



WRR

SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL FOR GOVERNMENT POLICY



*Insight into
the future
as a basis
for policy
today*



Insight into the future as a basis for policy today

What will the welfare state look like in the future? How will the Netherlands make its living in the future? How can the responsibility of citizens, companies and institutions for physical safety be further stimulated? What does the future have in store for Islam as a political force in the Netherlands and in Europe? How can public interests be safeguarded in tomorrow's society? What place does the Netherlands occupy in the new European Union? These are all examples of national and international issues tackled by the Scientific Council for Government Policy: the WRR. The WRR is an independent advisory body for the government, which has a unique position within the Dutch knowledge and advice structure. This is due to a combination of characteristics: it is independent, scientific, multi-disciplinary, engaged with policy and society, multi-sectoral and focused on the future. In addition, the Council is a working council, which means that the members of the Council conduct research and write reports themselves. They are aided by a scientific staff. This brochure describes in brief the task and function of the WRR, its working methods and organization.

The heart of government at the Hofvijver (Royal lake) in The Hague



Task and function of the WRR

The aim of the WRR is to advise the government about future developments of great public interest using a scientific approach. The government can use these advisory opinions in order to readjust existing policy, or to develop new policy or as support for decision making. The Council also tries to stimulate scientific debate. On the basis of scientific knowledge, all kinds of preconceived assumptions are subject to discussion, possible alternative policies are analysed, and solutions with an eye to future developments are presented. In this way, the WRR forms a bridge between scientific expertise and policy.

TASK

The WRR advises the government – sometimes at the government’s request, but sometimes unasked – on issues facing society which are or could be the subject of government policy. In principle, the Council is free to study any issue the government deals with, or should deal with. The government may also ask the Council for an advisory opinion on a subject.

Among other things, it is the task of the Council to:

- present new perspectives and long-term directions for solutions,
- indicate conflicts and contradictions in government policy,
- flag future bottlenecks,
- recognize new problems, and
- make proposals for integrated strategies for problems.



The Council at work



The WRR building on the Lange Vijverberg

A characteristic feature of the Council's work is that issues nearly always involve several policy fields (it is multi-sectoral) and are approached from different disciplines (it is multi-disciplinary). At the same time, the Council remains independent. In its work, the WRR takes no account of political wishes and policy directions or public opinion at any particular moment in time. The WRR tries to approach its work as objectively as possible.

On the basis of scientific knowledge and analysis, long-term solutions are sketched. The advisory opinions are public, are published in print, and may be consulted in their entirety on the WRR website (www.wrr.nl). The government is obliged to respond to an advisory opinion, saying what it is doing or intends to do. In this respect, the position of the WRR as a government think-tank is unique in Europe. The advisory opinions and government responses often form the subject of debate in Parliament.

SCIENCE SERVING SOCIETY

The Council's activities are often on the borderline between science and (government) policy. The research is no different in nature or approach from purely scientific work. The Council formulates a problem statement, collects information as objectively as possible, analyses problems as well as the solutions which have been opted for thus far, proposes alternatives and offers possibilities for taking action in the form of recommendations. The knowledge which is acquired will be widely disseminated, so as to be of advantage more widely than just for the government. One of the tasks of the WRR is to accept joint responsibility – from a scientific background – to put social questions on the agenda, and to analyse them. The government is responsible for making the final policy choices.

TOPICALITY VERSUS LONG TERM

Although the WRR takes recent events into account, it is the examination of future developments in society which forms the main task. Insight into these developments forms the basis for today's policy. The government can learn from this knowledge, and can see whether the insights in the long term have consequences for today's policy. The Council must therefore ensure that knowledge of the long term

effects of a certain development is present at the time the government takes a decision.

The decisions taken are ones which will determine the picture of the Netherlands for years – for instance in relation to safety and security, education, the welfare state and the multi-cultural society. The government can only take a balanced decision if it has insight into future opportunities and threats. The WRR provides this insight.

