary and secondary general education. On the initiative of the SMH, an interactive digital platform has been developed especially for MBO<sup>73</sup> students to provide a bare bones offering for this type of education.<sup>74</sup>

Within the Platform WO2, the NC and the SMH are jointly responsible for the education domain. Several members of Platform WO2 have taken educational initiatives, which are set out below.

In 2017, the SMH made an inventory of the educational materials held in Dutch war museums and institutions that focus on WWII.<sup>75</sup> This resulted in the collective aspiration to improve the quality of the education offered by memorial centres and war museums, through a programme called Kwaliteitsimpuls Educatie (KWIE).<sup>76</sup>

KWIE started in 2018, and ran until September 2020. It has been funded by VWS. From January 2018 to January 2020, 14 SMH institutions worked together within the programme, whose aim was to bolster the quality of education offered by the staff of war and resistance museums. Through the development of skills and the exchange of knowledge both between participants in the programme as well as with organizations outside the field, various guidance documents, educational materials and reports were produced on setting up exhibitions, working with volunteers and producing teaching materials for the educational system. For example, an interactive digital platform was developed especially for MBO students.

In addition to the development of a number of specific products, an important outcome of this two-year collaboration is that educational staff in the 14 war museums have built up mutual trust and developed collegial relationships. The museums recognize that they can learn from each other and help each other constructively to develop and improve their educational programmes and materials. The challenge for the future is how to develop more fully and deploy more broadly the knowledge that has been acquired so far.

A large proportion of the educational projects in the field also focus on the topic of citizenship, in keeping with Platform WO2's strategy.

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<sup>72</sup> SLO

<sup>73</sup> MBO is the abbreviation of Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs, secondary vocational education.

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.plekkenmeteenverhaal.nl>

<sup>75</sup> Platform WO2 and SMH, 'Educatie in Beeld', 2018.

<sup>76</sup> <https://smh40-45.nl/leren-van-wo2/>

Every year, the Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei distributes the Denkboek (Think Book) to about 80% of primary schools. The Denkboek places considerable emphasis on the Holocaust.<sup>77</sup> The annual magazine *4FREE* from the Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei has been developed especially for MBO students and teachers. It helps them, and their teachers, to talk about freedom and the limits to it, drawing a particular connection in the process to WWII and the Holocaust. The Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei has been putting out the Caribbean Think Book for primary-school pupils on the Caribbean islands since 2016. On 4 and 5 May, cultural institutions organize Freedom meals on the various islands.<sup>78</sup> The Denkboek is paid for by the Comité using the subsidy it receives annually from the VWS.

The Joods Cultureel Kwartier has produced a special teaching pack on the Holocaust called *Wordt Gemist*, in which children can follow the lives of children their age during the War.

The Anne Frank Stichting offers a large number of educational projects in the 'Learning from the War' programme, which is co-financed by VWS. For instance, it publishes a number of stories in the form of cartoons about historical events in the Netherlands. Because research has shown that children from the fifth year of primary school onwards are susceptible to prejudice and discrimination, the Anne Frank Stichting is developing a teaching package for this group. Together with international partners, the Anne Frank Stichting developed the online tool *Stories that move: Toolbox tegen discriminatie*. This tool encourages pupils to think about diversity and discrimination.

Since 2018, the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre has been organizing Holocaust Education study days for secondary school teachers in the Netherlands, in conjunction with the Vereniging van Docenten in geschiedenis en staatsinrichting in Nederland, in which international developments are shared and translated into educational practice. The Landelijk Steunpunt Gastsprekers WOII-Heden is located at the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre. In classrooms, guest speakers tell their own stories or the testimonials of survivors of WWII and the Holocaust. This very personal approach makes pupils think about life in a state of unfreedom.<sup>79</sup>

#### 1.8.2.1 *Educational publishing companies*

There have been several meetings between the person in charge of researching the current teaching materials and educational publishing companies. The goal to upgrade the level of Holocaust representations in textbooks was partially met. Some publishers improved their textbooks, others are still trailing behind. A survey among teachers in 2020 shows that most teachers are satisfied with the quality of the Holocaust coverage in textbooks. Complaints concern the lack of information or updated information and the disproportionate focus on the Dutch or Western European situation. Again, any company can develop a textbook on WWII and the Holocaust: the Dutch school textbook market is a free market. Unlike in Germany and other countries, there is no centralized approach or consent on the contents needed in The Netherlands, nor is there any kind of quality control platform.

<sup>77</sup> <https://www.4en5mei.nl/english/education>

<sup>78</sup> Het Denkboek is paid for by the committee from the institutional subsidy that the committee receives.

<sup>79</sup> <https://steunpuntgastsprekers.nl/>

In March 2020, there was to be a conference for historians, teachers, publishers and other professionals from Germany and The Netherlands. The Dutch Erasmus University was to present the outcome of a research project into education on history and citizenship, and projects and new educational material for this kind of education were to be presented. The conference was also to be the launching event for the Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust. However, the conference had to be cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

### 1.8.3 *Teacher training and excursions*

Teachers who want to learn more about WWII and the Holocaust than what is being taught during teaching degrees at Universities for Applied Sciences can choose to participate in trainings and excursions. The Center for Information and Documentation Israel (CIDI) organizes annual trips for teachers to Yad Vashem. Stichting Sobibór and the Nederlands Auschwitz Comité explicitly welcome teachers to join their annual remembrance journeys. The HAN University Nijmegen offers additional training and excursions to sites in The Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe to qualified teachers. As for the teaching materials, there is no independent quality control mechanism in The Netherlands for the training of qualified teachers on the topics of WWII, the Holocaust and the genocide of the Sinti and Roma, the Porajmos.

### 1.8.4 *New media*

Another development in education is the introduction of new media and modern technology. In 2016, for instance, a virtual-reality tour of the former Nazi concentration camp Sobibor was tested in the Camp Vught National Monument. VWS and the V-Fonds provided funding for the tour.<sup>80</sup> It presented an interactive walk through the former Nazi concentration camp Sobibor. VWS has asked a number of organizations to jointly assess the effectiveness of virtual reality as an instrument for teaching about the Holocaust.<sup>81</sup> The results showed 'that virtual reality can undoubtedly play an effective and important role in teaching about the Holocaust, and that this can be done in the best way through the selection of the right presentation technology and content.'<sup>82</sup>

In addition, the National Holocaust Museum in Development looked into the effectiveness of various ways of presenting the Sobibor extermination camp to different groups of visitors in 2017. Aside from a virtual-reality presentation, the effectiveness of oral transmission (in the form of witness accounts), documentation, models and objects in the museum were also assessed. As part of the international project iC-ACCESS, the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre, working with partners, made a virtual presentation of the camp, which was tested out on various visitor groups.

<sup>80</sup> Vfonds - <https://vfonds.nl/> the private Dutch Nationale Fonds voor Vrede, Vrijheid en Veteranenzorg

<sup>81</sup> NIOD/Erasmus University Rotterdam (historical research), the University of Leiden (developmental psychology), the Hogeschool van Amsterdam (transmedia storytelling) and the Universitat Pompeu Fabra Barcelona (neurosciences)

<sup>82</sup> K. Ribbens, C. Rieffe, H. van Vliet, S. Wierenga, and P. Verschure, *Virtueel omzien naar de Holocaust; evaluatie van het gebruik van Virtuele Realiteit in het onderricht van de geschiedenis van Sobibór en Bergen-Belsen*, Amsterdam (2017)

### 1.8.5 *Role of personal stories in education on the Holocaust*

The personal history of Anne Frank is unmistakably the most famous story about going into hiding and the consequences of betrayal. Besides the universal icon that is Anne Frank, there are several regional initiatives in the Netherlands who provide information on similar personal stories. Almost every war museum in the Netherlands offers personal stories connected with the Holocaust or the occupation of the Netherlands, for example the Resistance Museum, the Nationaal Onderduikmuseum in Aalten, the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre, Camp Vught National Memorial and the National Monument Kamp Amersfoort, as well as the earlier mentioned JCK project 'Wordt gemist'.

Personal stories are considered to be an appealing way for children to learn about traumatic and complex events in history. This is reflected in teacher training. For example, students of the Radboud Teachers Academy in Nijmegen learn about Mietje Voltijn, a Dutch-Jewish girl who lived in the city during the war and was murdered in Sobibór together with her family. Every year around 4 May, hundreds of children in the fourth year of primary schools in Nijmegen learn about the life and fate of Mietje, and visit the monument for the Jewish victims in the city centre.

### 1.8.6 *Effectiveness of education on the Holocaust*

This subsection deals with questions 11 and 12 of the country-report questionnaire, Have any surveys or educational research been conducted to assess the effectiveness of Holocaust education? Y/N. If yes, please provide details.

Have any surveys been conducted to assess the post-war public understanding of the Holocaust and the genocide of the Roma? Y/N. Has this understanding changed over time? Y/N. If yes, please provide details.

In 2018, a history journal, *Historisch Nieuwsblad*, tested the general knowledge of national history on the basis of questions that had also been put to a similar target group in 2008. The basis for the test was the Canon of the Netherlands. The average score of the study was a 5.2 on a scale from 1 to 10. Young people between 14 and 18 years of age scored a 4.4.<sup>83</sup>

Also in 2018, a national study financed by VWS started on what young Dutch people know about WWII and the Holocaust. More than 1,500 students were questioned about their actual historical knowledge and understanding of concepts. This research showed that 80% of young people had visited a war museum or memorial centre. Students indicated that their main sources of knowledge were school lessons and textbooks, as well as feature films.<sup>84</sup> For young people, the first association with the war is the Holocaust, but one in three cannot define 'Holocaust' correctly<sup>85</sup>. Many young people seem to be unable to understand some of the key concepts surrounding WWII and the Holocaust. A majority of them are unable to define terms such as 'antisemitism', 'collaboration', 'genocide', 'resistance' and 'national socialism'. Only

<sup>83</sup> *Historisch Nieuwsblad* VI (2018). (In the Netherlands, the scale runs from 1, the lowest score, to 10, the highest.

