SOTWG 2022

**Netherlands Fact Sheet**

*This country fact sheet presents key Netherlands-specific findings from the Plan International survey for the State of the World’s Girls (SOTWG) Report 2022. For the global analysis, qualitative findings and details on the methodology please refer to the technical report. This document is for internal use only. If you have any questions about this fact sheet please email* *alison.wright@plan-international.org**,* *aisling.corr@plan-international.org**, or* *karin.diaconu@plan-international.org**.*

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How to read and use the factsheet information

**Structure and content**

This factsheet follows the same structure as the State of the World’s Girls 2022 global technical report. It includes summary statistics applicable to your country. To help contextualise these, a comparison to the findings of the global technical report are also included.

**Understanding limitations and how to interpret the data**

It is important to note that limitations apply both to the data within the global report and the conclusions that can be drawn from that, as well as individual country level data. Below, the most important notes to be considered are summarised:

1. **Consider the answer options of the question you wish to interpret carefully**

*Limitation 1:* Some of the survey questions included mutually exclusive answer options: e.g. allowing respondents to say ‘none of the above apply’. For these questions, the % corresponding to the number of respondents choosing the ‘none’ or other relevant option is presented and the remaining % are calculated based on the number of respondents who do express a view. This may mean that the sample of respondents from which relevant % corresponding to other types of answer options are calculated is at times lower than 1000.

It is important to note that those respondents who choose the ‘none’ or similar options are not comparable to the remaining respondents. For example, respondents choosing ‘none’ may be in a hurry or simply wish to skip the question, or they may feel uncomfortable about the other answer options but not have an alternative best answer choice. As such, no inferences can be made about the respondents choosing these ‘none’ answer options.

*Limitation 2:* Some of the survey questions did not allow for ‘other’ or ‘none’ type responses: e.g. in one question, respondents were asked to rate how they feel about specific statements about their political leaders, on a scale of 1-5. It is important to note that respondents may have felt uncomfortable with having to choose an answer option and may have therefore been likelier to choose the average answer option.

1. **Do not make claims of generalisability**

*Limitation:* The survey data is not nationally representative. While the sample for the survey attempted to be representative of underlying populations as far as possible, given that the companies are likeliest to have sampled wealthier and higher educated segments of society (who have access to the internet and phone), findings cannot be generalized.

1. **Social desirability bias** may have impacted survey findings. e.g. it is likely girls and young women feel they should report positive views of leaders, particularly in regions where voicing negative views may be discouraged.

Overview of survey respondents

**Regions:** In Netherlands, 1000 girls and young womenparticipated in the survey.

Table 1: Regional distribution of the sample

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| Region | Number of respondents | % |
| Noord & Oost Nederland | 322 | 32.2 |
| West-Nederland | 480 | 48 |
| Zuid-Nederland | 198 | 19.8 |
| Total | 1,000 | 100 |

**Age:** The surveyed girls and young women werebetween 15 and 24 years old. The majority (58%) were aged 20-24.

Figure 1: Age distribution of the sample

Based on total 1000 responses

**Residence:** The majority (581, 58%) of survey participants are from urban areas. 66 (7%) identified as living in rural areas and 3% identified as living in an informal settlement or slum.

**Intersectional characteristics:**

* 16% identify as LGBTIQ+
* 5% identify as belonging to a racial or ethnic minority
* 6% identify as belonging to a religious minority
* 2% identify as having a disability
* 3% identify as a displaced person or refugee.
* 17% identify as none of the above
* 4% preferred not to say

Priorities for political action

Survey respondents were asked to identify five priorities for political action among 15 options.[[1]](#footnote-2) Globally, only 3% of girls did not identify any of the listed issues as priorities for political action; in Netherlands this figure was 4%.

Of those who did select issues from the list, the top priorities for political action amongst girls and young women globally were: poverty and unemployment (55%); conflict and peace, community violence and crime (53%); environmental issues including pollution and climate change (52%) mental and physical health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights (47%); and access to education (41%).

The priorities for political action amongst girls in the Netherlands were broadly similar to the global average. The top issues amongst girls and young women in the Netherlands were: conflict and peace, community violence and crime (55%); environmental issues including pollution and climate change (59%); poverty and unemployment (54%); discrimination on the basis of race and ethnicity and LGBTIQ+ rights (50%) and mental and physical health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights (49%). The issues which received the lowest number of votes were: the COVID-19 response (17%); gender based violence (20%) and resource shortages (22%).

Figure : What do girls and young women identify as priorities for political action?

Based on total 963 responses

Political leadership and representation

Perceptions of political leaders

Globally, a mixed picture emerged from the survey in relation to girls’ and young women’s perceptions of political leaders. In Netherlands, views were similar overall to the global average, although a slightly lower proportion of respondents disagreed with the positive statements than the global average.

