

29. Netherlands

This country profile presents self-employment and entrepreneurship rates for women, youth, seniors and immigrants in the Netherlands and benchmarks them against the European Union average. It also presents current inclusive entrepreneurship policy issues and recent policy developments.

Key trends

The proportion of working people who were self-employed in 2018 was slightly above the European Union (EU) average (15.5% vs. 13.7%). There was a gender gap in self-employment as men were about 1.5 times more likely to be self-employed than women (18.4% vs. 12.2%). Women, youth and seniors were more active than the EU average between 2014 and 2018 at starting and managing new businesses, especially youth (14.8% vs. 7.7%). While new women, youth and senior entrepreneurs were less likely than the EU average to report over this period that they started their business due to a lack of employment opportunities, they were also less likely to expect to create at least 19 jobs over the next five years.

Hot issue

There is an ongoing policy debate about “false” self-employment. In an effort to combat false self-employment, the Law Deregulating the Evaluation of Working Relationships (*Wet Deregulerend Beoordeling Arbeidsrelaties*) introduced Model contracts (*modelcontracten*) to clarify working relationships when solo-entrepreneurs have one client. However, the measure seems to have had mixed results after being introduced in 2016 (fully in force in July 2018). Further measures are planned concerning the assessment of the nature of labour relations.

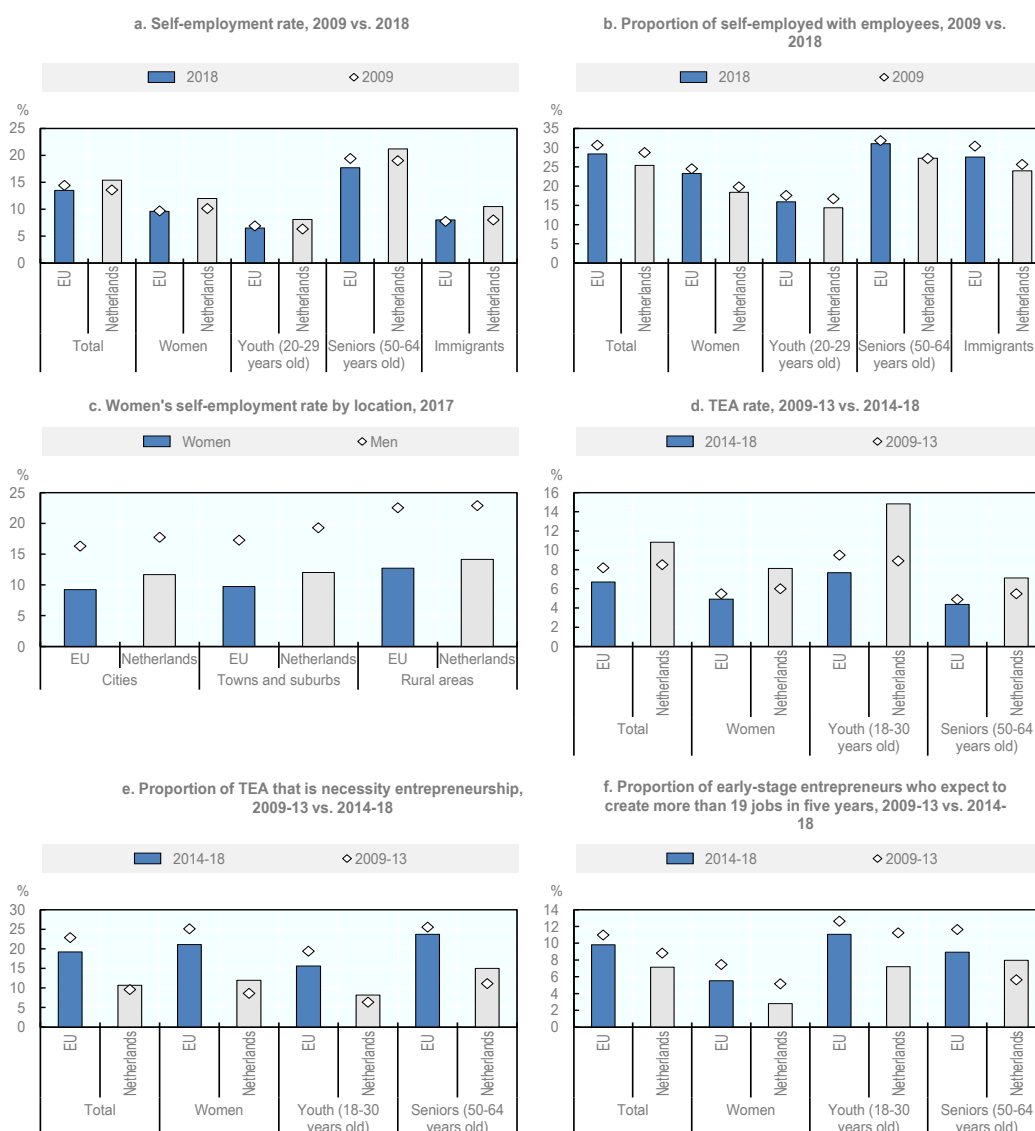
Recent policy developments

Support for women entrepreneurs was strengthened with the 2017 regulation “Entrepreneur and Pregnant” (*Zelfstandig en Zwanger-regeling – ZEZ*). This regulation states that pregnant entrepreneurs are eligible for financial coverage for maternity and parental leave for at least 16 weeks. Depending on the specific case, this could be up to 100% of the legal minimum wage. To qualify, the entrepreneur must be able to demonstrate their working time and that the enterprise is the main source of income. The husband, wife, or partner of a female entrepreneur can also apply for support under this regulation, but they are eligible for less support.

This profile is based on a recent country assessment report, which can be found at: www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/inclusive-entrepreneurship.htm.

Key inclusive entrepreneurship data

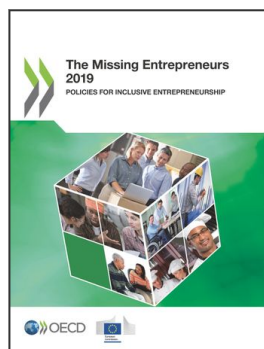
Figure 29.1. Entrepreneurship and self-employment data for Netherlands



Notes: The self-employment rate is defined as the number of self-employed people (15-64 years old) divided by the number of people in employment. The TEA rate is the proportion of adults (18-64 years old) involved in setting up a business or managing a business that is less than 42 months old. Necessity entrepreneurship is defined as entrepreneurship activities that were launched because there were no other options in the labour market. Early-stage entrepreneurs are those who are in the process of setting up a business or managing a business that is less than 42 months old. The EU average in Panels D-F excludes Czech Republic and Malta for the period 2014-18 and Malta for the period 2009-13.

Sources: Panels A and B: Eurostat (2019), Labour Force Survey, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/data/database>; Panel C: Eurostat (2018), Self-employment, Labour Force Survey ad-hoc module, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/data/database>; Panels D-F: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2019), *Special tabulations of the GEM survey 2014-18*.

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