

## NETHERLANDS

*Population:* 15,8 Mio

*Area:* 41.864 km<sup>2</sup>

### Part 1: Laws concerning Homosexuality

*Forbidden by law:* No

*Registered partnership/marriage:* Yes, partnership since 1998, marriage since 2001

*Differences to heterosexual marriages:* Almost the same rights except for differences in adoption rights and differences concerning church blessings.

*Anti-discrimination law, protecting lesbians/gays (L/G) against discrimination:* Yes, since 1 September 1994.

*At work:* Yes

*On the housing market:* Yes

*In other areas:* Yes

*Comments:* Most domains of public life, thus also trade, schooling, education and service; the exception, however, is related to pensions. In all the mentioned areas we can require to be treated equally. We have equal rights: Equal Law Treatment.

When this law was introduced, an Equal Treatment Committee was installed. Those who are not satisfied with the judgement of this Committee subsequently can go to court. Moreover, it is possible to go to court without previously having asked a judgement by the Equal Treatment Committee.

*Other groups in the society protected through such a law:* Yes

The anti-discrimination law also covers equal treatment on the grounds of religion or philosophy of life, political inclination, race, sex, nationality and civil status. Laws on the grounds of handicaps and age are currently being negotiated in Parliament.

*Incidents that briefly describe the situation of L/G in society:*

In 1996 the lesbian theologians of Sappho asked a judgement, because their lesbian dispute at the Catholic Theological University was forbidden. The Equal Treatment Committee judged that this university did not have the right to do so. When it became evident that the Committee was about to decide accordingly, the Catholic Theological University decided to cancel *all* disputes of students – so that the discrimination of lesbian disputes could not be claimed any longer. Now and then religious leaders (a cardinal, minister or imam) come into the picture with insulting pronouncements about homosexuality or homosexuals like the following: L/G are basically disordered/lower than dogs and pigs.

### Part 2: Situation in the Church(es)

*Open L/G welcome to*

*Eucharist:* Yes, in most churches they are, in some not.

*Do volunteer work:* Yes

*Comments:* Often openly, even in many Roman Catholic parishes; in some cases, people are more 'in the closet'.

*Work as ordained ministers:* Yes

*Comments:* Protestant ministers can usually live openly, priests usually hidden, at least not openly living in a relationship.

*Other employment in church(es):* Yes, e.g. as a pastor in a hospital etc., and as a sacristan.  
*Note:* Unlike in Germany, people teaching in a school in the Netherlands are never employed by a church.

*Partnership blessing possible:* Yes

*Comment:* In some churches officially, in others more informally (even by some Roman Catholic priests!), in some churches it is not possible. For such a ceremony, marriage or partnership registration is not a prerequisite!

*Incidents/outspoken attitudes that briefly describe the situation of L/G in the churches:*

Since lesbians/gays legally have the right to marriage in the Netherlands, most discussions in churches are about the blessing of same-sex couples. There's a big variety of opinions, and the discussions are always heavy at this point. In some parishes, the discussion about same-sex blessings starts only when a couple asks for a blessing. In other parishes, the discussion has started earlier on grounds of principle, to be ready to say yes or no if such a request might come up. In all those discussions, arguments against homosexuality may arise which until then had remained hidden in the local community.

### Part 3: Christian Lesbian/Gay Networks

*Network name:* Landelijk KoördinatiePunt Groepen Kerk en Homoseksualiteit (LKP)

*Number of members:* approx. 25 national and local to regional groups and organisations

*Year of foundation:* 1986

*Web page/contact address:*

[www.lkp-lesbo-homo-en-kerk.org](http://www.lkp-lesbo-homo-en-kerk.org)

[info@lkp-lesbo-homo-en-kerk.org](mailto:info@lkp-lesbo-homo-en-kerk.org)

*Network name:* Netwerk Verkeerd Verbonden (NVV)

*Number of members:* 300 women

*Year of foundation:* 1989

*Web page/contact address:*

<http://huizen.dds.nl/~netvv>

[netvv@dds.nl](mailto:netvv@dds.nl)

*Network name:* CHJC Holy Females

*Number of members:* 150 women

*Year of foundation:* 1998

*Web page/contact address:*

[www.holyfemales.myweb.nl](http://www.holyfemales.myweb.nl)

*Network name:* Landelijke Werkgroep Geloof en Levensbeschouwing N.V.I.H. (COC)

P.O. Box 3836, NL- AP Amsterdam

*Network name:* Werkgroep Homoseksualiteit in Christelijk Gereformeerd en Nederlands Gereformeerde Kring

*Web page/contact address:* P.O. Box 3836, NL-1011 AP Amsterdam (as above)

*Network name:* Werkgroep Homoseksualiteit (OCNV)  
Wezellaan 32, NL-1216 EA Hilversum

*Network name:* Werkverband van Homotheolgen (WHT)

████████████████████  
████████████████████

*Network name:* Werkverband van Katholieke Homo – Pastores (WKHP)  
[wkhomopastores@hotmail.com](mailto:wkhomopastores@hotmail.com)

*Questionnaire filled in by Gea from Netwerk Verkeerd Verbonden*