<sup>84</sup> M. L. F. van Berkel, *Wat weten Nederlandse jongeren over de Tweede Wereldoorlog?*, Arnhem (? Een onderzoek naar kennis, kennisbronnen en attitudes van jongeren in het voortgezet en middelbaar beroepsonderwijs (Nijmegen 2018) ([https://www.annefrank.org/nl/downloads/filer\\_public/d1/8c/d18c160e-360e-41ad-bd58-1c9baca50515/kennis\\_jongeren\\_woii\\_2018.pdf](https://www.annefrank.org/nl/downloads/filer_public/d1/8c/d18c160e-360e-41ad-bd58-1c9baca50515/kennis_jongeren_woii_2018.pdf)).

<sup>85</sup> idem

28% of young people knew that the vast majority of Jews lived in Eastern Europe. 12% knew what Treblinka was. Nevertheless, seven out of ten pupils thought that lessons could be learned from WWII.

The curriculum prescribes the discussion of 'racism and discrimination that have led to genocide, in particular in relation to the Jews'. The Roma genocide is thus not explicitly mentioned, but 'suggested' in the curriculum. The reference framework of Platform WO2 explicitly pleads for a global perspective on World War II and for discussion of all the groups victimized by the Nazis. Again, the constitutional freedom of education means that schools and teachers are free to choose the way in which they teach subjects to children.

The level of knowledge of the Holocaust remains difficult to gauge, as research results are ambiguous. On the one hand, research shows that World War II, and with that the Holocaust, is the topic that receives the highest attention levels from pupils. However, not all pupils in secondary education follow history classes. A follow-up study is currently taking place, looking into the position of education on WWII in schools, and the teachers' objectives and the connection with citizenship education in particular. The appreciation which teachers and young people attribute to the education and activities organized by memorial centres and war museums are an important element. The report of this follow-up study is expected in March 2021.

### 1.9 Academic programmes

This section partly answers questions 6, 9 and 10 of the country-report questionnaire, What are the major historical debates arising out of study of the Holocaust and the genocide of the Roma? How does the Holocaust fit into educational curricula? How does the genocide of the Roma fit into the educational curricula? What are the main textbooks and teaching materials? Have these changed in recent years?

Are there any special academic programs or permanent professorships dedicated to the Holocaust and related issues, particularly the way in which the Holocaust has been re-interpreted and publicly understood in the post-WWII period until the present day? Y/N If yes, please provide details.

Has any research been conducted on the persecution and the genocide of the Roma? Y/N. If yes, please provide details.

This section gives an indication of the nature of the educational programmes at universities of applied sciences and universities. In addition to the programmes presented below, many educational institutions offer programmes to students in which the Holocaust is the topic, or one of the topics, to be studied.

In accordance with the Stockholm Declaration, the Centrum voor Holocaust- en Genocidestudies was established in 2002, as was an endowed chair at the University of Amsterdam. The centre focuses on university education, on research on the Holocaust and other genocides, on making contributions to public debate, and on educating faculty. Since then, a master's programme in Holocaust and Genocide Studies has been developed. It receives 80 applications a year (half of the applicants are not Dutch) for 20 places. The programme is part of the Faculty of History at the University of Amsterdam, and is overseen by the chair of Holocaust and Genocide

Studies, the chair of Memory, History, and Transitional Justice, and researchers at the NIOD – the national Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies.<sup>86</sup>

In 2010, the centre formally became part of the NIOD, which in turn was renamed from the Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie to the Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogs-, Holocaust- en Genocidestudies – the Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies. The faculty of the NIOD carry out research on subjects varying from Babi Jar to the victims of Stalinism, and from international criminal tribunals to the experiences of Syrian refugees. Since its inception, the programme has worked together with sister organizations that were also established in response to the Stockholm Declaration: the Uppsala Programme for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Levande Istoria, HL-Senteret, and the Danish Institute for International Studies. The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) subsidizes the NIOD with almost €1 million per year.

Students who follow this programme study the causes, courses, and consequences of the Holocaust. They also study, under the same three rubrics, the genocides in Rwanda, Cambodia, former Yugoslavia, the Armenian genocide, the mass political violence in South Africa, and the crimes of Communism and Stalinism, among others. Approximately half of the students choose to write their theses on themes other than those related to the Holocaust – that is, other genocides or transitional justice (the range of legal and non-legal measures to address and redress past atrocities).

The MA programme does not equate the Holocaust with other historical events, it respects its uniqueness. It does, however, look to its causes, course, and consequences to help understand the dynamics of other instances of genocide/mass political victimization/dictatorship. The crimes committed by the political left are different to those committed by the right, but from the perspective of how ideologies can drive dictatorships, create co-conspirators among the population, of governments killing or incarcerating their own citizens, the millions of victimizations, and the survivors' difficult return to society, the Dutch MA programme opted to include the study of Stalinist crimes into the broad academic field of Holocaust and Genocide Studies. And as more and more societies recovering from genocide, conflict, and repression are searching for commonalities of experience and want to learn lessons from one another, the programme also explicitly included transitional justice as an area that merited teaching and research focus.

In the period from 2012 to 2019, the master's programme in Holocaust and Genocide Studies gained a growing and increasingly excellent academic reputation. Its focus is not on the most important topics of debate in the Netherlands – although these are covered in the curriculum - but rather on those in the global field. Students have come from all over the world to the Netherlands, just to follow the programme or to study with particular faculty members, and to partake in its broad public-debate programming.

On the research front, its achievements include the following:

- contribution to the reconstruction of the authoritative history and narrative of Babi Jar (a mass execution site near Kiev);

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<sup>86</sup> <http://www.niod.nl/en/master-holocaust-and-genocide-studies>

- publication of leading research collections analyzing the efficacy of various mechanisms and programmes aimed at addressing and redressing state-sponsored crimes, and compensating the victims thereof;
- close monitoring of and reporting on developments in the various international courts in the Hague and the debates surrounding these.;
- being at the forefront of the sub-field of 'perpetrator studies' (even providing expert testimony at the Demjanjuk trial);
- active engagement in teaching and publishing on oral history, and conducting oral history interviews, as well as researching oral history collections (subjects varying from the Holocaust and Gulag survivors, survivors of the Rwandan genocide to Syrian refugees);
- becoming a major partner in a global cooperation spearheaded by Columbia University on Historical Dialogues, Justice and Memory – a network that collaborates in the field of research, develops joint funding applications, facilitates fellowships and organizes annual conferences, workshops and seminars.

The MA programme also includes public activities and debates for both students and a broader audience. One recent example of this is the film-symposium series 'Roads to Justice' in 2019 (an annual series established in 2013). To give an idea of the series in 2019: during the first meeting, 'People Define the Times', on the fight against crimes committed under Albanian communism, was shown. The second film was 'Militia Man', which focused on the trial of the accused warlord Germaine Katanga. The third film, 'Srebrenica Genocide: No Room for Denial', drew attention to this recent event, which took place in the presence of Dutchbat (Dutch UN soldiers).

The academic programme also includes an annual lecture on Holocaust and Genocide studies with guest speakers such as James Young (monuments and remembrance), Norman Naimark (the history of genocide), Elazar Barkan (historical injustices), Scott Straus (the prevention of genocide), Sir Ian Kershaw (Nazism), and Jacques Sémelin (mass political violence).

Since 2011, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam has had an endowed chair, 'Heritage of the War ('Westerbork Leerstoel')', which was established to encourage research into and education on the legacy and memory of World War I and World War II (in particular the Holocaust) and the Cold War. There are also researchers and lecturers based at the universities of Utrecht and Leiden and at the Hogeschool van Arnhem and Nijmegen.

The Hogeschool Nijmegen (HAN) is currently putting together a six-month minor on the Holocaust and other genocides. During this course, students explore different aspects of the historical context, how these are handled and represented in museums, and the pedagogical approaches to the Holocaust and other genocides. It covers the history and historiography of the Holocaust and other genocides, as well as educational material, visual and other resources, and other eyewitness accounts of the Holocaust, other genocides, and concepts such as antisemitism, racism and prejudice. Students become acquainted with institutions focused on remembrance in the Netherlands, such as the Anne Frank House, and abroad, and take part in a six-day seminar in the former extermination camp Auschwitz-Birkenau. During the minor,

students develop educational materials, which are assessed by a panel of professionals.

The teacher training institutions of two universities of applied sciences (Utrecht and Nijmegen) offer students a course in teaching about the Holocaust and other genocides. For example, students in Nijmegen explore the various aspects of the historical context and the processing of the Holocaust and other genocides and their representations in museums, as well as the pedagogical approaches of the Holocaust and other twentieth century genocides. The course covers the history and historiography of the Holocaust and other genocides, as well as the exploration of educational materials, (visual) resources and other testimonies concerning the Holocaust, genocides in general. Subjects such as antisemitism, racism or prejudices are also covered. Students get acquainted with memorial institutions in the Netherlands, such as the Jewish Museum, the Holocaust Museum, the Dutch Theater and the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, Nationaal Monument Kamp Vught, as well as institutions abroad (all subject to change). Furthermore, students participate in a six-days seminar at the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum and in the city of Cracow. Through workshops and guided tours as well as by carrying out research tasks, the students develop educational materials for the above mentioned institutions. These educational materials are presented to a panel of professionals.

Each year since 2017, the Honours College of Hanze University of Applied Sciences and the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre, in collaboration with Windesheim University of Applied Sciences and American partner universities, have organized a summer school for Dutch and American students in the context of 'Holocaust Remembrance'. For two weeks, participants at Camp Westerbork devote themselves to the site's history and contemporary social developments.