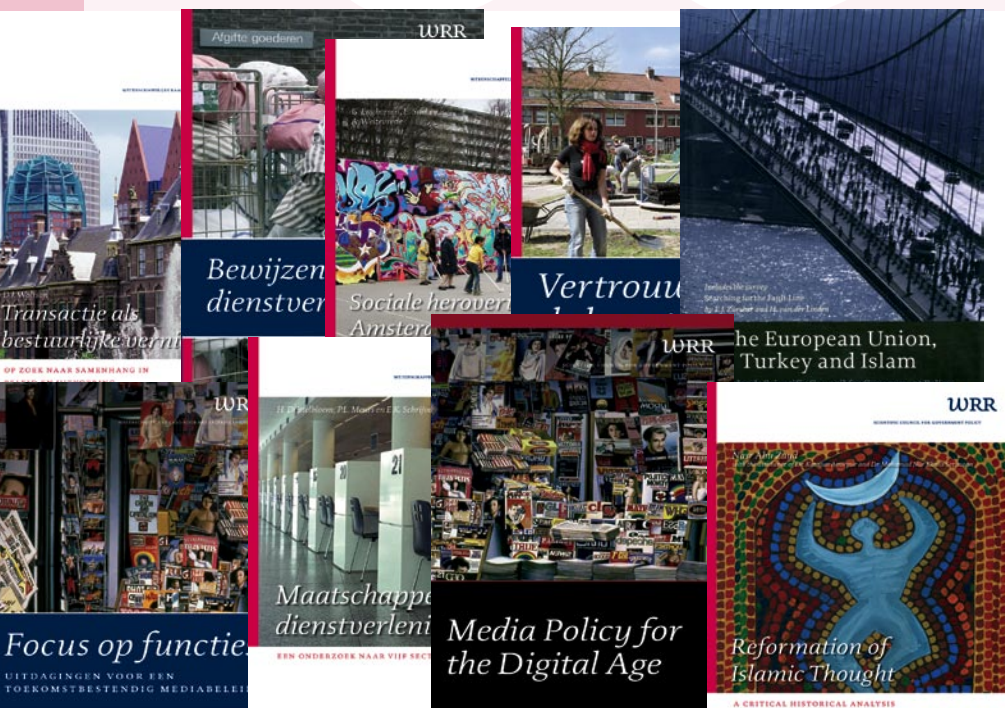
ROLE IN POLITICAL-ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION-MAKING

The work of the WRR provides knowledge and insight into future developments for the benefit of government policy. The reports to the government, as the advisory opinions are called, usually concern developments over a period of 10 to 20 years. They reach beyond the borders of a term of office of one single cabinet.

The direct influence of a WRR advisory opinion on policy is hard to measure. It is stipulated by law that the government must give a public response to reports of the WRR, which ensures that governments cannot simply disregard the reports, or set them aside without reading them. In this way, the reports play an important role in political-administrative decision making and policy formation.

The WRR advisory opinions influence the debate on social issues as a result of the fact that they are published, are presented in the media, and also because of active dissemination through congresses and symposia. In addition, they influence discussion in scientific and academic circles.

Other publications of the WRR, such as the surveys, can also influence the political agenda or give direction to debates in society as a result of their chosen approach.



Work programme

Every Council is appointed for a period of five years. At the start of a council period, the Council produces independently, after consultation with the prime minister, a work programme. This is the most important guarantee of the independent position of the Council. The programme can be modified during the council period. Subjects can be added if new ideas or insights emerge. In practice, the Council evaluates its work programme halfway through its term, and makes changes where necessary. The government can also ask the Council for advice on a particular subject; normally such requests are for research on policy fields that concern several departments. One example of this is the research on norms and values,¹ a topic which was spearheaded by the Balkenende Government.

The Council itself decides which subjects are included in the work programme. The Council does not usually focus on sub-problems or small-scale social issues, but examines social developments in a broader perspective. The work programme is more or less a reflection of the social developments within the Netherlands and beyond. The Council reports to the government directly, via the prime minister. At the end of the Council's term of office, account is given of the way the WRR has fulfilled its legal obligations.

DETERMINING THE SUBJECTS

It is quite impossible for the Council to even think of examining every single social development. There are clear criteria for the choice of subject:

- the subject should be of importance to long-term government policy.
- the subject should concern a current or future socially relevant problem.
- the subject should be challenging and should be suitable for scientific research.
- the subject should be within the sphere of government policy, or should come within that sphere in the future.
- the subject should be directed at the future.
- the subject should concern several sectors of government policy, it should be possible to approach it in different ways, and it should allow for suggestions for taking action.

Even applying these criteria, the Council is unable to address all the subjects that cross its path. Choices have to be made. In its programme, the Council gives reasons for its decisions.

