



The Netherlands
united by Sport



The National Sports Agreement





**The National
Sports
Agreement**
Sport unites
the Netherlands



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Why?

Sport unites

More than 9.4 million Dutch people engage in sport every week. While one person may have a subscription at a gym or swimming pool, another will be a member of the hockey club and yet another will be using Runkeeper to train for a marathon. In our country there are 26,000 sports clubs and 6,000 businesses offering sports and exercise services. We have magnificent sports facilities and organise fantastic sporting events thanks to the involvement of hundreds of thousands of volunteers. Bringing sport close to people. Making it accessible. In all: The Dutch sports infrastructure and culture is unique in the world.

This broad basis is also the foundation for the success of Dutch elite athletes, all of whom started out at their local club or association. The Netherlands is proud of them. All of us share the ups and downs of elite athletes such as Dafne Schippers (track- and field athlete), Rico Verhoeven (kickboxer), Epke Zonderland (gymnast), Bibian Mentel (para-snowboarder), Kjeld Nuis (speedskater) and the Oranje Lionesses (womens football).

Sport unites people, and sport unites the Netherlands.

However, success is not a given.

Although things are going well, at the same time there are concerns and wishes. Children's motor skills have declined and there are groups of people who never engage in sport. Sports facilities often stand idle, not every spectator knows how to behave respectfully and the traditional sports clubs are experiencing increasing pressure due to declining numbers of members and volunteers.

If the number of sportspeople in our country decreases, this also has consequences for elite sport. Therefore, we want to make sure people engage in sport. By supporting providers, by encouraging children to exercise more and more effectively and by making sports facilities more attractive and accessible. In this way we will involve everyone in sport and sport will contribute to a healthy population and unity in society.

That is why the Minister of Sport (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS)), the Municipalities and Sport Association (Vereniging Sport en Gemeenten or VSG) and the sports federations (NOC*NSF) have joined forces. We have concluded a National Sports Agreement together with the provincial governments, numerous social organisations and companies. For the first time in history.

The Agreement

The idea behind this Sports Agreement is that we want to make sport enjoyable for everyone, Truly everyone. Now and in the future. Without any restrictions. In a safe and healthy environment. As a sportsperson, volunteer or spectator.

Our signatures represent **the first step** to achieving this goal. A step we are taking with a large number of partners. Together we have formulated 6 ambitions. In 2021 – when the Sports Agreement ends – we should be able to see the fruits of our labours, for sportspeople, sports providers and for the Netherlands as a whole.

In order to realise the ambitions laid down in the Sports Agreement the government is investing over € 400 million every year up to and including 2021.

The provincial authorities, municipalities, the sports sector itself, social organisations and the business community are all contributing funds to help achieve the ambitions in the Sports Agreement. Their investment will be several times **the** annual contribution by the national government each year.

A few examples: € 180 million will be made available to local sports coaches (from 2,900 to a total of 3,625 fte). The government and municipalities will pay for this together. The government will also spend € 10 million on sports events every year. Associations, provincial authorities/ municipalities and the business community will pay at least the same amount. In addition to this € 87 million in government subsidies will be made available to sports providers that invest in modernising their facilities.

Five of our six ambitions are briefly described below, along with examples of what we are actually going to do. The plan for the sixth ambition entitled 'Elite sport inspires' is still being drawn up. It will follow later on because we do not want to change the conditions for elite athletes now who are preparing for the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2020.



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Inclusive sport

Every Dutch person a lifetime of enjoyable sport and exercise. Without any restriction in terms of age, physical or mental health, ethnic background, sexual orientation or social position. That should be self-evident. We will remove any hindrances which people are currently experiencing in terms of engaging in sport.

Approximately half of all Dutch people currently meet the exercise guideline and 57% of Dutch people engage in sport on a weekly basis. However, if we look at people with disabilities, a low income or a migration background, these percentages are much lower. The exercise guideline for children is at least 1 hour a day. For adults it is, in any event, 2.5 hours per week.

What are we going to do?

- More local sports coaches will be recruited. This will take the total from 2,900 to 3,625 coaches. They will help people who currently experience barriers to engaging in sport. They will also help sports providers provide better services to these people. Anyone who wants to use the services of a local sports coach should contact their municipality.
- We will ask municipalities to expand the number and variety of resources available to sportspeople with disabilities. An allowance must also be available for blades or handcycles. Information on the various options must be available from the municipal social support department.
- We will introduce a good sports governance code for sports providers. Diversity will be an aspect of this. The code will be one of the ways in which clubs will be encouraged to work on diversity in that everyone can enjoy sport and help organise it. Men and women, young and old, people with and without disabilities, low skilled and highly educated, everyone will be represented at all levels of sport. Boards, trainers, coaches and sportspeople will be a reflection of society. The sports federations will support the sports associations in effectively implementing the Code.

Sustainable sport





In the Netherlands we want to have a properly functioning and sustainable sports infrastructure. This not only means sports fields, swimming pools, sports centres and clubhouses, but also the municipal park and the local football pitch. Wherever people engage in sport and exercise, facilities have to be properly organised.

