NL DIGIbeter
Digital Government Agenda

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Opportunities and challenges in the digital society

1. We invest in innovation

2. Protecting fundamental rights and public values

3. Accessible, understandable and intended for everyone

4. Making our services more personal

5. Ready for the future!
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Opportunities and challenges in the digital society

The world is changing at a fast pace. The Netherlands is going digital and that offers huge opportunities to do things in a smarter way. We as the national and decentral government, wish to grasp those opportunities. At the same time, it is vitally important that we respect the autonomy of the individual citizen.

In the face of advancing digitalisation, the Constitution and specific public values including privacy, self-determination and equality must be protected. We are not alone in recognising this fact. The Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR), the National Ombudsman and the Rathenau Institute have also issued recommendations on these issues.

This agenda is all about utilising opportunities and protecting rights.

Today’s world is rife with discussion about the opportunities on offer – by artificial intelligence, blockchain, bitcoin and drones, for example. All around us, governments, businesses and institutions are investing in new-technologies because they see opportunities for improving their tasks, services or products. These developments also pose questions. We as a society are not yet able to answer those questions. For example, what does the exchange of personal data mean for the security and privacy of the individual? How can we make sure that this data is properly protected? How can we keep digitalisation from diminishing such essential values as equality and democracy? And how can we guarantee that everyone is able to continue participating in our society?

Our aim is not only to organise the debate on these issues, but also to take actual steps. We want to increase the autonomy of individual citizens and entrepreneurs. That means that we aim to create one central place in which citizens and entrepreneurs can meet government and institutions to deal with those issues that relate to them personally. The many possibilities include altering your own personal data, gaining access to any data that is recorded about yourself, granting consent for the use of your personal data, and managing your digital login facilities.
Context of the agenda
This agenda has not been drawn up in isolation, of course. The Dutch Digitalisation Strategy - Nederland Digitaal – is a Cabinet-wide strategy that considers every aspect of digitalisation. The Digital Government Agenda is aimed at government and interaction with citizens and entrepreneurs. There is a separate agenda to deal with cyber security issues - namely, the Dutch Cyber Security Agenda.

This Digital Government Agenda is an agenda drawn up together by all levels of government and it establishes links with key public and private partners. In that sense, this agenda cannot be viewed in isolation from the (Central) government Inter-administrative Programme, the Digital Agenda 2020 of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG), Common Ground from the municipalities, The Digital Society of the VSNU, and the European Digital Agenda. We will be producing and implementing this agenda together with a wide variety of partners. Among the most important of those partners are the administration agencies, businesses, knowledge institutions, the citizens’ sounding board group and businesses sounding board group, and European organisations. Our digitalisation process must also, of course, tie in with European agreements such as the Tallinn declaration on eGovernment in Europe.

A new work approach
In this Digital Government Agenda, the needs and rights of citizens and entrepreneurs will be the central point of focus, alongside the social challenges - for example, in the fields of security and healthcare. We are realistic and will work at a pace that matches the speed of modern developments. The complexity of the issues calls for all of government to act jointly and with clear leadership in taking responsibility to tackle those challenges. Digitalisation is more than day-to-day practice: it is a subject for discussion at boardroom level. And because digitalisation is not restricted by national boundaries, it calls for close collaboration with other European countries.

In real terms, this means that innovation will require experimentation, also with our European partners. That in turn demands leadership and a coalition of the willing. In this process, the Netherlands will seek to work actively alongside its European partners in doing things we have never done before. For example, we will be involving citizens and entrepreneurs in the development phase of new services. We will invest in research, and we will not shy away from the risk of failure. Cooperation will be essential, both within government itself and with the private sector, civil society and the sciences. We also plan to ensure that everyone within government has the necessary knowledge of digitalisation, from the grassroots through to the upper echelons. And, where necessary, we will create new laws such as the Digital Government Act.

Solid foundations
Government organisations such as municipalities, the Employee Insurance Agency (UWV) and the Education Executive Agency (DUO) maintain daily contacts with citizens and entrepreneurs. To a considerable extent, they are the face of government and, as such, play a key role in determining the elements of the basic
digital infrastructure. Deciding what we plan to do is in essence policy-making. How we then implement that policy is the specific responsibility of these organisations. Only by collaborating closely can we maintain the ties between policy and implementation.

There is already a wide range of facilities that must be kept secure and reliable, such as DigiD and MijnOverheid. Government also aims to work towards the broadest possible use of standards such as Standard Business Reporting. This enables entrepreneurs to record their details once, and to simply reuse them whenever subsequently necessary. The data required for the provision of services to citizens and entrepreneurs can be extracted from the basic registries such as the Basic Municipal Registry (Basisregistratie Personen) and the Basic Registry of Large-scale Topography (Basisregistratie Grootschalige Topografie). We are proud of these systems. The facilities, agreements, standards and registries together form a solid foundation for further development. Many of these facilities require modernisation, certainly if we aim to increase the autonomy of individual citizens and entrepreneurs. Facilities for digital identity and digital authorisation are of crucial importance.

We intend to modernise this basic digital infrastructure in small, logical, controlled stages. Each year, we will draw up an action plan based on the principles of continuity and continued service provision. To satisfy emerging requirements, we will first carry out an implementation test. At the same time, we will innovate by trying out new applications.

The legislative Bill on Digital Government will lay the legal foundations for the entire Generic Digital Infrastructure (GDI). This includes the rules on information security and privacy. In this manner, the Bill will set out the principle that requires government bodies to employ open standards. It will also give supervision and enforcement a basis in law. In this way, we plan to implement the idea of a single government, in the interests of our citizens and entrepreneurs.

