



2023

Annual REPORT

NETBALL NETHERLANDS

✉ netballnetherlands@outlook.com

🌐 www.netballnetherlands.com

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SUMMARY

A YEAR FULL OF GROWTH AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL LEAGUE



2023 was a year in which Netball Netherlands developed enormously. The organisation made great efforts to professionalise the Bond and to develop new initiatives for clubs, players and other stakeholders, to increase the opportunities to participate in the sport at a national level.

In this year, the main focus areas were the establishment of a national league, the launch of the website, the establishment of various committees that are an essential part of the Bond, the development of a national approach to develop and train umpires, the establishment and approval of numerous policies and the growth of Netball Netherlands. Representatives of seven local clubs meet every quarter in the Bond Council to discuss the strategic direction of Netball Netherlands..





ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

VISION

Our vision is for Netball to be a thriving sport for all

MISSION

Our mission is to empower our players, clubs, and all officeholders who participate in the Netherlands and facilitate safe play.

We will do this by:

- Promoting the sport
- Facilitating a national league
- Coordinating access to skills development for umpires, coaches and officiates
- Developing international ties to enable higher level and all-level Netball competition



ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL LEAGUE

One of the main action points identified for 2023, was the establishment and formalisation of a national competition. Up until now, local clubs had organised friendly matches among themselves at different frequencies, and some of the 'bigger' and more established clubs organised an annual tournament to which all Dutch clubs were invited, as well as clubs from Sweden, Great Britain, Germany and Belgium.

A small group of volunteers from various local clubs was brought together and a League Committee was set up, together with one of the Bond directors. This committee has carried out the following activities:

- Developed a Competition Concept Note, Oct 2022
- Established a Competition Committee, Oct 2022
- Extensive one-on-one consultation between the League Committee and all club representatives and presidents to develop a competition proposal, Nov 2022 – Feb 2023
- Several rounds of feedback and iterations at Bond Council meetings, Sep 2022, Feb 2023, June 2023
- Development of competition rules & policy, Aug 2023
- Launch of the Competition Pilot – first match: Netball Maastricht vs. Netball Amsterdam, Sep 2023

The competition started at the end of September 2023 and five clubs took part in the official competition matches. The matches took place from September 2023 to June 2024, with the finals early July. All match dates have been fixed from the start and all clubs gave their commitment. The competition matches have been received very well by the clubs and all players, with great enthusiasm. More information about the competition (draw, rules, news updates) can be found on the website of Netball Nederlands.

A NATIONAL UMPIRING TRAJECTORY

A priority for Netball Nederland is to develop the capacity of umpires. This includes supporting the development of skills and qualifications for netball umpires. This builds on several clubs that have been running their own workshops for amateur referees.

In Oct 2023, Netball Nederland issued a Terms of Reference seeking volunteers to join a committee that would design and implement a national approach to umpire development for all members.

The approach will support a future cohort of umpires to:

- Understand the rules of the game (theory), and;
- Develop confidence in game management (practical), and;
- Become qualified umpires.

The committee was established in Nov 2023 with five volunteers and began designing the pathway in Dec.

The intended national curriculum for umpires will be a mix of online and in-person. The committee has been tasked with:

- Rolling out a basic format, to more directly create a set of basic skills for umpires (“go broad” – that is, support enough club members quickly)
- Simultaneously designing a course to improve the skills of a smaller cohort (“go deep”). The working group may schedule an assessor – funded by Netball Netherlands – to qualify this cohort.



WELCOMING NEW CLUBS

Netball is growing rapidly in the Netherlands and support is needed to set up new clubs. The Bond has developed a buddy system where new emerging clubs are paired with an established club for support. By 2024, the Bond aims to develop a guide/brochure for new clubs to provide practical support and tools. The starting point for this guide will be the KvK registration manual, which was developed and distributed to the clubs in 2022.



