

Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy monitor country profile 2025: NETHERLANDS

The [BIK Policy monitor country profiles](#) summarise findings about the implementation of the BIK+ strategy's three pillars (protection, empowerment, participation) across each of the EU's Member States as well as Iceland and Norway. Download the full [BIK Policy monitor report 2025](#) from the [BIK Policy monitor](#) on the new [BIK Knowledge hub](#) and access the [Dutch country profile online](#) on the BIK Knowledge hub.

Introduction

The [Dutch Safer Internet Centre](#) exists to promote a safer and better use of the internet and mobile technologies among children and young people. Its Awareness strand exists to promote a safer and better use of the internet and mobile technologies among children and young people, and launches various yearly campaigns such as Media Literacy Week and Cybersecurity Month Alert Online. Over 180K primary school students play a highly successful game during the media literacy week. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are a highlight of the Safer Internet Centre. The Dutch SIC has a long history of public-private partnerships and has managed to get ministries and private partners on board with no exclusivity (everyone can join), aligning safety, skills, digital literacy, media literacy and cyber security programmes on a national level.

BIK policies

Policy frameworks

Policy frameworks describe the overarching approach for a better internet, and establish the underlying goals, principles and guidelines that shape individual policies within this area.

- This topic is **an important and emerging policy priority**, with children's online protection, digital empowerment, and digital participation partially covered in national/regional laws, regulations and policies.
- There are **separate, dedicated policies that address children and the digital environment** (protection, empowerment, and participation).
- **The BIK+ strategy is an important influence** on policy development on children and the digital environment (i.e., it informs and guides national policies even if they do not directly refer to BIK+).
- **National/regional policies and policy documents explicitly recognise children's rights in the digital environment.**

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Coverage of BIK+ issues in national policies		X		
Integration of policy provision		X		
Influence of the BIK+ strategy		X		
Recognition of children's rights	X			

Table 1: Topic summary - policy frameworks

Key national policy frameworks are:

- **Code for Children's Rights online**: The Code, which has recently been updated, contains a set of principles and guidelines that have been drawn up to protect and promote children's rights in the digital domain. It provides a framework for developers to promote responsible design for children

throughout the development process. It is recommended that the Code be applied iteratively, consulting the tool at every stage of development.

- **Gamewijzer** (Game Guide): a game ratings guide is currently under development that will explain, in an accessible way, which deceptive design techniques are present in particular games for the benefit of parents, children and carers
- **Children's Rights Impact Assessment** (CRIA): The CRIA is one of the Values-Driven Digitalisation Work Agenda initiatives and was developed by Considerati and Leiden University on behalf of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK). This instrument helps identify risks to children's rights.
- **Youth Council on Digitalisation**: The Youth Council is a cooperation between UNICEF Netherlands and the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. Children aged eleven to 17 are advising the Minister for Digitalisation on digitalisation topics they encounter in their daily lives. The outcomes of the youth council sessions are input for national policy on the protection of children in the digital world
- The **Netherlands Youth Institute** (NJI) has developed a media education toolbox **Media? Gewoon opvoeden!**, containing factsheets for professionals and teachers and tip sheets for parents. In partnership with young people themselves and organisations such as the youth mental health organisation MIND Us and the Dutch Media Literacy Network, it promotes media literacy, digital skills and striking a balance between digital and other activities.

Policy design

Policy design asks whether evidence and research support BIK-related policies and whether systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating those policies.

- There is **no data collection** on children's digital activity at the country level.
- However, **regular (e.g., annual or bi-annual) surveys include measures of children's experiences of risks, harms and digital well-being.**

- **Information is regularly gathered to inform policies** on children and the digital environment. However, this relies primarily on third-party sources, and there are limited opportunities to commission new data on children's digital activity.
- Regarding research funding, **there are occasional special initiatives to gather evidence about children and the digital environment.**
- **Policies undergo systematic and regular monitoring and evaluation** to assess the effectiveness of actions in different contexts and to take account of new technologies or emergent risks. In general, policy is evaluated once every four to seven years in a policy review.

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Regular data collection				X
Data on risks, harms and digital well-being	X			
Information systems		X		
National research fund			X	
Monitoring and evaluation	X			

Table 2: Topic summary - policy design

Policy governance

Policy governance examines how policies are coordinated at the governmental level, whether other implementation bodies are involved in their delivery, and whether structured mechanisms are available to guide their implementation.