The agenda and financing
Now and in the coming years, we plan to provide our services securely, quickly and reliably and to tackle social challenges, while maintaining a constant focus on fundamental rights and public values. This naturally calls for both time and money. We cannot do everything at once, and we must stay abreast of new developments. On the road to achieving our targets, we are open to discussion and new ideas. For that reason, this agenda is not cast in stone and will be updated at least once a year.

To finance the agenda – in addition to the regular budgetary funding from the relevant government bodies – an Investment Item for Digital Government has been made available within the budget from the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

These facilities, agreements, standards and registries will form a solid foundation for further development.
Individual citizens and entrepreneurs are increasingly using the facilities offered by digital government. For example, relatively large numbers of users already access the basic registries. As a result, compared to other European countries, the Netherlands is performing well. When it comes to digital services with regard to life events, the Netherlands occupies the ninth position. But huge improvements can be achieved by fully digitalising procedures. That goal ties in with the ambitions of this agenda: the right to digital services, and making digital services and authorisations understandable and accessible.

Entrepreneurs connected to eHerkenning (eRecognition): 232,000
Number of messages sent: 193,000
Number of times logged in: 6 million

Standard Business Reporting (SBR) 38 million

Number of times logged in using DigiD: 280 million
Active DigiD accounts: 13,5 million
Number of messages sent: 75 million

Source: GDI Monitor 2018

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We invest in innovation

The word innovation relates not only to new technologies, but above all to a new approach to working. We plan to identify solutions in concert with the markets and the world of science, and by means of start-ups and other creative forms of cooperation.

The government cannot do everything on its own. By experimenting and innovating, we aim to improve the service provision to our citizens and entrepreneurs, and we are not afraid of taking risks. At the same time, we plan to broaden the knowledge of (the possibilities offered by) digitalisation among civil servants.

Innovations can help solve important problems facing society such as the growing demand for healthcare. It is therefore essential that additional funding be invested in innovation. Each year, together with other partners, we – the government departments, implementing bodies, municipalities, provinces and water boards – draw up an innovation agenda. To encourage innovation, we are examining how to create more freedom within the tendering rules. In this way, we aim to enable small market organisations and start-ups to also participate in joint innovations.

If government imposes compulsory standards and uses open data as far as possible, the possibilities for innovation will grow further. We are investigating whether the same applies to open source software. This will improve the opportunities for investment by both the public and private sector. In chapters 4 and 5, we talk about how we are going to do this.
Actions

Innovation budget
• The Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations provides funding for businesses, government bodies and science institutions that are working towards broad-based societal objectives. With this funding, they can improve government service to citizens and entrepreneurs, and make better use of the opportunities offered by new technology. We are working towards integrated service provision and that calls for increased cooperation. As part of that process, we aim to share our experiences and to learn from one another.
• In 2018, we will further elaborate the conditions according to which parties can be eligible for this government funding. In collaboration with the private sector and research organisations, we will select the most promising projects.

Government and experimentation
• New technologies and opportunities such as blockchain, data-driven policy making and artificial intelligence can help improve government service provision. Many government organisations, both local and national, are already actively experimenting with these possibilities. The pilot projects undertaken by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations tie in with these developments. The Ministry also plans to involve other new parties in this process in the form of challenges. Examples include hackathons during which government invites the ‘players’ to come up with innovative solutions, and the Start-up-in-residence programme, according to which start-ups are given a temporary appointment in government to work towards improved service provision.

Dé Post (37) is the director of the logistics services provider H.N. Post & Zn in Pijnacker

“In the transport sector, many processes are still paper-based. Waybills and timesheets sometimes lie around untouched for weeks, and drivers can easily spend 20 minutes a day filling in and sending their documentation by hand. For that reason, we set ourselves the challenge of requiring all our drivers to work completely paper-free. Digitalisation ties in perfectly with our core values: sustainable, flexible and reliable. At the start of 2017, we developed an app for our drivers that enables them to generate a digital waybill with a single touch of a button.”

Faster invoicing
“From our app, the waybill is automatically transmitted to Transfollow, a reliable and legally watertight system. Transfollow sends out an automatic message to all stakeholders, including the dealer we are working for, who can then speed up the invoicing process. Unfortunately, things do not always work that way in practice. Companies that have to sign for receipt of the goods have no vested interest in this. They operate their own work processes and prefer to sign on paper simply because that is what they are used to doing.”

Change
“Any process of change is difficult. And that is a shame because it means we cannot move forward. I believe that government has an important role to play here. The advantages of digitalisation are already clear in the services provided by government: for example, turnover tax and wage tax are increasingly automated. We are also currently involved in a trial for the digital processing of vehicle tax. Instead of having to copy everything from invoices, we now work with an XML file. And that too ties in with our continuous search for improved efficiency.”

If government imposes standards and uses open data as far as possible, the possibilities for innovation will grow further.
We invest in innovation
‘By making more data available, you can improve the business climate.’

Saskia du Bois-Schütz (36) is the founder and owner of consultancy and concept development agency i-Inspire, based in Delft.

“Starting up my own business was really incredibly simple. Register with the Chamber of Commerce and off you go. Then came all the questions, but even finding the answers to those was also relatively easy. In my mind, far more of the government’s services should be placed online. Seeing something in black and white on an official website gives me confidence in its reliability. Far more than when I speak to someone on the telephone. More far-reaching digitalisation would also be good for government efficiency. I am convinced that it would lead to far greater cost savings.”

