



It's all about people

D66's 2006/2010 election programme

So much to do!

Much has been accomplished ...

D66 was founded forty years ago. In all that time our mission has remained the same: give people more say in who governs them and in how those governing run their lives and their country. Over the years, these core Democrats '66 positions have gradually become widely accepted. People's right to determine their own lives has become the norm: abortion, euthanasia and gay marriage are now socially accepted. Ombudsmen, patients' rights and victims' right to speak are now permanent features of modern society. Nowadays we can shop whenever we want. Innovation and sustainability are on the political agenda. We now know the economy and the environment can be managed in harmony, as the Wadden Sea proves. And despite the reluctance of most political parties, direct elections for the offices of prime minister and mayor will be a fact one day. Why? Because more and more voters want to be able to choose for themselves.

...and now new challenges lie ahead

You might say that D66's mission has been accomplished. D66 was born out of a reaction against the ruling elite and socio-political segregation. Yet our politicians have been unable to keep up with the rapid development of modern society. The relationship between citizens and their elected representatives is the same as it has always been. The need for D66 to place this issue on the political agenda has never been greater. Moreover, new conservative forces are at work, trying to stifle development toward a truly open and social society. And it's only in an open society that everyone can develop their talents.

> The limit had been reached

If there is one thing we will not stand for, it is arbitrary and inappropriate use of power. We will have no part of it. Power never precedes the law. A minister that abuses her power and refuses to be held to account is not wise, but obstinate. We therefore decided to leave the Cabinet. The limit had been reached. In a situation like that, what matters most is being true to what really matters. When clarity and decisiveness degenerate into harshness and rigidity, we know the limit has been reached. Rules exist to serve people. Not the other way around.

New elites

New elites have arisen. Elites made up of people who are taking advantage of the current state of confusion to secure what they have always wanted: more power and control. They wish to govern on a basis of distrust rather than trust. Their regulations undermine our civil liberties and violate our privacy. Theirs are regulations that obstruct talent, hamper enterprise and infringe on our right to live our lives as we wish. While these new elites create a false sense of security, they are in fact harming our freedoms. Where they wish to close borders, we welcome the challenge of globalization and prefer to see the Netherlands and Europe as one.

New conservatism

There are many that want to preserve the status quo. They intend to stay right where they are and view their positions as unassailable. They aren't interested in future generations or the rest of the world. They shut others out from what they themselves have acquired. They fear losing what they have: the good job, the beautiful house, the guaranteed pension. Quite understandable. But out of that fear comes a desire to exclude others. From the job market and from the housing market. From the Netherlands and from Europe. Too much has become inaccessible. Education and healthcare. Social security and the pension market. This culture of fear and exclusion can be observed internationally, too: rich countries are unwilling to share with poorer countries; they are reluctant to open up their markets. Established interests everywhere are being protected from new entrants. The result is a growing gap between young and old, rich and poor. A gap that leads to conflict we don't want and we certainly don't need.

> Equal opportunities

Insiders versus new entrants: this is the new standoff. We want a society where everyone has a fair and equal chance to develop and grow. We are therefore against the conservatism of interest groups, both left and right. Against the self-interest of the populists, both left and right.

No walls

Inequality and exclusion breed civil war and terrorism. We oppose Western hypocrisy and meddling that results in wars such as that in Iraq. We will not be party to such a war. We are against new walls that restrict freedom of movement, such as the wall dividing Israel and Palestine. But we also oppose the imaginary walls between countries that aspire to EU membership and those Member States that seek to keep them out. And we wish to address those wrongs that we all know about and that we are (indirectly) party to, such as Guantánamo Bay, where human rights are trodden underfoot. While at the same time others seek to threaten our freedoms with fundamentalist world views, often in the guise of religion. Their worst enemy is our open society. Their greatest victory would be the surrendering of our freedoms and convictions through fear. That must never be allowed to happen.

> Free-thinkers

D66 has renewed, or perhaps we should say “refund”, its mission. We have returned to our roots, gone back to the basics. Liberalism is our source of inspiration. Democracy is in our genes. The relationship between government and citizen has changed far too little. The upkeep of our democracy has been lacking. We have no attachment to vested interests and structures. We are the political free-thinkers. The time has come again to break down established structures. To introduce new forms of direct democracy. To give people more freedom and influence. Not just the fortunate and fortunated, but everyone. Young and old, rich or poor. This is a matter of decency.

Breaking down barriers

We want a society in which everyone can participate and no one is excluded. And so we support new entrants. This means breaking down barriers. Eliminating subsidies, tax breaks and protectionist regulations which, though once considered useful and well intentioned, have now distorted the market and serve primarily to protect vested interests. The entire system of interest relief for home-owners and subsidies for tenants has created a housing market that is obscure and inaccessible. It is a system that is unsustainable in the long term and one that impedes economic growth and social development. It is a system that forces people to stay put, eroding mobility. It is a system that benefits those already sitting pretty and disadvantages the young looking for their first home. The same is true of the labour market with its “last-in first-out” philosophy, designed to protect those with the longest tenures. And as for the declaration of the universal application of collective labour agreements, it completely ignores differences between companies. It hampers the healthy growth and natural development of business and stifles innovation. Powerful dismissal protection legislation discourages hiring and leaves young people with meagre contracts. D66 wants to change the rules governing dismissal. D66 is for a more flexible labour market. And D66 wants to provide full support, tax-related and otherwise, to those starting their own businesses.

> Differences are the spice of life! But not unfair differences

People may not all be the same, yet they are all equal. D66 values differences. Differences between people make life dynamic and exciting. Differences help people grow, which in turn stimulates the economy, boosts social development and fosters cultural diversity. Everyone benefits. What we are against is unfair differences. What we find unacceptable is the use, or even misuse, of power to preserve differences for reasons of self-interest. No more artificial structures to protect vested interests, such as rent protection for those who don’t need it, agricultural subsidies that keep Third World farmers impoverished and the tightest dismissal protection for those with the longest tenures.

A government that serves

We want a government that says “Yes”. A government that uses clear and transparent legislation to create a well-defined and level playing field for everyone. A playing field where everyone can live, work and do business. A government that sets conditions for growth and development, not one that throws up hurdles in the form of regulations and licensing requirements. This will mean far less hassle and bureaucracy (something that many civil servants welcome and are already working towards). We don’t have exaggerated expectations of government. The government is not responsible for our own personal happiness. After all, the government is not a happiness factory. And the government cannot regulate every aspect of life, neither can it anticipate every eventuality. *There will always be a certain level of risk.* What we want is a government that is less intrusive but that is aware of its role as a service provider. The government belongs to all of us and exists to serve the citizens of this country. There is a reason why “Minister” means “servant”.

Investing in sustainability

We are too dependent on polluting fossil fuels (oil and gas) which are, in any case, being depleted. The scarcity of fossil fuels is the cause of tensions worldwide. We want to switch as soon as possible to renewable sources of energy that do not harm the environment, such as wind, sun and biogas. Moreover, large-scale research into new and clean technologies is required. By using the profits from the Dutch natural gas resources and working closely with the private sector, we want to focus investment on developing renewable energy sources. This will allow the Netherlands to play a leading role in the creation of a sustainable society and provide the country with many economic (export) opportunities.

The best possible education

And most important of all: D66 is for more and better education. Our children deserve the very best education can offer. Investing in knowledge is essential. We want to see the Netherlands at the top of the education league. That will mean a multi-billion-euro investment. We want a Dutch education system that offers the highest quality and broadest diversity. That means freedom for schools, teachers, universities and scientists to shape education along professional lines as only they know best. Freedom for parents, pupils and students to participate fully in decisions concerning education. Education is the best guarantee for a person's continued development, be it personal, social or economic. A good education gives us the freedom to make our own choices and face the future, not with fear but with confidence. A well educated population that is confident fosters social cohesion and solidarity.

> A free world

D66 is pleased to take the lead in creating an open society without barriers. A society in which everyone is free to develop to his or her full potential. Creating a world in which a dignified existence can be had by all. More than ever, we want to do what we're good at: developing and supporting ground-breaking initiatives in the Netherlands, Europe and the world, be it renewable energy or micro credits, human rights or nature development. The Netherlands is one of the world's most developed countries. We want to retain this position and build on its success. In a sustainable world where everyone has a fair chance to prosper and grow.

Five indicators of a progressive social-liberal vision

- > Trust in people's own power**
- > Think and act internationally**
- > Reward performance and share wealth**
- > Work toward a sustainable and harmonious society**
- > Cherish our civil rights and shared values**

In the 2006/2010 election programme you will find concrete solutions to today's issues. The day-to-day reality of parliamentary work, however, is far more variable than we could possibly predict now. There will no doubt be issues that are only briefly touched upon, if at all, in this programme.

We have therefore chosen to translate our basic principles and ideas into five "indicators". Should any uncertainty arise, our elected representatives will give precedence to these indicators over solutions which, at the time of writing, may have seemed logical and valid, but which have subsequently been overtaken by the facts on the ground.

> Trust in people's own power

We believe in people's own power and their power to develop. This is why we feel optimistic about the future. People have the creative ability to keep coming up with new solutions themselves. We want a government that supports people's intrinsic creativity and resourcefulness. People themselves are the key to change and we want a government that acknowledges this fact. What people can do for themselves and for others is far more important and effective than anything a government might legislate.

> Think and act internationally

Societies are becoming interdependent in ever more ways. We welcome the entire world and wish to exclude no-one. In everything we do, we consider the effects our actions may have on others in the world. We recognise that Europe and the Netherlands are increasingly becoming one. International cooperation and economic progress are the keys to a world with fewer wars and conflicts. Our actions must be pragmatic, level-headed and based on facts.

> Reward performance and share wealth

People may not all be the same, yet they are all equal. People are different and we want a government that provides the freedom for those differences to flourish. We seek economic independence for as many as possible and we believe in rewarding those who have excelled. We want a dynamic, open society in which everyone has the freedom to make their own decisions and to develop as they wish. We consider it a matter of course that wealth should be shared. We want to see the maximum number of people participating socially and economically because this is the road to increased prosperity for us all. We acknowledge that for we all bear a responsibility for those in our society in less fortunate social and economic circumstances.

> Work toward a sustainable and harmonious society

We want to embrace the world with respect and compassion. Respect and compassion for the people around us and for our environment. The earth is not our personal property and it is no consumer item. We wish to stop the depletion and pollution of our environment. We feel the discussion on the environment should shift its focus from finding arguments for preservation to finding arguments for damage.

> Cherish our civil rights and shared values

The fundamental values of our society are freedom and equality for everyone, regardless of beliefs, religion, sexual orientation, leanings or origins. Physical safety, non-violent solutions to conflicts of interest and freedom of expression that is observed with respect, including respect for our democracy, are our core values. These values are universal and paramount. We defend civil rights, both at home and elsewhere.

People develop

> Education: five billion extra / Raising teachers' salaries / Freedom and responsibility for schools and students

Good education provides the basis for a society in which everyone can show the best of their capabilities and get the most out of themselves. Good education is also necessary for a strong economy, to make the country an attractive investment prospect for investors. And good education is necessary to create a clean and safe country, one in which people accept each other as they are.

At the moment, by contrast, too many pupils are leaving primary school unable to read and write or are leaving the education system prematurely. There are not enough good teachers, their true value is not being recognised and, moreover, the profession is not attractive enough. The quality of primary and secondary education is below par and the relevance of vocational education to trade and industry could also be a great deal better.

In the Netherlands no less than 1.5 million adults have difficulty with reading, writing or arithmetic. Of this number, some one million are of Dutch descent and half-a-million of non-Dutch descent. Their poor literacy and numeracy stops these individuals from participating fully in society. They have difficulty achieving their own goals and are unable to independently develop their knowledge and skills any further.

The Netherlands is investing too little in its future. Our investments in education fall short of those of comparable European countries, yet for the Netherlands knowledge will be the mainstay of our future prosperity. For the most part, highly educated people deliver knowledge-based services, which tend to have a high added value.

For D66, education is a top priority. The Netherlands must offer the best education in Europe. This requires strong measures. No sweeping government-led education reforms, but scope for schools, institutions, pupils and parents to make their own choices and take their own responsibility. And scope for the development of individual talents and capabilities. What's more, bureaucracy must be reduced – bureaucracy caused by both the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the educational institutions themselves.

The improvement in the quality of education and teaching staff requires substantial investment. D66 ensured that the study grant was raised by EUR 150 to compensate for the increased costs of health insurance and ensured that the public transport season ticket for students was retained when CDA and VVD wanted to restrict its use. More importantly, D66 turned the tide of educational cut-backs. Thanks to D66, billions have been added to the budget in recent years. Nonetheless, more is needed to raise our education system to its rightful level. During the coming eight years a structural increase of EUR 5 billion is required.

Trust in schools / Freedom of choice / Customisation / Fewer drop-outs / Better progression / Investing in teachers / Quality at the top

Trust in schools

> **Realising autonomous improvement in education.** Schools and institutions themselves best know what is good for their pupils and students. They themselves can take responsibility for the education they offer. This requires placing trust (in the form of money and freedom) in them instead of distrust (in the form of rules). Similarly, in the coming years D66 would like to see no major educational reforms imposed from The Hague. Schools may introduce educational improvements themselves and decide for themselves whether they want smaller classes, give pupils more individualised education, implement a digital learning environment or allot teachers more time for professional development. Thus, as far as D66 is concerned, the government should be taking a big step back. Let's get rid of unnecessary regulations.

> **No inspectorate but accountability.** Schools that take initiatives to improve education must not be inhibited by obstacles erected by the government, rather they should be encouraged during the implementation phase. Someone who takes responsibility can also give account of his or her actions. In the first instance, schools will give that account to those concerned: parents and secondary education. The schools inspectorate will be charged only with ensuring that this account is properly given.

Freedom of choice

> **Admission duty in special education.** D66 values the freedom of parents to send their child to the school of their choice. At the moment, schools in the special education sector can refuse pupils. D66 wants an admission duty for schools provided pupils and parents respect the principles of the school. This would make it no longer possible to discriminate on the basis of a religious principle. This does not require that Article 23 of the Dutch Constitution be scrapped.

> **Support for the broader school.** If the neighbourhood, parents and/or children indicate their support for a broad school that combines education with, for example, afterschool programmes, sport, culture, and homework sessions and/or social welfare institutions, the local government must create the scope for this, drawing on both the education budget and other budgets to do so. To enable the integration of education, culture and sport, education and welfare policy must form a consistent whole. In practice this means adopting a client-focused approach.

More customisation

> **No support for 'learning factories'.** Some schools and institutions, especially ROCs (Regional Education and Training Centres) in the large cities, have become little more than 'learning factories'. This makes it harder to take a personal approach toward the pupils. And so the goal of ever bigger schools must be relinquished, and even counteracted, by making further changes to the lump-sum financing system and by lowering the number of pupils below which a school is automatically closed. Obstacles that deny pupils the chance to choose from several secondary schools should be removed by the government.

> **Reinstate the MAVO.** D66 wants to see an end to the uniformity in education that aims to make all pupils the same. The vmbo (pre-vocational secondary education) must be more customised to pupils' needs. Pupils must be able to do what they have chosen to do and have greater scope to focus on what they are good at. So, more freedom for schools to offer pupils something extra, or to offer additional training. D66 was against the abolition of the mavo (junior general secondary education) and still wants to see the obstacles to this form of education removed. The mavo's broad basic education offers more opportunities, more choices and greater options for progression to the havo (senior general secondary education) than the theoretical vmbo learning path.

> **Personal budget for children who need extra care.** For pupils who need extra care, it is always a case of examining where they can best fulfil their potential. Children with learning difficulties need genuinely special education, and sometimes a separate school is the best place to offer that. In their mainstream schools, gifted children often miss the challenge they need. For both groups, D66 wants to see a 'backpack' or rather a personal budget to pay for extra help, learning support or extra learning materials. A child's 'backpack' must be used 100% for that child.

D66 accepts that the costs of special education will increase and is of the opinion that it will always be necessary to earmark part of the education budget for this purpose.

> Freedom and responsibility for students. D66 wants students to have genuine freedom of choice and to take responsibility for the choices they make. A job on the side, foreign placement or administrative role, all of which mean the student spends less time on his or her course studies for a while, must be possible without the loss of 'learning rights', but should not be at the state's expense. For this reason, students in higher education will receive a personal budget. With this approach, the government funding of educational institutions runs via the student. Based on the European Credits her or she attains, the student 'settles the bill' with their university or HE college. Students pay only for the education they receive and must account for the results they achieve.

