

Introducing

# The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

during the EU presidency

**EU**  
**2004**



Ministerie van  
Binnenlandse Zaken en  
Koninkrijksrelaties



# Welcome



*Johan Remkes:  
Minister of the Interior and  
Kingdom Relations*

*Thom de Graaf:  
Deputy Prime Minister and  
Minister for Government Reform  
and Kingdom Relations*

The presidency of the European Union is an important opportunity to make a contribution to the further development of European cooperation and European policy. A unique period: with the recent accession of ten Member States, a new European Constitution, a European Commission which will be taking office on 1 November 2004 and a European Parliament that has just taken office. These developments, which give a new dimension to the cooperation between the European Member States, make the Dutch presidency a special one.

The European Union plays a substantial role in the range of duties of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. In recent years, this role has become increasingly apparent in all the areas in which we work. The six months of our

presidency is a good opportunity to make a contribution to the further development of European cooperation and European policy. The agenda listing our priorities shows how we intend to use this period:

- combating terrorism,
- ethical standards and quality in the police service,
- cross-border police cooperation,
- urban policy,
- governance and the EU,
- the quality of government services,
- public access to documents in the EU

Within this agenda, our ambition is to maintain existing European networks and build up new forms of cooperation. This ambition fits in with the needs of the current European Union. It is very important that we work together with our colleagues from the other Member States to achieve this. Cooperation within the European Union requires more than propagating national interests. We believe that broader interests, such as striving towards the development of peace and safety, the involvement of citizens in the European Union, global stability and fundamental human rights must play an important role.

By means of the above priorities and activities we hope to make a contribution to the continuing process of European integration. We invite you to read more about the part that the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations is playing in the Dutch presidency in this brochure.

MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR  
AND KINGDOM RELATIONS,

*J.W. Remkes*

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR  
GOVERNMENT REFORM AND KINGDOM RELATIONS,

*Th. C. de Graaf*

# The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

Keeping our finger on the pulse and making sure that everything works, this is the role that the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) wants to play in society. So many people, so many opinions. We all have our own image of our society. Of what works and what needs to be improved. To ensure that everything works, we create policy that lays down clear frameworks and rules for very diverse matters. In addition to the national arena, the Ministry is also entering the European domain. BZK brings together public administration issues and organisations in the EU. In this way, we are working on practical solutions to problems in our policy areas.

## Tasks and objectives

BZK has a very extensive and varied range of tasks. These vary from the administrative organisation of the Netherlands to a career policy for the police, from the Constitution to crisis control, and from the quality of the civil service to national security. These tasks are carried out in close collaboration with the municipalities, the provinces and the other ministries. The most important objectives for the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations are:

- to guarantee the democratic rule of law;
- to ensure an effective and efficient public administration;
- to guarantee the quality of personnel and management in the civil service;
- to uphold the Constitution;
- to coordinate cooperation with the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba;
- to promote public order and safety;
- to ensure a constitutional system.

## Division of tasks

The political leadership lies in the hands of two ministers, Minister J.W. Remkes and Minister T.C. de Graaf. Minister Remkes is responsible for the police and fire services, the General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD) and other policy on peace, safety and security. In addition, his portfolio includes public administration and the policy on public sector personnel. Minister de Graaf's portfolio covers government reform, including the election of mayors and the reform of the electoral system



and constitutional matters. The policy on major cities, the quality of the civil service and Kingdom relations also fall under the responsibility of Minister de Graaf.

## Administrative organisation

The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations includes the following divisions:

- *The Directorate-General for Safety*, responsible for, among other things: combating terrorism, the police and fire services, civil protection
- *The Directorate-General for Public Sector Management*, responsible for, among other things: government personnel, the quality of government services, e-government
- *The Directorate-General for Kingdom Relations and Governance*, responsible for, among other things: urban policy, travel documents, governance and the EU
- *The Directorate-General for the action plan 'Different Government'*, responsible for modernising the central government
- *General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD)*
- *Constitutional Affairs and Legislation*, responsible for, among other things, equal treatment, human rights and public access.

The Ministry also includes the Office for the Development of the Senior Public Service, the Inspectorate for Public Order and Safety and Central Support Services.

# Priorities during the Dutch presidency



The Netherlands is the president of the Council of the European Union from 1 July to 31 December 2004. The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations will be focusing on seven priorities during this presidency.