Use of data

“If it were up to me, anything the government saves through digitalisation should then be spent on the use of open data – information about trends, the labour market and potential clients and partners, for example. Making data of that kind available to businesses improves the business climate, and creates more opportunities for businesses to develop new innovations, together. At present, if I want to collect even simple data, I have to hire in a student or even take on a new member of staff, it seems such an outdated concept.”

Sociale media

“The sharing of information raises privacy issues, of course. The same applies to approaching potential new customers. In the past, I used mailshots. But the new privacy legislation severely restricts the possibilities open to me. To some extent I now have to rely on flyers, a real step back in time because they have to be printed on paper. Surely that can’t be the intention? The only other alternative is social media. Social media can make, but just as easily break you. I would prefer to steer well clear of it, but there is really little choice.”

• In the data programme known as ‘Control’, living labs have been established to implement new service concepts that give you ‘control over your own data’.
• We are establishing a ‘digital democracy testbed’. In mid-2018, we will be submitting the local democracy action plan, which includes the testbed, to the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament.
• The Netherlands land registry and mapping agency – the Kadaster – has drawn up an initial concept for a digital building dossier, using blockchain technology. Together with the private sector, we are examining the possibilities of putting this concept into production.

Tendering

• Small market organisations are extremely useful in innovation processes but are often unable to satisfy the financial threshold for participating in a tendering procedure for large orders. Within the tendering rules, we are examining ways in which to improve the opportunities for small market organisations to participate.
• We are reducing the administrative burdens for businesses that result from participating in tendering procedures.

Enabling permanent beta sciences

• ‘Permanent’ beta sciences means: continuous redevelopment without shutting down services, preferably without the general public or the private sector even noticing. We are encouraging the use of methods that enable rapid, gradual and practice-based innovations, often originating from the private sector.

Dé Post, director of a transport company:

‘Change is difficult. That is a shame because it means we cannot move forward.’
Promoting knowledge and skills within government

- We plan to make it possible for government decision makers to take full account of the aspects and impact of digitalisation in their decision-making processes. The Senior Civil Service (Algemene Bestuursdienst) is already working in conjunction with various knowledge institutions. The aim is to create a community to promote leadership in this field.

- The programme of the Dutch National Academy for Digitalisation and Computerisation of Government will provide general basic knowledge modules for all civil servants, irrespective of their position or the sector in which they work. At the end of the day, we want every civil servant to have at least an absolute minimum of knowledge in this field. This specifically includes knowledge of the secure and functional use of ICT and the Internet at their own workplace. We will examine the future possibilities of expanding the Academy’s services to other levels of government and chain partners.

Saskia du Bois-Schütz, self-employed businesswoman:

‘A return to flyers thanks to the new privacy legislation. That cannot be the intention.’
Protecting fundamental rights and public values

Through innovation, the Dutch government wishes to take the lead in the use of new digital technology. At the same time, we in government want to protect all citizens and entrepreneurs and their rights if they are threatened by new developments.

Businesses, institutions and governments are investing in the use and implementation of new opportunities offered by technology. At the same time, ever-growing volumes of data are available. Everything we type on the Internet and all communication between devices connected to the Internet generates new data. These immense volumes of ‘big data’ make it possible for computers to use algorithms to filter and utilise information ever faster. The new opportunities offered by technology and data call for increased attention to rights and values. Consider artificial intelligence, for example: in the future will humans be in charge of what a computer decides? Will we make decisions about our own behaviour ourselves or will our decisions be unconsciously guided? How should we deal with the effects of digitalisation on the relationship between government and individual citizens, and on democracy? In essence, the real question is: what sort of society do we want to live in? What consequences will these developments have for the organisation of government?

Government also uses algorithms and (big) data in making its decisions, in providing its services, and in supervision and enforcement. If computer programs play a role in deciding whether an individual is eligible for a permit, where is the human element? How do we know whether a decision is the right one? Decisions made using algorithms must still satisfy the requirements of the General Administrative Law Act (Algemene Wet Bestuursrecht). We are investigating how to ensure adequate supervision of the integrity of data in algorithms. This is an intrinsic element of good public administration and of reinforcing the confidence of citizens and entrepreneurs in government.

Achieving our ambitions can involve a whole range of values. This can lead to dilemmas. On the one hand, we want people to feel secure and to be served personally as much as possible. On the other hand, everyone has a right to privacy. Technology can provide solutions – e.g., with blockchain. And naturally there’s always legislation to safeguard values.
Actions

**Debate, research and methods**

- Within Europe, the Netherlands is actively contributing to discussions concerning rights and digitalisation. A key theme within the Council of Europe is the right of citizens to autonomy.
- Based on actual questions, and using smart computers and data, we will help solve issues arising in society. For example: how can we increase the probability of catching criminals?
- In discussion with citizens, entrepreneurs, government and civil society organizations, we will discuss the effects of new technologies on rights and values.
- We have issued orders for a series of studies: to the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) for a study of the impact of artificial intelligence on public values, to the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations for an investigation of the impact of digitalisation on local democracy and to the Council for Public Administration (ROB) for a study of the effects of digitalisation on democracy. These studies will help us determine the issues that we in government need to tackle.

The real question is: what kind of society do we want to live in?

- The Government Parliamentary System Committee is considering the effects of digitalisation on the parliamentary system.
- We have called upon the Rathenau Institute to monitor the latest developments, to conduct research and to conduct political discussions on ethical issues.
- In developing legislation, policy and measures, we intend to include ethical aspects directly. This is known as ethics by design.