- **The lead ministry, public agency or regulatory authority is an informal arrangement** depending on the requirements at a particular point in time.
- **Coordination of policies and their implementation is distributed across multiple entities.**

- **Government policy has yet to be developed into an implementable action plan at this point**, but this is under development.

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Lead ministry for policy development			X	
National coordination body			X	
National action plan or strategy			X	

Table 3: Topic summary - policy governance

- As the responsibility for children's online safety and digital activity is divided across several ministries, the responsibility may differ per specific topic. However, the Minister for Digitalisation (part of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations) is coordinating the national policy on digitalisation, hence children's online safety and digital activity policy.
- The priorities of the Dutch policy on topics regarding digitalisation are laid down in the [Value-Driven Digitalisation Work Agenda](#). The policy regarding children's rights and digitalisation is communicated to the Parliament through Parliamentary letters. The parliamentary letter '[Children's rights and digitalisation](#)' consists of the relevant national initiatives on the protection of children online. Updates will regularly be sent to the Parliament.

Stakeholder involvement

Stakeholder involvement enquires how different stakeholders can participate in policy development. Children's involvement in policy-making is one such key issue. Additionally, international knowledge exchange about children's digital participation is also relevant to this topic.

- **Various groups exist across different branches of government**, in which stakeholders may contribute to policy discussion and development.

- **Members of the public are consulted on occasion** in the course of the development of new policies. However, this is not always the case.
- **Public consultation is infrequent and irregular.**
- **Children are listened to directly in the policy development process** (e.g., through hearings, consultations, specific surveys) but are not formally involved in decision-making.

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Stakeholder forum		X		
Consulting the public on BIK topics			X	
Involvement of young people		X		

Table 4: Topic summary - Stakeholder involvement

- When new legislation is being introduced public consultation will take place. The general public is generally not consulted concerning new policy that is not laid down in legislation such as policy instruments (soft law). However, the [Youth Council on Digitalisation](#) is regularly consulted in the process of policy development on the protection of children's rights online.
- [ECP, the Platform for the Information Society](#) is an independent and neutral platform which brings together government, science, business, education and social organisations to exchange knowledge and work towards a reliable, promising and resilient digital society. Various projects, studies and debates connect parties and put the social significance of ICT on the agenda of politics, government and business. In this role, ECP supports various programmes and coalitions.

BIK+ actions

Pillar 1 – Safe digital experiences

Safe digital experiences refers to actions taken to protect children from harmful and illegal online content, conduct, contact, and risks as young consumers and to improve their well-being online through a safe, age-appropriate digital environment created in a way that respects children's best interests.

Implementing EU laws

- The national implementing law is currently being prepared to be discussed in Parliament. The [Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Markets \(ACM\)](#) was assigned as the Digital Services Coordinator.
- The SIC partner, [Offlimits](#), which has a special focus on child sexual abuse and exploitation, has applied to become a trusted flagger.

Harmful online content

- Definitions of harmful audiovisual content are not specified by law. However, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science designates an organisation, [NICAM](#), which draws up rules on the classification of audiovisual content. The Media Act only specifies categories that should be included in those rules but gives no definition.
- The organisation designated by the Minister is organised in a way of 'conditioned self-regulation'. The media service provider has to classify their content themselves, according to the rules of [NICAM](#). It develops the classification mechanism and trains the 'classifiers'. Broadcasters have to join NICAM if they want to broadcast potentially harmful content.
- In the audiovisual domain, children (or their parents) can complain to NICAM if they consider the classification of the NICAM system to be inadequate. A formal complaint can also be filed at the [Dutch Media Authority](#) if the media service provider does not comply with the law.

Harmful online conduct

- The non-consensual sharing of intimate images, or 'revenge porn' can be prosecuted in the Netherlands via Article 139h of the Criminal Code as of January 1, 2020. It is currently still regarded as a crime against public order, but after the entry into force of the Sexual Offenses Act, it will be regarded as a sexual offence.
- Regarding cyberbullying, schools have an obligation to create a safe learning environment for pupils. This means that when cyberbullying impacts school safety, schools have an obligation to respond. [Stichting School en Veiligheid](#) offers information and advice for schools on how they can respond to cyberbullying. Also, as part of the curriculum renewal, new learning goals, specifically on digital literacy, will be added.
- No national legislation specifically protects children and young people from cyberbullying. However, many forms of (cyber) bullying of persons, regardless of age, are punishable and therefore prosecutable in the Netherlands. Examples include harassment, intimidation, stalking or doxing (dissemination of personal data for intimidation). The government funds a helpline where children and adults can get all kinds of help (Helpwanted, part of Offlimits).
- In the Netherlands, the use of personal data for harassment purposes—also known as doxing—has been criminalised since 1 January 2024.