#### 1.9.1 *European Holocaust Research Infrastructure (EHRI)*

The European Holocaust Research Infrastructure Project<sup>87</sup>, which many Holocaust-related institutions from across Europe, Israel and the United States have joined since 2010, has been working on broadly distributing resources and expertise in archives, museums, remembrance and research organizations, and libraries. By connecting resources, institutions and people, EHRI is overcoming the fragmentation that has arisen. The EHRI portal provides online access to information about Holocaust resources, regardless of where they are located. The portal is a growing resource, and currently offers more than 325,000 archival descriptions of 760 institutions and an inventory of more than 2,100 archival institutions containing Holocaust-related material in 59 countries.

The Conny Kristel Fellowship gives researchers access to the sources of the world's 20 leading Holocaust archives. Workshops and conferences create transnational and transdisciplinary communities of experts that can catalyze methodological innovations. Other meetings in different regions serve isolated researchers, archivists and heritage professionals. In 2019, EHRI organized two major international conferences in Amsterdam. Finally, EHRI promotes innovative tools that are helping the digital transformation of Holocaust research. Coordinated by NIOD – Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies – EHRI is funded through the European Union's

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<sup>87</sup> <https://ehri-project.eu/>

Horizon 2020 programme and, as an ESFRI project, it is being transformed into a permanent organization that will be fully operational by January 2025.

## 1.10 Memorial centres and museums

The next two subsections give a brief overview of the memorial centres and war museums in the Netherlands, and indicate how many visitors each one attracts each year, and thus answer questions 13 and 14 of the country-report questionnaire, Are there any museums and/or memorials in your country dedicated to the Holocaust and the genocide of the Roma? If yes, please provide details.

### 1.10.1 Memorial centres

Research conducted by the Rijksdienst voor Cultureel Erfgoed in 2018 shows that the Dutch attach importance to historical sites, buildings and objects for remembering and commemorating events and people. There is a need for stories that offer space for nuance and multiple perspectives.<sup>88</sup> Dutch memorial centres meet the need for commemorations at original sites. Four of the five memorial centres are at the exact location where Nazi crimes took place. Three of these locations are linked to the Holocaust: the former camps Amersfoort, Vught and Westerbork. The story of the Indisch Herinneringscentrum falls outside the IHRA's remit.

- The National Monument Kamp Amersfoort. In 2000, Kamp Amersfoort was officially designated a National Monument, and its visitor centre was opened. In the period from 1941 to 1945, approximately 45,000 mostly political prisoners, including 850 Jews, were held for short or longer periods of time. Camp Amersfoort was under the direct command of the SS as a transit and penal camp. Immediately after the war Camp Amersfoort served as an internment camp for Dutch people suspected of collaboration.
- Camp Vught National Memorial. This memorial centre was established in 1990. An exhibition building was added in 2002. The monument – the memorial and the museum – is located on the northeastern tip of the former camp site. Vught, the only SS-WHA camp in Western Europe outside Nazi Germany, was part of the main central structure of Nazi concentration camps. The SS needed space because the transit camps Amersfoort and Westerbork could no longer handle the increasing flow of prisoners. Among the 32,000 prisoners, approximately 12,000 Jews were assembled before being transported to Westerbork. Three transports went from Vught directly to the extermination camps, without stopping at Westerbork. Immediately after the war Camp Vught served as an internment camp for Dutch people suspected of collaboration. The museum was awarded the Dutch Museum Prize in 2016. On 27 November 2019, King Willem-Alexander opened the renovated Vught memorial centre, which now has a renewed permanent exhibition.<sup>89</sup>
- The Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre The memorial centre was opened in 1983. The years 1942 to 1945 are central in the history of Kamp Westerbork. However, the camp was built as early as 1939, and was used to house Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany. From 1 July 1942 the camp, called Polizeiliches Judendurchgangslager Westerbork, served as an assembly location for the departure of a total of 93 trains to Auschwitz, Sobibor, Theresienstadt, and

<sup>88</sup> Parliamentary Papers 32820, No, 321 Annex 909859, Erfgoed van betekenis *Erfgoed van betekenis, verkennend onderzoek naar de relatie tussen onroerend erfgoed en de herinnerings- en herdenkingscultuur in Nederland*, Rijksdienst van Cultureel Erfgoed, April 2019

<sup>89</sup> <https://www.nmkampvught.nl/koninklijke-opening-door-koning-willem-alexander/>

Bergen-Belsen. Of the 107,000 Jews, Sinti and Roma who were deported from the Netherlands, more than 100,000 were deported via Westerbork. Only 5,000 survived.

From 1945 to 1948, Kamp Westerbork served as an internment camp for Dutch people suspected of collaboration and for some Germans. After the independence of Indonesia, Dutch Indonesians were received here in 1950 and 1951. From 1951, Moluccans lived at the camp, which was renamed Schattenberg and which was demolished in 1971.

Since 1983, the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre has been paying attention to this complicated and layered history. The period of the Durchgangslager (1942 to 1945) is key here. Thanks to the growing number of visitors and the attention being paid to innovative forms of education, the Memorial Centre has come up with plans for rebuilding, with a view to creating better substantive connections among the museum, the knowledge centre and the former campsite.

- The Oranjehotel in The Hague. This memorial centre opened in 2019. Already during the War, the 'Oranjehotel' was the nickname for the Scheveningen prison. King Willem-Alexander opened the memorial centre in September 2019. More than 25,000 people were imprisoned here between 1940 and 1945 for interrogation and trial. They were a diverse group of people from all over the Netherlands, arrested for acts that the German occupier considered to be an offence: resistance fighters, but also Jews, Jehovah's Witnesses, political prisoners such as communists, and black-market traders. More than 250 prisoners were executed on the Waalsdorpervlakte across from the Oranjehotel.

This report refers to KWIE as the project in which memorial centres and war museums have worked together to innovate their educational programmes and materials. School trips of primary and secondary schools provide the largest group of visitors to the memorial centres. Educational material is being redeveloped with an eye for digital material aimed at more interaction, thus stimulating the dialogue between educators and pupils and among the pupils themselves. The ongoing renovation of Kamp Amersfoort enables the memorial centre to present the Holocaust as the unique historical event it is. However, the exhibitions and presentations do invite visitors to reflect on current genocides and acts of exclusion as well.

Together with a local primary school, Camp Vught organises the annual commemoration of the Children Transports from Camp Vught to Sobibor, via Westerbork, on 6 and 7 June 1943. Children from the primary school read the names and the ages of the almost 1300 Jewish children who were deported by the Nazis and murdered in Sobibor. The 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Children Transport was attended by three survivors who had travelled from the USA and Israel to participate in the commemoration. There was live coverage of the commemoration on Dutch national television.

The focus of the memorial centres in The Netherlands is the Holocaust, in both their exhibitions and in their educational programmes. The Porajmos receives attention on a smaller scale. Every year, Kamp Westerbork organises the commemoration of the Sinti and Roma transport, with a special programme every 5 years. Kamp Westerbork also uses this five-year interval for the reading of the 102.000 names of Dutch Jews that were deported from Westerbork and murdered in the Nazi extermination camps.

Camp Vught National Memorial has organized many commemorations (see above), plays, debates, screenings of films on topics such as Srebrenica, and developed several temporary exhibitions on various topics. From the exhibition 'Ogen van de Oorlog' in 2012 (portraits of and interviews with former prisoners of the camp) to 'Gulag, Terror and Arbitrariness' in 2015 (an exhibition of photos, objects/artefacts, archival documentation, accompanied by a commissioned documentary) and 'Child under Fire' in 2019 (an interactive exhibition on children in war situations today). In 2013, after a period of restoration, Camp Vught opened Barrack 1B, the last remaining barrack from Konzentrationslager Herzogenbusch. It houses an exhibition on the layered history of the camp and two workshop spaces which made it possible to expand the educational programmes the Memorial offers for schools. Every so often, Camp Vught organizes a conference on a specific theme related to Holocaust remembrance.

Not all war survivors or descendants of war victims in The Netherlands appreciate the Holocaust being linked with other genocides or current events. The debate is ongoing and the topic is very sensitive, as could be expected.

The table below shows the trend in the number of visitors to these memorial centres.

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Kamp Amersfoort	30,117	29,886	32,000	31,000	30,000	29,000	28,000
Camp Vught	72,738 <sup>90</sup>	72,611	72,500	75,500	74,000	72,000	
Kamp Westerbork <sup>91</sup>	165,072	167,349	170,000	165,000	172,000	148,000	133,000 <sup>92</sup>
The Oranjehotel	Because the memorial centre opened only recently, no data is available yet.						

The Cohen Commission indicated in its second report that more people are looking to experience the original location, the real places of memory, *lieux de mémoire*. It became clear in 2017 and 2018 that the Amersfoort, Westerbork and Vught memorial centres, for instance, did not have enough space or capacity to cope with the number of visitors (including from schools). As a result, in 2018 the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) granted these centres €1 million each for expansion and renovation.<sup>93</sup> In addition, VWS contributed to the development of the Oranjehotel.

### 1.10.2

#### *Museums*

In addition to the memorial centres, there are many war museums in the Netherlands. The museums which attract more than 21,000 visitors a year are, with the exception of the Anne Frank House, affiliated with Stichting Musea en Herinneringscentra 40-45. These ten war museums do not receive state subsidies, with the exception of the Joods Cultureel Kwartier in Amsterdam, which, based on the Heritage Act, receives an ongoing subsidy from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science through the Joods Historisch Museum. The war museums are financially largely dependent on visitors and income from shops and catering facilities. Some

<sup>90</sup> Closed for part of the year due to renovations.

