

# BREAKING THE BARRIERS

## Women in Arts and Media Professions: The Netherlands<sup>140</sup>

*Ineke van Hamersveld*<sup>141</sup>

### 1. Introduction

It is 1995. Chris Dercon, Director of Rotterdam's prominent Boijmans Van Beuningen art museum, selects only women artists for the Dutch pavilion at the Venice Biennale<sup>142</sup>. His choice is not only a mark of esteem for the quality these particular women represent. It can also be seen as an implicit tribute to the large and growing number of female top artists in the Dutch art world.

Now it is 1998. At the request of the temporary Committee on Cultural Governance, a survey is conducted examining the composition of the boards of directors of over fifty medium-sized and large cultural institutions in Amsterdam. With this research the Committee hopes to obtain insight into the age, sex and background of directors in the cultural sector. Amsterdam is to function as a *pars pro toto* for the rest of Dutch culture. The results are staggering. The average age of the directors is 54, the majority come from business backgrounds, and are male. Only 20 per cent are female (Commissie Cultural Governance 2000).

What do these examples say about the position of women in the cultural sector? Are these good times or bad times for them?

#### *Emancipation: Unfinished Business*

Anyone comparing the position of women in the year 2000 with that of twenty-five years ago must admit that much has changed to their advantage. Discrimination on the basis of sex has disappeared, to a large extent, from law and regulations. The previously reigning view that women were destined for child-raising and homemaking has lost much of its strength. Women no longer are underrepresented in education, and educational levels have drawn equal; in comparison with the situation 25 years ago women have even been able to turn their deficit into a lead. Finally, their level of participation in the labour market has increased (SCP 1998).

To an important extent, women have brought about these changes themselves. The Social and Cultural Planning Bureau confirms that Dutch society has been greatly modernized in social/cultural terms over the past quarter century, precisely in part thanks to women's emancipation. The Bureau bases this assessment on the enormous increase of women in

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<sup>141</sup> Ineke van Hamersveld is the editor-in-chief of the *Boekmancahier, kwartaalschrift voor kunst, onderzoek en beleid*, Amsterdam.

<sup>142</sup> The artists selected were Marlene Dumas, Maria Roosen and Marijke van Warmerdam.

education, through which they have achieved an equal starting point for entering the labour market (SCP/VUGA 1994).

However, figures point to this equal footing for entering the labour market not having led to the expected symmetry of roles there - and not in the cultural sector either. Thus one can still speak of sexual segregation in education and in the labour market<sup>143</sup>: In addition, women are underrepresented in influential positions. They earn less money than their male colleagues because they often work part-time, and choose professions which, because of their lower social status, are badly paid. Finally, they have built up fewer rights in the area of social security and supplementary pensions (SCP 1998, 213-216).

This paper therefore will concentrate on three subjects: the labour market in the cultural sector, and following on that, the equal opportunity policy that was drawn up in part to improve the position of women in this market. At the same time the position of women in higher vocational and academic education will be examined in greater detail, because differences in the training chosen filter through to the labour market. Among other things, they lead to differences in financial remuneration and social esteem, a phenomenon for which the term "horizontal segregation" is sometimes used.

Our research results will substantiate the argument that women in the cultural sector have not completed their long journey toward success, and thus deserve a place in the equal opportunity policies of the national government. Various tables are based on calculations involving sets of figures obtained over the past years from the *Kunstenmonitor* (Arts Monitor), a regular, recurrent survey of alumni in vocational art education about a year and a half to two years after their graduation. Furthermore, data is included on the course of careers of men and women in theatre. For women in the cultural sector the data in this article has never before been set out systematically and comprehensively. In order to make developments in the cultural sector stand out, where possible and when it is relevant they are contrasted with developments in society in general.

## **2. Education as a Mirror**

For many years now people have talked about the large number of women streaming into cultural programmes at the universities and into advanced vocational training, particularly in the arts. If this is accurate, then there is every reason to keep an eye on the degree to which these women will participate in the labour market, and the nature of their current involvement; information on this could be a gauge for the degree of emancipation in the cultural sector.

At the end of the 1960s there was still a considerable difference between the sexes in regard to participation in educational programmes: the percentage of women was less than half the percentage of men. A change set in during the early 1970s (SCP 1998). Inspired by the second feminist wave, women began playing catch-up.

### *Vocational Training*

The spectacular growth of students in advanced vocational education, which lasted up into the 1990s, is to a large extent due to the participation of women. At the moment, the percentage of

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<sup>143</sup> Sexual segregation is the phenomenon of the unequal distribution of women and men over sectors of education and the labour market.

women participating in all programmes ranging from economics to health care, applied social studies and artistic training is, on the average, higher than that of men: 55% to 45%.