Prof. dr. Jeroen van den Hoven (60) is professor of technology and ethics at the University of Technology in Delft.

“By taking privacy seriously, we are not making life easy for ourselves in Europe. However, it is specifically that complexity that makes us innovative: it creates a completely new set of foundations for innovation. Take for example “coarse graining”. This form of technology aimed at protecting privacy makes it possible to count numbers of people using camera images, without their faces being recognisable. This is useful, for example, for crowd management. That is what I would describe as a responsible innovation: you are transparent about the moral choices you have made and what you want to achieve.”

**Smart cooperation**

“Data from smartphones can also make a huge contribution to a safe and sustainable society. The problem is: the information in question is often privacy-sensitive. And that means we are increasingly dependent on commercial organisations. In many cases, specifically on those businesses that are highly skilled in combining data. It is therefore smart to cooperate with the private sector, but it is important not to hand over control. At the end of the day, the primary objective of businesses is to earn money.”

**Blockchain**

“Government must ask itself: what are the moral values we intend to serve? For example, blockchain offers interesting possibilities. By using blockchain, it is possible to record basic data such as names, ages and transactions in such a way that they cannot be manipulated. On the other hand, it is difficult to reconcile such aspects as privacy when it comes to the desire to use blockchain to improve services. There are also challenges with regard to democracy. There is currently much talk about the manipulation of elections. How can digital resources actually be used to support and innovate democracy? In my judgment, these are issues we need to tackle quickly in the Netherlands.”
The government is a role model when it comes to the use of data.

Data and algorithms
- The government is a role model when it comes to the use of data. We are creating a National Data Agenda that describes what we in government as a whole plan to do to ensure (even) better management of personal data, open data and big data. We plan to examine how the analysis and combination of government data can be used to promote policy-making and to solve societal challenges. We plan to make better use of the opportunities offered by big data while at the same time considering rights and values.
- We are examining the integrity and explainability of the decisions taken using algorithms. As part of that process, we are investigating the use of algorithms and the desirability of making them public. We are also investigating how the integrity of algorithms can be supervised adequately.
- After the summer, the Cabinet will issue a response to a study by the University of Utrecht of the relationship between algorithms and fundamental rights.
- In addition, the Centre for Scientific Research and Documentation (Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek en Documentatiecentrum) is examining the legal aspects of algorithms that make independent decisions.
- The Minister for Legal Protection will be sending a letter to the Lower House in the autumn of 2018 on the transparency of algorithms.
- We are currently drawing up rules and agreements on the use of information and data. Together with the Smart Cities (cities already making use of new technologies), we are working together to draw up rules of play (code of good digital administration).

Future-proof legislation
- In the digital world, developments can take place so quickly and be so fundamental that existing rules are no longer satisfactory, or become unnecessary in some other way. In that situation, new and adjusted rules are needed in order to guarantee public interests and values. We do not want legislation or regulations to impose unnecessary restrictions on innovation. Against that background, it is essential to take these aspects into account when drawing up standards. This is possible in a number of different ways (for example, through target requirements, the right to challenge, rules that operate independently of technology, framework legislation, and experimental legislation). At the same time, we must do justice to such values as the protection of legal interests and democratic decision-making.
- It takes time to make and to change rules. With that in mind, the Cabinet will regularly have strategic surveys carried out so as to identify the legal, technological and ethical consequences of new developments at an early stage. These surveys will be undertaken together with the private sector, institutions, academic parties and other stakeholders. We will share the outcomes of these surveys with everyone.
- One example is the survey of ‘Blockchain and the law’ (report in Parliamentary Papers II 2016–2017, 33 009, no. 42, page 3) that is expected to be concluded in November 2018. This study focuses on: a government-managed register of ownership, automated compliance by citizens with government rules, the use of smart contracts by private parties, the international transport of waste, and the recording and sharing of privacy-sensitive data by government.

Jeroen van den Hoven, professor of technology and ethics:
‘Cooperating with the private sector is smart, but we must not hand over control.’
When we say that our central focus is on citizens and entrepreneurs, we specifically also mean that everyone should be able to make use of our services. We can best serve the majority of people by ensuring a digital solution that is always available. For people who are not yet able or who do not wish to use a digital solution, there are other forms of contact.

Our starting point is autonomy for citizens and entrepreneurs. This means that we aim to make sure that people are able to deal with all those issues relating to them as a person, at a single location. Consider, for example, the possibility to revise your personal details, to have access to any data that is recorded about yourself, the ability to grant consent for the use of your personal data, and the management of your digital identity and your digital login facilities.

We aim to achieve this by turning the existing MijnOverheid (My Government) gateway into a place where individual citizens can take control of their own (personal) data. This will require a complete makeover of the existing My Government gateway. MijnOverheid and MijnOverheid voor Ondernemers (My Government for Entrepreneurs) are the places where individual citizens and entrepreneurs can correct any errors in the data recorded about them (or have those errors corrected. Any consequences of using incorrect information must be quickly rectified.

In the digital society, the role of digital identification applications is also growing. We therefore plan to investigate the possibilities of blockchain and biometric applications. This clearly also has a European component.
Some people struggle with digitalisation. We in government want to make sure that everyone can continue to participate in our society. We describe this as ‘digital inclusion’. Courses and support (also offered by other parties) should help people who are struggling with digitalisation. Citizens and entrepreneurs will be given more possibilities to issue digital authority to others who can then deal with various government-related issues on their behalf.

Everyone must be able to communicate with government in an understandable and secure manner. With that in mind, we want our services to align as closely as possible with the wishes, expectations and practical situations of citizens and entrepreneurs. We will be asking them to contribute their thoughts on improving our services. This will help improve confidence in digital government.