AMERSFOORT

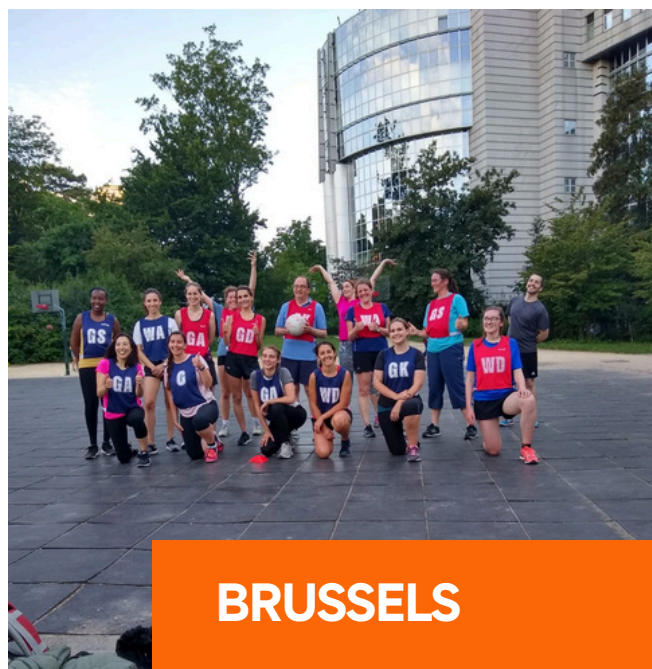
In addition, a new club has started in Amersfoort at the beginning of 2023. Due to the 'grassroots' character of this club, a letter of recognition will only be requested for this club once a certain level of continuity has been achieved. This is expected to happen at the beginning of 2024. A team from Amersfoort has already participated in the largest tournament organized by a local club this year, the Amsterdam Tournament in October, in 2023.

Established:

2023

Current players:

10



BRUSSELS

After approval by NOC NSF, the local club from Brussels has now joined Netball Nederland. Brussels Netball Club has been an established club for several years and has played various friendly matches with local clubs in the Netherlands in the past. Brussels has also joined the national competition for 2023.

Established:

2020

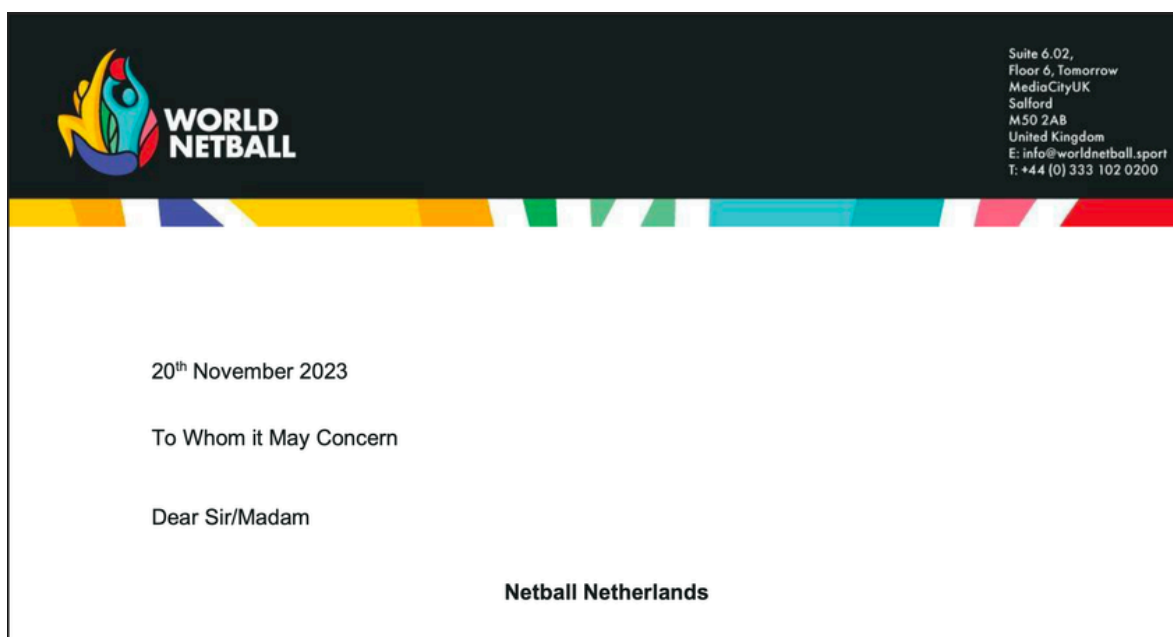
Current players:

25

FURTHER PROFESSIONALISING THE NETBALL BOND

AN OFFICIAL BOND COUNCIL

Since the beginning of 2022, a quarterly meeting has been organised between the Board of Directors and the local club representatives (the Bond Council). In 2023, the role of the club representatives has slowly changed from merely providing insights and information to the Bond to providing strategic direction for the agenda of Netball Nederland. This transition to an official Bond Council will be further developed in the course of 2024, with the role of providing advice and approval to support the work of Netball Nederland. The discussion on the role of the Bond Council is on the agenda for the quarterly meetings in 2024.



LETTERS OF RECOGNITION

We have received letters from all clubs in which they recognise Netball Netherlands with the current Bond Directors as the only organisation that strives to set up Netball in the Netherlands on a national level. In addition, we have received the same letter from World Netball / Netball Europe.