Age verification

- In the Netherlands, a preliminary framework has been developed that helps developers and providers of online services and products pick the right form of age assessment. There is no one-size-fits-all method for age verification. The assessment of the appropriate age assessment method is dependent on the characteristics of an online service or product. This framework is designed to help assess which age assessment method is appropriate, taking into account robustness, privacy, safety and accessibility.

- For the Dutch digital identity system [DigiD](#), it is obligatory that children older than 14 years apply the DigiD themselves. From age 14 the usage of one's digital identity is strictly personal. If the child is below the age of 14, the parent or caregiver is obliged to help the child with applying for DigiD. Having a DigiD as a minor is, among others, useful for making online healthcare appointments, applying for student grants or opening a bank account.

Commercial content

- There is a [Code of Conduct for Influencer Marketing](#) from the self-regulatory organisation for advertising in the Netherlands (SRC): Advertising Code for Social Media & Influencer Marketing (RSM). Although this code is non-statutory, registration at the SRC is a statutory obligation for certain influencers with large followings and active on the major social media platforms, as stated in the Dutch Media Law (Mediawet).

	In place	In development	Other activity	Not in place
Codes of practice	X			
DSC implemented	X			
Definition of harmful content			X	
Bodies can order content removal	X			
Children's complaints mechanism		X		
Intimate image abuse laws	X			
Cyberbullying laws				X
Age verification requirements		X		
Digital identity systems (EUDI)	X			
Consumer codes of practice	X			
Mental health measures				X
Addressing unfair commercial practices		X		

Table 5: Topic summary - pillar 1: safe digital experiences

Pillar 2 – Digital empowerment

Digital empowerment incorporates actions so that all children, including those in vulnerable situations, acquire the necessary skills and competences to make sound choices and express themselves in the online environment safely and responsibly.

Supports for online safety education

- As part of the curriculum renewal, new learning goals will be added, specifically on digital literacy.
- There is a national agreement for schools to ban phones from classrooms. Schools also have an obligation to create a safe learning environment for pupils. This means that when cyberbullying impacts school safety, schools have an obligation to respond.

Digital literacy skills to empower young people

- The [Media Literacy Network](#) is supported for this purpose by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. This is an extensive program that strengthens media literacy among all Dutch people. The program pays extra attention to young people (through education) and the vulnerable (through, for example, healthcare and welfare institutions).
- More than 1,000 partners are affiliated with the [Media Literacy Network](#). The network has developed the so-called [MediaDiamant](#) for parents. This is a tool for parents to have the proper conversation with their children about media use. Enjoying the possibilities, preventing risks, guiding your child, knowing which content is suitable and maintaining a healthy balance are important topics. The [MediaDiamant](#) is for parents with children aged 0 to 18 and has been developed by experts and scientists.
- To better equip parents and children to deal well with digital products and services, a multi-year public communication campaign is being established. This communication will start in the autumn of this year and will address different aspects of children's online risks. It will be aimed at children and their parents/carers.

	In place	In development	Other activity	Not in place
Teaching online safety		X		
Online safety policies in schools	X			
Informal education about online safety	X			
Adequate teacher training	X			
Basic digital skills training				X
Critical media literacy	X			
Creative digital skills				X

Table 6: Topic summary - pillar 2: digital empowerment

Pillar 3 – Active participation, respecting children’s rights

Active participation, respecting children’s rights, refers to actions which give children and young people a say in the digital environment, with more child-led activities to foster innovative and creative safe digital experiences.

- The [Youth Council on Digitalisation](#) comprises children aged eleven to 17 who advise the Minister for Digitalisation on digitalisation topics they encounter daily. The outcomes of the youth council sessions are input for national policy on protecting children in the digital world.
- The Youth Panel of the [Safer Internet Centre](#) consists of 17 young people aged 12-18, who advise the Safer Internet Centre on a variety of activities. Discussions about emerging trends, helping with the awareness campaigns and sharing their input on SIC services.