Figure : Girls and young women’s perceptions of political leaders

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Based on 1000 responses

**Feelings caused by actions of political leaders**

Globally, only 11% of girls and young women said that they were generally happy with the decisions of their political leaders, whereas in the Netherlands this figure was notably higher at 21%.

Globally, the majority of respondents indicated that they experienced negative feelings as a result of the decisions of political leaders. In the Netherlands, a smaller proportion of respondents who expressed a view reported that they had experienced negative feelings as a result of decisions made by their political leaders, compared to the global average.

Based on 808 responses

Perspectives on women political leaders

Globally, one in two survey respondents believed that it was acceptable for girls and young women in their community to become political leaders at local, provincial/state or national levels, or to become the nations’ leader. Views in the Netherlands were slightly more positive about the acceptability of girls and young women becoming political leaders, compared to the global average.

Globally, 40% of respondents who expressed a view agreed that female politicians suffer abuse and intimidation, and 42% agreed that they are judged for how they look or dress. These percentages were notably lower in the Netherlands (23% and 31% respectively)

Globally, 9% of girls and young women agreed with the statement ‘I don't think women are qualified to be political leaders’. This percentage is lower in Netherlands. (5%).

Table : Overall perceptions on women political leaders

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **In my community, it is acceptable for girls and young women…\*** | **Netherlands** | **Global average** |
|  | **n** | **%** |
| To become local political leaders (e.g. joining local council or leadership). | 509 | 57% | 57% |
| To become provincial/state or national political leaders (e.g. members of parliament). | 496 | 56% | 53% |
| To become our nation's leader (prime minister, president etc). | 472 | 53% | 49% |
| **When trying to participate or engage in politics, girls and young women may face the following challenges:\*\*** |  |
|  | **n** | **%** |  |
| I don't think women are qualified to be political leaders | 44 | 5% | 9% |
| Female politicians suffer a lot of intimidation and abuse  | 215 | 23% | 40% |
| Female politicians are often judged by the way they look or dress  | 294 | 31% | 42% |

\* Based on 892 responses

\*\* Based on 935 responses

Political participation

Reasons for participation

Globally, only 3% of respondents agreed with the statement ‘It is not important for girls and young women to participate in politics’, whereas in Netherlands this figure was 5%.

Globally, the most frequently selected reason for why girls’ and young women’s political participation is important was to ‘improve the situation of girls and young women in society’ with 67% of respondents identifying this as one of the main reasons for participating in politics. Similarly, in the Netherlands, the main reason for why girls’ and young women’s political participation was considered important was to ‘improve the situation of girls and young women in society’ (58%), followed by ‘to act as role models for the next generation’ (40%).

Figure 4: Reasons why it is important for girls and young women to participate in politics

Based on total 951 responses

Experiences of participation: what activities girls and young women take part in

Globally, 83% of girls and young women said they participated in politics in some form or had engaged with politics. Of those who reported participating, survey respondents globally had, on average, participated in 2.7 activities each. In the Netherlands, the overall level of political participation was lower than the global average; 72% of girls and young women said they participated in politics in some form or had engaged with politics and respondents had participated in an average of 1.9 activities each.

Globally, the most common participation activity was voting; 51% of girls globally who had participated in any activity reported having voted in an election (whether local or national). Of those eligible to vote[[2]](#footnote-3), 56% said they had voted. Similarly, in the Netherlands, the most commonly reported activity was voting in an election (48%), followed by signing a petition (45%).

Globally, the activities that girls and young women reported having conducted least were running for political office (11%), organizing a petition to collect signatures (12%) and communicating with an elected representative (14%). In the Netherlands, these were also the least frequently reported activities, with only 5% of respondents reporting running for office and 9% reporting communicating with an elected representative.

Globally, 74% of girls and young women report that they had participated in formal modes of political participation, most commonly through voting, compared to approximately 58% of girls who reported participating through informal channels. 65% of respondents reported they have engaged with politics by following through different media channels. In the Netherlands, 69% reported participating in formal modes; 64% through informal channels, and 52% reported they have engaged with politics by following through different media channels.

Figure 4: How girls and young women participate in or engage with politics: Activities

Based on total 722 responses

Experiences of participation: groups that girls and young belong to

Globally, 63% of girls and young women reported belonging to some form of group or organisation. In the Netherlands, this figure was notably lower at 48%

Globally, the most common type of group that girls and young women reported belonging to was a social group e.g. a sports group or religious group (40%); followed by a voluntary group that does something to help the community (33%). Similarly, in the Netherlands, amongst respondents who belonged to a group, the most common type was a social group (32%), followed by a messaging group where political or social issues are discussed (25%) Given the make-up of the sample it is important to note that some girls and young women would not have been able to access certain groups.