> The system of study funding won't change and should continue to combine responsibilities held by the government, parents and the student. As part of this approach, D66 wishes to retain the basic grant and does not support a social loan system or an academic tax. Opportunities to earn extra money will be broadened. And for course switches, for example from hbo to wo (vocational HE to university), learning rights will be used so that graduation is not hindered. All students must feel challenged to get the most out of their higher education, both on the course they are following and in the scope they have for personal development outside their course.

Fewer drop-outs

> Children with a language deficiency to school at the age of two. One in fourteen children currently leaves primary school without being able to read and write properly. In many cases, children begin to trail behind their peers in their language development even before they arrive at primary school. When pupils are illiterate when they join the secondary school, their problem becomes insurmountable for regular education. Often, they simply don't stand a chance in the rest of their educational path. For this reason, D66 wants an approach that involves both prevention and teaching the missing skills. The pre-school and pre-school education must be available to children as young as two-years-old who have a language deficiency. Moreover, their parents will be involved through language and arithmetic programmes that are related to the child's education. No child will leave primary school before he or she can read and write. The tools for achieving this will be extra language lessons, a summer course and, if necessary, an extra year at primary school.

> Better guidance. The problem of young people leaving school without qualifications is a growing one. In response, D66 wants to see more scope and support given to the institutions that cater for and offer guidance to pupils with problems, provided they can demonstrate that their approach works. This includes time-out projects, rebound, support teams, school social work, the school doctor and the neighbourhood police constable. This would make secondary education accessible to everyone and keep the drop-out percentage to a minimum. In particular, strong support would be given to approaches combining working and learning. A young person without work and not willing to enter education might receive reduced benefit.

> Stopping bullying and violence at school. The bullying of pupils and violence in secondary and primary schools deserve more attention. For example, we need a national reporting centre and every school must be required to draw up a policy, together with parents and pupils, to address this problem.

> Home visits to truants. Truancy must be tackled in its earliest phase. If it is found that a pupil is truanting and there is no parental response to the school's invitations, a representative of the school will make a home visit to ensure that the child returns to school. The school's representative – teacher, school social worker, school attendance officer or someone from the Youth Care Agency – will have the authority to impose sanctions if parents do not wish to cooperate.

> National facelift and caretakers. To do well at school or university, students have to feel at home on the premises. Many schools are struggling with a considerable lack of space, a backlog in repairs and general filthiness. D66 wants a national facelift for educational institutions and wishes to see caretakers appointed for primary schools.

Better progression

> Giving late-developers the time they need. Many pupils' early performance gives little indication of the higher level they are later able to achieve. Or they lose ground because they have problems during puberty. For this reason, D66 wants to stop the incentives schools have to abandon problem pupils as quickly as possible. Moreover, the progression of pupils between mavo/vmbo and havo/vwo (pre-university education), and for students between mbo/hbo and university, must be without obstacles and encouraged. This can only benefit pupils, especially pupils with a developmental difficulty, language or otherwise, for whom the opportunity to get the best out of themselves at a later date will remain intact.

> **Part-time education.** Good training courses must be available for people who work and wish to use ‘second-chance education’ or lifelong learning to obtain a diploma. Employers must be encouraged to make facilities available for employees in part-time education.

> **International Baccalaureate for international admission.** Students who wish to study abroad must be able to do so. This is why D66 wants more secondary schools to offer an International Baccalaureate diploma as the school-leaving qualification. This diploma, which concludes a bilingual education, offers better opportunities for studying abroad.

> **The door to university will stay open.** Universities can select students on the basis of the subjects they have studied, but D66 would like to see every student with the right diploma having the chance to gain admission. Programmes for students progressing from one level of education to the next will, of course, be encouraged.

> **Fixed admission numbers for courses in the medical branch will be scrapped.** In connection with this, existing initiatives to create fully fledged medical faculties in Enschede and Tilburg will be approved.

> **HBO masters.** Companies often need highly-qualified specialists and many students want to excel in a profession rather than in science. For this reason, D66 wants to see the hbo (vocational HE) offer a Master’s education. Trade associations *must* be consulted about the content of the funded hbo courses. After all, they know what companies need in terms of knowledge and skills. The trade associations can have decisive influence on non-funded courses, which they can finance as in-company training.

> **Trainee post, no doubt about it.** A feature of high-quality vocational education is that the subject matter taught enables the student to make a smooth transition to subsequent training or to work. Work placements and on-the-job learning are essential to achieving this. They enable pupils studying vmbo and MBO (pre-vocational secondary education and intermediate vocational education) to better understand what they are working towards, which in turn reduces the drop-out rate. So schools need to organise these ‘real-world’ activities, in cooperation with students and companies. Supervision is, of course, a condition for success. For companies, the organisation and supervision of work placements and trainee positions must be tax deductible. Work placements with institutions will be funded in a similar way. In return, companies and institutions must be receptive to having requirements imposed on the students’ supervision.

Investing in teachers

> **More recognition for the good teacher.** Teachers are professionals who do important work for our society. They are the people best suited to getting the most out of pupils. Our appreciation of their work should be expressed, at least in part, in their financial remuneration. At present, the attractiveness of the profession varies greatly from sector to sector and, in some cases, even from subject to subject. In vmbo (pre-vocational secondary education) and primary education, in particular, teaching should be a great deal more attractive than it is. For this reason, D66 wishes to invest 10% more in teachers’ salaries. Some of this money will be used to recognise well-trained and excellent teachers.

> **Teachers with knowledge.** On teacher-training courses the real professional knowledge is too often overlooked in favour of pedagogy. For teachers in training, it must become more enjoyable and challenging to spend time working on the job of teaching and the content of their specialist subject(s). For schools, too, the right balance between pedagogy and subject content must be found. The training of teachers must involve good cooperation between training institutes and schools. Together, schools and training institutes determine whether a student knows and can do enough to become a good teacher. The admission requirement for teacher training is at least havo (senior general secondary education) with science A.

> **Teachers with ‘real-world’ knowledge.** There is a growing need for knowledge to be exchanged between trade and industry and education. Companies and institutions will be encouraged (e.g. fiscally) to offer teaching posts in education. Companies and schools will be encouraged to set up exchange systems for teachers. In this way, ‘real-world’ experience will filter through to students.

> **The teacher is master.** As far as D66 is concerned, teaching must become a more attractive profession. This means ensuring that teaching is a genuine option upon graduation. D66 therefore wishes to see the postgraduate teaching diploma to become a recognised Master element (Bachelor of Education). Then, having achieved a Bachelor degree, students will have the option of doing a Master of Education (ME). In addition, it must become easier for students who hold a Master’s in a particular subject to become qualified to teach that subject.

> **Retaining young teachers and managing mass retirement.** Some students who have graduated in teacher training are currently unable to find a teaching job. Out of necessity, many of them are taking other jobs. However, in a couple of years’ time, there will be a major shortage of teachers. Thanks to D66’s proposal to release extra money to retain these young teachers, it recently became possible for them to find jobs as teachers and thus for schools to benefit

from their having been trained. Temporarily, schools are receiving extra teachers so that they will be better able to cope with the mass retirement of teachers expected in a couple of years. The extra EUR 29 million that has been earmarked for this purpose cannot be poached. This money can also be used to enable primary school teachers to retrain and teach in secondary education.

Quality at the top

Higher education is an important key for tomorrow's society. A society whose mainstay is knowledge must get the most out of its people throughout the entire education system. HE colleges and universities are institutions in which students can develop to the best of their ability into practitioners of professions and first-class academics. Higher education must be and remain available to everyone with the right preliminary education. The Netherlands must strive for a workforce in which at least 50% of its members have completed higher education. Within that vision there must be much more scope for diversity and for excellence than is currently the case. In both Bachelor's courses and the Master's phase the pursuit will always be to realise the education and training that best suits the talents and motivation of every student. A dynamic system of HE colleges and universities, genuine freedom of choice and responsibility for students and first-rate research will come together to create an environment in which both the Dutch economy and our society as a whole can contribute effectively to tackling the many challenges in the coming years. And so D66 wishes to put an end to the decline in the budget for students and create scope for excellent research and those who excel, in both academic and vocational higher education.

> More expensive Master's courses, if they are higher quality. Bachelor courses must be available to everyone who has the right preliminary education. Differentiation in tuition fees is only acceptable, therefore, for Master's courses and only then if the Master's course in question demonstrably offers more quality. In this way, D66 wishes to create the possibility for talented students to continue their development.

> Encouraging elite young scientists. D66 wants better supervision of research assistants (aio) and trainee research workers (oio) doing doctoral research. To increase the attractiveness of doing research, the legal status of young researchers will be improved. D66 wants the measures designed to encourage the appointment of elite young scientists to be extended to university lecturers and senior lecturers. D66 wants to increase substantially the number of doctoral students as well as the number of positions available for PhD graduates to progress to as postdocs. This will also have a positive influence on the position of women in science.

> International exchange. D66 is in favour of exchange relationships with educational institutions at every level because this is an effective way to learn about one another's culture and to curb radicalism. It helps give young people a future perspective. For these reasons, more attention for Europe must be embedded in the curriculum of educational institutions. As well as greater appreciation of the value of learning languages.

> Boosting organised sport. Sport is good for our health and the battle against overweight. It is also an excellent way to foster integration. Sport teaches young people to adhere to certain rules. Drop-out rates are much lower at schools in which sport is a priority. For this reason, the number of hours of PE must be increased to what it was. All reasons for the government to support organised sport. This can be achieved by giving the infrastructure a financial boost, but also by scrapping obstructive rules and by making voluntary work more attractive. Elite sport, too, deserves proper support. D66 wants the Netherlands to host an Olympics in the future. If this is to happen, the necessary action must be taken today, in consultation with the sporting world.

Investing an extra EUR 5 billion

In the opinion of D66, another EUR 5 billion in long-term support is needed to make the necessary investments in education. Various recommendations of the Innovation Platform, the Advisory Council for Education, the SME sector, unions and educational associations substantiate this amount. Specific amounts have been included in the financial analysis accompanying this programme.

In recent years, EUR 2 billion has already been invested. In each of the next two Cabinet terms, D66 wants another EUR 2.5 billion extra to be invested. With this recommendation, D66 is sticking to the 'knowledge investment agenda' and the Netherlands will be restored to the European vanguard in terms of investment in education.

**People
DESERVE
BETTER**

> Continuing with economic reforms / Keeping pension contributions affordable / 1 Billion for energy transition / More people in employment / Affordable childcare

D66 is convinced that an open, sustainable economy, based upon the production of goods and services by businesses, is what brings the most prosperity to our country. After a number of years of stagnation, the Dutch economy is once again showing growth. D66 is convinced that the policy pursued by this Cabinet, which was partly developed by D66, has strengthened the potential for growth of the Dutch economy.

D66 believes that the true openness of our economy, combined with social cohesion, will enable the Netherlands to benefit from the major changes that are occurring in international economic relations. The rise of the Chinese and Indian economies, the energy giants that are developing in Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela among other places, and the shifting of economic activities to low-wage countries will all have an effect on the Dutch economy.

On the international market, innovation and knowledge are becoming distinct weapons of competition. It no longer suffices to be competitive in terms of price or quality. Productivity, talent, knowledge and international focus are crucial competitive factors. This is also about people who will make the difference.

D66 strongly believes in the power and the resourcefulness of people and businesses. The way in which tax regulations and other regulations are formulated must be in line with the changing economy. In this regard, account must be taken of the fact that an increasing number of self-employed people are conducting business without personnel and flexible partnerships are constantly being established and dissolved. The explosive growth of e-commerce, which is no longer concerned by traditional national borders, illustrates the dynamism of an economy in which the government is, by definition, behind the times. D66's vision is of a Netherlands in which economic activity does not originate through subsidies, but through creating conditions and removing barriers.

D66 wants to create a strong government, in an open and competitive economy, which follows and stimulates market developments. Barriers to participation in the economy must be lifted. D66 sees globalisation as a necessity for a better future. Open borders and an internationally-oriented economy result in higher incomes and greater solidarity between old and young, active and inactive, newcomers and existing citizens.

The Netherlands is commended internationally for its economic policy of wage restraint, system reform and sound public finances. Nevertheless, D66 realises that this policy has put pressure on social cohesion in our own country. A sustainable society must care for its citizens if they are unable to care for themselves. Poverty is totally unacceptable in the Netherlands and we must also endeavour to combat this evil on an international level by devoting ourselves to the millennium objectives and worldwide fair trade.

Economic development must not be to the detriment of the environment. Ecosystems are also of international economic importance. The government can contribute towards making the economy greener and more sustainable by adjusting its purchasing policy and taking appropriate measures.

D66 also wants to invest in environmentally friendly energy. The use of fossil fuels is having a devastating impact on the environment of our planet. Global warming is responsible for increasing drought and rising sea levels. But reducing the use of fossil fuels is not only in the interests of the environment. Our high dependence on unstable regions for these fossil fuels is another reason to use alternative energy sources. During the oil crises in the seventies, a number of countries, including the Netherlands, experienced the consequences of such a high dependency. The gas crisis at the beginning of 2006, which was caused by a dispute between Russia and Ukraine, is the most recent illustration of the major political sensitivity surrounding the issue of fossil fuels.

Removing barriers for labour force participation and increasing flexibility / Keeping pensions affordable / Reducing the tax burden / Improving administrative organisation / Factoring in sustainability objectives / High level of dedication towards millennium objectives / 1 Billion for energy transition

Removing barriers

The mission to remove barriers in order to transform the Netherlands into a truly competitive, innovative and flexible economy has barely begun. In order to succeed in this mission, D66 believes that having faith in the resourcefulness of the people as entrepreneurs must guide the various decisions which now urgently need to be made.

This means opening up markets to newcomers. This also means removing barriers for outsiders to the labour market. Discrimination in application processes is one such barrier. Removing barriers to the labour market and increasing the flexibility of that market will increase the labour force participation rate, which is one of the most effective and fairest instruments for strengthening the economy.

In this connection, it is also very important to introduce further measures in relation to childcare. D66 views childcare as a basic condition for being able to combine work with having a family. Childcare must therefore be made as accessible as possible to all those who want to contribute to society in their own way, whether it be through employment, studying or volunteer work. The possibility for parents to choose an institution themselves and to negotiate with this institution with regard to opening times and the service level offered is one advantage of the Netherlands Childcare Act. D66 does, however, want to abolish the complex subsidy structure and to allow all parents to dispose of the employer's share of the childcare allowance via the wage tax and social security contributions and/or other taxes.

> SMEs form the backbone of our economy. SMEs are not relocating to China. For this reason they deserve to be protected from the abundance of government regulations. Tendering practices must be simplified, so that SMEs can get involved in public procurement.

> There is currently no place for innovative products in public works contracts because in the case of many of these contracts, the product concerned is required to have already been on the market for at least three years. This is an obstacle to innovation. The government must become the leading customer in innovation.

> The reintegration obligation is putting a tremendous strain on small companies with high absenteeism. The suggestions put forward by the Dutch Federation of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises in its report entitled "Reintegration in SMEs" in May 2006 must take priority.

Increasing labour force participation

> High-quality childcare must be accessible to workers, volunteers and students in order to make it possible to combine having a family with working or studying. This can be achieved, for example, through the introduction of a child-related budget.

> The participation of employees between the ages of 55 and 64 years must be increased in order to increase the level of support for the ageing population and to divide the expense fairly; it must be made more financially attractive to work for longer.

> Participation in the labour force must be strongly encouraged. To this end, we want to remove obstacles to entry and re-entry into employment and give extra encouragement to the less privileged. Not because we should take pity on them, but because employers are still all too often narrow minded when it comes to recruitment.

- > The focus of income replacement benefits (particularly unemployment benefit) will have to be on returning to an active working life as soon as possible. Employment in the lower wage categories is encouraged through the introduction of an earned income tax credit system.
- > The provision of the transferable tax-credit, the 'stay-at-home bonus', the tax-free allowance enjoyed by the unemployed (with transitional arrangements for those born before 1972) must be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- > Work permits must be issued more freely to those who can contribute to our economy.
- > Employees from EU Member States must be allowed full entry into the Dutch labour market.

More flexible labour market

A more flexible labour market means that employers are less apprehensive about taking on staff and that our economy is able to capitalise on changes in a more dynamic manner. In an economy in which the labour supply is becoming increasingly scarce and insights into leadership, management and career development are changing, the classic contrast between employer and employee is liable to change. It is in the interests of employers to invest a lot of time and money in the 'employability' of their employees.

In a labour market in which a labour shortage is on the horizon, greater emphasis must be placed on activation. A more flexible labour market will also affect the structure and implementation of income replacement benefits such as unemployment benefit.