	In place	In development	Other activity	Not in place
Promoting active participation and civic engagement	X			
Involvement in policymaking				X

Awareness raising on children's rights	X
Child-friendly versions of policy documents	X
Addressing digital inequalities	X
Supports for marginalised groups	X
Positive digital content	X

Table 7: Topic summary - pillar 3: active participation, respecting children's rights

BIK+ index 2025: The Netherlands

The BIK+ index has been developed to provide an aggregated at-a-glance overview of the levels of implementation across the two dimensions, BIK policies and BIK+ actions, in the Netherlands compared to the EU27+2 average. Values are shown in per cent.

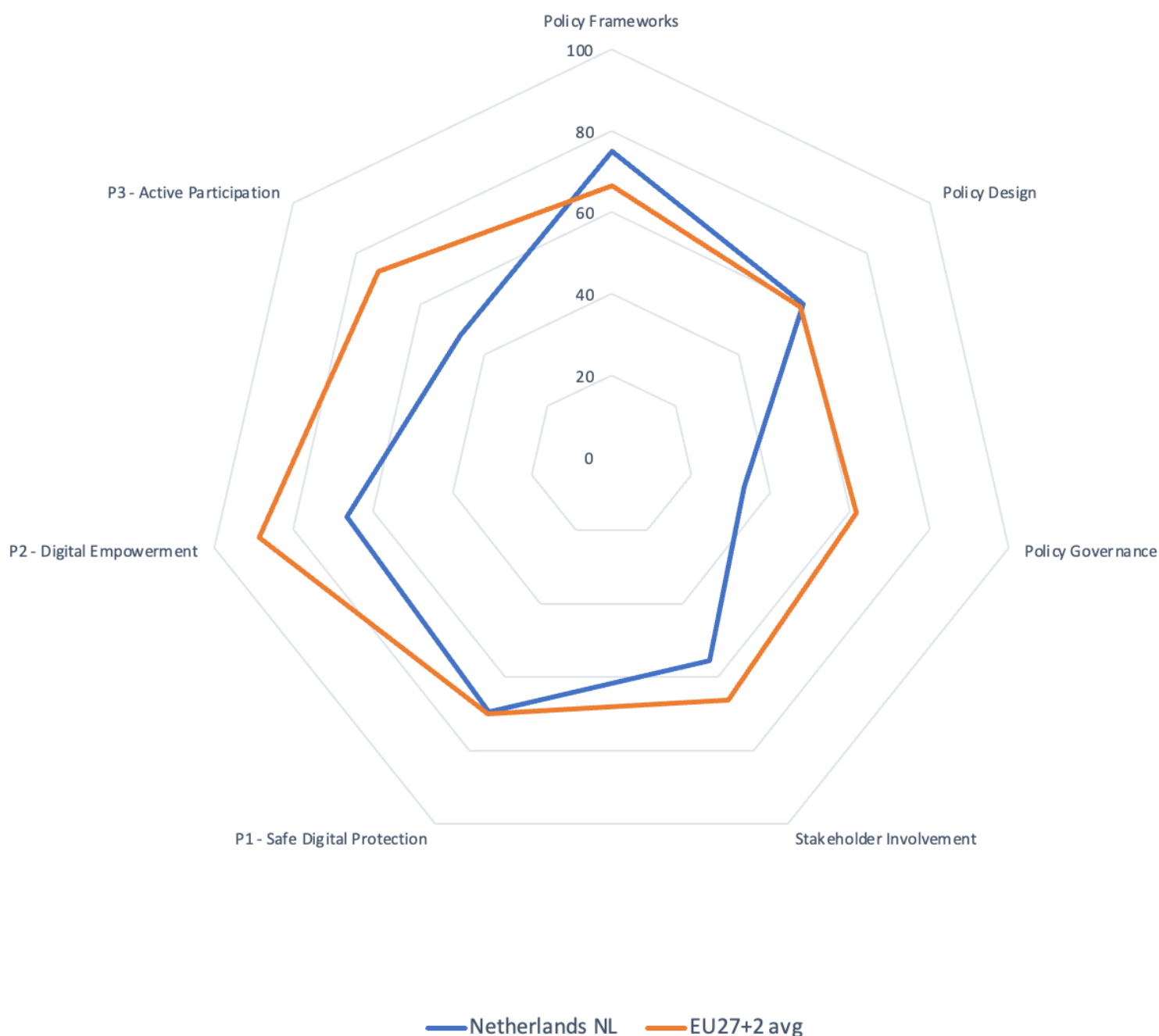


Figure 1: BIK+ index 2025: The Netherlands - EU27+2 average comparison



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