¹ *Values, norms and norm-transgressing behaviour*, WRR-report 68 (2003)

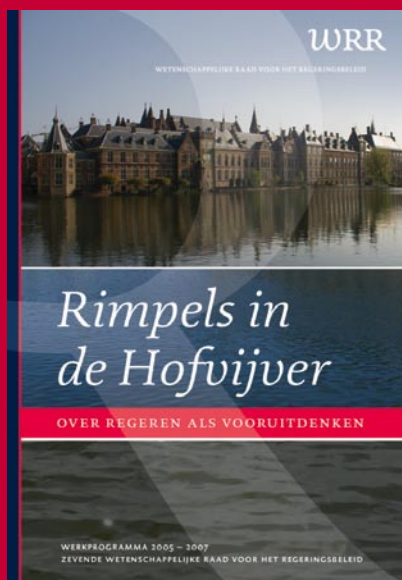
The subjects for 2005-2007

The new subjects on which the Council wishes to carry out research in the second half of the 7th council period will include at least:

- Climate policy
- The welfare state
- Safety
- The learning government
- Religion/Ideological beliefs and the public domain
- Searching for identities
- Infrastructure

In addition, publication of three reports is to be expected, resulting from investigations carried out by the Council in the first half of this council period:

- Labour market dynamics
- Youth
- Islamic activism



Subjects still under study, and whose place on the agenda is partly dependent on the available time and resources, are (these are working titles):

- The national interest of the Netherlands in the European Union
- Position and future of the Dutch Economy

WORKING METHODS

Every investigation is approached scientifically; and due to the nature of the WRR, there is always a component covering social aspects. For every subject of the work programme, an internal team is formed composed of members of the Council and the scientific staff of the WRR. The chairman will be a member of the Council and the team coordinator will be a member of the scientific staff. All team members will work on the content of the report. Until recently, the Council mainly produced reports containing research results and policy recommendations. More and more other ways are being used for disseminating knowledge and contributing to debate in society. The various working methods are described briefly below.

REPORTS - CORE TASK OF THE WRR

The core task of the WRR is, and will remain, producing reports for the government based on scientific research. All reports are supported by the Council, which is collectively responsible for the content. Each report is produced by a project team, which is assembled for a particular subject or theme. Written drafts are discussed extensively within



Mayor of Rotterdam, Ivo Opstelten, at the presentation of the report *Trust in the Neighbourhood*.

the project team, as well as being discussed by the staff and the Council. The Council meets once every two weeks and discusses the progress of projects, but more importantly it also discusses the content. In this way, the subjects are approached from different disciplines and, after many discussions and repeated redrafting of the texts, a report emerges that reflects the opinion of the entire Council. A report is only published once the Council has reached consensus on its content. In theory, a minority viewpoint could also be included in the advisory opinion, but this seldom occurs.

NETWORKS AT HOME AND ABROAD

The Netherlands is certainly not an isolated case when it comes to either knowledge or policy. Developments observed in the Netherlands can be seen elsewhere too. Dutch policy and Dutch views on policy are influenced by what happens abroad, and vice versa. In this context, European organizations play an increasing role. The influence of the European Union on domestic policy is growing, but in addition the Netherlands must also start policy initiatives as part of the Union. Because of the internationalization of policy, research increasingly touches upon developments abroad, both directly and indirectly. The WRR increasingly seeks more contact and cooperation with foreign scientific, administrative and social institutions and think tanks. In fact, there is no exact institutional equivalent to the WRR in other countries, although this would be desirable for the development of future-oriented European policy. One of the challenges for the WRR is to cooperate at a scientific level with other strategic knowledge centres across Europe.

But attention is also paid to cooperation with knowledge centres throughout the Netherlands itself. This can be achieved by involving reputed Dutch and foreign scientists in research, or by temporarily appointing them as members of the scientific staff or even the Council. This 'hiring' of expertise has a dual aim:

- bringing in the knowledge and skill of external experts into the Council, and
- stimulating future-oriented and policy-oriented scientific research outside the Council.

The WRR aims to evolve from a national strategic scientific advisory board towards a hub for international policy-related knowledge flows. The Council has built up a network of contacts including not only universities and scientific institutions at home and abroad, but also including business circles, political and social organizations.