Flexibility is being increased by:

- > Ensuring that when collective labour agreements are declared mandatory, this also applies in the event of changes in the labour market. Furthermore, the mandatory declaration does not always have to relate to the entire collective labour agreement.
- > Legally facilitating works councils to enter into negotiations on employment conditions and giving individual employees the freedom to do this themselves.
- > If people want to extend their working week, that is their own choice and there must be scope for businesses to allow this. Collective labour agreements should not, in principle, stand in the way of this.
- > Providing people over the age of 45 years in physically demanding professions with support in preparing for a second career.
- > Making training, coaching, outplacement and career reorientation courses more attractive, from a tax perspective or otherwise.
- > Allowing employment contracts to be terminated without the intervention of third parties. The prior consent of the court or the Central Organisation for Work and Income is no longer required for the termination of an employment contract. Redundancy payments are laid down by contract only and are taxed upon payment. In the event that the employee feels that his interests have been prejudiced, he is free to take the matter to court afterwards.
- > Unemployment benefit is always paid in the event of redundancy (unless the redundancy is voluntary). The employee does not have to oppose the redundancy in order to be eligible for this benefit.
- > In the event of redundancy, unemployment benefit is only paid for a limited period of time, the basic principle being that a higher starting percentage will apply than at present and the amount of the benefit will be reduced over a shorter period of time.
- > As is the case with social assistance benefit, the unemployment benefit will be allocated by the municipal authorities. This yields significant advantages in terms of efficiency and reduces the 'compartmentalisation problem' for job-seekers.
- > In combination with the abolition of the dual dismissal system, this means that the Employee Insurance Schemes Implementing Body and the Central Organisation for Work and Income can largely be dismantled. This applies *a fortiori* the more the Return to Work for the Partially Disabled Scheme is implemented by private parties.

In the forthcoming government's term of office, D66 wants concrete proposals to be made for:

- > Opening up the market for personal services.
- > Opening up the market for products and services within the EU.
- > Implementing the proposals of the Innovation Platform (with the emphasis on generic measures).
- > Incorporating the principle that work security is more important than job security in the public services system.

Keeping pensions affordable

Old-age pension secure. Politicians cannot ignore reality. Over the coming decades, an increasingly larger group of pensioners is going to depend on an increasingly smaller labour force. Previously, people did not tend to reach such an old age and pensioners only depended on their pension for a short amount of time. But the average life expectancy has increased from 65 to 80 years since the introduction of the old-age pension and is continuing to rise. This is, of course, good news. We are also tending to enter the labour market later than previously as a result of longer education and to cease employment earlier than previously as a result of early retirement and pre-pension schemes. We are therefore having to receive a pension for an increasingly longer period and have a shorter period over which to work for this pension and pay contributions towards it.

It is therefore important to take measures now to secure the old-age pension for the future. To this end, D66 is initially intending to implement measures that give older people more possibilities to continue to be active in the labour market. Retirement and early retirement have certainly not been voluntary in all cases and D66 is going to start by removing the obstacles preventing workers from continuing in employment for longer. It must also be made more attractive from a tax perspective to continue working after the age of 65 years. But these measures will not be enough, certainly not in the long term. It is likely that further measures will be necessary in order to sustain the financing of the old-age pension. This is why D66 wants to bring the age of retirement to a figure that is more in line with current life expectancy. We are proposing to increase the age of retirement by one month per year over the coming 24 years up to the age of 67 years. D66 wants to maintain the maximised old-age pension contribution and to continue to make up the difference between the proceeds of contributions and the burden of benefits using public resources, as is currently the case. The old-age pension will be of benefit to all of us, and with this in mind, we must all share the burden. We see the old-age pension as an essential basic provision for old age which is certainly worth keeping.

D66 observes, moreover, that the sustainability of the old-age pension also has a European element. In many Member States, measures are being taken or need to be taken to safeguard the European social model. For this reason, we envisage that solutions will contribute towards the long-term reform of pension systems in the EU, aimed at financial sustainability of the social model and the mobility of citizens within the EU.

> **Individual pension schemes possible.** It must be made possible to offer individual possibilities in relation to the old-age pension and the supplementary pension schemes whereby people can, within certain limits, opt for an earlier or later retirement (resulting in a lower or higher pension respectively) or for a part-time pension.

> **Legal representation of employees and pensioners.** As proposed in D66's private member's bill submitted by Bakker, pensioners of all pension funds, as well as employees, will receive the legal right to representation on the committees of their funds, and this right shall also extend to pensioners of the industry-wide pension funds.

> **Expanding the life-course savings scheme** so that people can save for education themselves. D66 does not want to prohibit the use of the scheme by those wishing to take early retirement, but does want to revert attention back to the purpose for which the scheme was originally intended: the 'peak hour' of life.

Remuneration of public office positions within limits

In recent years, the incomes of people holding leading positions in the public and semi-public sector have been spiralling out of control. Public functions should however be remunerated within public standards. Deviation from this is only permissible in exceptional cases under political responsibility (subject to the approval of the Cabinet). Only if a market actually exists (in which shareholders, supervisory officials and customers really have something to say or decide upon) would there be no reason for the government to take action.

Reducing taxes

An open and flexible economy goes hand in hand with a fair and transparent tax regime. Inappropriate measures that narrow the tax base unnecessarily are being abolished. D66 supports the initiative to improve the competitive position of the Netherlands (Working on Profit) introduced by the Balkenende II government, but wants to introduce measures to reduce the individual tax burden. With a view to reducing labour costs and a balanced distribution of incomes (among other things as a concession for the rise in healthcare premiums) and in the context of sustainable development in particular, it is necessary to:

- > Reduce income tax rates in the lowest two tax brackets.
- > Make the tax system greener. Environment and energy taxes which lead to a relative increase in the tax burden must be balanced out by reducing taxes on income from employment.
- > Further simplify the tax system in due course so as to create scope for lower rates.

Improving administrative organisation

Tackling unclear structures. Unclear structures with 'independent' administrative bodies or partially privatised enterprises with public tasks must be reformed so that democratic control and public accountability can be guaranteed. D66 is in favour of separating the networks from independent energy companies because strategic infrastructure is one of the core tasks of a strong government. The main ports of the Port of Rotterdam and Schiphol Airport are superbly functioning social enterprises that fulfil their public task in the form of a company without the need for participation of private financiers.

> **Public participations remain with the government.** The management of public participations in companies concerned with public goods is based upon the long-term development of these facilities for the benefit of our country. In principle, the government will not sell them and adheres to the Corporate Governance Code. In this regard, the government does not strive for maximum returns for shareholders, but for sustainable capital growth for the benefit of the public tasks and for maximum social benefit.

> **Granting of permits on the basis of trust.** With regard to the granting of permits to companies and institutions, the potential of these organisations must be realised on the basis of trust and personal responsibility (corporate environmental management system, corporate social responsibility, risk management and internal auditing).

> **Supervisory bodies established according to the needs of the market.** Supervisory bodies (Independent Post and Telecommunications Authority, media, healthcare, Netherlands Competition Authority, National Telecoms Agency etc.) are established for as long as the Minister responsible deems that the market requires such supervision; supervisory bodies are not maintained as a matter of course and are organised in so far as possible on a European level. Supervisory bodies may be replaced by the broader use of certification. Supervisory bodies with an added value must receive sufficient resources in order to remain effective.

Factoring in sustainability objectives

The government can play an important role in making the economy more sustainable. This role must involve persistently taking account of sustainability objectives in all government initiatives.

> **Emphasise the economic importance of ecosystems.** Ecosystems have a much broader economic importance than is often assumed. The overall value of an ecosystem is actually higher than that of the corresponding marketed services. Forests, for example, not only provide felled timber, but are also a source of oxygen and a supplier of medicinal plants. The economic costs of damage to ecosystems can be considerable. Overfishing can cause the collapse of an entire fishing industry, which leads to job losses and costs in the form of benefits and retraining needs.

> **Include environmental aspects in WTO negotiations.** Damage to ecosystems constitutes a barrier to achieving the millennium objectives. D66 is arguing in favour of the inclusion of environmental aspects in WTO negotiations in such a way that they do not end up being counterproductive to developing countries. This can be done, for example, through labelling. In the following round of negotiations, we must focus more actively on worldwide fair trade, eliminating trade-distorting subsidies and tariff barriers and tackling the 'compulsory' opening up of markets by developing countries.

> 100% sustainable purchasing. The government and semi-public authorities are major buyers of consumer goods. The government must therefore set a good example in its purchasing policy. Within four years, 100% of all products purchased by the government and semi-public authorities must fully comply with sustainability criteria. The purchase of organic products, for example, will serve as a major stimulus for improving the market position of sustainably produced goods.

Increasing dedication towards millennium objectives

Even in the 21st century, a large proportion of the global population is still living in poverty. Poverty is primarily associated with developing countries, but its presence is also felt in the richest countries in the world. In the European Union, around fifteen percent of the population are living on the poverty line. D66 wants the Netherlands to continue to be a frontrunner in the fight against poverty. Poverty is a form of imprisonment.

Tackling poverty in the rest of the world must also be actively encouraged over the coming four years. D66 is arguing in favour of continuing the same two current initiatives of creating pre-conditions and tailored assistance – known as ‘trade and aid’ – on a global level, and fully supports the millennium objectives. The millennium approach is receiving a great deal of criticism, but this is the best approach we have at the present time; the objectives are clear, measurable and attainable. The initiative lies in the hands of the receiving countries which draw up their own development plans. In addition, the Western countries have undertaken a commitment to do their bit. This commitment must be fulfilled. The second progress report will be drawn up in 2010, during the forthcoming government’s term of office. D66 is highly dedicated to this cause.

> Poverty high on the European agenda. The Netherlands must also place combating poverty high on the agenda within the European Union. Exchanging knowledge and experiences by means of the open coordination method and investigating the possibilities that the internal market has to offer can contribute towards the eradication of poverty in Europe.

> Greater coherence. D66 is striving for more coherence and is arguing in favour of a shift in emphasis from bilateral assistance to assistance via the European Union and international organisations. The key conditions for an effective European development policy are better coordination of donating bodies within the European Union and greater coherence in terms of foreign policy. The Netherlands must actively devote its efforts towards establishing a European foreign policy.

> Pioneering role in development cooperation. The Netherlands is one of the few countries in the world which achieves its target percentage for development cooperation. The Netherlands is therefore in an excellent position to encourage the other European Member States and other western countries to increase their share.

> Tidy up the budget for development cooperation D66 wants to maintain the budget of a minimum of 0.8%, but at the same time wants to take a critical look at spending in this field and adjust it where necessary. The rescheduling of debts, for example, does not come under the Official Development Aid, and therefore cannot be at the expense of the budget for development cooperation. D66 is also in favour of the cancellation of export credit debt no longer being covered by Official Development Aid, but being incorporated as development cooperation expenses.

> Self-sufficiency is the central objective. With regard to the provision of development aid, the self-sufficiency of those receiving the aid is the central objective. The Netherlands must therefore give priority to education, healthcare (the availability of drugs and the fight against HIV/AIDS) and entrepreneurship (microcredit). More possibilities must be provided for the private financing of development projects by means of tax benefits.

> Sexual and reproductive health. D66 believes that sexual and reproductive health and rights must remain a priority within the development cooperation policy. The Netherlands will continue to play an active role, both as a donor and an actor, in the international fight for access to safe abortions.

> Integrate climate policy. The Netherlands must integrate climate policy and the protection of bio-diversity in development policy and fight against illegal logging and the palm oil and soya industry, as a result of which the rainforests are being destroyed and small local farmers are being evicted and persecuted.

> Cancellation of debts. Debts may not constitute an obstacle for achieving the millennium objectives. We must consider cancelling the debt of countries which have insufficient resources to repay these debts. These countries must also be offered help in the form of donations (instead of loans).

> **Encourage microfinancing institutions.** Financial services such as small loans, savings options and insurance policies are an effective instrument against poverty and offer people the possibility of increasing their socioeconomic security.

Investing in environmentally friendly energy

Saving energy is a major priority. Furthermore, over the coming years it will be essential for us to invest in more environmentally friendly sources of energy, encouraging in particular those that can now already be put to use. Investing in renewable energy is also potentially a major source of economic power for the Netherlands. In Europe, approximately 300,000 people currently work in this sector, primarily in Germany. A major growth in employment is also expected in this sector in countries such as Austria, Denmark, Finland and Portugal. In Europe at large, this industry has an annual turnover of EUR 15 billion, but the Netherlands is lagging behind in these developments. This has to change.

> **Double the budget for environmentally friendly energy.** In line with the recommendations of the Energy Transition Task Force, the budget for renewable energy must be doubled over the coming years from 1 billion to 2 billion per year. This increased budget will go towards financing the large-scale use of offshore wind energy, solar power stations, biomass and other forms of environmentally friendly energy.

> **Solar energy return supply guarantee.** A return supply guarantee for solar energy comparable to the systems already in place in Germany and Spain must be introduced. For a period of twenty years, you receive a fixed return supply rate if you supply power back to the electricity grid. D66 wants to launch a solar energy programme in the Netherlands in which the roofs of one hundred thousand government and semi-public sector buildings will be fitted with solar panel systems.

> **Solar energy abroad.** Solar energy has a much higher yield in North Africa than in the Netherlands. The Netherlands must therefore establish a bilateral agreement with countries in North Africa as a result of which investments in solar energy could yield returns from a fixed price for supplying solar power to the electricity grid.

> **Information.** The energy source from which the energy supplied originates must be evident to consumers from their energy bills.

> **Supporting clean biomass.** Agricultural subsidies which are still currently earmarked for conventional agriculture can be used for the production of biomass. The biomass must, however, be obtained in a sustainable way: it may not be produced to the detriment of rainforests or biodiversity.

> **Blending biodiesel.** The use of biofuels and the blending of biofuels with diesel must be encouraged, particularly from a tax perspective. The Netherlands must fulfil its European obligations in this regard and must lead the way in terms of the implementation of this policy, thereby aiming to achieve a target blending percentage of 5.75% by 2010.

> **Subsidies.** D66 is opposed to trade-distorting subsidies. The real price must be paid for green power. Instead of subsidies, D66 wishes to impose a surcharge on non-green power. The proceeds from this surcharge will be used for research into more environmentally friendly energy supplies.

> **Clean fossil fuel.** The use of fossil fuels can be cleaner. D66 promotes the use of biomass, and the collection and underground storage of CO₂.

> **Large-scale solar energy** The use of solar energy on a large-scale (Concentrating Solar Power) has major potential. Although this type of power station cannot be operated in the Netherlands due to a lack of sun, the Netherlands must take the lead in the financing and technological development of such power stations for use in Spain and North Africa, for example.

> **Strict standards for saving energy.** Strict standards for saving energy must be introduced. Legal regulations must be introduced to drive back the production of standby equipment. A CO₂ levy could be imposed on high energy-consuming appliances. The quality mark indicating the extent to which appliances are energy-friendly must be updated on a regular basis in line with technological progress.

> **Nuclear energy.** In view of the latest developments in technology and the costs associated with nuclear energy, nuclear power stations are not a priority and receive no financial support from the government. Existing nuclear power stations can, however, be a useful source of energy for the time being until we become a sustainable energy economy, after which they can be closed down. In the meantime, research into finding more effective ways to process nuclear

waste must continue. The costs of the risk of accidents that could affect the population must be borne by the producers themselves, as is the case for other high-risk enterprises, and must not be shifted to the environment.

> **Green energy policy to be subject of EU collaboration** D66 believes that a joint energy policy must become a new mainstay of the European Union. Due to the fact that the Member States rarely collaborate on the research and development of environmentally friendly energy, Europe is missing the boat on both an economical and an ecological level.

> **Green energy agreement.** With a joint European programme, billions of euros should be made available for the development of solar power stations, offshore wind farms, the application of hydrogen technology and the improvement of electricity grids. For this reason, D66 is in favour of one green European energy policy. The amount that is currently being budgeted for joint research into sustainable energy must be increased tenfold to five billion euros until 2013.

> **A new climate treaty.** Europe must continue to play a pioneering role in the new Kyoto Protocol in order to achieve a reduction in CO₂ emissions. Europe must strive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 30% by 2030.

**People
like
green**

> Not along the Naardermeer lake / Fast and frequent public transport / Road pricing to replace road tax / More possibilities for biotechnology / Agricultural aid to green

The Netherlands is a small country, with many towns and cities situated close together. Effectively, the Netherlands is starting to function more and more as an overdeveloped city state within Europe: a densely populated delta in which the towns and cities, landscape and nature are closely interwoven. This affords our living environment a unique wealth, but at the same time it presents complicated challenges in terms of land use. Spatial planning, mobility, living and landscape development cannot be considered separately in this context. It is an important responsibility of the central government to safeguard that cohesion and to boldly step up to the major challenges facing us all.