To the extent possible, we want government information and software to be available and accessible to everyone. Open data also offers parties other than government the capability of developing related services. Open source software increases transparency about how government systems operate, and it keeps us from being limited to one or a small number of suppliers.

**Actions**

**Right to digital services**

- Citizens and entrepreneurs will also be granted the right to submit applications and other official notifications that they currently issue in writing to government in a digital format. This will be made possible via the legislative bill on the modernisation of electronic administrative correspondence. Citizens and entrepreneurs will also be given the right to receive a digital confirmation of receipt. This legislative bill will be ready for discussion in Parliament by the end of 2018.
- To increase confidence in systems, people are entitled to information about who is accessing, using or passing on their data to others, at what moment, and for what purpose. This right is laid down in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The regulation imposes considerable demands on government organisations and may result in joint actions.
- We will aggregate general notifications in electrical bulletins at a central point and provide access to these. We will also be providing a facility enabling citizens with an account on MijnOverheid to be informed by e-mail of notices affecting their immediate surroundings. This legislative bill will be issued for consultation in the near future.

**Control of data**

- We are preparing a number of basic agreements for the secure and reliable exchange of data, and the control of data by the citizen or entrepreneur in question. In this process, we will take account of developments concerning the Payment Service Directive (PSD2) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) according to which people are given greater control over the data that relates directly to them, and which make it possible to use that data for other purposes.
- To enable citizens and entrepreneurs to take control of their own data, changes will have to be made to government data management, in particular in the basic registers. The correctness of data is of huge importance and calls for active management.
- We will be converting today’s MijnOverheid into a place where individual citizens can take control of their (personal) data.
- Either via MijnOverheid or MijnOverheid voor Ondernemers, citizens and entrepreneurs will be able to correct any data errors or have them corrected. We will then quickly rectify the consequences of any incorrect data.
Amal el Mahi (28) is a teacher at a public primary school Het Schateiland in Gouda.

“I have seen so much change in the six years I have been working here. Today, every child starting in year one has his or her own tablet. I personally view digitalisation as a positive development: the children are more motivated and you can better adapt your lessons to individual learning targets. On the other hand, you cannot rely on tablets unquestioningly. Children learn to count more effectively with actual objects - a clock or wooden blocks, for example - which also teaches them spatial awareness. And in a history class, for example, a well-told tale from antiquity is as popular as ever.”

Tablet teaching or not?

“It is a difficult balance: what should we teach digitally and what not? The University of Nijmegen is currently researching the effects of tablet teaching on learning results. My school is involved in the study. We recognise the importance of the controlled use of tablets: it is a means and not an end in itself! Something else we have seen is that parents often have more problems with digitalisation than their children. Some pupils have no one at home who can help them with a PowerPoint presentation or project and some have no computer at all. Do all the children truly have equal opportunities? That is something I sometimes worry about.”

Sensitive information

“The increasing degree of digitalisation makes schools vulnerable. For example, you need a good Internet connection. When it fails, you have to be able to fall back on books. Information protection is also important; that is something we are increasingly recognising. A digital pupil-monitoring system provides very valuable insights, but that information is not intended for everyone. We must of course prevent any information about a child’s home situation becoming public knowledge.”
Accessible, understandable and intended for everyone
Accessible and understandable information and services

• Everyone is entitled to access to digital information and services, including people with a disability. We are therefore investing in the implementation of requirements derived from European Directives on (digital) access, and which have been implemented in national regulations. We make sure that we stick to the rules by turning accessibility guidelines into legal requirements and by supervising enforcement.

• Right across government, we are using the principles of ‘User Central’ (Gebruiker Centraal) for the provision of information and services. People with reading and writing difficulties will be actively involved in further developing those skills.

• We aim to establish safe learning environments in which citizens and entrepreneurs can test government services.

• We are aiming for a government-wide approach to ensure a clear focus on what people expect in their contact with government – ease of use, reliability and a personal approach. With that in mind, we are working on common principles and agreements: the interaction strategy.

• We are encouraging (the development of) user-friendly digital products and services that require minimum (digital) skills; we aim to make life as easy as possible for people.

• We will also undertake structural long-term studies into citizens’ changing preferences.

We are in discussion with companies about how they can help people with digital communication.

Dicky Gingnagel (48) is a parking attendant in Amsterdam.

“I have always struggled with reading and writing. I eventually went back to school when I was about 30. In the end that gave me a huge confidence boost but then I faced the next challenge: today, more and more things can only be dealt with via a computer. For someone with poor literacy skills, that represents an additional level of difficulty. On websites I am often overwhelmed by the huge volume of information. There is so much text, and I do not know where to click. I personally think that this should be much simpler.”

Reliance on staffed counters

“I don’t hate computers as such. When I was at school, I even opted for an additional computer course. That was the time when Internet banking was being introduced. I really tried my hardest. And I succeeded too. After all, if I had any questions I could always ask a member of staff at the bank. But that is becoming increasingly difficult. And what about the municipal service counter in the future? I hope they continue to offer the possibility of personal contact.”

Larger world

“I recently purchased a smartphone. I can now keep up to date on the latest news – for example, news about my favourite football club, all day long. My niece sometimes sends me an app message to ask whether I am at home. It feels good to be able to answer her immediately. When I only had a landline, my world was much smaller. But one thing has not changed: I am still afraid of making mistakes. Particularly when it comes to money matters, I am afraid of taking risks. Before you know it, you have paid more than you needed to. Fortunately I have people around me who can help me.”
Digital identification tools and authorisations

• We want the Dutch identification system to be extremely reliable and practical, and not susceptible to fraud. We are working towards innovative solutions to guarantee these requirements.