DIALOGUE WITH SOCIETY

The Council wishes to engage in dialogue with politicians, policy makers and social organizations, and to include their experiences with various subject matters in further research. For that reason, there is an increasing tendency to organize workshops, expert meetings and conferences before actual research is started. The Council finds it important to make the knowledge which is gathered available for policy, science, social organizations and the interested public. In order to stimulate the debate, the Council makes the results of its research public. This is done by organizing symposia, publishing concise advisory opinions or surveys based on the knowledge acquired, or by stimulating an exchange of ideas between policy makers, scientists and representatives of social organizations.

Such exchanges of ideas concern the recommendations and the manner in which these recommendations have been arrived at. This way, the Council gets a better idea of whether the advisory opinions are convincing enough, and how the link with practice can be streamlined. These activities of the Council also improve the chances that conclusions and insights find their way into policy making.

REACTING TO THE CURRENT SITUATION

In modern society, many of today's problems have long term effects. Problems relating to the economic structure of the Netherlands, the system of health care, and administrative aspects of citizens' demand for safety come to mind. Usually when addressing a new subject, the Council chooses for a period of in-depth research before producing a report. Advisory opinions can be produced by the Council fairly quickly on the basis of available knowledge and earlier studies if the subject allows for this and the current situation so requires. Sometimes, in the framework of a more extensive study, it is possible to publish separate advisory opinions on certain delimited parts of the study at an earlier

stage. Due to its independent position and multidisciplinary character, the Council can often provide a new and refreshing view on policy themes.



Symposium in the old chamber of the Lower House of Parliament



Discussion meeting “Hollands Spoor”

FUNCTION AS BROAD FORUM

The Council strives to share the knowledge which it has acquired with more people, by means of symposia, short-term advisory opinions and independent surveys. This makes it possible to give more depth to the debate at the crossroads of science and policy, without there necessarily being a report stating a common position of the Council.

The surveys *The State of Democracy*, *Democracy Beyond the State* (2004) and *The Netherlands and the European Constitution* (2003) are examples of separate publications on current affairs bundling opinions and contributions from within and outside the WRR. The survey *Twenty-five Years Later; the Survey of the Future 1977 as Learning Process* is another example of combined work.



Prime minister Balkenende speaking at a WRR symposium

Organization

The WRR occupies a special position within the system of advisory bodies. This position is regulated by a separate Act of Parliament. The WRR was established provisionally by the government in 1972. The Act of Parliament of 30th of June 1976 laid down definite arrangements for the position of the Council (see appendix). Because of its special position, the WRR does not belong to the category of advisory bodies under the framework legislation on advisory bodies dating from 1997. This is due to the complete independence of the Council and its advice on long-term multi-sectoral developments.

MEMBERS

The Council consists of a minimum of five and a maximum of eleven members, including the chairman. Currently (2006) the Council has eight members. The chairmanship is a full-time position, the other members are appointed for a minimum of two, often three days a week. Due to its nature, the Council takes joint decisions. The chairman as *primus inter pares* takes special responsibility for the activities of the Council. He does this in cooperation with the management. The director and deputy director of the WRR are also secretary, respectively deputy secretary of the Council.

The Council is a working council. The Council members actively carry out research; moreover, in their function as chairman of a team they carry responsibility for that team's research – which will eventually lead to an advisory report of the Council. In this, the Council differs from many other advisory bodies whose members merely take decisions on research performed by the scientific staff, on the basis of their generally acquired expertise.

The 7th Council





Prof. Leigh Hancher, member of the 7th Council

The members are appointed by Royal Decree for a maximum of five years, on the basis of their scientific expertise. The appointment follows a proposal by the prime minister, after consultation with the cabinet. They may be reappointed once, carrying on after a first appointment. Members are expected to be able to make independent judgements.

Several points are taken into account for the composition of the Council:

- the scientific qualities of the members;
- the distribution over the various scientific disciplines;
- a broad social orientation.

Excellent scientific qualities alone are not enough to make someone suitable to become a member. The members of Council must also be interested in policy issues, and must be familiar with the political hub in The Hague. The scientific requirement implies an academic background. As a rule, the members of the Council also work as university professors, and are acknowledged experts in their respective fields. In special cases, it is also possible to allow someone to participate in the Council as a 'guest of the Council', due to his exceptional qualities. In this way it is possible temporarily to provide specific scientific expertise on a particular issue or subject the Council wishes to investigate.

