



Tweede Kamer
DER STATEN-GENERAAL

Strengthening government oversight: legislative rapporteurs and scientific assessments

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Netherlands House of Representatives

Analysis and Research Department



Content

1. Introduction: Work of the Analysis and Research Department
2. Two Recent Innovations in Government Oversight
 - a) Legislative Rapporteurs
 - b) Scientific Assessments



Work of the Analysis and Research Department

- Analysing, structuring and processing information into knowledge directly relevant to the parliamentary process;
- Advising committees and rapporteurs in the budget cycle;
- Conducting research;
- Conducting and/or coordinating parliamentary investigations and inquiries.



Analysis and Research staff

- Knowledge coordinators
- EU-advisors
- Information specialists
- Legislative analysts



Strengthening the Dutch House of Representatives

- Political Working Group chaired by Kees van der Staaij MP
- Presented its report to the Speaker in December 2021
- Working Agenda: 26 Recommendations on Strengthening the Principle Functions of the House





Strengthening the Dutch House of Representatives

- On scrutinizing government bills:
 1. Work on your knowledge position, early on!
 - 2. New instrument: legislative rapporteurs**
 3. Provide specialist advice and support



Legislative Rapporteurs

Pre-legislative stage

- Analyse draft bill and consultation papers
- Comparative, academic surveys
- Procedural advice

Legislative Stage

- Review legislative quality and advisory opinions
- Provide non-partisan input in legislative process

Post-legislative stage

- Monitor government's implementation review
- Prepare parliamentary review



Legislative Rapporteurs in practice

- So far: 9 ongoing rapporteurships (or in planning), 3 have already concluded
- Usually two co-rapporteurs (coalition + opposition) with single mandate
- Supported by legislative analyst, (deputy) clerk, knowledge coordinator, information specialist



Example: Bill on sexual offences

- What did the Legislative Rapporteurs do?
 - Researching certain topics in depth (e.g. negligence vs intent)
 - Asking clarifying/technical questions
 - Opening statement on behalf of committee
- Effect: inspiring amendments to the bill?



The Scientific Assessment

- Assessment of legislative/policy proposals
 - Goal
 - Effectiveness and efficiency
 - Financial consequences
- Conducted jointly by 2 scientists from different universities + no involvement in proposal



Process

- Standing Committee decides, appoints rapporteurs
- Call for scientists
- Assessment 1: information available?
- Assessment 2: choices made scientifically tenable?
- Meeting with rapporteurs
- Technical Briefing
- Debate with Minister





Scientists:
Rapporteurs :
Contactperson Analysis and Research Department:
Proposal:

Judgement: Adequate Deserves attention Must be improved

Standard Form

- Keywords
- 4 pages
- Publicly available

	Judgement	Information in the proposal	Recommendations scientists
1. Findability			
2. Goal			
3. Policy instruments			
4. Effectiveness			
5. Efficiency			
6. Financial consequences (State)			
7. Financial consequences (third parties)			
8. Evaluation			



Whistle-blower Protection Act (WPA)

- Implementation EU-Directive
- Scientists were critical
- Technical Briefing
- Minor amendment of WPA
- Most recommendations postponed

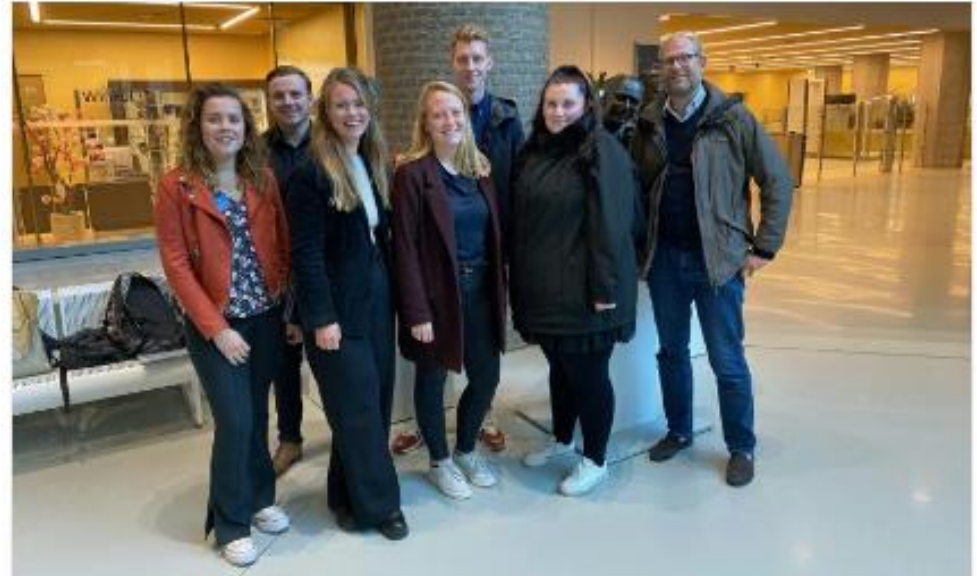
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Follow-Up

- Staff memo on (lack of) follow-up recommendations
- Consequently addressed by MPs in debate
- In the end: main recommendations adopted in amendments!



Studenten Recht en Bestuur adviseren Tweede Kamer over Wet bescherming klokkenluiders

rug.nl • Leestijd: 2 min.

- Also: student participation
- Award Best University Lecturer for one of the scientists!



Thank you!