• Over the next few years, we will be improving DigiD. Our strategy is to expand the group of DigiD rights holders, and to ensure that more people use DigiD at the ‘substantial’ level of reliability. There are also plans to offer DigiD at the ‘high’ level of Reliability. We will be authorising one or more private eID tools and will make it possible for eID tools from other EU Member States to be used in the Netherlands. This means that, in addition to DigiD, there will be other alternative login tools.

• To support businesses in transnational business, we will be organising mutual recognition of electronic identification (eIDAS Regulation 2014/910). We will also make it possible for citizens and businesses to use DigiD and eRecognition (eHerkenning) when purchasing a service from a public service provider within the European Union.

• We are launching a study into the use of automatic facial recognition and other forms of biometric identification. This includes an experiment with the use of identity data on a smartphone for people who make regular international flights. Together with the Association of Netherlands Municipalities and ten municipalities, we will be testing a range of new digital identification applications. We also intend to investigate digital identification and verification and the possible use of blockchain technology, based on data issued by individuals.

• The ICT infrastructure for passport and ID card applications will be updated. We then plan to develop options for document application irrespective of your location and the reuse of passport photographs and other biometric data in the event of loss or theft of an identification document. We plan to have this process in place by 2020.
• The Basic Registration of Persons will be adapted to the most recent wishes and requirements that have evolved from developments in society and technology. In particular, we will be focusing on the interests of the individual citizen and entrepreneur, and on improving service provision. We will make a start on this process in 2019. We will also be working together to improve the quality of the Basic Registration of Persons by continuing the National Programme for Address Quality (Landelijke Aanpak Adreskwaliteit).

• To increase autonomy, we will ensure that a reliable and practical form of digital authorisation is introduced. This will make it possible to do business digitally on behalf of another person or company. We will be drawing up an action plan for this service. The plan will also list which authorisation functions will be made available, and when. This is scheduled for 2019.

Open data
• As far as possible, we plan to make government data collections available to society in the form of open data so that the data in question can be used at multiple locations. To make this possible, we will be further improving and expanding access to the central open data gateway (data.overheid.nl).

• Based on the wide range of applications in which they can be used, open geographical data has already more than proven its value for society. We therefore intend to further develop basic geo-registration and better match the way in which these records are made available to the various types of users.

Open source software
• In order to make government less dependent on software suppliers, and in order to provide greater insight into the way in which certain software is structured, we are encouraging the use of open source software. We are therefore developing a knowledge network and will be preparing guidelines for the publication of proprietary software as open source software. We will also make it possible for government parties to operate more in line with open source principles and will reach agreements with them on this issue. As far as possible, we will remove any obstacles to the use and release of open source software.

Amal El Mahi, primary school teacher:
‘It is a difficult balance: what should we teach digitally and what not?’

Dicky Gingnagel, parking attendant:
‘I am still afraid of making mistakes. Particularly when it comes to money matters.’
Making our services more personal

Thanks to digitalisation, from the viewpoint of citizens and entrepreneurs, we can make our services more user-friendly, more personal and more proactive. For example: for the registration of a marriage, a birth, a business start-up or any other life event. In many of these situations, we often have to deal with a variety of service providers crossing the boundary between public and private life.

We in government wish to provide these services as a package whenever they are called for. We will focus our attention on the way these services are perceived by the individual citizen or entrepreneur. We will therefore be working to ensure that any services provided in cooperation with different government organisations are offered in a uniform, recognisable style. We call this ‘integrated service provision’.

To be able to match our services to individual needs, we are working to establish a central point where citizens and entrepreneurs can take control of their interactions with government, even if you are a Dutch national living abroad.

To make this centralisation possible, government organisations will have to exchange more data. Those organisations will therefore be collaborating more closely and ensuring that their systems and architectures are equipped for this task (for example, the Common Ground initiative currently being implemented within municipalities). Which government organisation they are dealing with will then become less important for individual citizens; what is far more important is the quality of the help they receive.

As government organisations exchange increasing amounts of data, they must take full account of information security, privacy and other rights. A sound legal basis is needed for the exchange of personal data. In addition to existing laws, we are working to establish a new legal basis for the exchange of data among cooperating government bodies. After all, citizens must be able to trust these organisations.
Citizens must be able to trust organisations.

Actions
Focus on life events
• We have determined three criteria for deciding which life events to deal with first: does a particular life event occur regularly? Are multiple implementing organisations involved? And is there a clear demand from society? Before the summer of 2019, we will have defined a series of checklists for life events that satisfy these criteria - for example: ‘I am in debt’, ‘I am moving house’, ‘I want to rent a home’, ‘I want to buy a home’, ‘I require long-term care’, ‘I am new to Holland’, ‘I am taking on a foster child’, ‘I am adopting a child’. For companies, the key life events are: ‘I want sustainable energy’ and ‘I am involved in a government tender procedure’. All of these events require information exchange in the chains and networks.
• Within the current Cabinet period, alongside the Ministry of General Affairs, the Chamber of Commerce and all affected government organisations, we will be working to harmonise service provision with regard to life events. We will work according to the ‘customer journey’ method.