<sup>91</sup> This is a remote memorial centre and museum in an open space. More than 500,000 people visited the open memorial space in 2017.

<sup>92</sup> All data are based on annual reports and official correspondence

<sup>93</sup> Press release from VWS, 4 May 2018

museums receive grants from their municipalities and/or provinces. The Holocaust features in the exhibitions in all museums.

The Holocaust is the primary subject in the National Holocaust Museum, part of the Joods Cultureel Kwartier, and the Anne Frank House. The table below shows the visitor numbers in the period from 2013 to 2019.

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
Anne Frank House	1,304,793	1,225,976	1,266,966	1,295,600	1,268,100	1,227,500	1,195,500
Joods Cultureel Kwartier <sup>94</sup>	358,771	372,783	370,853	327,773	284,254	282,878	277,311

In 2019 and 2020, VWS set aside a one-time sum of eight million euro for the modernization of war museums and for innovative ways of presenting materials.

### 1.11 Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands

This section gives a partial answer to questions 6 and 12 of the country-report questionnaire, What are the major historical debates arising out of study of the Holocaust and the genocide of the Roma? How does the Holocaust fit into educational curricula? How does the genocide of the Roma fit into the educational curricula? What are the main textbooks and teaching materials? Have these changed in recent years?

Have any surveys been conducted to assess the post-war public understanding of the Holocaust and the genocide of the Roma? Y/N. Has this understanding changed over time? Y/N. If yes, please provide details.

245 Sinti and Roma were deported from Kamp Westerbork to Auschwitz-Birkenau during WWII. Only 30 of them survived the War.

Before WWII, the Sinti and Roma communities in the Netherlands were small in size, and that has remained. The current number of Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands is not known exactly, as the registers do not mention ethnicity. Estimations from studies to find out the size of the communities range from 2,000-20,000 people to 32,000-48,000 people.<sup>95,96</sup> Dutch Roma and Sinti live on caravan sites as well as in permanent homes spread throughout the Netherlands.

Several studies are being carried out on the present-day integration and segregation of the Sinti and the Roma, and on crime in these communities.<sup>97</sup> A detailed historical

<sup>94</sup> The JCK comprises the Joods Historisch Museum (including the children's museum), the Portuguese synagogue (including the Ets Haim library), the Hollandsche Schouwburg memorial centre (the former *Umschlagplatz*) and, since 2016, the National Holocaust Museum In Development.

<sup>95</sup> Dagevos, J. and Gijsberts, M. (eds.) (2010) *Jaarrapport integratie 2009*, Den Haag, SCP.

<sup>96</sup> Cahn, C. and Guild, E. (2010) *Recent migration of Roma in Europe*. Second edition, Strasbourg / The Hague, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights / OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

<sup>97</sup> H. van Baar, *The Roma and Their Struggle for Identity in Contemporary Europe*, Oxford (2019); College voor de Rechten van de Mens, *Advies inzake het woonwagen- en standplaatsenbeleid*, Utrecht (2018); H. van Baar, *The Securitization of the Roma in Europe*, New York (2018); D. Siegel, *The Mobility of East and Central European Organized Crime: The Cases of Lithuania, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania*, Utrecht (2017); WODC, *Europa en zijn Roma*, Den Haag (2014); A. Dul, *Broederschap of pooierschap? Een onderzoek naar de invloed van de interne dynamiek van de Roma gemeenschap op de aanwezigheid van mensenhandel*, Utrecht (2013).

study was devoted to the persecution of the Sinti in the province of Limburg, where most Dutch Sinti lived before the Holocaust.<sup>98</sup>

The Netherlands does not have a museum that focuses exclusively on the history and persecution of the Sinti and the Roma. *De vergeten genocide, het lot van de Sinti en Roma*, which can be found at <https://romasinti.eu/nl/> is a digital exhibition. The IHRA has contributed to this exhibition with financial support and substantive expertise.

The Nederlands Instituut Sinti en Roma (NISR) works to improve the social position of Sinti and Roma. The NISR was started in order to continue the various projects that its predecessor, the Stichting Rechtsherstel Sinti en Roma (SRSR), had initiated in education, employment, housing and culture.

In 2015, VWS issued a special grant scheme to enable activities by and on behalf of the Dutch Sinti and Roma communities, with a total budget of €4.1 million.<sup>99</sup> The money that remains from the former SRSR is distributed through the grant procedure to grass roots initiatives from the Sinti and Roma communities.

A core condition to receive a grant is the active participation of the Sinti and Roma communities in Dutch society. Requests are mostly filed by foundations or other types of collectives that act on a local or regional level. The goal is to finance projects and activities that, according to the Sinti and the Roma, will directly or indirectly lead to a better social position of the Sinti and the Roma in the Netherlands. So far, grants have been awarded to requests with the following themes have:

- Remembrance of the Porajmos and World War II;
- Combatting discrimination and prejudice;
- Strengthening advocacy and representation;
- Stimulating the enrolment into formal education and completion thereof;
- Job creation
- Respect and understanding for Sinti and Roma culture and identity;
- Coaching and consulting intermediaries.

Combatting antigypsyism is a topic that fits well with the theme of *Combatting discrimination and prejudice*. Examples of such projects are exhibitions or Sinti and Roma speakers at schools and other institutions. The projects aim to increase knowledge of the Sinti and Roma among fellow citizens and to decrease prejudices.

The community is in control of the requests and their content. It is up to individuals or collectives to request a grant for projects that support the further emancipation and participation of Sinti and Roma in Dutch society. The committee that evaluates the requests and awards the grants includes representatives of the Sinti and Roma communities.

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<sup>98</sup> H. van Rens, *Vervolgd in Limburg. Joden en Sinti in Nederlands-Limburg tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, Hilversum (2013).

<sup>99</sup> Besluit vaststelling subsidieplafond en vaststelling beleidsregels inzake het Beleidskader [...] en emancipatie van de Sinti en Roma in Nederland (11 april 2015); Instellingsbesluit Adviescommissie participatie en emancipatie Sinti en Roma (12 mei 2015)

An annual amount of €500,000 is available for projects that address one or more of the earlier mentioned themes, but there is no budget allocation by theme. In case the number of awarded projects exceeds the annual amount of €500,000, projects serving the survivors of WWII and the Porajmos and projects related to the remembrance of the Porajmos take precedence. The communities decided that project requests would be rewarded in accordance with these ranking criteria. The grant is intended for the emancipation of Sinti and Roma, not poverty alleviation. Emancipation can be achieved through various ways and all ways are essential to combat antigypsyism. One specific way of achieving emancipation is through education. The grant scheme supports the application of a natural person for a scholarship for academic or applied sciences.

## **1.12 Activities in the international context**

The State Secretary for VWS informs the House of Representatives about developments in War Remembrance policy, including in connection with the IHRA and the cooperation with other international organizations. In addition to its activities as a member of the IHRA, the Netherlands is also active in the International Steering Committee on Sobibor (ISC Sobibor) and the Arolsen Archives International Commission on Nazi Persecution, formerly the International Tracing Service (ITS). Each year, directors of war and resistance museums also make a trip abroad to gain inspiration for their own working practice.

### *1.12.1 ISC Sobibor*

Poland, Israel, Slovakia, and the Netherlands work together in the ISC Sobibor to create a dignified memorial to the more than 170,000 Jews, including more than 34,000 from the Netherlands, who were murdered in Sobibor. The museum is expected to open on the site in October 2020. In 2021, the entire complex will be opened. During the IHRA plenary in December 2019, the Polish delegation gave a presentation on the design, the archaeological excavations and the construction process involved.

### *1.12.2 The Arolsen Archives International Commission*

The Netherlands is one of 11 members of the International Commission. In 2017 and 2018, the Netherlands chaired what was then the International Tracing Service, and shepherded it through the following changes:

- A name change, from 'International Tracing Service' to 'Arolsen Archives International Center on Nazi Persecution';
- The start of a digital strategy;
- The creation of a working group to assess the impact of the General Data Protection Regulation on the Arolsen Archives.

### *1.12.3 International activities of the Anne Frank Stichting*

The Anne Frank Stichting is not only responsible for opening up the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, but is also active in dozens of countries to tell the story of Anne Frank through travelling exhibitions and educational projects. The exhibition 'Let me be myself' tells the story of Anne Frank's life and brings the fate of the millions of victims of WWII closer to home. An important part of this exhibition involves opening up the discussion of prejudices and perceptions. In addition to the historical part of the exhibition, there is a section consisting of stories of young people today. This section deals with themes such as identity, diversity, discrimination and taking action. Tours

of the exhibition are provided by guides – among them young people – who receive appropriate training. Such peer-to-peer education is an important part of the international educational work the Stichting does. Its international activities are set up and implemented with local partners (NGOs), partner organizations and volunteers. The costs of these projects are usually borne by local partners and sponsors, although in a large number of countries the Dutch government also supports presentations. In Central and Eastern Europe, the European Commission regularly sponsors the Anne Frank Stichting's programmes.

#### 1.12.4 *International activities Kamp Westerbork*

The Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre is a partner in the iC-ACCESS programme. In the autumn of 2019, the academic project Accessing Campscapes: Inclusive Strategies for European Conflicted Pasts was officially concluded with a closing conference at the Simon Wiesenthal Institute in Vienna. As an associate partner, for three years the Memorial Centre was part of this partnership between renowned European universities on the one hand and Memorial Centres such as Westerbork on the other. The aim of iC-ACCESS was to develop new strategies to make the hidden histories of the former concentration and extermination camps involved more readily visible and susceptible to discussion by a wide audience. The initiator of iC-ACCESS was Prof. Rob van der Laarse. He led the project from his position as chair of the Westerbork-Leerstool at the Free University of Amsterdam.