ADVISORY MEMBERS

The Council has a number of advisory members, viz. the directors of important government policy analysis offices:

- The Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis (Centraal Plan Bureau, CPB). This office provides scientific, independent economic analyses relevant to policy making in the Netherlands.
- The Social and Cultural Planning Office (Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau, SCP). This office analyses expected developments in the social and cultural field in the Netherlands, with the purpose of contributing to well-founded decisions as well as developing alternatives in this area.
- The Institute for Spatial Research (Ruimtelijk Planbureau, RPB). This office systematically explores current and future spatial developments; it flags new issues, and puts them on the agenda.
- The Environmental Assessment Agency (Milieu en Natuur Planbureau, MNP). Tasks include recommendations and research on the development of public health and the system of health care, the effects of nutrition and other consumer products on health, and

environmental and nature issues.

- Statistics Netherlands (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek, CBS). The core task of this office is the collecting, processing and publishing of statistics for practice, policy and science.

The advisory members meet with the Council a couple of times every year, among other things to coordinate activities and to comment on research. Of course the WRR remains responsible for the final result of its own activities.

THE SCIENTIFIC STAFF

The members of Council are assisted in their activities by a scientific staff. The scientific staff is – like the Council itself – composed on a multidisciplinary basis, and includes the following disciplines: economics/econometrics, social and political sciences, law, and the natural sciences. The scientific employees are senior in their fields, and many of them have doctorates. They should also have a broad scientific interest. A number of the scientific staff are also linked to a university. Thus, a close link remains between the WRR and scientific research at the universities.

There is a growing trend of temporary appointments of scientific staff on a project basis, so as to enhance the flow in relation to scientific networks. Highly qualified academic staff may be appointed to the WRR as guest research worker for certain subjects or issues. Recent graduates can be appointed on a project basis, to a limited extent, in order to provide support for the Council.

The scientific staff together with the supporting staff form the office of the WRR. The office management is in the hands of the director and deputy director (who are also secretary and deputy secretary of the Council); together with the programme manager, the location manager and the communications advisor, they form the management team. The WRR has a library, with information staff for the support of scientific projects. There is additional support in the form of a secretariat and administrative employees.



Council meeting



Staff meeting

EXTERNAL CONTACTS

The effects of the Council's work are greatest when it attracts a great deal of attention from political circles and in society, and a political debate gets off the ground. This can be achieved by publishing results and maintaining contact with various groups in society. The Council makes sure it is informed about the various questions arising in ministries, in politics and in society.

The chairman of the Council is in contact with the prime minister from time to time. Sometimes, a delegation from or a subcommittee of the council of ministers meets with a delegation from the WRR about a specific project; sometimes consultation with a minister or state secretary (a junior minister) takes place. Meetings with members of parliament occur regularly, for example about the work programme. Sometimes an extended committee convenes to discuss a report from the Council.

Besides the more politically oriented contacts, the Council maintains relations with different government departments, social and scientific institutions, and advisory bodies at home and abroad. These are sometimes general contacts, and sometimes contacts in the scope of particular projects. The contacts with politicians and policy-makers have intensified over the last couple of years. The Council wants to be optimally informed about current developments in policy making and ideas related to it. A special category of contacts comprises those with the various other advisory bodies and offices of policy analysis.

PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATION

Communication with the outside world takes place in several ways:

- The official advisory opinions of the Council are published as 'reports to the government' and form the heart of the Council's work. These reports find their way to the relevant ministers via the prime minister. The government is required to give an official reaction to the work of the WRR. After the cabinet has been acquainted with the report, the WRR brings it in the public domain. Parliament, interest groups, scientific and social organizations are sent a copy. If the subject is appropriate, the report is translated into English – either entirely, or in abridged form – and sometimes also

in other languages; examples are the report on media policy fit for the future,² and the report on values and norms.³

PREDICTING THE FUTURE

In the past, the WRR took on large-scale, all-embracing predictions for the future of society, as in the 1977 report: *The Next 25 Years, Exploring the Future*. The experience was that this type of all-embracing prediction only has a relative value. A recent evaluation of this report in *Twenty-five Years Later; the Survey of The Future 1977 as Learning Process* (V5, 2004) shows that a lot of the predictions turned out to be true, but at the same time a lot did not. For instance: the predictions on the economy turned out to be true. Other predictions, though, partly due to the altered world picture, were not realized.