Developments in arts training programmes reflect such figures; as *Tables 2a* and *2b* demonstrate, the percentage of arts students has increased to 55%. In some areas, such as visual arts, total enrolment figures have multiplied four or five-fold over the last thirty years. Here too, the increase in the number of female students began during the 1970s. In some fields such as theatre and visual arts, the proportions of male to female students have completely reversed.; women now occupying the majority, except in music. The latter is the only art form in which men still predominate. On the other hand, women make up the majority of students in training to become music teachers.

**Table 1: Number of students in the arts, by course, 1970, 1980 and 1990**

Field of education	1970		1980		1990	
	Total	% W	Total	% W	Total	% W
Art academies	168	33	248	45	11.194	59
Teacher training in the arts	7.970	38	9.409	49	--	--
Architecture academies	--	--	896	4	--	--
Conservatories	2.875	41	5.261	41	2.382	38
Theatre schools	127	49	1.154	74	697	73
Ballet schools	300	87	--	--	--	--
Post-grad	--	--	--	--	792	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>11.440</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>16.968</b>	<b>46%</b>		

Source: CBS, 2000.

Notes: In the 1990's architecture was no longer classified with art education.

**Table 2: Total number of graduates from art, theatre and music schools, 1996**

**Table 2a: Visual arts graduates**

Field/subject	% Women
Fine arts	58
Applied arts: design	56
Applied arts: audio/video	69
Art teachers	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>

Source: Based on calculations by Merijn Renjers, 1999/2000.

**Table 2b: Performing arts graduates**

Field/subject	% Women
Actors/performers	66
Drama teachers	83
Musicians	34
Music teachers	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

Source: Based on calculations by Merijn Renjers, 1999/2000.

### *Academic Education*

Academic education displays the same general pattern as advanced vocational training, despite the fact that the former attracts considerably fewer students than the latter. In 1999, men were still slightly in the majority, at 52% versus 48% women. During the 1980s culturally oriented courses, united in the Language and Culture<sup>144</sup> field, made a small jump forward with a growth of nearly 30%. This trend was reversed in the 1990s; in 1999 there were fewer students in Language and Culture than in 1980, although the percentages of women and men have remained the same: respectively 64% and 36%.

Developments in recent years show a remarkable decline in the number of university students; enrolment in almost all programmes fell. The largest fall was, however, in the field of Language and Culture. At the same time, there was a rise in the number of students in advanced vocational education, in courses such as economics and technological training, teaching, applied social sciences (social and cultural work) and health care. The number of students in arts vocations hardly changed. Art and culturally directed education is thus losing its attractiveness.

As of 1999, the total combined number of women taking advanced vocational training or academic education courses formed 53% of the whole, thereby passing the total number of male students at 47%.

### *Traditional Choice Patterns*

Notwithstanding the fact that many women are participating in highly qualified educational programmes, their sex-specific patterns of choice remain intact. They choose, in general, service vocations, for instance health care, social and cultural work or teaching among the fields in advanced vocational education, with behavioural and social sciences, language and culture, and lastly health sciences as the counterpart in academic courses. In contrast, men choose technical, economic and agrarian training in advanced vocational education, and technology, economics and physical sciences in academic courses.

Vocational art training reveals the same patterns as the rest of advanced vocational training field. Courses of study such as fashion and textiles, but also training to become teachers are still pursued by more than three-quarters of the women. Yet small shifts are perceptible: women are making themselves felt more and more in post graduate courses which were formerly dominated by men, such as film, video and television (53% women vs. 47% men) and photography (59% women vs. 41% men) (Van Hamersveld 1998).

Within the university field of Language and Culture one likewise finds that women are in the overwhelming majority, except in the disciplines of musicology, history and philosophy where women are the minority. Disciplines which have traditionally been categorised among the humanities now fall under Language and Culture, such as art history or languages, or the relatively new disciplines of art policy and management.

Thus women today, as before, go out of their way to avoid economics, technology and the physical sciences. Even a field such as computer science, in which job prospects are very good, has not been able to attract women students. In business and in the cultural sector there is,

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<sup>144</sup> Including language and literature courses, archaeology, library and information sciences, film and performing arts and television studies, art history, musicology, theatre studies, European studies, cultural studies, philosophy etc.

however, a great need for computer experts who also have an understanding of the world beyond the computer. For that reason various universities are setting up new science-oriented programmes and study variants with a more "humane" face. For instance, the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam is working on a course in Geo-archaeology for which the earth scientists are working together with archaeologists from the humanities faculty. The programme will be accommodated with the earth sciences, and begins in the autumn of 2001. The same university has set up a course in Multimedia and Culture, drawing on staff from information sciences and arts and letters; it opens its doors in September 2000. Students in this programme will learn to design software for cultural and media institutions such as museums, libraries and broadcasters. In this sector substantive knowledge of culture and media will be just as important as knowledge of programming techniques. There is a conviction that training courses with such a human and social focus will speak more to young woman than do courses focusing purely on computer programming.