#### 1.12.5 *International activities of Platform WO2*

Since 2016, the directors of the organizations affiliated with Platform WO2 have gone on an annual knowledge-exchange and networking trip in order to strengthen mutual cooperation on the one hand and, on the other, to get to know colleagues and working methods abroad. The directors visited such countries as the United Kingdom, Belgium and Hungary.

The SMH organized a study trip to Belgium for MBO teachers and the educational staff of SMH. The focus of the trip was the connection between WWII and citizenship.

### 1.13 **The Stockholm Declaration and decisions by the IHRA**

This section deals with question 7 of the country-report questionnaire, How is progress toward implementing the Stockholm Declaration and subsequent IHRA decisions monitored and assessed?

VWS oversees the Dutch delegation to the IHRA. Developments related to the IHRA are part of VWS's regular communications with parliament. In addition to the regular debate, communications with the House of Representatives also consist of occasional questions from members of the House, sometimes on the basis of discussions with NGOs, the outcomes of conferences, deliberations or press releases. The State Secretary for VWS informs Parliament immediately if developments so require. The IHRA is well known to parliamentarians, and the Stockholm Declaration is an integral part of Dutch national policy.

VWS strives to see to it that the make-up of the IHRA delegation reflects the breadth of the field of Holocaust remembrance and education, and related academic research in the Netherlands, preferably with specific knowledge of the IHRA's priority themes. The organizations whose staff are members of the Dutch delegation to the IHRA have their own national and international professional networks where IHRA decisions are

discussed, disseminated and monitored. The most important national networks for organizations devoted to the Holocaust and WWII are the aforementioned Platform WO2 and the Stichting Musea en Herinneringscentra 1940-1945 (SMH). The connection between national and international themes has come in for more attention in recent years.

## 2 Priority themes

The IHRA's member states have decided to devote particular attention to a number of themes, with a view to achieving synergies in order to get results. The current priorities are dealing with Holocaust denial and distortion; access to Holocaust-related archives, locations, artefacts and witness accounts; and the fight against antisemitism. The following sections discuss efforts in the Netherlands in this connection, and the results they have produced.

### 2.1 Holocaust denial and distortion

This section deals in part with question 15 of the country-report questionnaire, With a view to the IHRA working definition of Holocaust denial and distortion and the working definition of antisemitism how serious is the challenge of countering distortion in your country? Separate out, if you can, Holocaust distortion or denial, and antisemitism. Are there governmental policies in place to tackle distortion? If yes, please list these policies and rate their effectiveness.

The Dutch government views Holocaust denial and distortion as expressions of antisemitism. Dutch government policy focuses on combating discrimination in general, and the fight against antisemitism is part of this. Holocaust denial and distortion are relatively unknown phenomena in the Netherlands. Since the death in 2007 of the widow Rost van Tonningen, a convicted and persistent Holocaust denier, the denial and distortion of the Holocaust have not had any traction in the Netherlands. With regard to Holocaust denial and distortion, permanent monitoring is required in order to avoid or combat any equivocation and relativization in education and in society. Despite the lack of any concrete grounds or data indicating Holocaust denial and distortion, the government is committed to the fight against Holocaust revisionism.

An accusation of Holocaust denial and distortion was made in discussions about the publication of the historian Bart van der Boom, "Wij weten niets van hun lot". The publication of the results of his research set off a fierce debate in the media and online about what the Dutch knew about the Holocaust at the time.<sup>100</sup> The fierce debate focused on the author's use of 164 diaries as sources, and on the conclusions in the book about the attitudes and alleged inactivity of Jewish victims. Opponents of the book accused Van der Boom of trivializing the actions of the perpetrators responsible for the Holocaust and of wanting to condone the attitude of non-Jewish Dutch people. The polemic, in the form of contributions from all participants in the debate, has been recorded.<sup>101</sup>

### 2.2 The IHRA's working definition of Holocaust denial and distortion

In 2020, the Ministry of VWS commissioned the translation of the IHRA's working definition of Holocaust denial and distortion to Dutch so that it can be shared more widely. The aim in doing so is to contribute to the recognition of Holocaust denial and distortion and thus to combat the phenomenon.

<sup>100</sup> B. van der Boom, "We weten niets van hun lot": gewone Nederlanders en de Holocaust, Amsterdam (2012)

<sup>101</sup> <https://niod.on.worldcat.org/v2/oclc/869216912>

## 2.3 Combating antisemitism

This section deals in part with question 15 of the country-report questionnaire, With a view to the IHRA working definition of Holocaust denial and distortion and the working definition of antisemitism how serious is the challenge of countering distortion in your country? Separate out, if you can, Holocaust distortion or denial, and antisemitism. Are there governmental policies in place to tackle distortion? If yes, please list these policies and rate their effectiveness.

The Dutch government is committed to combating antisemitism as integral part of the broader efforts within the Cabinet's approach to fighting discrimination. The approach of the Government of the Netherlands in its policy on antisemitism is partly based on the results of the 2015 study of factors that trigger antisemitism, which showed that the conflict in the Middle East and football are the most important triggers for expressions of antisemitism.<sup>102</sup> About half of the antisemitic incidents registered in the Netherlands are football-related, according to various publications in these areas.<sup>103</sup>

Preventive policy focuses on promoting interreligious dialogue and raising awareness in education and in the football world. Enforcement policy focuses on measures to increase the willingness to report incidents and press charges, to improve the registration of incidents and understanding of them, and to enable effective investigation and prosecution. In addition, various departments engage in frequent dialogue with key figures and organisations within the Jewish community.

The 2019 study on antisemitism by the EU Fundamental Rights Agency, in which the views of Dutch Jews were also sought, states that the perception of safety in relation to antisemitism is declining and that an increase in verbal and other antisemitic incidents is being felt by Dutch Jews.<sup>104</sup> The seventh report by the Anne Frank Stichting and the Verweij Jonker Institute, *Racisme, antisemitisme en extreemrechts geweld in Nederland*, declares: 'Across the board we are seeing a decline in the number of racist incidents. The number of incidents of an antisemitic nature has also declined, with the exception of intentionally antisemitic incidents. There is, however, an increase in the seriousness of all forms of incident.'<sup>105</sup>

### 2.3.1 IHRA working definition of antisemitism

On 27 November 2018, a majority of the House of Representatives supported a motion on using, in the Netherlands, the IHRA's international working definition of

<sup>102</sup> *Antisemitisme onder jongeren in Nederland; oorzaken en triggerfactoren*, the Anne Frank Stichting and the Verweij-Jonker Instituut, Amsterdam, 2015

<sup>103</sup> The Anne Frank Stichting and the Verweij-Jonker Instituut, *Vijfde rapportage racisme, antisemitisme en extreemrechts geweld in Nederland*, Amsterdam (2016); SCP, *Gedeelde waarden en een weerbare democratie*, Den Haag (2016); the Anne Frank Stichting and the Verweij-Jonker Instituut, *Antisemitisme onder jongeren in Nederland; oorzaken en triggerfactoren*, Amsterdam (2015); the Anne Frank Stichting and the Verweij-Jonker Instituut, *Nader onderzoek beelden van islamitische jongeren over zionisten en Joden*, Utrecht (2015); the Anne Frank Stichting, *Football-related antisemitisme compareer; verslag van de internationale conferentie over antisemitisme in het betaalde voetbal*, Amsterdam (2015); SCP, *Ervaren discriminatie in Nederland*, The Hague (2014); the NIOD, *De dynamiek van het hedendaagse antisemitisme in een globaliserende context: de "Jood" als kadermodel in Nederland, Marokko, Polen en Turkije*, Amsterdam (2013)

<sup>104</sup> <https://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2019/young-jewish-europeans-perceptions-and-experiences-antisemitism>

<sup>105</sup> <https://www.annefrank.org/nl/over-ons/onderzoek/sociaal-onderzoek/monitor-racisme-en-extremisme/>

antisemitism.<sup>106</sup> The Dutch government supports the working definition of antisemitism as a non-legally binding working definition, meaning the IHRA's working definition has not altered the relevant legal frameworks. The Netherlands Public Prosecution Service and the police use the working definition as a guide in assessing offences, including those that are reported. Within the Dutch legal system, antisemitism is punishable as a form of discrimination or incitement to hatred or violence, and it is up to the courts to decide what the limits of freedom of expression are.

## 2.4 **Combatting antigypsyism**

Combatting discrimination against Sinti and Roma is part of the generic approach to fighting discrimination. The government is committed to promoting the inclusion of the Sinti and Roma. This commitment is visible in policies aimed at combating leaving school at an early age, promoting the right to self-determination, and promoting dialogue. The Ministries of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW) and of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) have programmes that aim to promote the emancipation of the Sinti and the Roma.

The Dutch government has commissioned research into the living and housing conditions of Sinti and Roma in the Netherlands in order to make an inventory of the degree to which they are socially included. SZW is supporting pilot projects in seven municipalities to promote, through the deployment of intermediaries, participation by young Sinti and Roma in education and guidance for them on employment. Evaluative research plays an important role in getting the best possible picture of the effectiveness of this approach.

## 2.5 **Statistics on discrimination**

This section deals with question 16 of the country-report questionnaire, Do the statistics for hate speech or hate crime suggest the situation is improving or deteriorating? Please explain and reference specific statistics as compiled by government agencies. Separate out antisemitism and antigypsyism.

There are three prime data sources for statistics on discrimination available, which are all published annually: 1) the joint report from local authorities and the police; 2) the report published by the Netherlands Public Prosecution Service, and 3) the report made by the Center for Information and Documentation Israel (CIDI), a private organization. Law enforcement may use this report for reference purposes.

In 2014, the police started a programme to improve, as an ongoing matter, the tracking down and registration of discrimination within society. Each year, the House of Representatives receives a report on the registration of incidents related to acts of discrimination.<sup>107</sup> The following table shows submissions to the police of reports of discrimination in various forms.