For instance, nobody foresaw the collapse of communism and its consequences. It should be clear that the importance of these large-scale, far-reaching, general predictions of the future is limited. The WRR now increasingly aims for surveys on possible social developments and issues that will occur in the coming ten to fifteen years. Their purpose is to prevent possible problems from occurring - and not for predictions to prove true.



- Studies on limited aspects and research which provide the foundation for a report and which are commissioned by the Council, may be published as WRR surveys if the Council considers it important that a broad public is informed of their content. The Council guarantees the quality of the study, but does not take responsibility for the content and points of view therein; these are the responsibility of the authors. Working documents and pre-studies, which were previously published separately, have been published in this series since the start of the term of the seventh Council.

EUROPE, TURKEY AND THE ISLAM

A report that has clearly proved its usefulness is: *Europe, Turkey and the Islam* (2004). The report was published before the EU took a decision on the possible accession of Turkey to the Union. The report was also presented to the European Commission. The Council concluded in this report that the fact that most Turks are Muslim, is not an obstacle to Turkish accession.

All WRR publications are downloadable in pdf format from the website www.wrr.nl. Publications may also be ordered via the WRR website. Highly specific studies and research, which are only rele-

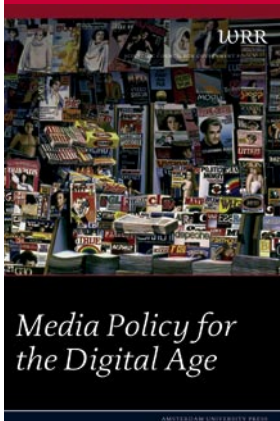
² *Media policy for the digital age*. A summary of WRR-report 71 (2005)

³ *Do unto others...* A summary of WRR-report 68 (2003)

vant for a very select audience due their specificity, are published as web-publications and can usually also be ordered in print.

MEDIA POLICY FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

The media landscape is constantly changing. Hilversum (the Dutch centre of radio and television broadcasting) and the national press no longer control



the general picture. Commercial radio and television, the internet and various technological development, such as cable-television or television over the phone line have had a profound impact. The increasing influence of European legislation in this area has restricted the room for manoeuvre of the Dutch government. In this report, the WRR advises the government radically to change its policy view of the media landscape. The government should develop a view which focuses on the functions of the media landscape.

- The dialogue with policy makers comes about in different ways. In the series of debates entitled *Hollands Spoor* (the Dutch track – also the name of one of the railway stations in the Hague), which is organized in collaboration with the *Strategieeraad Rijksbreed* (strategic council nationwide), discussions take place on current events between senior policy-makers and scientific and academic specialists. In addition, respected specialists from the Netherlands and abroad are frequently invited to exchange ideas with the WRR and its staff. The relevant policy-makers are also involved in these internal conferences.

VALUES, NORMS AND NORM-TRANSGRESSING BEHAVIOUR



The central question in this report, which was drawn up at the request of the government, is: which fundamental values can bring cohesion to our society and which values can lead to conflicts, partly in the light of cultural differences. This report makes a thorough analysis of the very diverse problems that are covered by the label 'values and norms'. The behavioural component of the problems concerning values and norms are examined separately. An attempt is made to find a future perspective for the central and common values that are of importance to the society as a whole in the coming ten to twenty years.

- The WRR also initiates discussions on current social issues which it is examining, and it actively participates in current social debate on these issues. To feed this debate and disseminate the knowledge acquired, conferences, workshops and fora are organized regularly – also in cooperation with other groups.

PROOFS OF GOOD SERVICE PROVISION

Professionals, managers, clients and the government do not cooperate well in social services. This leads to problems for services in the fields of education, healthcare, welfare, housing and labour. This is partly because the political and scientific debate is dominated by a one-sided approach. The WRR therefore advises the government to take a different approach. A better insight is to be gained into the problems in these sectors by making a distinction between the institutional logic, the supply logic and the demand logic of public services.



