Application of the European Code of Social Security by the Netherlands

58th Annual Report: General report 2025

(1-7-2024 - 30-6-2025)

The Government indicates that seafarers who legally reside in the Netherlands are entitled to social security protection for the following branches: medical care, old-age benefit, child benefit, and surviving relatives benefit.

It further declares that seafarers legally residing in the Netherlands and employed by an employer residing in the Netherlands, as well as seafarers legally employed by a foreign employer and working on a ship flying the Dutch flag, are covered for the following additional branches of social security: sickness benefit, unemployment benefit, maternity benefit, and invalidity benefit.

Non-Dutch seafaring personnel are also statutory protected (Vereniging Zeerisico 1967). In case of illness seafaring personnel receives 80% of their daily wage for the duration of 52 weeks. In case of a job related illness or a job related accident, seafaring personnel receives 70% of their daily wage for a maximum of 3 years after the initial 52 weeks of illness. Furthermore, there exists a compensation for medical treatment in their home country as well as a compensation for survivors.

I GENERAL

A. Administration/ Organization

No changes during reference period.

B. Benefits

See new rates from **1 January 2025** in the relevant chapters in this report

II MEDICAL CARE

a) Changes made during the reference period

Key to the Dutch healthcare system is the Basic Health Insurance, a mandatory population widescheme. The coverage of this standard package (basisverzekering) includes medical care by specialists, GPs and midwives, hospital care, medication, rehabilitation, dental help for persons younger than 22, mental healthcare and necessary medical help during a holiday or business trip abroad. Health insurance companies have an obligation to accept everyone for this Basic Health Insurance, irrespective of gender, age and health.

Innovations in treatment are added automatically throughout the year, without a need to change entitlements. In the Health Care system, changes in entitlements are implemented at the beginning of each calendar year. In most years, some (minor) changes to this basic insurance package are made. These are reported below, together with changes to co-payments.

The following changes were made to the basket of care on January 1 2025:

- The abolition of a number of conditions for the entitlement to geriatric rehabilitation care.
- Permanent admission to the basic package of long-term personalized supervised active exercise therapy for rheumatoid arthritis with severe functional limitations.
- Removing the restrictions for supervised exercise therapy for COPD.

- Clarifying the role of the oral surgeon in providing diagnostics or treatment for orthodontics.

Co-payments:

- The compulsory deductible has remained at 385 euros per year in 2025 (no changes)

b) Changes decided, planned or proposed for the following year

- The maximum number of programs to quit smoking will be raised from one to three programs per year to stimulate smokers to quit with professional guidance.

- The admission of long-term personalized supervised active exercise therapy for insured persons with axial spondyloarthritis who have severe functional limitations.

Co-payments:

Planned for 1/1/2026: co-consultation from a GP to another health care professional in order to facilitate referral to follow up care will be exempted from the compulsory deductible.

Planned for 1/1/2027: the amount of the compulsory deductible will be lowered from 385 to 165 euros per annum. Furthermore, a maximum co-payment of 50 euros per treatment in medical-specialist care will be introduced.

c) Research (including evaluation), completed or initiated

- The research trajectory into paramedical recovery care after Covid-19 has been concluded in the fall of 2024. The study shows that individuals with serious complaints/disabilities who received paramedical recovery care experienced an improvement in daily functioning. However, comparable individuals who did not receive this care reported similar improvements in daily functioning. According to the National Health Care Institute, this care therefore offers no added value compared to not providing treatment.

- Furthermore, several research trajectories on various medical conditions on the basis of conditional admission have been initiated.

III SICKNESS BENEFITS

a) Changes made during the reference period

No changes.

b) Changes decided, planned or proposed for the following year

No changes decided, planned or proposed for the following year.

c) Research (including evaluation), completed or initiated

The Dutch government has decided to do research about the whole system of sickness and incapacity for work in the Netherlands. This includes the Capacity for Work Act (WIA) and the Sickness Benefits Act (Ziektewet). The goal of this research is to make an analysis about the trends and developments and to investigate how we could make the system more affordable and manageable, and how we could increase the labour participation. This research started in December 2024 and will be completed in September 2025. It is carried out by different ministries.

IV UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

a) Changes made during the reference period

No major changes.

b) Changes decided, planned or proposed for the following year

No changes foreseen.

c) Research (including evaluation), completed or initiated

No research completed or initiated.

V OLD AGE BENEFITS

a) Changes made during the reference period

As of January 1, 2025, the AOW (pension) Income Support (IOAOW) scheme has been ended. This was an additional amount on top of the AOW benefit. The amount of the IOAOW depended on the number of years a person had accrued AOW benefits. In 2024, the maximum IOAOW was €5,50 gross per month. The abolition of the IOAOW is the result of a change in the law. The AOW is linked to the statutory minimum wage, meaning that an increase in the minimum wage also leads to an increase in the AOW. In 2023, the minimum wage was increased further due to high inflation in 2022. This also led to an increase in the AOW benefit. The previous government then decided that the IOAOW was redundant and abolished the scheme.

b) Changes decided, planned or proposed for the following year

No changes.

c) Research (including evaluation), completed or initiated

The 6th edition of the AOW (pension) monitor, that evaluates the effects of the increase of the pension age, will be completed in September 2025. It will be continued yearly.