One such challenge lies in the rapid changes in the composition and spread of the population. How do we deal with the aging population and depopulation in the more rural parts of the Dutch city state? How can we use spatial measures to improve the country's competitive strength and how do we handle growth, new urbanisation, internationalisation and the influx of people from other races and cultures in metropolitan regions? New policies should be developed, not only to prevent disruptions but also to allow us to seize important opportunities.

Another challenge is presented by the increasing mobility. D66 believes that that increase, which is essential to prosperity and wellbeing in our city state, can no longer be provided for with random road expansions. The Netherlands should finally adopt a focused approach to a truly high-quality and cohesive network for public and private transport, similar to the solutions implemented by various urban regions abroad.

New impulses are also needed to improve the operation of the housing market, to make the best possible use of the existing supply of homes and of the developed area, and to ensure that ghetto-like situations in the large towns and cities can be prevented. D66 wishes to make spatial planning serve the emancipation and integration possibilities of all inhabitants of the Netherlands. It is important to ensure that no one is excluded, which is why we should prevent the development of city districts with a one-sided demographic composition.

D66 is only prepared to reconsider the possibilities of restricting the mortgage interest deduction facility as part of a general tax reform, one which will also include property transfer tax and a system of notional owner-occupied home income. People should not be worse off, or else should be given ample opportunity to respond to a new tax system.

A more intensive use of space will diminish the pressure on the landscape and support the level of amenities. At the same time, the Dutch towns and cities should remain appealing for knowledge workers and people undertaking new initiatives for culture, media and other creative fields. Support is also necessary for numerous ideas and initiatives arising from the many cultures that our towns and cities boast and that benefit the vitality of the Netherlands.

The greatest challenge is to offer sufficient space, in the short term and in the long term, both to economic growth and urban and social dynamism, and to urban heritage, recreation, valuable landscape and nature. D66 feels that these can go hand in hand. However, this calls for a refreshing, innovative approach that allows room for district-specific solutions. The first steps in district development and development planning have been made during recent years, but more is needed. Lobby groups should abandon their barricades and new designing, technical and environmental ingenuity, of which there is so much in the Netherlands, should be given every opportunity. It is important in this connection that spatial developments be initiated that contribute to a favourable spatial quality, expressed in a positive value for people in terms of use, experience, and future possibilities.

This calls both for administrative and substantive vision in the long term, and for boldness in the short term. The new Cabinet should immediately start, together with other government bodies and social partners, to develop a national strategy for the future of the Netherlands as an appealing urban delta in the European context.

More efficient use of space / High-quality public transport / Investments in the Dutch landscape / Fewer traffic jams, more environment / Investments in urban renewal / Healthier housing market / Sustainable agriculture

More efficient use of space

> **Stronger direction for spatial development.** The provincial authorities (and later the *landsdelen*) have been assigned the responsibility for supervising the spatial development. They should live up to that role, and should be given the resources to act if the green areas are wrongfully being harmed.

> **Better use of industrial estates.** The space on existing industrial estates should be used better, and new estates may only be created in very exceptional instances; only if it has been demonstrated that it is impossible to accommodate the need on one of the existing estates or if it allows businesses to relocate from the town or city, making it possible for new homes to be built. Obviously, exchanges between sites are also possible. Another factor that will be encouraged is for municipal authorities to work together more closely at the regional level when developing industrial estates.

> **Countering of industrial estates in visible locations.** Many people regard industrial buildings in visible locations as 'ugly boxes' that detract from the spatial quality and the attractiveness of the landscape, and reinforce the feeling of 'fullness'. D66 believes that it is high time to fight that detraction.

> **Encouragement of use of waterways and Betuwe Railway Line.** D66 wishes to encourage the use of waterways for goods and people, and wishes to encourage the use of the Betuwe Railway Line for goods, particularly from the Rotterdam and Amsterdam harbours. Goods transport by rail along the Brabant Route will be discouraged, in favour of the Betuwe Line.

> **Discouragement of growth of goods transport by road.** D66 wishes a thorough study into the possibilities of slowing down the growth of goods transport by road. This will increase road safety and the quality of life in towns and cities. Developing alternative possibilities for supplying shops is one of the options that should be considered in this regard, while another is the further encouragement of transport by water.

High-quality public transport

> **D66 chooses for high-quality public transport.** In the urban areas, this will be given shape differently compared with rural districts. The facilities should be tailored to fit the situation. In the Randstad conurbation, all administrations will have to work together to develop a comprehensive strategy for public transport. The *landsdelen* will be responsible, as transport authorities, for a coordinated network. However, public transport should be developed in conjunction with car mobility and other forms of transport (including walking, cycling and collective transport), resulting in not only public transport being at a higher plane, but the entire traffic and transport network improving and offering more options for people to choose from.

> **High-quality connections between the towns and cities.** Fast trains should run at frequent and regular intervals between the towns and cities in the Randstad conurbation. A similar type of high-grade connection should also be realized between the towns and cities in Brabant Province. Realisation of the *Rondje Randstad* and the *Rondje Brabantstad* connections should be given priority.

> **Fast public transport in other *landsdelen*.** Around Nijmegen and Arnhem, the light-rail projects should be given priority. The funds earmarked for the Zuiderzee Line to the northern part of the Netherlands would be put to better use if they were spent on projects offering a greater economic added value. D66 chooses for the high-quality public transport project Kolibri (public transport system for the Groningen-Assen region) that should be realised in its original form.

> **High-speed line.** A better international network of high-speed trains is needed as an alternative to air transport. Investments in the current network and extension of high-speed railway lines and fast intercity connections are indeed necessary, for example in south-easterly, easterly and north-easterly direction.

> **Specific transport solutions in rural areas.** Extra funds should be made available for offering suitable public transport in the more rural parts of the Netherlands. While it is pointless to keep empty buses running, taxi-on-demand services and smaller buses can maintain the use of public transport at the present level, and even give it an impulse.

> **Accessibility for disabled persons.** Ensuring that bus stops and pickup points for public transport are made and remain accessible for disabled persons, and accelerate efforts to that effect.

> **Abolition of the public transport ceiling for disabled persons.** D66 wishes to abolish the ceiling for cheap public transport for disabled persons and the chronically sick. Disabled persons should be given the maximum opportunity to move in society.

Investments in the Dutch landscape

Nature and the landscape are part of our primary needs. D66 wishes to invest heavily in nature, the landscape and water during the coming period of government. Not only should existing nature and landscape be protected, new nature and recreational facilities should be created. Particularly in urbanised areas, it is important that new green spaces be added. The plan for a green network with extra natural areas near towns and cities, characteristic national landscapes and a robust overall ecological structure should be implemented in a spatially cohesive, intelligent and quick manner.

> **Green spaces in towns and cities.** With the construction of each new home, the target should be to realise a better ratio between buildings and green per new home. This means more town parks and more green, in quantitative terms, and if that is impossible, in qualitative terms. Green facilities should not be seized as a cost-cutting area in new residential districts.

> **Green belts around towns and cities.** The construction of green recreational belts around towns and cities (and villages) is below par. A great deal of effort is required to bring them up to standard. The same applies to the accessibility of those facilities, which is particularly below standard for cyclists and pedestrians.

> **Protection of and connections between existing natural areas.** D66 wants the natural areas of the Main Ecologic Structure (*Ecologische Hoofstructuur*, 'EHS') to be protected and linked together more rapidly, by providing an additional impulse to acquisition, design and management. D66 is in favour of making the EHS stronger and 'climate-proof'.

> **Protection of national parks.** D66 wishes to expressly protect the existing national parks and landscapes (such as the Veluwe, the Biesbosch and the Utrechtse Heuvelrug) against fragmentation and urbanisation. These parks are of tremendous natural value for the Netherlands. Extra investments in management and in preventing fragmentation are needed.

> **Prevention of flooding.** D66 subscribes to the measures to prevent flooding and other ways of water management that are laid down in the National Water Management Agreement (*Nationaal Bestuursakkoord Water*) and the implementation of the Water Framework Directive, and advocates further investments to ensure that the Netherlands remains dry in the future.

> **Support for social initiatives.** D66 supports initiatives (such as the Deltaplan for the landscape) to improve and retain the quality and quantity of the rural parts of the Netherlands. Biodiversity, cultural history and recreational access are guiding principles to allow the owners and managers to take responsibility for this additional care for the landscape in a sustainable manner (e.g. by setting up a foundation).

> **The quality of the rural areas should be improved by the following means:**

- retaining characteristic landscapes;
- encouraging nature development in potentially valuable areas;
- supporting organic agriculture;
- aiming for sustainable investments.

> **Gas production on the Waddenzee.** Gas production using an angled pipe under the Waddenzee will not affect the environment, and will not obstruct any views. That is why D66 supports this clean method of production, provided that the promised funds are made available to the Wadden Foundation to help repair nature in the Wadden district. A

considerable portion of the income should be spent on buying out the cockle fishers and on major investments in sustainable projects.

Air traffic

> **Main-port Schiphol.** Amsterdam Airport Schiphol is important for the economic development of Amsterdam and the northern part of the Randstad conurbation. When the Dutch Aviation Act (*Wet Luchtvaart*) was assessed, an opportunity was missed to introduce a clear and enforceable environmental system that combines the expected growth (and importance) of the aviation sector with quality of life in the surrounding area. During the coming four years, an environmental system will have to be created that provides for the permanent development of Schiphol's mainport function.

> **Increase in air traffic to Lelystad.** Part of Schiphol's air traffic can be outsourced to Lelystad Airport. This could also offer an impulse to employment east of Almere.

> **Levy on air traffic.** At present, air traffic is not subject to tax on its fuel. D66 wants a small levy to be introduced on air traffic in Europe, the income from which will be spent on investing in clean sources of energy.

> **Transparent legislation for helicopter airports.** Regulating helicopter landing sites is currently made difficult by a gap in the regulations for altitudes between 500 and 3000 feet. Similarly, municipal authorities lack criteria to assess noise pollution and environmental aspects. That is why D66 wishes clear and effective regulations to be introduced as soon as possible, because 'up, up and away' is not a lasting solution to the problem of traffic jams.

Fewer traffic jams, more environment

> **First priority: improving existing roads.** D66 prefers improving existing roads, and expanding them in specific areas, to building new roads. Existing roads can be widened to allow them to handle more traffic. However, improvements to the road infrastructure should be developed in conjunction with public transport and other modes of transport (including walking, cycling and collective transport), ensuring that improving car mobility is not considered in isolation, but as part of an effort to improve the entire traffic and transport network and to offer people more choices.

> **No extension of the A6-A9 motorway along the Naardermeer lake.** D66 is against these plans, and supports an intelligent alternative along existing roads, in which air pollution is countered by covering and deepening the road (specifically, the Gaasperdammerweg). Other scenarios that respect nature and the landscape are also possible, such as a tunnel under the IJmeer lake.

> **Road pricing to replace road tax.** Besides investments in public transport and the existing road network, people should also start to make more intelligent use of their cars. D66 wants to introduce road pricing for cars as soon as possible. This will encourage drivers who do not absolutely have to drive during rush hour to use the roads at other times, which in turn will diminish the number of traffic jams. Polluting cars will also be taxed at a higher rate than clean cars. As introducing these levies should replace the current generic system of road tax, road pricing will not result in more taxes.

> **Cleaner cars.** A concrete agreement about cleaner cars should be reached at the European level. If that agreement is not reached quickly enough, the Netherlands should dare to take the lead and impose stricter requirements. The MOT tests should be used to ensure that cars whose emissions are too high are taken off the road within ten years. Drivers who fit their cars with soot filters should be given a tax benefit. Subsidy facilities for hybrid cars should remain limited to categories A and B.

> **Commuting to be tackled more intelligently by employers.** Employers should be encouraged to ensure that their workers travel to work in more intelligent ways. Flexible working hours, working from home, new forms of collective transport, shared use of cars and encouraging bicycle use will help cut back traffic jams. As such, D66 wants at least improved bicycle facilities.

> **Covering and tunnelling in towns and cities.** The nuisance caused by existing transport links through towns and cities should be removed by covering them and building tunnels. This will offer new possibilities for improving access, the environment *and* spatial quality, as well as protecting vulnerable landscapes. The Gaasperdammerweg road in Amsterdam, and the A2 traversal through Maastricht are locations where this is a possibility.

Investments in urban renewal

The spatial contrasts between various neighbourhoods in towns and cities (and between towns and cities and their neighbouring municipalities) are increasing, while the integration of immigrants, particularly non-Western immigrants, is diminishing. This is particularly the case in the four big cities, although it is a problem elsewhere too. D66 wishes to allocate more funds to fight diminishing integration and increasing segregation, to create a better and more varied housing supply in the neighbourhoods concerned and to improve conurban public transport to ensure that everyone has better access to their work and a range of different facilities. D66 believes restructuring and urban renewal during the coming years to be urgently necessary, as well as social investments and investments in care and education. D66 wants funding under the Urban Renewal Investment Budget (ISV) and the Location-Specific Subsidies Decree (BLS) to remain available after 2010. This will require EUR 1 billion per year. Those funds should be deployed for more specific purposes and with greater focus than they have been so far. The current allocation to no fewer than 56 neighbourhoods is too fragmented.

> Housing corporations to play a more active role. D66 wants housing corporations to adopt an even more active role in the process of urban renewal and to allocate more resources to that process. Housing corporations should be held responsible for their broad social task: new development and renovation, rental policy, quality of living, the socially vulnerable population and development of social property. For this purpose, D66 advocates the formation of a National Covenant. The housing corporations' capital designated for social purposes should be used for renewing and managing the supply of cheap homes and other necessary investments. As a result, optimal use should be made of the investment potential of the Dutch corporations, for the purpose of urban renewal and the required quality in the towns and cities. It should be possible to enforce compliance by any corporation that refuses to take its responsibility in this respect.

> Private owners to reduce vacancy levels. Private owners should also be encouraged to actively contribute to the required urban renewal. D66 also wishes them to adopt a more active approach in reducing vacancy levels and to invest in the conversion of unused spaces (e.g. above shops) into homes. This will give starters, senior citizens and possibly other house hunters more chances of finding a home. It will also help to increase social safety.

Mortgage interest deduction not to be considered in isolation

D66 places the discussion about the future of the mortgage interest deduction facility in the context of the housing market as a whole. It is clear that something has to be done to set things right in the housing market, since starters are finding it very difficult to enter that market and since the mortgage interest deduction facility threatens to become unaffordable. However, it is important that existing rights should not be prejudiced, since the government has a responsibility to adopt a predictable and reliable attitude toward the population.

That is why D66 wishes to deduct the mortgage interest deduction in new cases to 500,000 euros. This reform is similar to the reform introduced in England, where a high threshold was also set. By maintaining this deductibility ceiling during the coming decades, inflation and the rising house prices will automatically ensure the gradual reduction of deductibility.

In the long term, the funds released as a result can be used to phase out property transfer tax and the system of notional owner-occupied home income.

However, increasing the supply of homes will have the greatest impact on trading up. As such, D66 believes that the issuance of land at reasonable prices should be encouraged, and that development land should be sold subject to the condition that construction be realised in predetermined price segments within a predefined time period. Increasing the supply of homes is the greatest priority, with most attention being focused on increasing the number of affordable homes for young people and starters.

Healthier housing market

Spatial design can contribute to the emancipation and integration possibilities of all inhabitants of the Netherlands. It is necessary to ensure that starters on the housing market are not excluded and to prevent the one-sided makeup of neighbourhoods.

> Diversity. Most of the new homes will have to be located in the existing towns and cities. Property developers and housing corporations should be encouraged to build more diverse property. An additional effort is called for to bring residential production to the proper level.

> Customised solutions and trading up. The deregulation introduced on the rental market does not offer a true solution for improving the operation of the housing market, will probably not result in any actual increase in the number of people trading up, and will probably even have a negative social impact on the demographic composition of several neighbourhoods. That is why D66 wants a thorough investigation into ways in which government contributions to rental and owner-occupied homes can be reduced, before the deregulation is continued. More specific solutions are required, more construction to respond to actual needs and encouragement of trading up, to end unnecessary subsidies and at the same time help create a more balanced composition of neighbourhoods, towns and cities, and regions. Reducing the differences between towns and cities on the one hand and their neighbouring municipalities on the other – including in terms of housing supply – and ensuring a cohesive development of both will be the responsibility of the municipal authorities.