In the Netherlands there are more than 22,000 sports facilities varying from sports centres to swimming pools and from baseball fields to ice rinks. Of the 1.2 billion euros municipalities spend on sport every year, 85% is spent on sports facilities. Many of these are between 40 and 50 years old and were not built in a sustainable fashion. As a result sports clubs and municipalities have to pay high energy bills. The money they spend on these could be used more effectively and to keep sport affordable for everyone.

What are we going to do?

- As from 1 January 2019 sports associations can apply for a subsidy from the VWS subsidy portal for investments they make in their facilities. An extra subsidy is also available to make facilities more sustainable and accessible. Municipalities and sports federations will be issuing more information on this soon.
- More and more people are engaging in sport and exercise in public spaces, for example by walking, cycling, jogging or doing yoga in the park. Municipalities are working to make public spaces more suitable for sport and exercise. The 'Sport, exercise and the Environment and Planning Act (Omgevingswet)' guide which the Municipalities and Sport Association has developed for this can be downloaded from the VSG website.
- Sports associations and municipalities are being supported in their efforts to make their sports facilities more sustainable via a so-called Roadmap and an expertise platform. Lower energy charges mean lower costs for the facilities, so we can keep sport affordable for everyone. More information about the Roadmap can be obtained from the VSG.

Vital providers



We want to make sports and exercise providers future proof so that sport and exercise are and remain accessible for everyone. Not every sports provider currently knows how to respond to developments such as ageing, individualisation and digitisation. Partly as a result of this, a quarter of all associations have seen member numbers drop in recent years, and many associations are also facing a shortage of trainers.

We want all providers to be ready for the future. Associations can become stronger by broadening the range of sports and exercise activities they offer and by behaving more like businesses. Commercial sports providers can strengthen their positions by becoming socially engaged.

What are we going to do?

- In order to encourage voluntary work in the sports sector, the untaxed volunteer's allowance will be increased from €1,500 to €1,700 per year as of 1 January 2019. You can find more information on this on the website of the Tax and Customs Administration.
- Local sports coaches will help sports providers strengthen their position through cooperation. This means cooperation within their own branch of sport. For example by jointly appointing 1 trainer, or cooperation with other sports, for example through the setting up of a multisports association. Alternatively it may involve cooperation with partners from, for example, education, childcare, welfare organisations or the business community. More information about local sports coaches can be obtained from the municipality.
- A range of training programmes will be offered to people involved in sports management. The aim will be to ensure that associations function more like businesses. Details of the various training programmes that are available can be found on the websites of the sports federations and the Sports Management Academy [Academie voor Sportkader] (ASK).



Positive sports culture

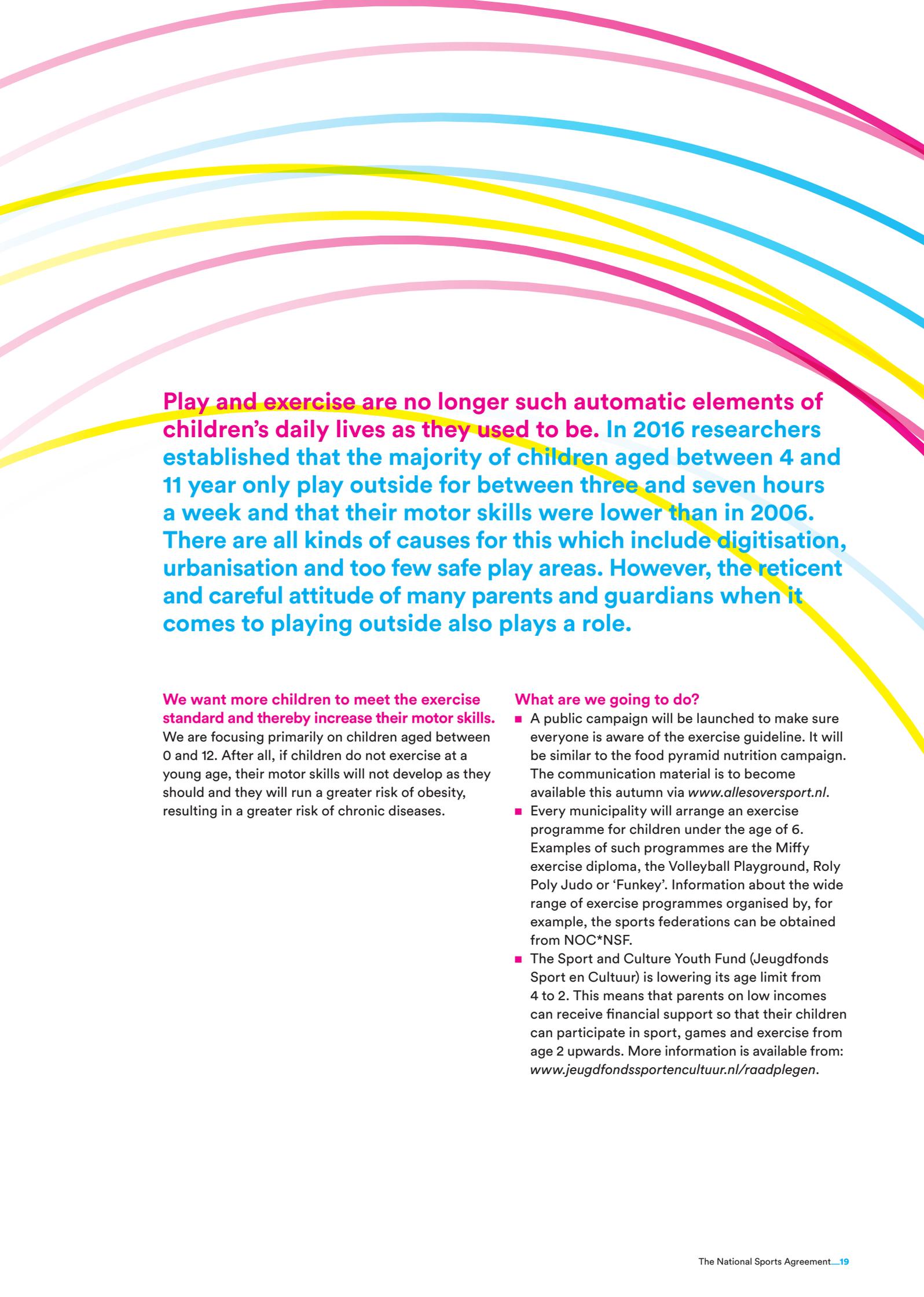
Sport has to be fun, safe, fair and carefree. This is a joint responsibility. Fun is the foundation for a lifetime engagement in sport. In years gone by almost 60 percent of all sports associations have been working hard to create an enjoyable and safe sporting environment. We want to ensure that all sports clubs focus on creating a positive sports culture, that trainers, teachers and instructors regard the welfare of children as more important than winning and that parents and guardians who spectate behave as positive supporters.