A social cost/benefit analysis about the relation between the AOW and the public domains of housing and health care has been completed in July 2025.

d) Rates of payment during reference period

Benefit rates as of January 1st 2025:

Single pensioner	*€ 1580,92* *gross per month*	*€ 102,46* *holiday allowance gross per month*
Married pensioners or living together (amount per person)	*€ 1081,50* *gross per month*	*€ 73,18* *holiday allowance gross per month*

VI WORK ACCIDENT AND OCCUPATIONAL DISEASE BENEFITS

Not applicable anymore for the Netherlands

VII FAMILY BENEFITS

a) Changes made during the reference period

Both the general child benefit (AKW) and child allowance (WKB) have been raised as of the 1st of January 2025. The amounts are:

General child benefit (AKW)

Age category	*Quarterly amount per child*
0 up to and including 5 years	*€ 286,45*
6 up to and including 11 years	*€ 347,83*
12 up to and including 17 years	*€ 409,21*

Child allowance (WKB)

	Yearly amount
Per child	*€ 2511*
Increase for children age 12 up to and including 15 years	*€ 703*
Increase for children age 16 and 17 years	*€ 936*
Increase for single parent households	*€ 3389*

b) Changes decided, planned or proposed for the following year

No changes have been proposed for the general child benefit.
With regard to the child allowance there are currently three proposals of law being prepared taking effect in the years 2026 and 2027. Main changes are exceptions to the partner-criteria to the benefit of de facto single parents; the other change has effect on the highest income group. They will receive less or no child allowance from 2027 on.

c) Research (including evaluation), completed or initiated

The general child benefit for Caribbean Netherlands (KBV BES) has been evaluated for the first time since its introduction in 2016. The report covers the period 2016 – 2023. All child benefits, general and means-tested, are currently being evaluated for the period 2018 – 2023. The report will be sent to Parliament at the end of 2025.

VIII MATERNITY BENEFITS

a) Changes made during the reference period

No changes made during the reference period.

b) Changes decided, planned or proposed for the following year

No changes planned for the following year.

c) Research (including evaluation), completed or initiated

No research completed or initiated.

IX INVALIDITY BENEFITS

a) Changes made during the reference period

Since 1 July 2024 a new measure has been in effect, which is called 'Praktisch beoordelen' (practical assessment). This is a temporary measure which will end on 1 July 2027. This measure has been taken for people who apply for a benefit under the Capacity for Work Act (WIA) and who are still partially working. Before the introduction of the measure, the Netherlands Employees Insurance Agency (UWV) did both a practical and theoretical assessment in order to decide if people have the right to an incapacity benefit. A theoretical assessment is an estimate of the amount of money that an employee in theory could earn. With a practical assessment, UWV assesses whether the work that someone does, is suitable for what this person is still able to do considering his/her situation. If so, UWV calculates the difference between the old and the new salary. The assessment which gives the lowest rate of incapacity for work decides if the employee has a right to an incapacity benefit under the WIA.

The measure 'Praktisch beoordelen' means that UWV does only a practical assessment for people that are still partially working. To implement the change, the government has changed the 'Schattingsbesluit arbeidsongeschiktheidswetten'[1].

b) Changes decided, planned or proposed for the following year

No changes decided, planned or proposed.

c) Research (including evaluation), completed or initiated

See under 'Sickness Benefits'.

d) Rates of payment during reference period

The maximum daily wage for the benefit is €290,67 gross per day, and €6322,07 gross per month, as of 1 January 2025. For people whose benefit is below maximum, the rate of payment depends on their incapacity percentage.

X SURVIVORS' BENEFITS

a) Changes made during the reference period

No important changes during the reference period.

b) Changes decided, planned or proposed for the following year

No changes foreseen.

[1] wetten.nl - Regeling - Schattingsbesluit arbeidsongeschiktheidswetten - BWBR0011478

c) Research (including evaluation), completed or initiated

CBS (Statistics Netherlands) research on survivor benefits will start in September 2025 and delivery will be in January 2026:

1. Cohort of partners who died between 2015 and 2018: tracked from the year before death to 5 years after death.

2. Non-use among surviving relatives who lost their partner between 2015 and 2018.

3. Individuals whose Anw benefits ceased between 2019 and 2022: tracked from the year before leaving the household to the year after leaving the household.

4. Use and non-use among orphans.

5. Monitoring Anw use over time to map the development of women's dependency.

d) Rates of payment during reference period

The maximum rate of Anw survivors' benefit is 70% of the statutory net minimum wage, € 1594,74 paid monthly. In addition, a holiday allowance (vakantie-uitkering) of € 122,64 per month is allocated and paid as a lump sum once a year.

The Anw-survivors’ benefit includes a monthly Anw-allowance of € 21,16.