> Increase in the diversity of the housing supply. D66 aims for more diversity in the supply of homes. Primarily as a result of individualisation and the increasing ethnic and cultural diversity, people's wishes are becoming more divergent than ever. However, the housing market is barely responding to that development. This issue involves both the wishes for housing/care complexes for senior citizens and handicapped persons and those of starters and students. D66 advocates a new Housing Act that will help create a balanced and just allocation of scarce living space.

> Fight against sector-specific lobbies and non-transparent circuits. Large investment funds, including the income from natural gas, should be used to help realise the spatial vision and strategy for the future. This means an end to divisive politics fuelled by sector-specific lobbies and administrative circuits whenever extra funds become available as a result of one-off windfalls, such as income from natural gas. Spatial projects should be supported. D66 advocates a long-term programme for regional development, in which government funds will be available for spatial projects on a structural basis and with greater transparency. Slow processes should be streamlined, to help realise projects that would otherwise not be carried out, or only at a lower level of quality.

> Altering public role in development planning. Multidisciplinary projects for housing and care, housing and education and housing and work, etc. are impeded, despite their great social importance. Regulations should be simplified, to make it easier to alter designated uses in the planning process.

In the development and realisation of complex and multifunctional projects, the role of the executive administration becomes caught between the reality of market operators and politics. Planning for complex and multifunctional projects does not run parallel to political cycles. As a result, investors are often misled, creating the impression of an unreliable government. Regulations should be simplified to shorten development processes. Urban renewal in the Netherlands is an institutional process, in which financial interests are the dominating factor. As a result, the programming of new development focuses more on financial optimisation than on urban quality. The role of market operators should be given a greater degree of social responsibility. Urban development planning should offer much more room for initiatives from the side of civilians and businesses themselves. Regulations should be simplified, while at the same time market operations should be assigned a greater degree of social involvement.

Sustainable Agriculture

> Abolition of export subsidies. The export subsidies on agricultural products from the European Union have a very negative impact on farmers in developing countries. The Netherlands should strongly advocate abolishing these subsidies as soon as possible. At the same time, export restrictions should not be applied to maintain the prices in the Union at an artificially low level if global market prices rise.

> Biotechnology as an opportunity. Biotechnology should be seen as an opportunity for the sustainability of agriculture, the environment, developing countries and improved health levels. This technology also offers economic opportunities for innovation. The Netherlands should also adopt much more of a leading position in this area. D66 believes that this technology should therefore have broader applications, particularly since it is clear that genetic modification of crops barely gives rise to specific problems. As such, the special regulations and accompanying bureaucracy for transgenic crops can be gradually phased out. However, choices should remain; people should be able to choose for themselves whether or not they wish to eat genetically modified food. Patent law should be revised in such a manner as to ensure that biotechnological products are more accessible to developing countries.

> Organic agriculture. Organic agriculture and horticulture also have innovative power. The target set by D66 is to ensure that by 2010 ten percent of the agricultural sector is organic.

> Agricultural aid to green. The Netherlands should use its European agricultural aid for supplying 'green services', such as repairing the landscape, protecting field birds and ensuring open-air grazing for cows.

> **Alternative forms of fertilisation.** Possibilities should be introduced for alternative ways of fertilising land. The current form of fertilisation destroys much of the biodiversity.

> **Agriculture as an opportunity.** The development and use of crops as raw materials for products – primarily sustainable products – should be encouraged, such as sustainable crops for the production of textile, degradable plastic and sustainable energy.

Animals

During the coming decades, the consumption of meat and animal products will rise significantly. In many cases, this will result in a further intensification of cattle farming, at the expense of the wellbeing of the animals. D66 believes this to be a very worrying development, and wants the Netherlands to invest in sustainable cattle farming. A civilised society should treat its animals decently.

> **End to bio-industry.** The situation of animals in the bio-industry should be improved at a more rapid pace. D66 chooses for concrete measures, such as substantially increasing the size of their cages, allowing bovines to graze in the open, banning unanaesthetised castration of pigs and limiting animal transports lasting longer than four hours or covering distances of more than 300 kilometres. The Netherlands should not wait for the rest of Europe to introduce these measures.

> **Labels on all animal products.** All animal products should be labelled in such a manner as to clearly show the level of the animal's wellbeing. This will allow consumers to make a sensible choice. Dutch supermarkets should conclude a voluntary agreement within two years, to ensure that no animal products are sold that were produced below an acceptable standard of animal wellbeing.

> **Animal wellbeing deduction for farmers.** Farmers that make substantial investments in larger sheds for their animals should be given a tax discount to help them bear the costs.

> **Fight against hunting of and trading in protected species.** Many animals are facing extinction, as a result of the destruction of their living environments and overhunting. D66 calls for stricter controls on the trade in the Netherlands and Europe. D66 is against the full deregulation of foxhunting and the hunting of other animals in the Netherlands.

> **Fight against overfishing.** Strict international arrangements should be introduced about drastically reducing the fishing of vulnerable species. If those arrangements are not enforced, an economic and ecological disaster will follow. Alternative fishing methods that prevent bycatching should be encouraged. The ban on whaling should remain.

> **Fight against the production and sale of furs.** Breeding minks for furs in the Netherlands should be forbidden. The sale of dog and cat fur, as well as seal fur, should also be curbed.

> **Significant caution in the use of animal testing.** Animal testing is often a necessary evil, as well as also being a statutory requirement in many situations. However, improved international cooperation and coordination may serve to prevent tests being carried out multiple times. That is why the Netherlands should actively advocate a coordinated system of registering research. In addition, investments should be made in developing alternative methods of research.

**People rule
themselves**

> Minister of Deregulation / One single Randstad administration / Provinces to become *landsdelen* / No repetition of European tasks

The closed model of the Dutch political system has only made a few minor concessions during the past century. Thanks to the perseverance of D66, more rights of self-determination have been won in matters such as abortion, euthanasia and same-sex marriages. We now have an Ombudsman, the right of speech for victims and possibilities for initiatives from the people. These changes, stimulated by D66 (and others), have resulted in more openness, although the harvest is still meagre: even the smallest changes to the political system proposed by D66 were delayed, smothered in political committees or rejected by the Upper House. Nevertheless, change is imminent. The National Convention has made a series of important propositions that will undoubtedly be implemented. D66 continues to fan these flames.

People should be able to identify with the issues occupying politicians. This will create more fertile ground for trust between people and politicians, which is an essential condition for democracy to function effectively.

In a democracy, the right administrators should be in the right places. Who those administrators are is determined by the people. People know what is good for them and should be able to determine how their lives and their country are structured. Vision and leadership and an orientation on results are the true keys for bridging the gap between the people and the administration: keys that open doors, if we give them to those administrators who are chosen directly by people, administrators with realistic and clear objectives, who render account for their actions.

In the present system, the responsibilities of the government are so diffuse that no one feels responsible any longer for the system as a whole. Decisions are delayed by bureaucratic structures. Established interests and the government have a stranglehold on each other. Politicians have to take account of the interests of society, while pressure groups and the government have become too closely entangled. Public discussions, decisions and the allocation of public funds are the responsibility of the government and parliament and should not be transferred to polder model pressure groups.

Moreover, at present politicians are too afraid to state that the government is not the solution to all problems. In the hunt for voters' favour, promises are made that the government is totally incapable of keeping. The government is not a happiness factory.

The government should implement democratic decisions in a way that is serviceable and client-friendly. People should see and know that the government is concerned with things that are important to them. The government can only know this if it listens, and can only respond decisively and create the correct conditions quickly if the right structure is in place. The most fundamental question is this: On the basis of what principle should we organise our society: distrust or trust? Where possible, D66 wishes to rely on people's and businesses' own responsibility, and only have the government supervise where that is strictly necessary. The government still operates in a compartmentalised manner rather than working towards a comprehensive, clear and appealing objective.

Direct influence by the people / Improved level of service / An end to the compartmentalisation / Amendment to the constitution / Administrative organisations to be tailored to their specific needs / Better organisation in European cooperation

Direct influence by the people

> **Chosen administrators at all levels.** What we need are authentic politicians and administrators who are prepared to render account for the results they achieve. That is why D66 believes that the most important political administrators should be chosen directly (mayors, Queen's Commissioners, the Prime Minister and the Chairman of the European Commission). Parties that oppose this apparently have too little faith in the judgment of the people. The chosen administrators can then put together their own Cabinet or municipal executive. In anticipation of the direct election of the Prime Minister, we would also like the Cabinet Former to be chosen directly. We further feel that the suggestions of the National Convention assigning more powers to the Prime Minister (such as the power to appoint officials) should only be implemented if the Prime Minister is elected directly.

> **Referendum.** Naturally administrators should ensure that the people are involved in the decisions to be taken in more ways than only through elections. That is why D66 wants the people to be able to make decisions at neighbourhood, district, municipal, provincial, national and European level. D66 is in favour of introducing a system of corrective and advisory referendums at these levels, as well as people's initiatives with a realistic threshold. D66 also supports a system of advisory referendums, which will offer people the opportunity to express their opinions on alternative propositions (multiple-choice referendum/ preferendum). As an aside, it should be noted that the last of these systems does not require a statutory basis. We believe that parties should commit themselves in advance to the results of the referendums.

> **Annual accountability.** An annual door-to-door newspaper – to be published on the third Wednesday in May – should be introduced, in which the Cabinet renders account in plain language for its achievements. The parliamentary website should also include discussions about current issues. Why, if Parliament is the most important forum in the Dutch democracy, are important discussions left to social initiatives or to the small clubs set up and heavily subsidised by the government?

> **Greater recognisability of administrators.** For some time, we have been advocating a different voting system, in which the link between the voters and the elected is reinforced. At the least, this will require a lower threshold for preference votes. In a previous programme, D66 was in favour of a mixed system, in which 75 members were elected through proportional representation and 75 were elected through the district system. During the coming months, the suggestions put forward by the people's forum on the voting system (www.burgerforumkiesstelsel.nl) will be revealed and will be taken on as the basis for considering what system will ultimately be given the preference. The system should be simple in use.

Improved level of service

> **Trust at the forefront.** Self-regulation is the standard. This principle can be applied in the construction industry, for instance: self-regulating contractors and civilians will result in the abolition of building permits. The government expects that work will be carried out according to the rules, carries out random on inspections and certifies contactors (similar to the system of MOT inspections). This will result in considerable savings and will cut down the level of bureaucracy, guarantee a better implementation of rules, and place responsibilities where they belong: the people themselves. That is why D66 wants any permits and licences that are unavoidable to be integrated wherever possible. If any government bodies fail to refuse licences and permits or to request additional information within the statutory periods, the permit or licence will be deemed to have been granted.

> **A service-oriented government.** The government is there for the people and not the other way around. That is why D66 wants the Other Government ('*Andere Overheid*') project to be continued. The systems of DIGID (digital

identity) and the citizen's service number should be implemented further, and a single telephone number and website for the government will be introduced. The government should also be easy to reach by Internet and e-mail. In 2010, all services should be available on the Internet. In addition to these measures the government should create binding mechanisms for itself, such as concrete standards of service, which will make 'good' service concrete and measurable. Service also means that the government should take the initiative to inform the people of possibilities or benefits.

> **Minister Q for deregulation.** Not everything is better in Belgium, but in some areas we can learn from our southern neighbours. That is why D66 (like the National Convention) suggests appointing a Minister Q to carry out an Operation Kafka and bring a stop to excessive rules and regulations. This will create room for possibilities in the Netherlands. The stakes are a reduction of the administrative burden for people and businesses. We want a reduction of these costs by 25% during the coming period.

An end to compartmentalisation

> **Current system of commissions in the Lower House to be replaced.** D66 also calls for the abolition of the current system of commissions in the Lower House. The commissions do not cross the boundaries between Ministries and so reinforce compartmentalisation. This seriously impedes a comprehensive consideration of interests. The current system of commissions should be replaced by theme-based commissions – children and teenagers, knowledge economy, etc. – that are not bound to a single Ministry. This should also result in a substantial reduction in the number of meetings and lead to more discussions about general issues.

> **Limited ministerial reorganisation.** The elected Prime Minister forms his or her Cabinet, which should break through the compartmentalisation in its administration of important social issues. In our view, this will not require any large-scale ministerial reorganisation that would only cause standstills. However, we want to abolish the Ministry of Agriculture, considerably reduce the scope of its responsibilities, and transfer those Economic Affairs, making agriculture simply another economic sector. We also want to integrate economic affairs and social affairs in order to reinforce our efforts to activate people. Finally we want to integrate the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment with the Directorate Generals for Public Works and Water Management and for Water, and the spatial Directorates and Departments of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Dutch spatial policy.

> **A single national budget.** That budget will be a list of all integral considerations and give a clear description of general policy. The separate chapters need then only be accompanied by shorter Explanatory Memorandums. The reduced Council of Ministers bears responsibility for its composition, while the Lower House of Parliament, as a representative body, will have true influence on the political considerations or the interests of the current compartments.

> **Civil servants to be questioned by Parliament.** It should be possible for civil servants to be questioned by Parliament. This is a useful additional tool serving to provide information to the Lower House, which will not detract from ministerial responsibility and even do better justice to that system.

Amendment of the Constitution

> **Abolition of the Upper House.** The Upper House was historically created to counterbalance the 'common' Lower House and as a *chambre de réflexion* should be responsible for re-examining legislative proposals. In the current situation, however, its political nature has become dominant, while the Upper House is not even elected directly. As such, D66 wishes to abolish the Upper House. Judging the quality and feasibility of legislation can then be left to those who are properly equipped to do so: lawyers and experts from the field. Fair assessment will be both a test of the feasibility and a test of the quality of legislation. Until the Upper House is abolished, it should be given a one-time right of rejection. In addition, D66 shares the National Convention's view that all courts should be able to test the laws against fundamental rights laid down in the constitution, and that a Constitutional Court should be set up.

> **Altered procedure for amending the Constitution.** Legislative proposals are passed by a simple majority in the Lower and Upper Houses. However, amendments to the Constitution have to be passed twice, once by a simple majority and once by a two-thirds majority, with elections between both votes. This is an especially difficult and time-consuming procedure that is no longer tenable in an age in which changes occur particularly quickly. The procedure for amending the Constitution should therefore be simplified. However, D66 does not wish to ignore the fact that amending the Constitution is a matter of a different magnitude than that of an ordinary law and that, therefore, guarantees should exist to prevent amendment by a coincidental majority. That is why D66 shares the National Convention's view that it should be possible to complete amendments to the Constitution during a single government

period (requiring only one reading), but that the proposition should be passed during that period of government by a two-thirds majority (in both Houses or at a joint meeting). In addition, an as yet undefined category of fundamental amendments should then be ratified by referendum.

> **Modernisation of the monarchy.** D66 wishes the King to play a ceremonial part in our political system. The King should no longer be part of the government, and the Cabinet Former should no longer be appointed by the King, but by the Lower House of Parliament, or preferably even elected by the people. The King should no longer be the Chair of the Council of State.

Administrative organisations to be tailored to their specific needs

Each issue calls for its own scale, and does generally not fall within the accidental boundaries of territorial units. The motto for administrative organisation should therefore be customised solutions.

D66 advocates a small, high-quality government that acts where necessary and directs where possible. This can be achieved by trimming away any excess ‘fat’ in the government. Examples include the inefficient use of many policy officials at each Ministry. Reducing the number of civil servants is not a goal in itself, but a result of a government that limits itself to its principal tasks. Many civil servants themselves want changes, but are obstructed by the structure in which they are forced to operate. It is unfair to make generalisations about all civil servants and administrators in a plea for a more efficient government.

Reducing the government and making it more responsive can be given shape by privatisation, among other things, though only if competition is possible. In addition, municipal authorities (singly or together) will take over appropriate executive tasks from the central and provincial governments. This may serve to increase the government’s effectiveness, particularly in situations involving close ties with other municipal duties (e.g. social services, the Centre for Work and Income, the Employee Insurance Schemes Body UWV). However, this is subject to the condition that municipal authorities be given more financial freedom.

> **Continuation of the policy aimed at the major cities.** In recent years, the major cities have worked hard to improve their position as the place where economic opportunities meet social challenges. The success of the cities shows that it is indeed possible to achieve progress if specific attention is devoted to the matter. We believe it to be important that new, understandable and concrete performance targets be set for towns and cities, both separately and as a group, and that account be rendered about the achievement of those targets. Tailored improvements and financial and legal support for new solutions are essential in this connection. The administrative burdens of the major cities involved will have to be reduced significantly. One indispensable factor in that regard is bundling cash flows.

