

Realities of access to medicines in the Netherlands: Commitments Rights and Obligations

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Health Action International's "Our Medicines, Our Right" campaign was launched in the run up to the [2017 Dutch Parliamentary elections](#), with the endorsement of 14 civil society organisations.

The campaign added a civil society voice to the animated discussion taking place in the Netherlands about the prohibitive price of several medicines and pinpointed factors that enable excessive pricing. Among them the opacity of research and development costs purportedly incurred by pharmaceutical companies; failure to acknowledge the contribution of public funds and publicly funded research institutions to the early development of newly-marketed medicines and the lack of transparency in pricing decisions and procurement schemes.

The Dutch government has been one of the most vocal in the European Union (EU) on the need to reframe the balance between innovation and access. Successive Ministers of Health have been adamant about the need to seek a balance between pharmaceutical companies' marketing strategies and national governments budgetary constraints, both within EU and at the global level.

This paper follows up on HAI's 2018 report and gauges the current situation of access to medicines (especially affordability, transparency and accountability) following the three axes on which the campaign was built: transparency of government decisions, disclosure of research and development costs by pharmaceutical companies, and public return on public investment.

This policy brief is free to download in [English](#). A summary of the paper has been created in [Dutch](#) and is also available to download.