Modernising government gateways
• We intend to improve MijnOverheid in such a way that citizens and entrepreneurs are able to access their personal data, make corrections (or have them made) and (re)use that data as required. In the future, as a citizen or entrepreneur, via MijnOverheid, you will be able to organise digital identification tools or authorisations, you will receive notifications from government, you will determine which communication channels and apps you wish to use, and you will be able to respond to notifications. To make this possible, there will have to be greater cooperation among Rijksoverheid.nl, Overheid.nl, Entrepreneursplein.nl, MijnOverheid and MijnOverheid voor Ondernemers.

Lazo Bozarov (47) is employed as a local government information services manager.

“In technical terms, a great deal is already possible; our challenge lies in the culture.”

Consensus culture
“Technology is not the problem; we in government should be able to offer apps that are just as user-friendly as those supplied by the banks. What sometimes holds us back is our consensus culture. Instead of demanding open standards from our suppliers, we go in search of common ground. In practice, that sometimes makes our systems unnecessarily expensive. That is why the VNG (Association of Netherlands Municipalities) recently launched its Organising Together Taskforce. Instead of coming up with an idea 388 times, we will jointly come up with just one single idea, and use it 388 times.”

Digital identity
“Today’s solutions, such as DigiD, are no longer the most forward-thinking possibilities out there. Consider digital identity, for example: a unique digital code on your mobile phone that enables you as an individual citizen to settle everything for yourself. Just think how useful that would be when registering a birth, taking out a mortgage, or in numerous other life events. It would even make it possible for individual citizens to decide who will be granted access to what data for what purpose and for how long. Only then is the focus truly on the individual!”
We will be focusing on the quality of formal digital correspondence between citizen and government so that it becomes understandable for everyone. We will increase user-friendliness by using new technologies such as chatbots. That makes it even more important to pay closer attention to the understandability of (digital) letters from government. Citizens and entrepreneurs can choose how digitally accessible they want to be. In elaborating this policy, we will still leave latitude for the individual nature of the various government organisations. We will reach government-wide agreements on these issues.

We will be launching the first version of MijnOverheid voor Ondernemers, specifically for entrepreneurs, before the summer of 2019. This will enable entrepreneurs to exchange messages with, and access data held by, various government organisations. Before the summer of 2019, the Berichtenbox Bedrijven (Business Message Box) will have been integrated with MijnOverheid voor Ondernemers for the first group of businesses. Over the next few years, in a step-by-step process, we will be expanding MijnOverheid voor Ondernemers on the basis of the most urgent wishes and needs of the entrepreneurs themselves.

Because the Chamber of Commerce is the first port of call for many entrepreneurs, we will also be transferring the Ondernemersplein to the Chamber of Commerce website before the summer of 2019. The information section of KvK.nl will then become the Ondernemersplein. To broaden the overall outreach, the content of the Ondernemersplein will also be accessible via the channels operated by other government organisations. This step will have been taken for at least 10 organisations by the summer of 2019.

In elaborating this policy, we will still leave latitude for the individual nature of the various government organisations.
We will be introducing a European gateway for accessing all widely used services within the European Union: the Single Digital Gateway. A number of these services must be made fully digitally available for cross-border transactions within the EU. With respect to these services, citizens and enterprises will be given the right to submit their data on just one occasion, within the entire EU. Agreements on this service will be laid down in a European regulation. In 2019, we will be submitting an impact analysis for its intended introduction in the Netherlands.

Standardisation
- Information and service provision for citizens and entrepreneurs must be accessible, secure and reliable. We intend to reach clear agreements on these issues. Integrated services also call for the sharing of information and cooperation among the different divisions of government, sector organisations and private parties (for example, concerning security, social security, education and healthcare). This too will require new agreements. These include a number of basic agreements to allow citizens and entrepreneurs to take control of their own data. We will also be introducing a special standardisation agenda that will also focus on supervision and enforcement.
- We recognise that progress based on standards such as Standard Business Reporting helps to reduce administrative burdens for entrepreneurs and makes it easier to do business with government. We are therefore actively searching for other sectors in which these standards could deliver potential added value, and will be encouraging the broader use of such standards.

Guaranteeing secure information and services
- We are investing in improvements in information security for government services. This also relates to the way in which civil servants handle personal data. We in government will do everything we can to prevent personal data becoming public knowledge. Systems and processes must also be well secured. Government organisations are responsible for their own information security. Government-wide cooperation is aimed at uniformity and standardisation wherever possible and necessary. The systems we build will, at all times, satisfy the requirements of government information security. We will be investigating what this means for legislation and supervision. In the autumn of 2018, we will be informing the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament about the further implementation of improved information security in government.

Lazo Bozarov, information services manager in local government:
‘Instead of coming up with an idea 388 times, we will jointly come up with just one single idea and use it 388 times.’
Ready for the future!

This agenda lists the operating principles and actions to be taken to achieve the government’s ambitions. We recognise the lightning speed at which developments take place in digitalisation. For that reason, this agenda is specifically intended to be an initial document, not cast in stone.

We will update the agenda at least once a year, making it a so-called ‘rolling agenda’. In the autumn, we will be reconsidering the management of existing programmes against the background of this agenda.

The agenda also serves as an invitation to other parties to join in. We in government are actively interested in cooperation with the scientific community, entrepreneurs and societal organisations. Our aim is to solve problems, to learn from one another and, above all, to enter into discussions about setting priorities. We intend to consider carefully whether the things we do actually make a contribution to solving the problems we recognise. In other words, we will constantly measure the effects of our policy and measures.