- A special form of the WRR’s “forum function” is the WRR lecture, in which well-known Dutch or international speakers are invited to share their view on current issues from a policy and science perspective. The goal is to shed light on an issue by debate between a scientific expert and a politician or a manager, each from his or her own point of view. The subject is nearly always linked with one of the projects.
- The site <http://www.wrr.nl/> contains information on the WRR in Dutch and English. Not only information on the organization and the activities of the members of the Council and the staff, but also all publications and government reactions can be downloaded from the website. In addition, discussion papers are available from the website. These are articles by members of the Council and staff, and also, for example, papers written as a result of conferences or workshops. Those interested may subscribe to a newsletter which appears a couple of times every year.
- Members of the Council and staff regularly write articles for newspapers and academic and scientific journals, or are invited to give lectures or to give their opinion on television.

Act of Establishment WRR

(Stb. 413, 5 August 1976; most recently amended on December 11, 1997)

ACT of 30 June 1976 Establishing a Scientific Council for Government Policy

We, Juliana, by the Grace of God, Queen of the Netherlands, Princess of Orange Nassau, etc., etc., etc.

To all and singular to whom these presents shall come, Greeting! Whereas We have considered that for the shaping of Government policy it is desirable that information on developments which may affect society in the long term be supplied systematically, that the establishment of a permanent body giving advice and assistance to replace the Provisional Scientific Council for Government Policy may contribute to that end:

We, therefore, having heard the Council of State, and in consultation with the States General, have approved and decreed as We hereby approve and decree:

Article 1

- 1 There shall be a Scientific Council for Government Policy, hereinafter referred to as 'the Council'.
- 2 The Council will not be considered an advisory council as meant in the Advisory Councils Act.

Article 2

The Council shall:

- 1 supply for Government Policy scientifically sound information on developments which may affect society in the long term and draw timely attention to anomalies and bottlenecks to be anticipated;
- 2 provide a scientific structure which the Government could use when establishing priorities and which would ensure that a consistent policy is pursued;
- 3 with respect to studies undertaken in the sphere of research on future developments and long-term planning in both public and private sectors, make recommendations on the elimination of structural inadequacies, the furtherance of specific studies and the improvement of communication and co-ordination.

Article 3

- 1 The Council shall comprise at least five and at most eleven members.
- 2 We shall appoint the Chairman and the other members of the Council on the recommendation of Our Prime Minister/Minister for General Affairs, made in accordance with the consensus of the Council of Ministers.
- 3 The Chairman and other members shall be appointed for five years, except in the event of earlier discharge by Us. They shall be immediately re-eligible for appointment for one subsequent term.
- 4 A person appointed to fill an interim vacancy shall resign on the date on which the person he was appointed to replace would have had to resign.

Article 4

- 1 The post of Chairman of the Council shall be a full-time function.
- 2 The other members of the Council shall make available for Council work at least two working-days a week of their total working-hours.
- 3 In exceptional cases the Prime Minister/Minister for General Affairs may stipulate that the working-hours made available to the Council under the preceding paragraph be decreased.

Article 5

The legal status of the Chairman and of the other members shall be laid down by General Administrative Order.

Article 6

- 1 There shall be advisory members.
- 2 The Council may make recommendations to Our Prime Minister/Minister for General Affairs in the matter of the appointment of advisory members.
- 3 We shall appoint the advisory members of the Council on the recommendation of Our Prime Minister/Minister for General Affairs, made in accordance with the consensus of the Council of Ministers.

Article 7

- 1 The Council shall have an office headed by a Secretary to assist it.
- 2 We shall appoint the Council's Secretary on the recommendation of Our Prime Minister/ Minister for General Affairs.

Article 7a

- 1 The Council will draw up its programme of work after having consulted Our Prime Minister/ Minister for General Affairs.
- 2 The Council may change its programme of work after having consulted Our Prime Minister/ Minister for General Affairs.
- 3 For the consultations referred to in the first and second paragraph Our Prime Minister/ Minister for General Affairs will hear the Council of Ministers.

Article 8

- 1 The Council shall, in discharging its duties, avail itself of the results of research undertaken by other institutions.
- 2 General Government departments and institutions, and local authorities shall supply the Council with such information as it requires.
- 3 The Council may apply direct to other institutions or persons for information.
- 4 Our Ministers shall ensure that the Council, if the discharge of its duties so requires, be informed in time of any research on future developments and of the results of such research undertaken under their responsibility, as also of any assumptions and intentions as regards long-term policy.

Article 9

- 1 The Council may consult directly with experts from the public and private sectors.
- 2 The Council may set up committees. It shall require the approval of such of Our Ministers as may be involved for any assistance given by experts from the public sector.
- 3 The Council may maintain direct international contacts in its own particular sphere.