<sup>106</sup> Parliamentary Papers 35000 V, No. 68 result

<https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/detail?id=2018Z22018&id=2018D56273>

<sup>107</sup> Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, police, *Discriminatiecijfers in 2017; een rapport over registraties en meldingen van discriminatie in Nederland*, Rotterdam/The Hague (2018)

Categories of discrimination	2014 <sup>108</sup>	2015	2016 <sup>109</sup>	2017	2018 <sup>110</sup>	2019 <sup>111</sup>
Antisemitism	6%	8%	8%	8%	8%	14%
Gender	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Religion	5%	9%	8%	6%	5%	4%
Specifically against Muslims	No data	9%	8%	5%	4%	No data
Against people with a disability	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Origin/descent	52%	43%	39%	39%	43%	39%
Professed beliefs	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Sexual orientation	25%	31%	30%	25%	25%	29%
Unknown/Other	No data	12%	17%	21%	17%	11%

The 2019 report offers several possible explanations for the increase in the percentages, in the reports, of antisemitic incidents. One of these is the increased political and societal attention to antisemitism, including calls to report it. A second explanation from the report is that graffiti with swastikas and vandalism without reference to Jews has been registered as 'antisemitism' rather than as 'unknown/other'.<sup>112</sup>

The incidents registered in 2019 can be roughly divided into four categories:

- antisemitic insults used against public service employees, in particular police officers;
- insults using the word 'Jew' between members of the public;
- graffiti or other drawing/writing in public places using swastikas in a clear antisemitic context;
- antisemitic manifestations or violence against Jewish persons or institutions.

In the period 2010-2018, the Anne Frank Stichting and the Verweij Jonker Institute carried out the so called 'Monitoronderzoek' (Monitoring research), analyzing the data regarding discrimination reported to the police. Since 2018, this analysis has been carried out by a different organisation in conjunction with the police. The 'Monitoronderzoek' by the Anne Frank Stichting now solely focuses on activities of the extreme right. This may include antisemitism, but the research is aimed at identifying this type of discrimination in particular.

In 2013, the Anne Frank Stichting investigated the occurrence of antisemitism in secondary schools. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the second part of this investigation, which was planned for 2020, had to be postponed. The investigation consists of a survey amongst teachers in secondary education regarding their

<sup>108</sup> <https://www.verweij-jonker.nl/publicaties/2015/discriminatiecijfers-politie-2014>

<sup>109</sup> <https://discriminatie.nl/files/2017-05/discriminatiecijfers-2016-landelijk-rapport.pdf>

<sup>110</sup> The Netherlands Public Prosecution Service, *Cijfers in beeld 2018; overzicht discriminatiecijfers*, p. 15, The Hague (2019).

<sup>111</sup> Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, *Discriminatiecijfers in 2019: Een rapport over registraties van discriminatie-incidenten door de politie, en meldingen bij antidiscriminatievoorzieningen en andere organisaties in Nederland*, The Hague (2020)  
<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/binaries/rijksoverheid/documenten/kamerstukken/2020/04/28/aanbieding-rapporten-discriminatiecijfers-en-ervaren-discriminatie/aanbieding-rapporten-inzake-discriminatiecijfers-en-ervaren-discriminatie.pdf>

<sup>112</sup> Idem, p. 27.

experiences with antisemitism. These experiences may include online manifestations of antisemitism, should these be known or reported to teachers.

Occurrences of antisemitism are registered by the Dutch anti-discrimination offices (ADVs) and by the Netherlands Public Prosecution Office. In addition, the Center for Information and Documentation Israel (CIDI) has been registering incidents of antisemitism since 1984 and publishing its findings in the annual 'Monitor Antisemitische Incidenten'. This Monitor shows the changes and trends in antisemitism in the Netherlands over the years. To prevent double counting, CIDI verifies if the incidents that are reported to them have not already been reported to the ADVs or the College for Human Rights. Since the working definition of antisemitism was adopted by IHRA, the Monitor has been using this definition to determine if a manifestation is antisemitic.<sup>113</sup>

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
'Real life' manifestations	21	28	54	33	36	29	27	61
Vandalism	14	10	22	20	21	28	21	14
Incidents in private life	16	27	30	36	21	24	40	32
Written manifestations	26	13	38	21	11	14	21	25
Public domain	19	22	27	16	20	18	26	50
Total reported manifestations excluding Internet	96	100	171	126	109	113	135	182
Total reported manifestations including Internet	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	137	230	309

Number of antisemitic incidents reported to CIDI since 2012<sup>114</sup>

The number of incidents in the CIDI Monitor is higher than what is reported to the ADVs or the Netherlands Public Prosecution Service. There are several explanations for this. The Netherlands Public Prosecution Service registers the number of cases concerning discrimination, where antisemitism is only a part of all (punishable) manifestations of discrimination and racism. Also, it is likely that people are more familiar with CIDI than with the ADVs when it comes to reporting antisemitism. Another explanation to explain the difference in numbers could be the definition of antisemitism. For instance, a wall that is plastered with a swastika but without any antisemitic texts may be classed as a manifestation of antisemitism by one ADV but not by another.

The identification and analysis of antisemitism on social media and the internet proves to be a complex matter. On 31 December 2019, CIDI carried out a baseline measurement for all online manifestations of antisemitism in the Dutch language on Twitter and websites. This exercise only had a limited scope, as Facebook, Instagram and YouTube were not included, but despite these limitations, the result of the measurements were 747 antisemitic tweets, 222 websites, blogs and forums containing structurally antisemitic content, and 64 websites containing incidental manifestations of antisemitism.<sup>115</sup>

<sup>113</sup> CIDI Monitor antisemitische incidenten 2019 p. 14.

<sup>114</sup> Idem p. 3

<sup>115</sup> Antisemitisme op Twitter, websites, blogs en fora. Kantar in opdracht van CIDI. 15 mei 2020

## 2.6 Hate crimes and incitements to hatred

This section deals with part of question 2 and with question 16 of the country-report questionnaire, What are the most important policy statements on commemoration, education or hate speech/crimes over the last five years? Do the statistics for hate speech or hate crime suggest the situation is improving or deteriorating? Please explain and reference specific statistics as compiled by government agencies. Separate out antisemitism and antigypsyism.

There are approximately 50 synagogues in use in the Netherlands, 13 of which are in Amsterdam. Only a small number offer regular services.<sup>116</sup> The police have placed clearly recognizable observation posts at a number of synagogues, as well as at Jewish museums and schools, to protect users, visitors and the premises themselves.

The Minister of Justice and Security has informed the House of Representatives on several occasions about incidents committed with discriminatory motives. In October 2019, after explosives were thrown through their window, a Jewish family in Hippolytushoef declared that they had been terrorized because of their religion for two decades.<sup>117</sup> There were several attacks on the Israeli restaurant HaCarmel in Amsterdam in 2017 and 2018.<sup>118</sup> The incident in March 2018 was one of the reasons for the initiative proposal in the Amsterdam municipal council to actively combat antisemitism.<sup>119</sup> <sup>120</sup> Violence that seems rooted in discrimination or hatred against a religious group also hits the Muslim community. For example, in Enschede a group of five men threw Molotov cocktails at a mosque<sup>121</sup> or in Emmeloord a 14-year-old girl was beaten for wearing a headscarf.<sup>122</sup>

### 2.6.1 Statistics on hate crimes

The Netherlands Public Prosecution Service (OM) does not register hate speech or hate crimes separately. The figures from the OM on the settlement of cases on the basis of Article 137 (c) and (d) of the Penal Code are a possible indication of the number of these offences in the Netherlands. The OM may decide to prosecute a suspect, to settle the case or offer a deal, or to dismiss the case.

The number of cases received in a given year may differ from the number of cases dismissed in that year; these are not necessarily the same cases. A case may come in one year and be dismissed the next.

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 <sup>123</sup>

<sup>116</sup> [www.nik.nl](http://www.nik.nl), [www.ljgamsterdam.nl](http://www.ljgamsterdam.nl)

<sup>117</sup> <https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/nieuws/nederland/artikel/4902156/joods-gezin-geterroriseerd-hippolytushoef>

<sup>118</sup> <https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/nederland/artikel/3887276/eigenaar-aangevallen-joods-restaurant-hoezo-geen-motief-elke-keer-zijn>

<sup>119</sup> <https://nos.nl/artikel/2220986-plaatselijke-partijen-committeren-zich-aan-amsterdam-joods-akkoord.html>

<sup>120</sup> *Een 9 punten-plan in de strijd tegen antisemitisme in Amsterdam*. An initiative proposal of councillors Poot, Ceder, Boomsma and Nanninga for the Amsterdam municipal council, submitted on 6 March 2019

<sup>121</sup> <https://www.tubantia.nl/nieuws/molotovcocktail-tegen-moskee-enschede-domme-actie-of-een-aanslag~a1df6509/>

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.destentor.nl/regio/joodse-en-islamitische-organisaties-veroordelen-mishandeling-meisje-14-emmeoord~a2735244/>

<sup>123</sup> *Cijfers in Beeld 2019*. Overzicht discriminatiecijfers The Netherlands Public Prosecution Service. 1 June 2020. <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2020/06/01/cijfers-in-beeld-2019-overzicht-discriminatiecijfers-openbaar-ministerie>

<b>Defamation of groups under Art. 137 (c)</b>	107	118	142	77	104
<b>Incitements to violence under Art. 137 (d)</b>	19	27	26	8	14

## 2.7 Holocaust related materials

This section deals with questions 17 and 18 of the country-report questionnaire, With a view to the IHRA working definition on Holocaust related-materials, how serious are the challenges of safeguarding the historical record of the Holocaust or the genocide of the Roma in your country? Separate out, if you, can archives (identification and access), testimonies, sites, artefacts, an accepted narrative, a culture of commemoration.