What are we going to do?

- Sports managers can use coaching to create a positive sports culture at their club. More information on this is available from the sports federations.
- We are retraining referees to become youth match supervisors. We will also invest in improving the pedagogical knowledge of trainers and supervisors of young sportspeople. Details of the various (re) training programmes available can be found on the websites of the sports federations and the Sports Management Academy.
- Sports associations can receive support for setting up an integrity policy. The focus is on preventing undesirable behaviour at and around the club. The certificate of good conduct will continue to be freely available to volunteers in the sports sector. Associations can register via www.gratisvog.nl.

Enjoying exercise from an early age





Play and exercise are no longer such automatic elements of children's daily lives as they used to be. In 2016 researchers established that the majority of children aged between 4 and 11 year only play outside for between three and seven hours a week and that their motor skills were lower than in 2006. There are all kinds of causes for this which include digitisation, urbanisation and too few safe play areas. However, the reticent and careful attitude of many parents and guardians when it comes to playing outside also plays a role.

We want more children to meet the exercise standard and thereby increase their motor skills.

We are focusing primarily on children aged between 0 and 12. After all, if children do not exercise at a young age, their motor skills will not develop as they should and they will run a greater risk of obesity, resulting in a greater risk of chronic diseases.

What are we going to do?

- A public campaign will be launched to make sure everyone is aware of the exercise guideline. It will be similar to the food pyramid nutrition campaign. The communication material is to become available this autumn via www.allesoversport.nl.
- Every municipality will arrange an exercise programme for children under the age of 6. Examples of such programmes are the Miffy exercise diploma, the Volleyball Playground, Roly Poly Judo or 'Funkey'. Information about the wide range of exercise programmes organised by, for example, the sports federations can be obtained from NOC*NSF.
- The Sport and Culture Youth Fund (Jeugdfonds Sport en Cultuur) is lowering its age limit from 4 to 2. This means that parents on low incomes can receive financial support so that their children can participate in sport, games and exercise from age 2 upwards. More information is available from: www.jeugdfondssportencultuur.nl/raadplegen.

Lastly

We will strengthen our sports infrastructure at every level: Locally, regionally and nationally. After all, the federations and umbrella organisations must – just like the sports providers – develop in order to fulfil their new role within sport. That is why we have agreed, in addition to the six ambitions, to work on researching how sport is organised and financed. Research will enable us to establish where the bottlenecks are and how we can resolve them. In this way we can unite sport at local and national levels and unite the country via sport for the short and long term.

This Sports Agreement signals the start of this initiative. Large numbers of people are ready to help achieve our shared ambitions in the coming years. Everyone can help to promote sport and everyone can help all Dutch people to find out how enjoyable sport and exercise are. **We are all going to pull together to make it happen.**





This brochure is a summary of the Sports Agreement. The whole text can be found at www.allesoversport.nl/onderwerp/Sportakkoord

More information about what the measures in the Sports Agreement mean for associations can be obtained from NOC*NSF.

Municipalities and sports businesses can contact the VSG for more information about the content of the Sports Agreement.

Information about the subsidy measures and the Sports Agreement can be obtained from the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport: sportakkoord@minvws.nl or by telephone from: +31 (0)70-340 6398.