Article 10

The Council may, on its own initiative, request that certain studies or research projects be undertaken. This shall be done through the intermediary of such of Our Ministers as may be involved where departments or institutions working under them are concerned.

Article 12

- 1 The Council shall report to the Government through the intermediary of Our Prime Minister/ Minister for General Affairs.
- 2 Our Prime Minister/Minister for General Affairs shall inform the Council of the findings of the Council of Ministers with respect to such reports.
- 3 The Council of Ministers shall hear the Council, if it so requests, in connection with the findings referred to in the preceding paragraph.

Article 13

- 1 The reports submitted to the Government by the Council shall be public, in so far as secrecy shall not have to be observed.
- 2 The Council shall publish the reports after the Council of Ministers has studied them.

Article 14

The Council may issue further rules for its procedure.

Article 16

This Act may be cited as the Scientific Council for Government Policy (Establishment) Act.

Publications

REPORTS TO THE GOVERNMENT

* Translation or summary available in English on www.wrr.nl

FIRST TERM OF OFFICE (1972 – 1977)

- 1 Europese Unie
- 2 Structuur van de Nederlandse economie
- 3 Energiebeleid (1,2 en 3 gebundeld in één publicatie (1974)
- 4 Milieubeleid (1974)
- 5 Bevolkingsgroei (1974)
- 6 De organisatie van het openbaar bestuur (1975)
- 7 Buitenlandse invloeden op Nederland: Internationale migratie (1976)
- 8 Buitenlandse invloeden op Nederland: Beschikbaarheid van wetenschappelijke en technische kennis (1976)
- 9 Commentaar op de Discussienota Sectorraden (1976)
- 10 Commentaar op de nota Contouren van een toekomstig onderwijsbestel (1976)
- 11 Overzicht externe adviesorganen van de centrale overheid (1976)
- 12 Externe adviesorganen van de centrale overheid (1976)
- 13 Maken wij er werk van? Verkenningen omtrent de verhouding tussen actieven en niet-actieven (1977)*
- 14 Interne adviesorganen van de centrale overheid (1977)
- 15 De komende vijftienvijf jaar – Een toekomstverkenning voor Nederland (1977)*
- 16 Over sociale ongelijkheid – Een beleidsgerichte probleemverkenning (1977)*

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 - a. Rapport aan de Regering
 - b. Naar een algemeen etnisch minderhedenbeleid?
- 18 Plaats en toekomst van de Nederlandse industrie (1980)*
- 19 Beleidsgerichte toekomstverkenning*
 - Deel 1: Een poging tot uitlokking (1980)
- 20 Democratie en geweld. Probleemanalyse naar aanleiding van de gebeurtenissen in Amsterdam op 30 april 1980*
- 21 Vernieuwingen in het arbeidsbestel (1981)
- 22 Herwaardering van welzijnsbeleid (1982)
- 23 Onder invloed van Duitsland. Een onderzoek naar gevoeligheid en kwetsbaarheid in de betrekkingen tussen Nederland en de Bondsrepubliek (1982)
- 24 Samenhangend mediabeleid (1982)

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- 29 Ruimte voor groei. Kansen en bedreigingen voor de Nederlandse economie in de komende tien jaar (1987)*
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 - Deel 1: Rapport aan de Regering;
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- 39 Technologie en overheid (1990)
- 40 De onderwijsverzorging in de toekomst (1991)
- 41 Milieubeleid. Strategie, instrumenten en handhaafbaarheid (1992)*
- 42 Grond voor keuzen. Vier perspectieven voor de landelijke gebieden in de Europese Gemeenschap (1992)*
- 43 Ouderen voor ouderen. Demografische ontwikkelingen en beleid (1993)

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- 45 Belang en beleid. Naar een verantwoorde uitvoering van de werknemersverzekeringen (1994)
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- 50 Tweedeling in perspectief (1996)*
- 51 Van verdelen naar verdienen. Afwegingen voor de sociale zekerheid in de 21e eeuw (1997)*
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- 56 Het borgen van publiek belang (2000)
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- 61 Van oude en nieuwe kennis. De gevolgen van ict voor het kennisbeleid (2002)
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Report 23 has been translated into German. Of Report no. 42 a German and a Spanish summary is available, as well as a full French translation. Summaries of Report 73 are available in English, French and Arabic.

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