We want a society in which everyone can continue to participate and in which human dignity is paramount. We also want to improve the provision of government services to citizens and entrepreneurs. This makes us a government that keeps pace with developments. That will help us make the Netherlands ready for the future. A “DIGIbetter” Netherlands.
Appendix

1 We invest in innovation

| Parameters for eligibility for government innovation funding. | end 2018 |
| Innovation budget available. | from 2019 |
| Selection of promising innovation projects. | this Cabinet period |
| Pilots using new technologies. | this Cabinet period |
| Local democracy testbed. | starting in 2018 |
| Investigating and experimenting with new service concepts that put ‘taking control of your data’ into practice. | starting in 2018 |
| Upscaling the digital building file. | starting in 2018 |
| Identifying opportunities for smaller market parties within the existing tendering rules, including reduction of administrative burdens for tender participation. | 2019 |
| Encouraging use of methods for rapid innovation: permanent beta sciences. | this Cabinet period |
| Encouraging knowledge and skills within government. | Already started |

2 Protecting public rights and public values

| Active contribution to discussions on rights and digitalisation across Europe. | this Cabinet period |
| Dealing with social issues. | starting in 2018 |
| Dialogue with society on the effects of new technologies on rights and values. | this Cabinet period |
| Request for advice from WRR on impact of artificial intelligence on public values. | 2018 |
| Investigation into the impact of digitalisation on local democracy by Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations | this Cabinet period |
| Investigation of the impact of digitalisation on democracy by the Council for Public Administration. | at latest 2019 |
| The Government Committee on the Parliamentary System will include digitalisation as an important development in its work. | end 2018 |
| Tie-in with Rathenau Institute programming. | starting in 2018 |
| Ethics by design. | starting in 2018 |
| National Data Agenda. | end 2018 |
| Integrity and explainability of algorithms by government. | end 2018 |
| Letter from Minister for Legal Protection on transparency of algorithms. | autumn 2018 |
| Cabinet response to investigation into relationship between algorithms and fundamental rights (University of Utrecht). | summer 2018 |
# 2 Protecting public rights and values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigation into legal aspects of automatic decision-making.</td>
<td>starting in 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data rules and agreements.</td>
<td>already started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code Good Digital Administration.</td>
<td>mid 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future-proof legislation and strategic assessments.</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial investigation ‘Blockchain and the law’</td>
<td>autumn 2018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

# 3 Accessible, understandable and intended for everyone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislative bill modernisation of electronic administrative traffic.</td>
<td>end 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative bill for citizens according to which citizens with an account on MijnOverheid can be informed by e-mail of notifications that affect their immediate environment.</td>
<td>mid 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General notifications in electronic bulletins collected and accessible at a central point.</td>
<td>mid 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic agreements for secure and reliable exchange of data and control of that data by the affected citizen or entrepreneur.</td>
<td>mid 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes to government data management in particular basic registers.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Converting MijnOverheid into a place where citizens can take control of their (personal) data.</td>
<td>starting in 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via MijnOverheid and MijnOverheid voor Ondernemers, citizens and entrepreneurs can correct data errors (or have them corrected).</td>
<td>from 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We will quickly rectify the consequences of the use of incorrect data.</td>
<td>from 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive approach for digital inclusion.</td>
<td>end 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal enforcement of European Directives on (digital) access and establishing relevant supervision.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3 Accessible, understandable and intended for everyone

**Government-wide** we will be using the principles of *'User Focus'*. People who have reading and writing difficulties will be actively involved in developing information provision and services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equipping secure test environments where citizens and entrepreneurs can test their services.</td>
<td>early 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction strategy.</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing user-friendly digital products.</td>
<td>already started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-term structural investigation of changing wishes of citizens.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud-proof, reliable and practical innovative solutions for identification.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Further development of DigiD, and approval of one or more eID tools.</td>
<td>end 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mutual recognition of electronic identification (eIDAS).</td>
<td>starting in 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation of the use of automatic facial recognition and other forms of biometric identification, including experimentation.</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing various new digital identity applications.</td>
<td>between now and 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation of digital identification and verification, possibly using blockchain technology, including experiments.</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New ICT infrastructure for applying for passports and identification documents.</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 4 Making our services more personal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elaboration of first eight life events.</td>
<td>mid 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying new customer journeys for a large number of life events.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving MijnOverheid so that citizens and entrepreneurs can access their personal data.</td>
<td>early 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government-wide agreements on formal digital correspondence between citizens and government.</td>
<td>early 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First version of MijnOverheid voor Ondernemers.</td>
<td>mid 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferring Ondernemersplein to Chamber of Commerce website.</td>
<td>mid 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact analysis of implementation of Single Digital Gateway in the Netherlands.</td>
<td>mid 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic agreements for managing your own data for individual citizens and entrepreneurs.</td>
<td>mid 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardisation agenda.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation of sectors in which standards such as Standard Business Reporting can contribute to reduced administrative burdens for entrepreneurs and facilitating business with the government.</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved information security.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5 Ready for the future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Updating the Digital Government Agenda once a year.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review programme management.</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking active cooperation with the environment.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measuring effects of policy and measures.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modernising basic infrastructure.</td>
<td>this Cabinet period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Kadaster
Chamber of Commerce, KvK
National Archive, Na
Nederland ICT
Netherlands Register of Judicial Experts, NRGD
Netherlands Order of Registered EDP Auditors, NOREA
Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research, TNO
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Netherlands Enterprise Agency, RVO
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The following parties are represented in this consultation:

CIO-Rijk
The Association of Dutch Provinces (IPO)
Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy of the Netherlands
Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management
Ministry of Justice and Security
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment
Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport
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www.nldigitalgovernment.nl
www.rijksoverheid.nl
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