## 1 Combating terrorism

Five years ago, the Tampere European Council decided on the creation of an area of freedom, security and justice. After the attacks in New York and Washington on 11 September 2001, the urgency of the Tampere agenda was once again underlined by the attacks in Madrid. This year, the JHA Council multi-year programme agreed in Tampere in 1999 will be evaluated. This evaluation and a new multi-year plan are key issues to be dealt with during the Dutch presidency of the JHA Council. This subject will be discussed during the informal JHA Council meeting to be held between **29 September and 1 October 2004** in The Hague. This should ultimately lead to conclusions by the European Council on **5 November 2004**.

The areas requiring attention as far as combating terrorism is concerned are to be seen largely in the light of the European Council's declaration on terrorism of 25 March 2004, and the action plan of the European Terrorism Coordinator. In this respect, the Netherlands is paying particular attention to improving cooperation between intelligence, security and police services.

During the Dutch presidency, cooperation between Member States in terms of preparing for the consequences of possible terrorist attacks involving chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) substances, has also been placed on the agenda.

## 2 Ethical standards and quality in the police service

One of the conditions for effective cooperation between the various European police forces is a competent and incorruptible police service. The Netherlands is endeavouring to lay down a code of conduct at EU level in which shared values and standards are defined for the police forces in the EU Member States. In 2001, the Council of Europe adopted the European Code of Police Ethics. The Netherlands wishes to use this document to reach a common position on ethics.

During its presidency, the Netherlands will also be looking at opportunities to safeguard administrative bodies against any unintentional facilitation of criminal organisations. An administrative approach to this can supplement the fight against organised crime in the criminal courts.

## 3 Cross-border police cooperation

One of the objectives of the European Union is to give its citizens a high level of safety and security in an area of freedom, security and justice. Since people, goods and capital can travel and circulate freely, this has led to the internationalisation of safety and security issues.

The absence of internal border controls within Europe and increased mobility mean that the nature and extent of cross-border crime in areas around the internal borders of the European Union have changed. During large-scale events as well, the internationalisation of safety and security issues encroaches on public order and safety. Examples of this are the riots in Sweden, rioting by anti-globalisation protesters in Italy and the football riots in Belgium during the European championships in 2000. As part of this, the Netherlands will also pay attention to the development of a transport police network and to cooperation with regard to vehicle crime.

A seminar on cross-border police cooperation was held on **11 and 12 March 2004**, called Policing without frontiers.

During this seminar, a number of areas where problems coincide were identified. The aim is to discuss the outcome of this seminar at Council level and, if possible, lay down agreements.

#### 4 Urban policy

During its presidency, the Netherlands wishes to pay more attention to the influential role that cities play in the development of Europe. The goal is to strengthen the position of cities in Europe. In addition, a strategy can be developed in which concrete cooperative campaigns are identified, such as a European Knowledge Network.

On **29 and 30 November 2004** the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, together with the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, will be organising an informal ministerial conference on territorial cohesion and urban policy. BZK will develop concrete proposals on the role of cities in the knowledge economy and social inclusion for this ministerial conference. From an administrative perspective, consideration will be given to the role of cities, how national and international cooperation can be structured and how national governments and the EU can facilitate this process.

Prior to the ministerial conference, approximately 800 mayors and other representatives will attend the City Summit in Noordwijk and Leiden on **18 and 19 October 2004**. The findings of the City Summit will be presented during the informal ministerial conference.

#### 5 Governance and the EU

Partly because of the new European Constitution, the Netherlands is raising the issue of how the various administrative tiers can help the EU to develop and implement policy more effectively and to become more democratic and transparent.

Two aspects are central in this regard:

1. The influence of the EU on the administrative systems of the Member States.
2. Exchanging the best practices of national governments for involving local and regional authorities in the formulation of European policy and regulations.

The central question is how the EU Member States deal with questions of governance, without the EU saying how it must be done. The underlying questions relate to whether the domestic administration responds to what is happening in the European arena and whether the EU is keeping pace with what is happening at the level of the internal administration of the Member States.

These questions will be put onto the agenda, discussed and answered, in the form of recommendations, during an official meeting called Governance & the EU. The Role of the EU, Member States and Regional and Local Authorities on **9 and 10 December 2004** in The Hague. The recommendations will be presented to the Future of the Union Task Force of the European Commission and will serve as 'best practices' for the Member States.

#### 6 The quality of government services

Government bodies in Europe must become more efficient and effective by using intelligent ICT solutions and benchmarking. The Netherlands would like to strengthen European cooperation in the area of the quality of public services and to encourage European policymakers and those delivering government services to adopt best practices from elsewhere.