By taking such new directions the sciences hope not only to better serve various target audiences, but also attract more women - and, in passing, do something about their "nerd" image (Zuidweg 2000).

## 2. Labour Market Position

It appears there is hard data that can support the proposition stated above that culturally-oriented educational programmes predominantly attract women. If the majority of the number of students in culturally-oriented tracks in advanced vocational and academic education consist of women - and in some cases have done so for nearly two decades (!) - one might suppose that these figures would be reflected in their participation in the labour market. However, that is not the case. In order to make that clear, first the position of women in the labour market in general will be surveyed, then the position of women in the cultural sector, and finally that of women in advanced vocational and academic teaching.

The position of women in the labour market has improved remarkably over the last decades. For instance, the *Enquête Beroepsbevolking 1998* indicates that the percentage of women in the labour force has risen from 35% in 1988 to 40% in 1998 (CBS 1999, 32-33). This survey of the labour force is published annually and is an important source for analysing the position of women in the labour market.

All persons between 15 and 64 years of age who actually work at least 12 hours per week, are beginning to working, or are actively seeking work for at least 12 hours per week are counted as part of the employed segment of the labour force for the purposes of the *Enquête*. Those who work less than 12 hours a week or do not work are counted as unemployed (CBS 1999, 19).

In 1998 the percentage of women in the total working population was 39%; the percentage of men with paid work was considerably higher, at 61%. Unemployment was also higher among women than among men: 57% as opposed to 43%. But the greatest difference, however, appears in the category of those outside the labour force: in 1998 that was 68% female and 32% male (CBS 1999, 32-33)<sup>145</sup>.

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<sup>145</sup> Of all women between 15 and 64, 49% actually had work in 1998; 75% of all males between the same ages worked (CBS 1999, 32-33).

With regard to participation in the labour market, the figures for the cultural sector are close to these general figures. In the *Enquête* all employees and self-employed persons are classified according to their activity, in various sectors of business or trade. An important part of the cultural sector falls under the heading of Culture and Miscellaneous Services. Among the subgroups here are Rubbish Collection and Processing, Laundries and Personal Care (!), but also Opinion and Special Interest Groups, and finally Culture, Recreation and Sports. Among the activities which are included under Culture are "film, video, radio, television, other entertainment and art, cultural lending centres, public archives and museums."

At the end of 1998 about 1.4% of the total workforce were employed in this sector. This means that about 91,400 people have their principle job in the cultural sector. Of them 44% are women and 56% are men.

**Table 3: Number of women and men working in the cultural sector 1993-1998 (in thousands)**

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
1993	34,5	43,3
1994	36,3	45,7
1995	34,2	46,1
1996	36,3	47,1
1997	38,3	49,4
1998	40,3	51,2

Source: CBS, (Statline) 2000.

In the cultural sector the women-to-men ratio is somewhat more balanced than in the labour market in general. However, this ratio in no way corresponds with the percentages of men and women who graduated in the 1980s and 1990s from art training or from the culture-oriented programmes at universities as seen above. The number of women in the cultural sector however is growing at the same rate as the number of men. This may be surprising, because in other sectors of the economy, the number of women is growing faster than the number of men. On the other hand, the indexed growth<sup>146</sup> in the number of jobs in the cultural sector does reflect the growth in jobs in the general economy. Conclusion: the proportion of women in the cultural labour market remains less than expected.

#### *Individual Sectors and the Cultural Labour Market*

Within the *Enquête Beroepsbevolking* Culture, Recreation and Sport are presented as a homogenous and monolithic block. This may be understandable for technical reasons related to research, but in terms of the substance of the various disciplines it is inaccurate. Not only is the content of the jobs performed by people in the cultural sector very far removed from those in Sport and Recreation, but even the various jobs within the Cultural sector diverge greatly. The various cultural disciplines have occasionally been charted through empirical research; when this has been done, interest has extended primarily to producers of culture. The differences between

<sup>146</sup> The index indicates the rise or fall in the average number of those working in the cultural sector over a certain period.

men and women, however, have not been an issue in such research<sup>147</sup>. There are thus few precise, comparative figures available. Therefore the following is an impression of the situation.