Improved administrative structure

The administrative structure of the Netherlands has been a matter of discussion for a long time. That is why D66 wishes to force a breakthrough, because further delays will hamper the development of the Netherlands. We therefore present the following proposals:

> **Provinces to be absorbed into *landsdelen*.** In many cases, the provinces are not units with which the people can identify. The lack of identification is apparent from the low turnouts for provincial elections. In addition, the presence of provinces in the scale at which the Netherlands functions regularly causes administrative confusion, not least because of mutual competition. Particularly with a view to developing force at the European level, a larger scale is called for. We want to have the provinces to be absorbed into *landsdelen*, which, however, need not all have the same powers, since tailoring is the motto. The provinces’ current planning duties can be carried out by the *landsdelen*, and the executive tasks by municipalities or groups of municipalities.

> **Randstad administration.** The quadrangle of Amsterdam – The Hague – Rotterdam – Utrecht should be transformed into a Randstad *landsdeel*. That *landsdeel* can step up to face the challenges in the fields of space, economy and infrastructure. This Randstad administration will require an extensive set of powers (not only those of the provinces, but also governmental duties in the areas of economy, infrastructure and space), making an open organisation the obvious solution. The tasks and powers of the *landsdelen* Northern Netherlands, Eastern Netherlands and Southern Netherlands will have to be detailed in a similar manner, with special attention being devoted to spatial planning.

> **Duties of the water boards.** New impulses are needed in the regional management of water quantity, water quality and water defences. The cooperation between the water boards and the provinces and municipalities is increasing

significantly, driven by the Water Framework Directive at the European level and the National Water Management Agreement (*Nationaal Bestuursakkoord Water*) at the national level. It should be considered whether the new *landsdelen* can play a role in the field of water management, and if so how.

> **Reorganisation at own municipalities' own initiative.** Reorganising municipalities is not a goal in and of itself. Reorganisations should result in improved service to residents. D66 works on the principle that the initiative for such reorganisations lies with the municipalities themselves. However, failure on the part of the municipalities to initiate such reforms while it is apparent that they are incapable of providing an acceptable level of facilities, proper service or solutions to regional issues may also be a reason for reorganisation. Legislation should not form an obstruction for joint implementation and operation between municipal authorities.

> **D66 in favour of municipal tax areas.** In the local democracy, taxation and the level of amenities should also be carefully weighed against one another. Since property tax for tenants has been abolished, a quick decision is needed in that connection. At the same time, however, income policies should remain a national task.

Improved organisation of European cooperation

D66 is very much in favour of European cooperation: Europe is our homeland, in economic, political and social terms. Europe is not something happening to us from outside, it is something that we are already part of!

> **Federal.** D66 favours a federal Europe. The EU demands solid democratic guarantees. Consequently, the powers of the European Parliament should be expanded further in the areas of legislation and monitoring. We are also in favour of directly electing the Chair of the European Commission and of transforming the Council of Ministers into Europe's Senate. The Dutch government should also adopt a more forceful approach by actually seeing Europe as its homeland. In order to express in the Dutch political reality that Europe is our homeland, the Dutch efforts in Europe should not be coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but by the Ministry of General Affairs. Similar to in the Danish model, the Lower House of Parliament should be involved in European decisions at a much earlier stage. Significant changes to the European Treaty can only be ratified based on a referendum.

> **No duplication of European tasks.** A major possibility for increasing the efficiency of European cooperation is to allocate the entire responsibility for European tasks to Europe, rather than having them duplicated by each Member State. Examples include Defence and Foreign Affairs. D66 is in favour of forming a European army, with a further specialisation of the Dutch armed forces.

> **New entrants.** The EU cannot continue to grow endlessly. Doing so would make the Union too inflexible and obstruct its solution-oriented attitude. D66 believes the boundaries of the European Union to be the European continent: not including Russia, in light of the implications for the balance of power, but including Turkey, based on commitments already entered into. However, countries should only be allowed to join if they meet the relevant criteria. The principal criteria to be considered include matters such as human rights, minorities and democracy.

> **European Constitution.** The rejection of the EU Constitution means that it is now more urgent to force a breakthrough in the way people think and act in relation to Europe. That is why D66 wishes to allow the people of Europe to adopt a Constitution that expresses Europe's nature as a community of values. The essence of that Constitution lies in the fundamental values of our Dutch, and therefore European, society. D66 also proposes that, for the short term, the best possible use be made of the possibilities offered by the current EU treaties to make Europe more efficient and more effective. This means, among other things, that the Council's meetings should be held in public in future; that the Council's decisions should be based on majority voting where that is possible, e.g. in matters concerning asylum and immigration, in combination with an increase in the powers of the European Parliament; that National Parliaments will put forth greater efforts to be involved in the European decision-making process; and that a European Minister for Foreign Affairs be appointed. For the mid-term, D66 feels that the solution lies in amending the existing draft Constitution, with an increased emphasis on individual fundamental rights. Those fundamental rights are freedom for and equality of every human, regardless of beliefs, religion, sexual preference or origins; physical integrity, non-violent solutions to conflicts of interest and a respectfully applied freedom of beliefs and speech, including respect for the democratic and constitutional state. That Constitution should also include the basic conditions for democratic decisions in the Union. The Dutch involvement in the creation of this treaty should be the result of an open and transparent discussion with everyone involved. Ratifying the 'new' Constitution should become a project involving the whole of Europe. Consequently, if it is to be ratified anew, that should be done on the same day in *all* countries.

> **Monthly relocations between Brussels and Strasbourg.** It is also very important that the costly monthly relocations from Brussels to Strasbourg be abolished as quickly as possible. The Netherlands should take the initiative to introduce an amendment to the treaty to that effect.

Kingdom Relations

The Kingdom of the Netherlands consists of three separate countries: the Netherlands, Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles. D66 advocates stimulating independence for the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba as much as possible. Since those islands are part of our colonial past, there are mutual obligations. However, in view of the fact that the islands do not form a single unit, D66 proposes to create a new statute offering the islands the possibility of building up a relationship with the Netherlands that is as close or as loose as they wish. The inhabitants of Curacao and St. Maarten want a separate status, similar to Aruba. The other three islands wish a new, more direct relationship with the Netherlands.

> Refinancing of the national debt. D66 believes that the Netherlands should support the other parts of the Kingdom in tackling their acute financial and economic problems and developing their economies. As such, D66 feels that the Netherlands should contribute to a refinancing of the national debt, contingent upon a coherent plan for development, the prospect of democratic development, sufficiently uniform and high-quality legislation, a properly functioning constitutional state and fair and honest administration.

**People are
living longer
and healthier
lives**

> Patient to decide / Front-line central / No deportation of illegal immigrants / More protection for children

Healthcare caters to every individual's fundamental need to be healthy, to remain healthy, and to be able to participate in society and social life as fully as possible. Since healthcare is so important, the access to proper basic care is an inalienable right.

Healthcare is also a source of employment, economic growth, technological innovation and philosophy. Health and healthcare cannot be considered separately from one another: health is also a matter of one's domestic and living situation, eating patterns and food safety, proper education, tolerance, good quality of air, health behaviour and a safe living environment. Consequently, health promotion measures should be an integral part of healthcare policy.

Healthcare offers a great many benefits, but is also costly. Care consumes an increasingly large portion of the GDP, partly as a result of the aging population and the increasing possibilities in the fields of technology and medication. That is why preserving a solid basic package calls for an effective management of the care system.

D66 supports current government policy, which is no longer aimed exclusively at regulating the supply, but primarily at reinforcing the patient's position and focusing on results by way of the demand. With the increasingly aging population and the foreseeable shortage of healthcare workers, a balance must be found during the coming years between market operation and public supply, and between solidarity and own responsibility.

D66 believes that the people's wishes should be taken seriously. Patients and the demand for assistance should be the central factors. The best way in which this can be achieved is in a system of regulated, limited market operation in the healthcare sector. This is a good way to restrain the costs of healthcare while at the same time increasing the quality of the care. Market operation can only be introduced if the people can actually choose. For example, they cannot choose in the case of acute care. Market forces do not relieve the government of its general responsibility for the quality and accessibility of the necessary healthcare, no for the protection of children who are caught in the middle. The children's surroundings, with their parents at the forefront, are pivotal in this regard, but the government should act quickly and properly if any problems arise.

Freedom of choice and self-determination for the individual / Improved organisation, transparency, quality and funding / Childcare to act faster and more effectively / Prevention

Freedom of choice and self-determination for the individual

- > **Application of person-linked budgets.** Person-linked budgets increase the patient's freedom of choice and self-determination, and should be applied wherever possible. In order to reduce the costs of the bureaucracy for the public, full administrative records need not be kept for the first part of the budget (for example up to a sum of €5,000).
- > **Citizen's service number and electronic file.** In the healthcare sector, insufficient use is made of the possibilities presented by ICT and other technological innovations. As a result, many opportunities for improving effectiveness and quality are missed. D66 therefore wishes to quickly introduce the system of citizen's service numbers and electronic patient files, with sufficient guarantees to safeguard privacy. Patients should be able to access their medical files using electronic means, and have the opportunity to contribute information of their own.
- > **Patients' movement to play an increasingly important role.** In recent years, the patients' movement has developed into an effective body for protecting interests and influencing policies. Nevertheless, patients cannot yet fully play the part allotted to them in the new healthcare system. That is why the government should provide more financial resources than is currently the case. This money will earn itself back through the resulting improvements in quality. The patients' movement is the third party in the healthcare sector, after the healthcare providers and the healthcare insurers, and as such should be funded using healthcare premiums.
- > **Clear distinction with alternative medicine.** D66 wants people to be able to choose freely for alternative healers, but at the same time believes that it is important to make a clear distinction between the regular and the alternative circuit. Insurance companies should be reminded of their social responsibilities, and offer alternative methods of healing in separate modules. This will serve to prevent confusing signals being given to their policyholders.
- > **Senior citizens to remain at home longer.** The position of senior citizens who want to continue living at home for as long as possible should be reinforced. That is why D66 advocates properly qualified homecare, technological innovations and other support. Municipal authorities should construct more 'lifecycle-proof' development. Front-line care should be integrated into residential complexes wherever possible.
- > **Simplified procedures for obtaining European healthcare.** It should be made simpler for people to obtain healthcare in a European context. This possibility should also be made more widely known.
- > **Relief for volunteer care.** The increased demand for healthcare, the lack of healthcare workers and the introduction of the Social Support Act (*Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning*) mean an increased burden on the volunteer care sector. D66 believes that the burden on volunteer care should be diminished, and that the homecare sector should take on more tasks from the volunteer care sector. In addition, volunteer care providers should receive more support for their valuable work, for example in the form of tax measures. The possibilities for free moments, 'respite care', should also be increased and made more widely known.
- > **Expansion of freely available substances.** The new Medicines Act (*Geneesmiddelenwet*) will enter into force in 2007. Part of the act involves a new classification into freely obtainable substances. The UA status (*Uitsluitend Apotheek*, i.e. medicines that do not require a prescription but that do require a pharmacist's supervision) has been reintroduced, and provides opportunities to safely exempt a number of substances that currently require a prescription from that obligation. D66 wants substances that can be qualified as lifestyle substances, either in whole or in part, such as erection-enhancing substances, to be included in that system, as well as calling for research into a system of freer availability of substances that are currently only insured based on a prescription, such as cholesterol reducers.
- > **Patients to be made aware of their rights.** Many patients are not sufficiently aware of their rights. That is why D66 wants the current patient-related laws to be implemented better and patients to be made more aware of their rights.

Self-determination at life's end ...

> **Self-chosen end to life.** The aging population and the increasing empowerment of patients will mean that the issue of a self-chosen end to life for people who are 'ready' will arise more and more frequently. D66 works on the principle of self-determination for all mentally capable adults. That is why D66 wishes to find responsible methods for realising that self-determination.

> **Euthanasia to remain an option.** The introduction of protocols for palliative sedation entails the risk that palliative sedation will become an alternative to euthanasia for doctors. However, euthanasia is an essentially different practice to palliative sedation. That is why euthanasia should remain a realistic option for patients, in addition to palliative sedation. Non-physical disabilities should also constitute grounds for euthanasia or aid in self-killing.

> **Respect for patients' refusal of treatment.** Purposeless medical treatment is currently still provided during the final phase of life, causing unnecessary suffering. However, many senior citizens place wellbeing above life extension. Doctors should respect this. D66 believes it is impermissible for doctors to ignore a patient's refusal of treatment.

... and at life's beginning

> **Self-determination for parents.** D66 is in favour of the greatest possible degree of self-determination for future parents. As such, meaningful prenatal diagnostics should be offered to all pregnant women, including with a view to future developments that will make prenatal diagnostics less dangerous and much more accessible (maternal serum screening/diagnostics).

> **Abolition of the cooling-down period for abortions.** The evaluation of the Abortion Act (*Abortuswet*) shows that women do not decide in haste to have an abortion. As such, D66 is in favour of abolishing the statutory five-day cooling-down period.

> **Early abortion not to be covered by the Abortion Act.** D66 sees no reason why early abortion should fall within the scope of the Abortion Act. The accessibility of medicinal abortion should be improved, for example by allowing general practitioners to prescribe the abortion pill.

> **Sexual and relationship education.** D66 is strongly in favour of teaching sexual and relationship education, in terms that go beyond 'how to put on a condom' or how to avoid venereal diseases and unwanted pregnancy, but that also deal with the relationship-related and emotional aspects of sexuality, with teaching people how to communicate and recognise wishes and limits, with knowledge of the human body, with sexual identity and preference, with homosexuality, with emancipation and with how to prevent abuse. Sexual and relationship education should be introduced gradually from primary school onward, geared to the pupils' age, and also be made more accessible for teenagers and immigrants.

Improvements to organisation, quality, transparency and funding

During the coming decades, the costs of healthcare will rise significantly, as a result of the aging population and technological innovations. As a consequence, discussions will arise not only about the essential ethical aspects, but also about the allocation of scarce resources, the limits of solidarity and the admission of new facilities in the healthcare supply. D66 advocates that a transparent and democratic process be developed to assist in making these painful choices, in which the stakeholders in the field of healthcare (particularly care providers and patients) play an important part. Although considerations of cost effectiveness may serve as tool in such choices, they can never take the place of the democratic process. Politicians will determine the limits of the healthcare, not the healthcare insurers.

More effective funding

> **Front-line to compete with hospitals.** At present, healthcare insurers cannot negotiate the majority of the budget. As a result, there is barely any reason for them to look for a hospital offering the best value for money. Healthcare insurers should be given more freedom in this connection. The financing system should allow for the front line (including general practitioners, physiotherapists, health centres, etc.) to compete more easily with hospitals.

> **Central role for general practitioners.** General practitioners should retain a central role in the frontline healthcare, and be given sufficient possibilities for practice assistance and the formation of health centres.

> **Increased transparency and savings in the healthcare sector.** D66 wishes a further deregulation of healthcare procurement and an increase to ninety percent in the B segment for which free, cost-covering rates apply (current level: ten percent).

> **Incorporation of incentives in AWBZ.** The current organisation of the Exceptional Medical Expenses Act (*Algemene wet bijzondere ziektekosten*, 'AWBZ') is ineffective, and as such will not serve in the future. At present, there are no incentives to procure care efficiently for senior citizens and disabled persons. However, it is important that those incentives be introduced on the side of the insurers, which will change that situation. Although senior citizen care, more than care of disabled persons, can be incorporated into healthcare insurance legislation, the practicability is still uncertain in various respects. If further study reveals that it is possible to transpose senior citizen care, that will be put into action. Separation of housing and care will be encouraged.

> **Investments in the expansion of generic medicines.** Our principle for the prescription and use of medicines is that they should be cheap if possible, and expensive if they must. As such, D66 wishes to invest in stimulating the development of generic medicines, and in actively implementing independent evidence-based guidelines and protocols as developed by the professional organisations.

More effective organisation

> **Introduction of client-oriented neighbourhood centres.** Municipal authorities have more information about the possibilities and needs at the local level. That is why D66 wishes to organise as many healthcare facilities locally as possible. In order to ensure that individual needs on the side of the patients remains the central factor wherever possible, D66 advocates the introduction of low-threshold and client-oriented neighbourhood centres for offering both medical and social care and support. Funding should be arranged by shifting the emphasis from the AWBZ to the Social Support Act (*Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning*).

> **Careful introduction of the WMO.** The Social Support Act (*Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning*) will be introduced in all municipalities in 2007. The purpose of that law is to properly coordinate wellbeing policy, policy for amenities for disabled persons and senior citizens and homecare. A careful introduction and the allocation of sufficient funds for the municipal authorities are conditions that have to be met in order for that coordination to succeed: The WMO is not a cost-cutting measure. D66 wishes organisations of disabled persons and senior citizens in every municipality to be closely involved in the choices made, and for assistance and amenities to be of a high standard of quality. When the WMO is assessed, particular attention will be devoted to structural adverse effects, for example for female care volunteers. D66 is against a further transfer of AWBZ claims to municipal authorities in the current situation: the practical effects of the WMO should first be examined.