A great deal of attention is being paid to attempts, in both Europe and the Netherlands, to reduce the number of regulations as well as to make these simpler and more effective. This aim of creating a public sector where quality is improving all the time is expressed in the wish to inspire and strengthen European cooperation in respect to public services. The 3rd Quality Conference for Public Administration in the EU (3QC) will be one instrument for achieving this. This conference will be held from **15 to 17 September 2004** in Rotterdam. The conference will result in a report detailing concrete opportunities for successfully modernising and improving the quality of public services.

A DG Conference on the public sector will be organised between **21 and 23 November 2004**. This conference will deal with the future of public sector pensions, a model code for ethics and integrity and the evaluation of the 3QC conference.

# Contact

## 7 Public access to documents in the EU

The Netherlands wants to encourage public access to European institutions in the European Union. This not only benefits the internal working processes of the Union, but will also contribute to democratic legitimacy and improving citizens' confidence in the European Union.

The Netherlands therefore intends to discuss the applicable EU law during its presidency (regulation in respect to public access to documents). This may pave the way for joint follow-up campaigns with other Member States and the European Commission.

In order to achieve the above objective, a conference on this subject will be organised in The Hague on **25 and 26 November 2004**. This conference will be geared in particular towards encouraging debate in the European Union about public access to European institutions.

### More than just seven priorities

The priorities listed above are of course not the only European areas we will be dealing with during the presidency. We will also give attention to areas which are on the normal Council agenda, such as biometric data in passports, equal treatment and non-discrimination.



More information about the policy of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations can be found on [www.minbzk.nl](http://www.minbzk.nl). You can also access the personal websites of Minister Remkes and Minister De Graaf via this website.

Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

Street address:  
Schedeldoekshaven 200  
2511 EZ The Hague

Postal address:  
Postbus 20011  
2500 EA The Hague

General telephone number: +31 (0) 70 426 6426  
Press information: +31 (0) 70 426 8888  
Fax: +31 (0) 70 3639153  
E-mail: [info@minbzk.nl](mailto:info@minbzk.nl)  
Internet: [www.minbzk.nl](http://www.minbzk.nl)

You can find more information about the Dutch presidency on [www.eu2004.nl](http://www.eu2004.nl).

# Events during the Dutch presidency

The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations will be organising a number of events as part of the Dutch presidency. You can find more information about these events on [www.minbzk.nl](http://www.minbzk.nl) and [www.eu2004.nl](http://www.eu2004.nl).

11 and 12 March 2004	Policing without frontiers, Maastricht
8 and 9 June 2004	Transport police seminar, The Hague
21 June 2004	Innovative Public Service Group, (IPSG) The Hague
24 and 25 June 2004	Police Integrity experts' meeting, The Hague
5 and 6 July 2004	Seminar on the Promotion of Integrity Assessment by the Public Administration The Hague and Amsterdam
7 and 8 July 2004	CBRN terrorism seminar, The Hague
11 and 13 July 2004	CATS (informal) <sup>1</sup> , Maastricht
2 and 3 September 2004	IPSG task force, The Hague
13 and 14 September 2004	E-government I task force, Scheveningen
14 and 15 September 2004	CEPOL I Governing Board, Noordwijk
15 – 17 September 2004	3QC, 3rd Quality Conference Public Administration in EU, Rotterdam
29, 30 September – 1 October 2004	Informal JHA Council meeting <sup>1</sup> , The Hague
30 September 2004	DG Conference Urban Policy <sup>2</sup> , Haarlem
7 and 8 October 2004	DG Conference Civil Protection, Amsterdam
11 and 12 October 2004	European Police Chief Task Force (EPCTF), The Hague
18 and 19 October 2004	City Summit/Urban Audit <sup>3</sup> , Leiden
26 - 28 October 2004	Europol Governmental Board <sup>1</sup> , Maastricht
28 and 29 October 2004	E-government II task force, Amsterdam
4 November 2004	Ministerial Troika Quality of the Civil Service, Wassenaar
10 – 12 November 2004	CAF/IPSG task force, Amsterdam
21 – 23 November 2004	DG conference Quality of Government Services, Maastricht
22 and 23 November 2004 <sup>4</sup>	Conference The Future of Equal Treatment and Non-Discrimination <sup>4</sup> , The Hague
22 and 23 November 2004	CEPOL II Governing Board, Amsterdam
25 and 26 November 2004	Conference Evaluation of Public Access to Documents, The Hague
30 November 2004	Informal council meeting Territorial Cohesion and Urban Policy <sup>2</sup> , Rotterdam
9 and 10 December 2004	DG Conference Governance & the EU. The Role of the EU, Member States and Regional and Local Authorities, The Hague
December 2004	Counterterrorism I and II

1 In cooperation with the Ministry of Justice.

2 In cooperation with the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment

3 In cooperation with the European Commission

4 In cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.