FURTHER PROFESSIONALISING THE NETBALL BOND

DEVELOPING WIDELY SUPPORTED POLICIES

Due to the preparations for the national competition, some NOC NSF requirements were prioritised over others to ensure that the Netball Bond would have all policies and rules in place before the competition would start. The main policies that were developed, discussed and approved during the meetings with the Bond Council are the Bond's policy on diversity and inclusion, safe play and dispute resolution, as well as the Bond's statement on male players (netball is traditionally a female sport, but organisations, including Netball Nederland, also offer male players the opportunity to participate in netball).

An overview of the main policies related to the competition have been published on the Netball Netherlands website.



Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Diversity and Inclusion Policy

- Netball Netherlands is fully committed to the principles that anyone* should be encouraged and able to participate without prejudice and in a welcoming and inclusive environment
- *Anyone = regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, pregnancy, political convictions, socio-economic background, ethnic origin, nationality, or age

Netball Netherlands Position Statement on Male participation in Netball

- Rules of netball clearly state the Game may be played by teams of the **same gender** or may be **mixed**.
- Netball Netherlands has the right to decide our position and guidelines on men's involvement in netball. We have the right to decide a women's only/ men's only/ mixed league, for example.
- Our position is:
 - The empowerment of women (leadership, players, officiates, volunteers) will remain a major focus
 - We should remain conscious of our Diversity and Inclusion commitment
 - How? Show our feminist values of power sharing = to ensure men / gender diverse people have fair opportunities to play

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SUPPORT FROM NETBALL EUROPE

In 2023, contact with Netball Europe and World Netball went well. We received the official letter of recognition from World Netball in the course of 2023, which recognises Netball Netherlands and its Bond Directors as the only organisation in the Netherlands. In addition, Netball Europe started an intensive development programme for future aspiring members in the fourth quarter of 2023 and we can expect more targeted support in 2024 around the coaching and umpiring.





LAUNCHING A NEW WEBSITE

During Q1 and Q2 of 2023, volunteers from different clubs worked together with the Bond Directors to build a website for Netball Netherlands. The content of the website was developed by the Bond Directors and the branding from the early years was further strengthened by the website creators. Each club provided input, including important information about their club and photos. The website includes:

- The mission and vision of Netball Netherlands
- About Netball Netherlands – including our social media accounts, the Board of Directors and contact details
- How to find or start a club incl. a separate subpage for each local club
- Information about the national competition
- Policies (here you will find all policy documents available)
- News

The website went live in Q3 2023. As a next step, the Bond is currently working with the team to increase the presence on Social Media and develop flyers in the layout and branding of Netball Netherlands. You can find us on Instagram and Facebook, where we actively post to engage and inform existing and potential new players.



STRATEGY FORWARD

2024 will be a different year for Netball Netherlands. As the organisation grows and professionalises, there is a need to develop a well-structured strategy that prioritises key activities and a work plan that outlines a detailed approach. In 2025 a three-year plan will be created, in line with the requirements NOC NSF, to obtain recognition as a national Bond. The four key strategic areas, which can be found below, are an initial step in that direction.

* GROWING NETBALL AS A NATIONAL SPORT

First and foremost, Netball Netherlands will need to keep on growing as a national sport, particularly in number of players. We will attempt to grow netball as a national sport in several ways:

- A buddy system for new clubs, and providing them with the necessary support to take the first steps in their development as clubs
- Provide support for established clubs, e.g. through conflict resolution and for any other matters that may occur.
- Focus on marketing and promotion to ensure national visibility.. This includes Social Media and the newsfeed on the website.

* FORMALISING AS A BOND

The development of policies, strategic plans and financial statements are all essential elements in the steps towards recognition as a national Bond. In 2024, significant efforts will be made in this area to prepare for recognition by NOC NSF in 2025. Besides, both club and individual memberships will be installed through a contribution model and a membership registration will be developed.

* PROFESSIONALISING PLAY IN THE NL

The kickstart of the league in 2023 was a great starting point to professionalise netball play in the r Netherlands. In 2024, the league will be further professionalised through umpiring courses & the umpiring development group, referee fees and learnings from the pilot year. Several workshops will be organised around coaching and umpiring, and support will be received from Netball Europe on these themes as well.

Lastly, more policies will be developed incl. policies around good governance, matchfixing and sexual harassment.

* BEING A FUTUREPROOF ORGANISATION

As a young and rapidly growing organisation, one of the key pillars for sustainable growth towards the future, will be to build a future proof organisation. These four key strategic focus areas are a first step into that direction. In 2024, a multi-annual plan will be developed, which will include a strategy and financial estimation for 2025-2027.

The contribution model which is to be developed, will ensure a stable sustainable financial position as well as reflect the recognition by the clubs and individual members. .

Lastly, in 2024 fundraising opportunities will be explored to ensure that the one-time costs of starting the Bond are covered.