If income from work is less than €1095,90 per month including WLZ/Anw contributions, Anw survivors' benefit is paid out in full. If the income is above € 1095,90 per month, a proportionally lower amount is paid out.

If the surviving partner has an income of more than € 3456,27 per month, no benefit is paid.

Children having lost both parents (no restriction on cumulation with family allowances) are entitled to the following orphan’s benefits:

- each child under 10: € 503,55 per month, plus a monthly gross holiday allowance of €39,24 paid as a lump sum once a year.

- each child aged 10 to 16: € 755,32 per month, plus a monthly gross holiday allowance of € 58,87 paid as a lump sum once a year.

- each child aged 16 to 21: € 1007,09 per month, plus a monthly gross holiday allowance of € 78,49 paid as a lump sum once a year.

XI <u>**FINANCING**</u>

General Unemployment Fund:

No major changes or changes planned. No research completed or initiated.

The employer contribution to the AWf (General Unemployment Fund) is 2.74% for contracted workers with indefinite terms, and 7.74% for flex and temporary workers.

Employers that are part of the public sector do not pay the AWF contribution, but instead pay the unemployment benefits of their (former) employees directly (plus a 0.68% rate towards the running costs).

Specific Request

Part IV (Unemployment benefit), Articles 23 and 24 of the Code, as amended by the Protocol. Qualifying period and minimum duration of benefit. In its previous conclusions, the Committee noted that to become entitled to the minimum duration of 21 weeks (five months) of unemployment benefit in accordance with Article 24 of the Code, as amended by the Protocol, a person had to fulfil a qualifying period of at least two-and-a-half years of employment. Observing that this was manifestly excessive in terms of Article 23 of the Code, which allows a qualifying period only insofar as it is necessary to preclude abuse, and the current practice in the majority of the European countries, where the qualifying period normally does not exceed one year of employment, the Committee requested the Government to take measures to review the national legislation in this respect. The Committee further noted with concern the former Government's indication that in 2020 it started the process of denouncing Part IV of the Code, as it considered that adjusting Dutch legislation was neither realistic nor desirable due to its financial impact. In this regard, the Committee observed that while the national legislation concerning the qualifying period for entitlement to unemployment benefits was not in line with Articles 23 and 24(1) of the Code, as amended by the Protocol, it was in line with Articles 23 and 24(1)(a) of the Code. In particular, the Committee observed that in the Netherlands, a shorter qualifying period of employment (less than one year) was required for the entitlement to the minimum duration of 13 weeks of unemployment benefit as provided in Article 24(1)(a) of the Code.

The Committee notes the Government's indication that the final position on restarting the process of denouncing Part IV of the Code, as amended by the Protocol, has still to be determined, as in July 2023 the Dutch government then in office resigned and a new Government entered into office on 2 July 2024.

Considering that the provisions of the national legislation are found to be in compliance with Articles 23 and 24 of the Code, and partially in compliance with Part IV, as amended by the Protocol, the Committee once again firmly hopes that the new Government will consider the possibility of maintaining its obligations under Part IV of the Code and the Protocol, and envisage taking measures to fully align its legislation with Part IV of the Code, as amended by the Protocol.

Answer:
The final position on restarting the process of denouncing has still to be determined by the government.

Furthermore, we would like to note that in your Specific Request it is stated that a person has to fulfil a qualifying period of at least two-and-a-half years of employment to become entitled to a benefit duration of 21 weeks, and that this is not correct. In the text below we explain how the duration of unemployment benefits is determined in the Netherlands and what employment history is required for a benefit duration of 21 weeks.

- In the Netherlands one of the requirements to receive unemployment benefits is completing a required reference period of employment. Unemployed employees who have worked at least 26 weeks in the last 36 weeks (at least 1 hour per week) prior to unemployment, satisfy the required reference period to be eligible for unemployment benefits (this is often called the **weeks requirement**). These employees receive benefits for a duration of at least 3 months. If the weeks-requirement is not satisfied, no unemployment benefits are awarded.
- Unemployed employees who have *additionally* worked 4 out of the last 5 years prior to the year of becoming unemployed (at least 208 hours per year), receive a longer duration of benefits. This is called the **years requirement**. If both the weeks requirement and the years requirement are satisfied, the length of benefits is determined by looking at the total employment history. Again, a year is taken into account for the determination of the

employment history if at least 208 hours have been worked that year. For the first 10 years of employment history, 1 month of benefits is awarded. For the years thereafter, half a month per year is awarded. With a maximum of 24 months.

- Some examples:
  - An employee only satisfies the weeks requirement, and not the years requirement: the benefit duration is 3 months.
  - An employee satisfies both the weeks and years requirements. The total employment history is 6 years. The benefit duration is then 6 years x 1 month = 6 months.
  - An employee satisfies both the weeks and years requirement. The total employment history is 36 years. The benefit duration is then 10 years x 1 month + 26 years x 0.5 months = 23 months.
- The above system implies that in order to obtain a benefit duration of at least 21 weeks (approximately 5 months) in the Netherlands, one should:
  - Satisfy the weeks requirement and satisfy the years requirement.
  - Have a total employment history of at least 5 years.