

Foreword

This report is the first country assessment to be produced as part of the OECD study on value for money in government. This study, launched in 2008 on the initiative of the Dutch government, aims to identify new developments in the organisation of central government that are leading to better value for money: better services at lower costs for taxpayers. The first report in the *Value for Money* series was published in July 2010 under the title *Public Administration after “New Public Management”*.

During the course of 2010, the scope of the study was extended. In Phase II, the study has become truly international in that it is now financed by five countries and other countries are considering contributing. At the time of writing, the countries financing the project are Australia, Austria, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden. Countries that have pledged to provide information to the study by responding to questionnaires include Canada, Finland, France, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom.

The Netherlands country assessment is the second report in the *Value for Money* series. It was prepared by an OECD team consisting of Dirk Kraan (lead), Ian Hawkesworth (both of the OECD Secretariat), Gwen Carpenter (consultant) and Joanne Kelly (consultant, professor at the Australia/New Zealand School of Government). Important contributions to the report were further provided by Joop Vrolijk, Colin Forthun and Emmanuel Job (all of the OECD Secretariat).

The OECD team undertook a mission to the Netherlands from 18 to 22 January 2010. The team met with numerous senior Dutch officials with tasks in the sphere of policy development, policy execution, support services, and supervision and regulation. The team expresses its gratitude for the time these interlocutors made available to answer questions and for their frank and open contributions to the ensuing discussions. The nature of this report is for a large part determined by the insights gained during the mission to The Hague.

The team wishes to thank in particular Peter van der Gaast, Principal Administrator at the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, who organised the mission.

The team would also like to thank Barry Anderson, former Head of the Budgeting and Public Expenditures Division at the OECD, who acts as supervisor of the study. Barry provided useful and inspiring comments on the draft report.

The Dutch country assessment was discussed during a meeting of the advisory committee of the OECD Value for Money study that took place on 7 July 2010 under the chairmanship of Roel Bekker, former Secretary General for Central Government Reform in the Netherlands. All countries that provide information to the project are represented in the advisory committee. The views and comments expressed during the meeting by the Dutch delegates as well as by delegates of some other countries have been integrated into the final version of this report.



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