

## Fact sheet the Netherlands

### Very few general practitioners licensed to prescribe abortion pills<sup>1</sup>

As of 1 January 2026, only 3.5% of the approximately 16.000 general practitioners (GPs) working in the Netherlands are authorised to prescribe abortion pills.<sup>2</sup> These GPs have completed the mandatory training required under the legislative amendment that entered into force on 1 January 2025, which allows GPs to provide abortion care up to nine weeks of pregnancy.

This figure is significantly lower than expected. Prior to the legislative change, projections suggested that 30–50% of GPs would obtain the necessary qualification. Experts have therefore described the current uptake as deeply disappointing.

The low number of qualified GPs stands in sharp contrast with public opinion in the Netherlands. Recent surveys show that:

- 75% of the population considers abortion to be normal medical care;<sup>3</sup>
- 86% views abortion primarily as a personal matter;
- Only 6% believe abortion should be treated as a criminal offence;
- Just 7% consider abortion mainly a political issue.

One factor that may have contributed to the low uptake is the dissemination of misleading information. In early 2025, an anti-abortion organisation reportedly sent anonymous brochures to all Dutch GPs, containing inaccurate and alarmist claims about abortion care.<sup>4</sup> This may have discouraged GPs from participating in the training or from offering abortion pills in their practice.

### Recommendations

Experts emphasise that further steps are needed to ensure effective access to abortion care through primary healthcare. Key recommendations include:

- Ending the criminalisation of abortion altogether, in order to support GPs and patients in recognising abortion as standard medical care rather than an exceptional or legally risky procedure.
- Providing accurate, evidence-based information materials for both GPs and patients to counter misinformation.
- Ensuring reimbursement of mifepristone for abortion care on the same basis as its reimbursement when prescribed for miscarriage management.

Without these measures, the promise of the 2025 legal reform risks remaining largely symbolic, with limited practical impact on access to abortion care.

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<sup>1</sup> In addition to the Written public submission to CEDAW, session 92 *Discrepancy between Dutch abortion legislation and international human rights standards*; see also *Mind the Gap: Addressing Policy Gaps in Women's Rights. Dutch NGOs Shadow report for CEDAW 4 July 2024* para 30

<sup>2</sup> NPO Radio1 24 January 2026

<sup>3</sup> [Ipsos I&O \(2025\). Abortus als Zorg, Rapport voor Vrije Keuze Coalitie, October 2025.](#)

<sup>4</sup> Bureau Clara Wichmann together with other organisations, successfully filed a complaint at the Advertising Code Authority ([Ruling dd 19 November 2025](#)).