Figure 5: How girls and young women participate in or engage with politics: groups they belong to

Based on total 508 responses

Influences on political participation

Views of key challenges to political participation

Globally, 94% of survey respondents identified that girls and young women may face challenges when trying to participate in politics.[[3]](#footnote-4) In Netherlands, this figure was 93%.[[4]](#footnote-5)

Among the options listed, the top challenges chosen by respondents globally were: politicians not listening to girls and young women (35%); a lack of politicians to inspire engagement (32%) and politics not being open to young women or girls’ participation (31%). In the Netherlands, the top challenge identified by girls and young women was not understanding enough about political issues (35%), followed by not seeing politicians to inspire them (31%), and politicians not listening to girls and young women’ (26%).

*Figure 6: Perceived challenges to girls’ and young women’s political participation*

Based on total 935 responses

Social norms surrounding girls’ and young women’s participation

Globally, only around 1 in 2 girls and young women reported that their communities view it as acceptable for them to participate and engage in politics in diverse ways. Overall, in the Netherlands, acceptability of girls’ and young women’s participation was similar to the global average.

Globally, the most acceptable participation activity was reported as being ‘to use the internet and social media to speak out about an issue they care about in order to bring about social change’, which 65% of respondents say would be acceptable. Similarly, in the Netherlands, the most acceptable participation activity for girls and young women was reported to be using the internet and social media to speak out about an issue they care about in order to bring about social change (63%), while the least acceptable participation activity for girls and young women was reported to be influencing political leaders (51%).

*Figure 7: Social norms surrounding girls’ and young women’s political participation*

Based on total 892 responses

Changes to norms and barriers over time

Globally, the majority of survey respondents believe that it has become easier for girls to participate in politics when compared to the situation of older women in their communities. Responses from the Netherlands were similar to the global average.

Figure 8: Changes in ease of participation over time

Based on 1000 responses

Confidence to participate in politics

Globally, just under half of survey respondents reported being not confident or unsure about their confidence in carrying out diverse political participation or engagement activities. Girls and young women in the Netherlands were, overall, slightly less confident than the global average, with a smaller proportion reporting that they felt confident about undertaking most of the activities.

Globally, respondents report that they are least confident about standing as a candidate in an election (50% not confident), or persuading representatives of national governments or authorities of their own views regarding a topic they are passionate about (34% not confident). Similarly, girls and young women in the Netherlands felt least confident about standing as a candidate in an election (54% not confident), or persuading representatives of national governments or authorities of their own views regarding a topic they are passionate about (37% not confident).

Globally, respondents were most confident in following a television debate about a social, political or economic issue (56% confident); discussing an online or newspaper article on an issue they care about (55% confident). Similarly, in the Netherlands respondents were most confident about discussing an article on an issue they care about (47% confident), followed by following a television debate about a social, political or economic issue (44% confident).

Figure : Confidence to engage in political activities

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Based on 1000 responses

Knowledge of political topics and where this was gained

Globally, the majority of the survey respondents report knowing at least something about diverse topics associated with political participation. Knowledge of how people can vote in local or national elections was highest overall, with 83% of respondents reporting knowing everything or something about this. In the Netherlands, overall levels of knowledge of political topics were similar to the global average. How people can vote in local or national elections was also the topic which respondents in the Netherlands reported knowing most about; 86% of respondents reported knowing everything or something about this.

Globally, respondents reported knowing least about how politicians and political leaders in their country can be held to account (38% knew nothing about this). Whereas, amongst girls and young women in the Netherlands, knowledge of how to solve problems in their local community was lowest overall with 39% of respondents reporting knowing nothing about this.

Figure : Level of knowledge of political topics

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Based on 1000 responses

Globally, knowledge of political topics was gained primarily at home or from family (54%), at school or university (52%) or on social media (50%). The main sources of knowledge for girls in the Netherlands who reported knowing something about at least one political topic were also at home or from family (55%) and at school or university (50%), followed by social media (43%).

Figure : Where political knowledge was gained

Based on 961 responses

Aspirations for future participation

Globally, 21% of survey respondents reported not being interested in engaging or participating in politics at all in the future. In Netherlands, this figure was slightly higher at 26%.

Globally, the most popular options for future participation were engaging in discussions online (34%) or in person (34%); be part of or join a political movement online (29%) or in person (28%). In the Netherlands, girls and young women had lower aspirations overall - a lower than average percentage could see themselves engaging in all of the listed activities in future. The most popular option amongst girls and young women in the Netherlands who could see themselves participating in future was ‘engaging in political discussions online’ (22%), followed by engaging in political discussions in person (21%); being part of a political movement online (18%) or in person (18%)

Figure : Future aspirations for political participation

Based on 748 responses

1. The 15 options were grouped for the purposes of analysis [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Based on applying minimum legal voting age in national level for each Netherlands. Note that in some countries different legal voting ages apply at different levels of administration. Not all girls and young women who have the right to vote will have had the opportunity since becoming enfranchised. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Only 6% of respondents said that they experienced no challenges to participation, remaining respondents all identified at least one challenge. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Only 7% of respondents said that they experienced no challenges to participation, remaining respondents all identified at least one challenge. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)