> **Tackling worker shortages.** In a number of specific areas of the healthcare sector, worker shortages are imminent. Possible solutions include hiring foreign doctors and nursing staff. It should be made simpler for them to have their qualifications recognised in the Netherlands. It should also become simpler for Dutch students to obtain official qualifications abroad. Another solution for the shortage of workers is to reorganise duties: some duties of doctors (e.g. in the field of chronic care) can be taken over by specialist nursing staff, who in turn could delegate work to practice assistants, for example. The powers to do so should be defined clearly in the Professional Healthcare Professions Act (*Wet BIG*) and the Medicines Act (*Geneesmiddelenwet*).

> **Fight against bureaucracy.** D66 wishes to reduce the amount of bureaucracy at semi-medical institutions, such as homecare institutions and identification bodies, to ensure that requests for aid can be handled more quickly, without a time-consuming decision-making process.

> **Subsequent verification by identification bodies.** The amount of bureaucracy can also be reduced by having the identification for care be made much more frequently by the professionals themselves (with a subsequent check). This will mean a different role for the central identification bodies: they will no longer identify the care themselves, but instead will verify the identification made by the professional.

> **Reduction of management layers.** The number of layers of management at healthcare institutions can be reduced by assigning a significant portion of the management responsibilities to the healthcare professionals. Combining those responsibilities with their care duties will increase their job satisfaction and their effectiveness.

> **Broader application of technological innovations.** Innovations such as telemedicine should have a broader application, and should be discussed as part of the training of doctors and nursing staff.

> **Stricter enforcement of advertising guidelines.** Advertising guidelines for medicines should be enforced much more strictly: self-regulation is not enough.

Further propositions for the healthcare sector

> **Growing of embryos under strictly regulated conditions.** It is a principle for D66 that a human embryo deserves more and more protection as the pregnancy continues. This means that the value of the embryo is not absolute, but can be weighed against a number of other considerations, such as the great medical expectations of stem cell technology. Consequently, D66 advocates the end of the moratorium on growing human embryos specifically for medical scientific research, naturally under strictly regulated conditions.

> **International cooperation to fight infectious diseases.** Effectively combating infectious diseases calls for international cooperation. D66 believes that, for our own safety and in the interests of international solidarity, the Netherlands should make an effort during the coming period of office to help effectively fight diseases such as TBS, malaria and HIV/AIDS, in both a European and an international context.

> **Organ donorship to be regarded as reciprocity.** Anyone who wishes to receive an organ should also be deemed prepared to donate an organ. Donorship is the standard. As such, D66 is in favour of a system of organ donorship in which anyone who fails to register in the Donor Register, after repeated calls to do so, is automatically registered as a donor. An important condition in this connection is that scientific proof must be provided showing that this system is indeed more effective than the current system.

> **Illegal immigrants to be provided with necessary healthcare.** Persons living illegally in the Netherlands are entitled to all necessary medical care. What is 'necessary' is to be determined by doctors, not by desk clerks. The government should allow care providers opportunities to implement such a policy.

> **Addicts off the streets.** More towns and cities should allow the possibility of providing methadone and heroine under medical supervision. This will offer addicts the possibility of stability and treatment, and will reduce the level of drug-related crime.

> **Drug testing in nightlife.** In order to reduce the health risks of party drugs, it should be made simpler to test drugs for contamination. At the same time, more active information should be distributed about the risks of party drugs.

> **Ban on smoking in hotels, restaurants and cafes.** Non-smokers should not be bothered by smokers, and all workers are entitled to a smoke-free working area. Consequently, D66 is in favour of a ban on smoking in hotels, restaurants and cafes. However, possibilities should remain for smoking in residential institutions (such as institutions for chronic psychiatric patients).

Childcare: focus on the child

Development is impossible without protection. In protecting children, the child's surroundings are central, with the parents at the forefront; at the same time, however, if problems occur, the government should be able to act swiftly and properly. Sadly, it is clear that the child's interests are not always put first in the current structure and methods of the childcare sector. Those methods must be improved, and there are ways in which this can be achieved. The interests of the child should become much more the focal point.

> **Regulation of contact with parents in problem families.** Many children with problems come from families in which the parents cannot or do not function properly. At present, child doctors working for the municipal health services and staff at childcare institutions have no contact with parents, or only under very difficult conditions. This causes subsequent damage, both to the child and to any children born later. As such, proper arrangements should be made regulating contact with those parents, including for other additional care providers.

> **Health clinic visits to 100%.** Parents should be obliged to take their children to their local health clinics. Any child who is not brought to the health clinic will be reported to *Bureau Jeugdzorg* and actively tracked down. If necessary, someone from the health clinic or from *Bureau Jeugdzorg* should pay a house call to ensure that the appointment at the health clinic is met.

> **Compulsory aid for parents.** All too often, *Bureau Jeugdzorg* identifies cases in which parents require parental aid in order to be able to help their children properly. Such parental aid should be made obligatory.

> **Reduction of amount of bureaucracy.** At great deal of time is lost in the childcare sector on discussions between various care institutions. D66 calls for an end to bureaucracy and compartmentalisation. At least seventy percent of the people working in the childcare sector should be direct care providers. D66 also wants house calls to be made within 24 hours after a serious report of child abuse is received.

Prevention

Prevention can serve to achieve great improvements in health and to limit the costs of healthcare. As such, D66 wishes to allocate a structurally higher budget to prevention and to research into its effectiveness and efficiency. Effective preventions programmes should be developed and implemented, aimed at cardiovascular diseases, obesity, addictions, including the consumption of nicotine (smoking) and excessive consumption of alcohol. Prevention also means ensuring a healthy living environment, clean air, sufficient space, safe opportunities for physical exercise, sufficient facilities for sports and a reduction of poverty.

> Stricter enforcement of the ban on sales to anyone below the age of 16. In order to reduce smoking and excessive consumption of alcohol, the ban on selling those substances to children and teenagers below the age of 16 should be enforced more strictly. Not only alcohol vendors should be held liable by law, but also parents and children. More information should be provided about the consequences of smoking, drinking and doing drugs.

> Comprehensive tackling of mental illnesses. Depression, phobias and other mental disorders will become the most common health problems in the future. D66 advocates a comprehensive approach to tackling this complex problem. In addition to medicinal treatment, this requires that attention be devoted to preventative measures, early diagnoses (e.g. in education), healthy school environments and proper working conditions.

> Sex education. Education about sexuality, contraceptives and the prevention of STDs should devote particular attention to women of non-Dutch origins.

> Low threshold to availability of contraceptives remains an important condition for preventing infectious diseases and unwanted pregnancies.

People and their rights

> An end to compulsory identification / No more police performance contracts / Non-compulsory integration training

The Netherlands is a democracy governed by the rule of law – as so it must remain. Certainty of law, equality before the law and the prevention of arbitrariness are the pillars of our legal system. For citizens to trust their judiciary, they must be confident it is both independent and competent.

Security and citizens' civil rights and freedoms are the core values that the legal system must protect to the best of its ability. This means that security measures taken must comply with democratic regulations. Moreover, the law courts must be free to examine security measures taken against individuals. The European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights are our guide to personal freedoms and any restrictions thereof.

As an open society, the Netherlands is vulnerable. We constantly need to seek the right balance between government powers and civil rights. Between the freedoms of individual citizens and the security of society as a whole. Fear-based legislation and law enforcement can result in a legal system that compromises the very fundamental freedoms and rights we wish to protect. Human rights must not be allowed to fall victim to the clamour to acquire ever more instruments to fight terrorism and organised crime.

Security can never be fully guaranteed. We need to realise that not all social problems that compromise our sense of security can be resolved by prohibitions and tougher sentencing. Yet much can be done to increase security. First and foremost, the government must adopt measures to prevent the erosion of security and fight crime forcefully and effectively.

Fighting terrorism and crime is, however, not purely the task of the police, the intelligence services and the Ministry of Defence. The strategy needs to extend beyond that and tackle the political, economic, social and cultural tensions that lie at the root of terrorism and crime. Lack of opportunity, exclusion and discrimination can breed hostility toward society and encourage radicalism.

Integration policy during the last Cabinet term was characterised by callousness and arbitrariness. Never before had a member of the government been reprimanded so often by the courts on account of individual decisions. Individual cases that became national news. Decisions that needlessly hurt many asylum-seekers and immigrants and caused great personal suffering.

What is more, the international standing of the Netherlands was damaged. D66 believes firm policy can be carried out humanely. Resorting to wanton harshness to score political points is not the road this country should be travelling.

Invest in a quality judiciary / European cooperation / Address the issue of young criminals / Strengthen the position of the victim / A humane aliens policy

Invest in a quality judiciary

> **Judges stay abreast.** Maintaining our quality judiciary will require on-going investment. Investment in improved employment conditions, extra training and refresher courses for judges. Investment in reducing the time taken to process cases and in improving communication with the public; people need to be able to understand the reasoning behind judgments.

> **Regular monitoring of judges' performance.** Judges are appointed for life. The performance of individual judges should be subject to regular and rigorous scrutiny with the option of intervention. In essence, this is also about the appreciation – as well as the evaluation – of professions. There should be more possibilities to promote good judges that do not perform management tasks.

> **A Public Prosecutions Department that is focused on its core task.** The quality of the Public Prosecutions Department is under pressure. Expectations of the quality of its work are high, as indeed they should be. The Public Prosecutions Department should concentrate on its core task – investigating and prosecuting offenders – and not aspire to extend its range of tasks and powers or resort to investigative methods that have no place in a country governed by the rule of law.

> **Politicians are not judges.** Politicians and representatives of the public administration have no business involving themselves in cases pending judgment.

> **No minimum sentences.** Sentences must take into account the crime, person and circumstances. For this reason, the law stipulates maximum sentences. D66 is opposed to the introduction of minimum sentences. This would deprive judges of the freedom to impose appropriate sentences in individual cases.

> **Prevention on the ground.** Crime prevention is primarily a matter of education and upbringing as well as help to problem families and youngsters. Our public spaces also require crime prevention measures, of which neighbourhood security initiatives are a good local example. We need consistent surveillance in the public transportation system. Improving the quality of our public spaces, including trains, buses and metro stations, also benefits crime prevention efforts.

A more efficiently organised police force

> **Boost national services at the local level.** D66's preference for local differentiation and a neighbourhood-focused approach does not mean ignoring fragmentation issues and problems of information exchange. The creation of a national force, however, would be excessive and unnecessary.

> **More action, less policy.** Action is the essence of police work. Our police forces don't need yet more policy. It's time that more police officers, even those of higher rank, got out from behind their desks. This will mean looking at ways of implementing variable remuneration.

> **No more performance contracts.** D66 wants an immediate end to performance contracts. Planning and accountability are better performance instruments. Performance contracts turn officers into "ticket collectors" who are interested primarily in meeting their quotas, don't act as they should and who are rewarded when they act as they shouldn't.

> **An end to compulsory identification.** D66 wants to abolish compulsory identification. It is a measure that does not boost our security sufficiently to warrant the invasion of our privacy.

> **Digital crime.** Digital crime is becoming an ever more serious problem. Catching up with this new breed of criminal and bringing him to book will require attracting the right kind of expertise and investing in hardware.

Drugs

> **Regulate the production of soft drugs.** The permitted sale of soft drugs in coffee shops has proved to be a good idea. Now the time has come to also regulate the production of soft drugs. This can be achieved with a licensing system. Regulating production will help reduce both the crime involved and hazardous home production. Public health risks can also be better controlled. Growers and traders that ignore the regulations should be dealt with severely. D66 desires full legalisation of soft drugs in the long term, for which international treaties will need to be amended. The Netherlands must defend this position vigorously on the world stage.

> **No coffee shops near schools.** Coffee shops should not be located near schools and no-one under 18 should be sold soft drugs. There should be more information available on the risks of soft drugs, particularly information targeted at young people under the age of 18. D66 believes that greater openness about soft drugs will be a greater benefit to public health than allowing the issue to remain taboo.

> **Review hard drugs policy.** D66 feels that the “War on Drugs” has overreached itself. Any hard drugs policy must focus its efforts on preventing harm to the public health. Adequate information provision and hard drugs testing currently fall short. The Netherlands must take the lead in the debate on the “War on Drugs”.

Address the issue of young criminals

> **Educational objective to remain guiding principle in juvenile criminal law.** The quality of care in the youth custodial institutions must be maintained. We need more juvenile institutions and our institutions must be properly equipped to perform their key task: the reintegration of young offenders. This means more psychiatric help, treatment and guidance. The initial experiences of enlarged groups and multiple young people in a single cell give us reason to look again at this policy.

> **Better define “tit-for-tat”.** Where “punishment” is deserved, it should be carried out as quickly as possible, especially in the case of young offenders. Long waiting times dilute the relationship between the crime and the punishment. The “tit-for-tat” policy that is observed in theory must finally start to take definite shape. Accelerated criminal proceedings and alternative punishments, such as conditional release and community service centre for young offenders, should be part of this effort. The electronic child file should always be used to ensure that sanctions imposed or conditions set for release are indeed carried out or observed.

> **Young people with behavioural problems do not belong in youth prison.** Alternative accommodation in care institutions must be created as soon as possible for young people with behavioural problems who are now wrongfully in crisis accommodation in the youth custodial institutions. Until alternative arrangements can be made for all young people detained for civil offences, they must in any case never be placed together with youths detained for criminal convictions. The experiment in which young children from eight to twelve are removed from the judicial system and accommodated in a care institution must be extended nationwide as soon as possible.

> **Genital mutilation, murder in the name of family honour and forced marriage.** Dutch society is being confronted more and more with genital mutilation, murder in the name of family honour and forced marriage. D66 strongly expresses its opposition to these unacceptable violations of human rights. D66 wants to counter these practices with a combination of training for the professionals involved and education. D66 also advocates tougher measures against the perpetrators.

Adapt jails to the detainees

Sober jails run locally are sufficient for short-term detention. Long-term detainees require more facilities and opportunities for rehabilitation. Untreatable forensic patients that are a danger to those around them need to be provided with a secured living environment. Punishments for young and young-adult repeat offenders should be geared more toward training in special boarding homes.

Strengthen the position of the victim

> **Punishments that protect the victim.** D66 was successful in establishing the right of victims to speak during criminal proceedings. Yet the position of the victim must be strengthened even further. For example, the range of punishments must be expanded to meet the legitimate needs of victims. In addition to street bans, bans on moving house should also be among the instruments available for dealing with sex offenders.

> **Better service to those reporting crimes.** When reporting crimes, citizens deserve more attention and better service than they currently receive. The option of reporting minor offences electronically should be standard.

> **No vigilantism.** Citizens must be discouraged from taking the law into their own hands. People being threatened or assaulted are of course allowed to defend themselves, but the line dividing what is permissible and what isn't will always be determined by the courts.

See integration as a natural process

Integration policy during the last Cabinet term was characterised by callousness and arbitrariness. It needlessly hurt many asylum-seekers and immigrants and caused great personal suffering. What is more, the international standing of the Netherlands was damaged. While the whole debate on immigration harps on about Dutch customs and traditions, it seems ignorant of the fact that for centuries these customs and traditions were influenced by contact with other cultures. The grim clinging to so-called "shared" Dutch customs and traditions inherently means large sections of the population in this country will come to feel excluded. D66 wants an end to integration "by force". There is space for differences in an open society in a world growing ever more globalised. However, D66 does expect immigrants with standard residence permits to learn the Dutch language in order to participate in Dutch society. It is the government's duty to facilitate this.

> **Refugee policy to be the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior; labour migration the responsibility of Economic Affairs.**

> **Automatic Dutch nationality for children born in the Netherlands** whose parents have resided legally in the Netherlands for five years or more; double nationality allowed.

> **Emancipation of new Dutch citizens.** D66 does not believe in a separate integration policy for new Dutch citizens, but rather that all areas of government policy need to pay sufficient attention to specific positions and needs. An exception to this is the integration policy that specifically targets newcomers and which D66 would like see stripped of its current coercive character. The specific attention for Dutch citizens needs to be applied in both socio-cultural and socio-economic areas. The policy must take into account the significant differences between and within the various ethnic groups, especially those between the first and second generations. Integration of new Dutch citizens is a bilateral process that can only succeed if the indigenous Dutch population is involved.

> **Prison is no place for children.** Underage asylum-seekers and the children of refugees awaiting deportation do not belong in prison. They should also always be entitled to education.