It is possible to gain access one way or another to every government archive in the Netherlands that holds Holocaust-related materials, though for some of the archives, special conditions or restrictions may apply to access the files.

The Dutch government encourages the use of research results for education and remembrance, as expressed in the mandate of the NIOD and the Nationaal Comité voor 4 en 5 mei. In 2016, the NIOD examined the challenges facing researchers in gaining access to archive materials.<sup>124</sup> The legislation governing access to government archives holding Holocaust-related materials is the Personal Data Protection Act 2000 (Wet Bescherming Persoonsgegevens 2000 or WBP since May 2018 Algemene Verordening Gegevensbescherming in English General Data Protection Regulation), the Archival Act 1995 (Archiefwet 1995), and the Government Information (Public Access) Act 1991 (Wet Openbaarheid van Bestuur 1991, or WOB).

The Archival Act 1995 provides for public access to Dutch government archives when archives have been transferred to the National Archives, 20 years after the files in question have been closed. The Archival Act offers ministries and High Councils of State the opportunity to impose restrictive provisions to publicity when archives are being transferred to the National Archives. One example is the Centraal Archief Bijzondere Rechtspleging (CABR), one of the most important government archives on WWII and the Holocaust. The Ministry of Justice and Security has imposed conditions on who may consult the CABR and what they may do with its contents.

In addition to the government archives, there are so called hybrid archives. One example is the Red Cross archive, which has been transferred to the National Archives. When archives are being transferred, it may be decided that specific arrangements are to be imposed regarding access to them. This type of arrangement has complicated and limited the possibilities for conducting research at the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre and the JCK.

Archaeological research is a valuable and necessary way of doing research into WWII and the Holocaust. The Dutch authorities use professional expertise for research at original locations. Such research has taken place in the Netherlands, at the Kamp

<sup>124</sup> *Afgeschermd gebengen. Een onderzoek naar de inzagerregimes van de naoorlogse berechting van collaborateurs in België en Nederland en de invloed van deze regimes op het narratief van collaboratie en berechting daarvan.* Maartje van de Kamp (2016) Thesis commissioned by the NIOD. <https://scripties.uba.uva.nl/scriptie/612992>

Westerbork Memorial Centre, and abroad, for example during the work to build the memorial centre on the site of the former Sobibor Nazi extermination camp.

Since 2000, the Landelijke Steunpunt Gast sprekers WOII-Heden, which is affiliated with the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre, has organized classroom talks by survivors of WWII and the Holocaust. This is one of the projects to preserve eyewitness accounts of the Holocaust.<sup>125</sup> Another project, run by the NIOD in cooperation with Data Archiving and Networked Services (DANS), is the website <http://getuigenverhalen.nl>, which offers visitors eyewitness accounts of the War.

## 2.8 Legal Challenges

This section deals with question 5 of the country-report questionnaire, What are the main legal challenges you are encountering? Are these local problems which require local solutions or do they merit an international approach?

The main challenge when it comes to the law has to do with the interpretation and application of the EU General Data Protection Regulation, recital 158 of which pays particular attention to the importance of preserving and otherwise processing information on genocide and the Holocaust, including personal data, for the purposes of archiving in the public interest. In the Netherlands, recital 158 has, among other groups, led to discussions between archivists and both individuals and organizations seeking access to Holocaust-related archives.

In January 2020, the Administrative Jurisdiction Division of the Council of State issued a ruling on how this recital on the Holocaust should be weighed up in light of the GDPR:

*4. [Appellant] argues that the District Court incorrectly failed to consider the grounds for its appeal that the State Archivist failed to assess its application on the basis of the General Data Protection Regulation (hereinafter "GDPR"). The appellant claims to be entitled to information on the Holocaust, pursuant to the last sentence of recital 158 in the preamble to the GDPR.*

*4.2. [...] Insofar as [the appellant] argues that the condition in Article 24 Preamble and (c) of the GDPR is not compatible with paragraph 158, the Division sees no grounds for that opinion. Recital 158 in the preamble to the GDPR states as follows: "[...] Member States should also be authorised to provide for the further processing of personal data for archiving purposes, for example with a view to providing specific information related to the political behaviour under former totalitarian state regimes, genocide, crimes against humanity, in particular the Holocaust, or war crimes." It does not follow from recital 158 that no conditions should be imposed on data processing in the context of Holocaust-related scholarly research.<sup>126</sup>*

With this ruling, the Supreme Administrative Court leaves open the possibility that conditions may be imposed on access to Holocaust-related materials in archives, and

<sup>125</sup> [www.wo2go.nl](http://www.wo2go.nl) [www.uiteerste-hand.wordpress.com](http://www.uiteerste-hand.wordpress.com) [www.getuigenverhalen.nl](http://www.getuigenverhalen.nl) [www.oorlogsinmijnbuurt.nl](http://www.oorlogsinmijnbuurt.nl) [www.verzetmuseum.org/museum/nl/tweede-wereldoorlog/themas/levensverhalen](http://www.verzetmuseum.org/museum/nl/tweede-wereldoorlog/themas/levensverhalen),

M. Spee and M. Venema, *Ooggetuigen in de klas* (2014).

<sup>126</sup> ECLI:NL:RVS:2020:251

that access to these archives is thus limited in practice, usually for the purpose of protecting personal privacy.

## **2.9 Relationship with civil society**

This section deals with question 19 of the country-report questionnaire, Characterize how your government engages with Civil Society Organizations whilst working towards countering distortion and safeguarding the record including the level of financial support/ funding offered.

The Dutch government has good working relations with organizations of Holocaust survivors and relatives of victims and survivors, especially with the Nederlands Auschwitz Comité and the Stichting Sobibor. One example is the close cooperation around the placement of the memorial stones at the former Sobibor Nazi extermination camp. The International Steering Committee adapted the design of Remembrance Avenue to meet the wishes of the Sobibor Foundation. The outcome is that 500 stones will lie on each side of Remembrance Avenue. Some of the stones will bear the names of victims as a tribute from their relatives, while some will not, in order to make this disparity visible to relatives.

Every year the Nederlands Auschwitz Comité and the Stichting Sobibor organize several trips to the former Nazi concentration camps in Poland. Those who go on the trips are surviving relatives of victims of the Nazis, students, and employees of organizations that are professionally involved with the War and/or with surviving relatives. The Province of Gelderland subsidizes the International Youth Meeting, which the Polish-German Reconciliation Foundation has been organizing every year since 2013 around 14 October, the date of the revolt in Sobibor. Participants come from various countries in Europe and have, in the past come from Israel.

## 3 Genocides

### 3.1 Remembrance of the Porajmos

This section gives a partial answer to questions 6, 13 and 20 of the country-report questionnaire, What are the major historical debates arising out of study of the Holocaust and the genocide of the Roma? How does the Holocaust fit into educational curricula? How does the genocide of the Roma fit into the educational curricula? What are the main textbooks and teaching materials? Have these changed in recent years?

Are there any museums and/or memorials in your country dedicated to the Holocaust and the genocide of the Roma? If yes, please provide details.

Does your country associate remembrance of the persecution and/or genocide of the Roma in its Holocaust commemorative, educational or research activities? If this is done separately please explain when and why.

During raids throughout the Netherlands on 16 May 1944, the Nazis arrested Roma and Sinti. They were gathered in Westerbork, from where a train carrying 245 of them left for Auschwitz on 19 May 1944. On 19 May 2019, the National Remembrance Service for Victims of Persecution of the Sinti and the Roma took place for the second time at the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre. Paul Blokhuis, State Secretary of Health, Welfare and Sport, spoke during the remembrance ceremony. This is not an annual commemoration.

Every year, the annual National Holocaust Remembrance Day also recalls the genocide of the Sinti and Roma, the Porajmos. An orchestra of Sinti provides the musical accompaniment during the National Holocaust Remembrance, playing traditional music. The Nederlands Auschwitz Comité is developing the Holocaust Memorial of Names in Amsterdam. The development of other memorials usually involves representatives of Sinti and Roma communities and local or regional authorities. The O Lungo Drom foundation is an example of such a representative of the Sinti and Roma.

Various Sinti organizations have used the aforementioned subsidy scheme to set up local commemorations in recent years. For example, the annual commemoration of this raid, and of the later deportation of Sinti from the province of Limburg, takes place in the village of Beek. In Amsterdam, The Hague and Kamp Westerbork, there are also separate memorials dedicated to the Porajmos. In 2018, a 'social sofa' was put in Oldenzaal in remembrance of the raid of 16 May 1944. These commemorations focus exclusively on the Sinti and the Roma, as they were set up by and for these communities themselves. The international commemoration of the Roma genocide takes place on 2 August in various locations in the Netherlands.

The persecution and genocide of Sinti and Roma are featured in several academic programmes that are described in the Academic programmes section above. In education, the genocide of Sinti and Roma is largely absent from history lessons and schoolbooks. The Anne Frank Stichting and the Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei were partners in three projects that tried to close this gap through a number of activities

and materials, such as the *Requiem for Auschwitz/International Conference* in 2012<sup>127</sup> and the digital exhibition *The Forgotten Genocide* on [www.romasinti.eu/nl](http://www.romasinti.eu/nl), which also contains teaching materials on the murder of Sinti and Roma during the Holocaust.

The Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre devotes attention to the horrors of the Porajmos in its permanent exhibition. In 2019, the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre strengthened the connection with the Sinti and Roma community through cooperation projects. Examples include the exhibition *Opgejaagd*, the preparation of a number of 'Westerbork portraits' on Sinti and Roma, and the joint organization of the national Sinti and Roma commemoration.