> **Residence permit fees.** The fee for a residence permit should be lowered to be in line with the fee charged for a passport.

> **General pardon.** D66 supports a special pardon for those who requested asylum under the old Aliens Act. Those who applied for asylum in the Netherlands before 1 April 2000, regardless of their current legal status but provided they have not committed any serious offences, must be given a residence permit.

> **Develop European asylum policy.** The Netherlands must play an active role in developing a liberal European refugee and asylum policy. The emphasis of this policy must lie in prevention; combating extreme poverty, mediating in conflict situations, providing disaster relief and protecting human rights, all of which will reduce the need to migrate and flee.

> **Stimulate labour migration with the EU.** D66 wants to stimulate labour migration within the European Union. The European labour market offers opportunities that are still not fully understood. Tight conditions in the labour market in one Member State can be compensated by spare capacity in another. The European Commission has already taken steps in this direction, such as the establishment of a European vacancies data bank. These initiatives need to be

better publicised and further developed. One desirable side-effect of such initiatives is better knowledge and understanding of other cultures within the Union.

> **A Green Card for Europe.** D66 wants the European Union to issue a Green Card to people from third countries who want to work in the Union for either a shorter or longer period of time.

International law and order

Dutch foreign policy reflects the position of the Netherlands in the world: a mid-sized Member State of the European Union, host nation of international law, a country that is not directly involved in conflicts and that has extensive experience with military (peace) missions, emergency relief and development aid.

> **A European Minister of Foreign Affairs.** The Netherlands must strive for a European-wide foreign policy under a European Minister of Foreign Affairs. Within Europe, the Netherlands should defend freedoms such as gay marriage, a progressive drugs policy and scrupulous abortion legislation. The Netherlands must urge new Member States to protect human rights and guard the position of minorities, so that the Roma people in Eastern Europe, for example, can share in education and healthcare.

> **The Netherlands taking the lead.** The Netherlands must play a leading role in protecting human rights wherever abuses occur in the world. The Netherlands should take issue with countries that violate human rights, and should seek solutions in a productive manner. For example, we should focus more on the violation of women's human rights in Congo and the suppression of political opposition in Tibet, Burma and Cuba. The Netherlands should also be vigorous in its support of religious and ethnic minorities. In its bilateral relations with Russia, the Netherlands should be prepared to put the war in Chechnya and Russia's growing problem of racism on the agenda. The Netherlands should also use its trade missions to China to discuss the plight of imprisoned dissidents with that country's authorities.

> **Democratisation as a central issue.** Like human rights, democratisation is a key issue in Dutch foreign policy. The Netherlands must participate in democratisation programs such as the training of journalists, judges and lawyers. The Netherlands must do its best to fight corruption and arbitrary rule by, for example, training police forces in developing countries and new democracies.

> **Dialog and negotiations.** With regard to the Middle East, the Netherlands must avoid taking sides and instead stimulate dialogue and negotiations. The Netherlands would do well to take a more ambitious stance in resolving the conflict between Israel and Palestine. The Netherlands should denounce the illegal arms trade in the Middle East and support local organisations in their struggle for greater women's rights and democracy.

> **Africa higher on the agenda.** The Netherlands must support the national and international tribunals in Africa that will foster enduring democracy on that continent. The Netherlands should facilitate elections and provide military resources or manpower to stop the war in Sudan.

> **Better protection for Dutch citizens.** Dutch citizens abroad need better protection and assistance from the Dutch government than has thus far been the case. Good diplomatic relations with dictatorships such as Syria or Saudi Arabia should not come before the interest of children with Dutch nationality who have been abducted by their fathers and are prevented from returning to their mothers in the Netherlands. Prisoners held in sub-standard and corrupt foreign jails must be allowed to serve their sentences in the Netherlands.

> **Tough conditions for peace missions.** In committing to military or peace missions abroad, the Netherlands must be meticulous in applying the conditions drawn up by the Bakker Commission, such as refusing to allow Dutch armed forces to participate in hopeless missions or in missions that do not serve the interests of the local population. The staffing and material requirements for peace missions in hostile regions must also be thoroughly calculated and prepared.

> **Care for veterans.** Military personnel serving on missions abroad can suffer both physical and psychiatric harm. The Dutch government therefore has an obligation to provide generous and easily accessible medical, emotional and material aftercare for as long as required. This means that the Dutch government accepts its responsibilities toward its injured military personnel, even long they have left the service.

> **The US must recognise the International Criminal Court.** Working together to promote the rule of law worldwide also means daring to criticize your partners. It is therefore unacceptable that the US refuses to recognise the International Criminal Court. D66 remains adamant that the Netherlands must pressure the US and its other partners on this issue. Democracy can only work if the government itself observes the law. This is even more true in the context of universal human rights and international humanitarian law.

> **The Non-proliferation Treaty remains in effect.** D66 is extremely concerned that the US, a signatory to the non-proliferation treaty, is now discussing the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons and is concluding treaties that could open the door to an even wider proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is a serious development that the Netherlands and its partners must resist by constantly tackling the US.

> **Strengthen fragile democracies.** D66 believes greater world security can be given a major boost by extending and strengthening democracy in countries where it is still fragile and in its infancy. Terrorists need a haven to prepare for large-scale attacks. The ideal terrorist havens are countries where lawlessness and corruption reign – so-called “failed” states. D66 is for engaging failing states and fragile democracies by talking to those with opportunities, offering expertise and support.

> **Moderate liberalisation.** Developing countries need a bigger say in multi-lateral organisations such as the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO. Moreover, these organisations must become more democratic. Export and import duties must be eliminated gradually. The industrialised countries should take the lead here by eliminating their tariffs first and giving developing countries the time to get their economies to a level where they can compete in an open market. Instant liberalisation is not the answer for these countries.

> **UN reform.** The United Nations is in need of reform. The Security Council, in particular, should no longer reflect the old Cold War balance of power.

> **EU to manage its own security without outside help.** The EU should be able to deal with all security tasks in Europe, including stabilisation and rebuilding operations, without the need for outside assistance. To accomplish this, the EU needs to boost and coordinate its military and civilian capabilities. The approaching civilian EU mission to Kosovo, where the EU will take over responsibility for the civilian administration from the UN at the end of 2006 / start of 2007, is an important touchstone for the EU’s ability to perform such tasks. The Netherlands should therefore monitor this mission’s progress carefully and critically.

> **Human rights experts in crisis management operations.** D66 wants the EU to include human rights experts in all crisis management operations. The Netherlands should provide such experts.

> **A European criminal code.** With the harmonisation of criminal law, there is now a need for a European criminal code for cross-border crime that could then be tackled at a European level. There are already many individual agreements that could be brought together and gaps that should be filled. An EU variant of the American system deserves consideration.

Fighting terror

The fight against terror requires forceful and effective government action. We are, however, not actually fighting a “war” against terror, and the suggestion that we are puts us on a dangerous road toward an “anything goes” attitude. D66 does not support a super Ministry of Security.

> **Keep our promises.** Together with our democratic partners in the world, D66 wants to increase stability and security. Maintaining credibility is crucial here. If one of the partners fails to act as promised, the position of the entire alliance is weakened.

> **Abolish vetoes.** D66 wants the fight against cross-border crime and terrorism to be waged efficiently *and* democratically. The European Commission proposes abolishing vetoes and granting the European Parliament some decision-making authority. Article 42 of the current EU Treaty allows for this. It is up to the Member States to carry this through. D66 feels the Netherlands should make every effort to see that this proposal is passed.

> **Invest in implementation.** The laws dealing with terrorism are comprehensive enough in the Netherlands. What we need now is the effective implementation of these laws. The intelligence services must be allowed to do their job and persons guilty of (planning) terrorist crimes must be brought to justice where possible. This requires judicial supervision of the way evidence is obtained. Where criminal proceedings are not called for, other measures will be needed to prevent terrorist actions. This will require European collaboration.

> **No torture and illegal prisons.** Human rights must always be respected – also in the fight against terror. It is therefore unacceptable that the intelligence services use information obtained under torture. Torture is always wrong. Guantánamo Bay is an illegal prison and Europe must continue to insist that the US find an alternative, legal solution.

> **Protect privacy.** In the international fight against terrorism, the Netherlands needs to examine critically a variety of security measures. We must also always evaluate the effectiveness of any measures taken. This is why the Netherlands should not blindly cooperate in the transfer of passenger data to the US. A measure such as this requires proportionality (no more data than necessary), open and democratic decision-making and legal protection from government errors and misuse of power. The privacy of Dutch citizens must not be compromised and the Netherlands must under no circumstances ever participate in torture, the illegal detention or the illegal extradition of prisoners. The Netherlands should therefore not be involved in secret “CIA flights” or facilitate them.

> **Boost military and civilian capacity.** To create a more balanced partnership with the old and new super powers in the world, the EU will need to expand its military and civilian capacities further and improve EU-wide cohesion. Together, the EU and the US must promote a worldwide legal system based on universal human rights, human security, the UN treaties and covenants on human rights and international humanitarian law.

> **Cooperation between police and the intelligence services.** In combating terrorism and international crime, the police and intelligence services need to collaborate better with their counterparts from other countries and with Europol and Interpol.

Emancipation again on the agenda

The emancipation of women in the Netherlands is nowhere near “complete”. Society needs to continue focusing on the position of women, particularly that of older and immigrant women. Women in the Netherlands are structurally poorer than men: women’s salaries are nearly half that of men’s. D66 wants economic independence for as many women as possible and break down the barriers that prevent this.

Working more hours should be made more appealing for women. A working week of twelve hours will rarely be enough to meet the criterion for economic independence: the minimum income.

> **Extend regular school hours.** Extending school hours will eliminate the need for in-school childcare and reduce the need for childcare before and after school. The additional time at school can be used for sport or cultural activities.

> **End “stay-at-home” bonus.** D66 supports the abolition of the transferable tax credit (with a transitional arrangement for those born before 1972).

> **Maternity leave – also for entrepreneurs.** Maternity benefit for female entrepreneurs should be reintroduced so that women are not discouraged from starting their own business or having children.

> **More women in senior positions.** In the next five years, the new Cabinet must actively seek out female talent for senior positions at international organizations, for example.

> **Parents retain right to see their children.** Each year thousands of children stop seeing one of their parents following a divorce. Often the father. Much legislation actually hinders good co-parenting arrangements. The point of departure must be that both parents are responsible for and equal in parental authority *and* care. Also following a divorce.

> **Millennium targets.** Women play a crucial role in achieving the millennium targets. At the same time, the targets for the improved health and social position of women are the most behind schedule. D66 wants the Netherlands to prioritize the improvement of the position of girls and women in developing countries.

Gay emancipation

The climate in the Netherlands for gay men and women is still relatively tolerant and the introduction of civil marriage for couples of the same sex has brought about a large measure of equality before the law. In the last few years, however, the emancipation of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgenders (LGBTs) seems to have slowed down. We need new measures to reverse this drift away from gay tolerance.

> **Invest in the approach to the problems.** The police must register anti-gay violence. Teachers must always condemn homophobia. Furthermore, there is a need for support and accommodation for gays from migrant families who have nowhere to go. All schools, regardless of the type of education they offer, must foster a gay-friendly atmosphere. Sexual orientation or a sex change can never be a reason to fire or refuse to hire a teacher. Serious

investment is needed for this, as it is for training police officers to deal with homophobic violence and multicultural problems or indeed racial or sexual discrimination.

> **Full legal equality for gays.** Gay parents must be able to seal the legal bonds with their children in the same uncomplicated manner as straight parents. Inter-country adoption will soon be possible for gay parents. Registrars cannot refuse to marry gay couples.

> **Support international protection.** The Netherlands condemns the violation of gay rights abroad and supports foreign gay organisations. Gay asylum-seekers who face persecution in their own countries can find a safe have in the Netherlands.

> **Recognition for married and registered gay couples in the EU.** Gay couples married and registered in the Netherlands still face difficulties the moment they change job or move home within the European Union. The Netherlands must therefore demand that gay couples who have married or registered their relationships in the Netherlands receive the same recognition as straight couples.

People and their art

> Museums free to young people / 1% of National Budget for culture / Artists in the classroom

Art and culture form the DNA of the society that D66 want to achieve. Culture is a valuable aim in itself and not just a tool for achieving other policy objectives. Given this, D66 wants to see a structural expenditure on art and culture amounting to 1% of the National Budget. These resources will be used to create a high-quality and a varied cultural provision for the entire country.

Culture also has significant economic value. A broad cultural provision helps create a favourable climate for establishing a business. And so D66 wishes to invest more money in forging links between culture and the economy. In this way, the Netherlands will break into the international vanguard of creative industry.

Public broadcasting is losing an enormous number of young viewers and listeners. This is a missed opportunity for young people; the programmes are educational and informative and that is important for this target group. Broadcasters need to be brought up to speed on the demands of today's digital era. This is an era in which young people are spending more time on the internet than in front of the television. In recognition of this, internet will become a spearhead of public broadcasting.

Scope for cultural offensive / More attention for young people / Strengthen public broadcasting

Scope for cultural offensive

> **Room for 'grand projects'.** There must be a generous fund for special cultural projects, 'grand projects' that can be used to fund architecture with international grandeur, to purchase a unique painting, to organise a festival or create an innovation in the museum world.

> **Matching grants.** A broad cultural offensive relies on the participation of private individuals, companies and funds. It is time for a new golden age of cultural patronage. The government is using matching grants and tax measures to encourage donations to culture.

> **International cooperation.** The Netherlands benefits from strong cultural links with foreign countries. The budget for international cultural cooperation must, therefore, be increased.

> **House of Cultures.** The enrichment of our country by other cultures is evident in the House of Cultures, where artists of Dutch descent and artists more recently in the Netherlands are given a showcase. D66 argues for giving the House room to grow.

> **Maintaining monuments.** Investment must be made in the many monuments that our country can boast in order to preserve them from disrepair and to carry out much-needed restoration.

> **Government to set financial boundaries and not interfere with the content.** Artists and cultural institutions will be subject to as little bureaucracy and political interference as possible. The overloaded Policy Document on Culture cycle, the allocation formula for government subsidies, will be revised to reflect the principle that the government remains at a distance. D66 argues for simple, transparent subsidy procedures with a clearer role for cultural funds and experts in the sector.

More attention for young people

> **Artists in the classroom.** From primary schools onwards, D66 would like to see more scope for cultural education and artists visiting classes, and more scope for free expression.

> **Cultural provision in afterschool programmes.** Schools and art institutions must receive more generous budgets so that they can develop a broad cultural provision as part of their afterschool programmes.

> **Museums free up to the age of 18 years.** Support within and outside mainstream education is important and will remain so. For this reason, D66 is also arguing for making museums free to young people up to the age of 18 years and for facilitating youth culture such as pop music and DJs.

Strengthening public broadcasting

D66 is in favour of a strong, fully-fledged public broadcasting corporation, one that is not led by market share or viewing figures but whose guiding principles are quality, distinctive programming, originality and independence. News and information, art, culture and education are the public broadcaster's main business because these are the areas in which programmes should be made independently of commercial or other interests. Even in the digital era, the public broadcaster has a significant role to play, but modernisation is necessary. Centralised direction is needed, but that doesn't mean uniformity: public broadcasting programming is one area in which the diversity in our society should find expression, on radio, television and on the internet.

D66 wants to safeguard the quality and independence of public broadcasting.

> **Advertising on public channels will continue.** D66 considers it a destruction of capital to make public broadcasting advertising-free. Similarly, D66 is no advocate of an advertising-free public broadcasting corporation. Whether 'Hilversum' one, two or three should be running general networks is a question that's out of date – the public broadcasting corporation has since launched 17 digital thematic channels, and this is just the start of a trend. The main concern is that the public broadcaster's programmes find their way to the viewers as smoothly as possible, wherever those viewers may be reached.

> **Broadcasting monies are for programmes and programme-makers.** Public sector standards for management salaries will also apply to broadcasters. Moreover, a generous, guaranteed budget will be made available for opera and concert recordings, art programmes, documentaries and other cultural productions.

> **Other media, too, are under pressure.** D66 wants to see the cross-ownership regulation extended, and quickly, so that media companies (newspapers, publishers) have more elbowroom. Nonetheless, the multiformity in the publishing and newspaper worlds must be safeguarded.

> **Encouraging local broadcasters.** Local broadcasters are important to the local community and to a lively local democracy. Municipalities are not free to spend the government grant for local broadcasting, which will be raised, on other aims because locally, too, the independence of the broadcaster is the main issue.

The text of D66's election programme entitled, *It's all about people* has been created under the aegis of the programme committee consisting of:

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