In 2012, the website [romasinti.eu](http://romasinti.eu) was launched.<sup>128</sup> Available in eight languages, it includes information on the Porajmos and portraits of Sinti and Roma who were persecuted. Also in 2012, the exhibition 'In Memoriam, de gedeporteerde en vermoorde Joodse, Roma en Sinti kinderen 1942-1945' [In Memoriam, the deported and murdered Jewish, Roma and Sinti children 1942-1945] was held in the Gemeenschappelijk Archief in Amsterdam. Other activities related to the history and genocide of the Sinti and Roma are also organized, such as memorial services, visits to concentration camps, a travelling photo exhibition, a bus tour on 4 May to draw attention to the Porajmos, radio broadcasts, and so on.

Thanks in part to the earlier mentioned grant scheme, a number of exhibitions on the genocide of the Sinti and the Roma have been set up in recent years. For example, the exhibition 'O Lungo Drom' has been held in various prominent places in the Netherlands.

The memory of Sinti and Roma who were deported is getting increasing attention in the Netherlands, as is shown by the growing number of monuments in cities. The Gypsy monument 'Hel en vuur', was unveiled on 25 November 1978 in Amsterdam. This is the world's first monument to the Roma and the Sinti. In the period between 1978 and 2012, several monuments for the Sinti community were unveiled. The monument 'De 102.000 stenen' at the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre memorializes Jews, Sinti and Roma. The Plaque of Names was unveiled in Den Bosch in 2019. The Holocaust Memorial of Names will be erected on the Weesperstraat in Amsterdam. It will be the first national memorial on which the names of all victims of the Holocaust and the Porajmos will be inscribed.

### 3.2 Remembrance of the persecution or genocide of other groups

This section deals with question 21 of the country-report questionnaire, Does your country associate remembrance of the persecution and/or genocide of other groups in the world in its Holocaust commemorative, educational or research activities? If this is done separately please explain which genocides, when and why.

The Netherlands has no specific national commemorations for other groups who fell victim to Nazism. The Dutch tradition of remembrance in relation to WWII and the Holocaust has found resonance in responding to and coping with other traumas.

<sup>127</sup> The conference was held in Amsterdam on 6 May 2012. The performances took place in Amsterdam, Berlin, Budapest, Frankfurt, Cracow, Prague and Tilburg in the period from May 2012 to January 2013. <http://www.requiemforauschwitz.eu/nl/index.html>

<sup>128</sup> <https://romasinti.eu/nl/>

Every year on 11 July, the genocide in Srebrenica is commemorated in front of the parliament in The Hague. Dutchbat, the Dutch detachment in UNPROFOR, was ultimately unable to prevent the fall of the Srebrenica enclave and the subsequent murder of the Muslim men from the enclave. Remembrance of the Armenian genocide is another example. In Almelo and Assen, the Armenian community in the Netherlands commemorates the trauma, and the Dutch government is represented at the commemoration in Yerevan.

In the years since 2010 there has been an increasing plea for the remembrance and critical assessment of transatlantic slavery, with an eye towards the role that the Dutch played in these human-rights violations.

## 4 Future work

### 4.1 Awareness of the IHRA in the Netherlands

This section deals with question 22 of the country-report questionnaire, Based on your own assessment, how well- known is the IHRA in your country, in particular within politics, academia and civil society? How could IHRA's reputation, visibility and effectiveness be enhanced among its target groups?

The IHRA is not widely known in the Netherlands. Its output and its impact on Dutch policy are nevertheless undeniable. The Dutch delegation is working on improving the visibility of IHRA's work in the Dutch professional world. IHRA is only well known in the Netherlands to a circle of experts and others who are directly involved with it. Awareness will increase somewhat through the translation and dissemination of the IHRA's various definitions and guidelines. At the time of writing, the working definition of Holocaust denial and distortion and the recommendations for education about the Holocaust are being translated into Dutch. Platform WO2 and the Netherlands delegation to the IHRA are working on a strategy for disseminating these recommendations.

Since 2016, the Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei has published an overview of IHRA plenary meetings on its website. Each issue of the Committee's semi-annual publication, NC Magazine, contains an article on the IHRA and on IHRA-related issues, such as the Holocaust in Italy, the Holocaust in Switzerland, and the Holocaust archives.<sup>129</sup>

### 4.2 Awareness of the IHRA among civil-society organizations

This section deals with question 23 of the country-report questionnaire, Which are the main relevant Civil Society Organizations in your country? Do they each relate to or keep involved with the work of IHRA?

The most important Dutch relevant civil-society organizations when it comes to war victims and victims of the Holocaust, are the Anne Frank Stichting, JCK, the Kamp Westerbork Memorial Centre (and Landelijk Steunpunt Gast sprekers WOII-Heden) the Nederlands Auschwitz Comité, the Center for Information and Documentation Israel (CIDI), and the Stichting Sobibor. These organizations know IHRA well, either thanks to the membership of the Dutch delegation or because they have relationships with individual members. How much Sinti and Roma organizations in the Netherlands know about the IHRA is not clear.

Organizations active in the field of antidiscrimination include the Contactorgaan Moslims en Overheid (CMO), the Centraal Joods Overleg (CJO), Forum, the Intercultural Alliance, the Stichting Inspraakorgaan Turken in Nederland (IOT) and the Samenwerkingsverband Marokkaanse Nederlanders (SMN). How much these organizations know about the IHRA has not been investigated, but the expectation is that it is not that much.

<sup>129</sup> NC Magazine, issues 7-1 (2018); 6-1 and 6-2 (2017); and 5-1 and 5-2 (2016).

### 4.3 Focus on other areas

This section deals with question 24 of the country-report questionnaire, On what other areas would you like IHRA to focus? What might be future priority themes?

The Dutch delegation appreciates the half-yearly IHRA plenary sessions as a meeting place for government representatives and experts. The members of the delegation use the plenary sessions to get ideas and see where initiatives that come from the Netherlands can link up with ideas and plans from other IHRA member states. In this country report, the delegation would like to identify three topics on which the IHRA might work in the near future.

The Netherlands delegation would first like to repeat a plea it made during the plenary in December 2019. There seems to be a broad interest within the IHRA community in learning about national traditions and approaches to commemoration and remembrance. During the meeting of the Museums and Memorials Working Group at the Luxembourg plenary in December 2019, there was a call for the development and implementation of a survey of national commemoration and remembrance traditions that would also address ideas about the future of such activities. The Netherlands supports that call.

Second, the Netherlands delegation would like to discuss with the IHRA community how to deal with the shift in the approach to education around the Holocaust. Now that eyewitnesses are slowly but surely leaving us, and memory is definitively making way for remembrance, the Dutch delegation thinks it is relevant to discuss the future of formal education on the Holocaust. By way of giving some structure to these ideas, here are three scenarios:

- Scenario 1: Learning about the Holocaust.  
This is about putting the Holocaust in historical context. An overwhelming majority of teachers – between 80 and 85% – from several IHRA member states say they do not know enough on this score, and are reticent about following this scenario. The Recommendations for Teaching and Learning about the Holocaust can help increase knowledge and eliminate this reticence.
- Scenario 2: Learning from the Holocaust.  
This is about learning from the experiences of the Holocaust as part of civic education. The historical complexity of the Holocaust is no longer discussed intensively in this scenario.
- Scenario 3: Learning by means of the Holocaust.  
This is the so-called mediatization of the Holocaust. For many young people, online media and films are the most important sources of knowledge about WWII and the Holocaust. The problem is that films such as “Oorlogswinter” and “The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas” creatively interpret historical facts about the Holocaust and sometimes even present a false equivalence between victims and perpetrators.

Third, the Netherlands IHRA delegation is aware of the differences in perceptions of the Holocaust in the various Member States. The horrors of the Holocaust are unprecedented and unique in world history, and comparisons with other events are not appropriate. That said the Netherlands attaches importance to the recognition that before, during and after the Nazi regime, other regimes and movements also

egregiously mistreated people in areas they controlled. The Netherlands delegation takes the view that it is important to acknowledge specifically the intense feelings of fear, insecurity, frustration and anger, as well as the need for reparations. Based on this conviction, the Netherlands delegation supports the IHRA's entry into a relationship with GAAMAC, Global Action against Mass Atrocities.

#### 4.4 Membership of the IHRA

This section deals with questions 25 and 26 of the country-report questionnaire, From your national perspective, how can the IHRA use its understanding of the Holocaust to promote practical measures to prevent future genocides and heal societies that have experienced genocides? and Does your government think it is getting value for money for its subscription to and membership of IHRA? If not why not? What would you change?

The Dutch government was one of the original signatories to the Stockholm Declaration in 2000, and it will continue to subscribe to its principles. The Netherlands is more than satisfied with what the IHRA is achieving in discussions of various kinds between government representatives and experts in various fields and disciplines. The global nature of WWII and the Holocaust requires international, cross-border cooperation to bring a global approach to questions about education on, research into, and remembrance of the Holocaust, and to facilitate reflection on the effectiveness of that approach. The Netherlands has complete confidence that the current process of strategic and organizational reflection and reorientation will lead to better results in the coordinated fight against antisemitism and Holocaust denial and distortion. To this end, the Netherlands participates in the debates within IHRA with a varied delegation that not only asks critical questions, but also presents guidelines, programmes and policy from the Dutch work field as examples. The exchange with colleagues from all over the world is all the value the Netherlands delegation has been looking for and has found within IHRA.

Remembrance of the Holocaust, conducting research on it, and teaching about it, in addition to fighting antisemitism, require professional expertise and international cooperation in order to ensure an effective approach. The IHRA has shown itself to be up to that task, and the Netherlands will continue to contribute in every possible way to achieving the IHRA's goals. **A world that remembers the Holocaust. A world without Genocide!**