In the theatre in 1975 there were only a handful of women active in stage productions as actors/performers and/or directors; in 1985 they already made up 20% of the performances. Ten years later they were responsible for 33% of all productions, albeit predominantly in ad hoc subsidized projects (Kolk 1999, 11). In new music, traditionally a male domain, only 8% of composers were female in 1999 (Metzelaar 1999, 162). In the field of the visual arts, in 1997 44% are recorded as female (Brouwer and Poot 1999).

#### *Education and the University as Labour Market*

In the *Enquête Beroepsbevolking*, vocational training in art and university teaching in the field of Language and Culture are not counted as part of Culture, Recreation and Sport, but of the more general field of Higher Education. Compared with the general labour market position of women in the cultural sector, that of women in Higher Education, of which both advanced vocational training and academic education are part, is considerably worse.

In advanced vocational education, and particularly arts training, the percentage of female teachers does not even slightly reflect the percentage of female students.

**Table 4: Teachers in higher vocational education (hbo) and arts training**

		Total	% Women
1977	Vocation arts training	2,041	26
	Vocation education	11,498	19
1980	Vocation arts training	2,337	26
	Vocation education	12,375	22
1990	Vocation education	18,613	29
1999	Vocation education	14,214	34

Source: CBS, 2000.

Note: after 1980, the number of teachers is no longer divided between arts training and other vocational training.

The same is true for academic education, including in the field of Language and Culture. Although for twenty years now, more than 60% of their graduates have been women, a maximum of 16% of the professors at Dutch universities are female! It is striking that it is precisely the youngest of the universities (Maastricht, Rotterdam and Tilburg) which have no female professors at all in the liberal arts<sup>148</sup>. Nevertheless, the figures for faculties in the liberal arts stand out very favourably against the national average of 5%. At the national level, 7% of all senior university lecturers are women; the figure is 20% for all "regular" university lecturers, and 34% for doctoral candidates working as teaching assistants (NWO 1999, 1).

<sup>147</sup> In the 1990s more research has been done into dancers and choreographers, cabaret performers, composers and visual artists. In addition, there is a follow-up on students by the *Kunstenmonitor*, one or two years after their graduation from art training.

<sup>148</sup> In 1998 16% of the professors at the University of Amsterdam were women. (Baaijens 1999, 173).

**Table 5: Percentage of women as professors at Dutch universities with a Faculty of Letters (Language and Culture), 1996**

	Total	% Women
(Amsterdam) University of Amsterdam	79	8
(Amsterdam) Vrije Universiteit	40	13
(Groningen) State University	43	9
(Leiden) State University	79	10
(Maastricht) State University Limburg	76	--
(Nijmegen) Catholic University Nijmegen	51	10
(Rotterdam) Erasmus University	11	--
(Tilburg) Catholic University Brabant	9	--
(Utrecht) University of Utrecht	45	16

Source: Baaijens 1999, 173.

### *Lessons from the Research Field?*

In 1997, the underrepresentation of women in academic fields in The Netherlands became the centre of attention as a result of a much-discussed Swedish publication on the limited opportunities for women in the post-doctoral programmes of the Swedish Medical Research Council (Wennerås and Wold 1997). In response, that same year the Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO = Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research) conducted a comparable survey into post-doctoral programmes aimed toward individuals (TALENT and PIONIER). From this survey it appeared that, unlike in Sweden, the chances of acceptance for men and women were about the same. However, in The Netherlands fewer women than men were proposed or nominated for post-doctoral subsidies directed toward individuals, and there are fewer female researchers who, as the main applicant, submit grant applications.

In response to this, the NWO has taken various steps. For instance, beginning in 1997/1998 the NWO is keeping record of how many female and how many male researchers submit applications, and how many of these applications are approved. In addition, the age criteria for most forms of grants were abolished; beginning in 1998 a family care clause applied for the remaining sorts of subsidies. Applicants or proposed candidates - female or male - do not need to meet the age criteria if they can demonstrate that their career has been delayed due to care responsibilities. Their academic age then lags behind their biological age.

To facilitate the move up from a university lecturer to senior lecturer, the NWO and the Association of Universities (VSNU) have instituted an incentive programme. The programme bears the name ASPASIA, and runs from 1999 to 2004. The goal is for candidates to largely devote themselves to performing and supervising research over a number of years, to undertake a four year doctoral project, or a two year post-doctoral project<sup>149</sup>. Through this initiative a larger contingent of talented female researchers will become available/qualified for positions as professors and university administrators. At the same time, there will be an expansion of talented

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<sup>149</sup> The person carrying out the doctoral or post-doctoral project can be a woman or man.

research potential, according to the rationale. Only the very best proposals will be accepted; it involves a total of 28 to 33 research places<sup>150</sup> (Timmerhuis and Bringmann 1999).

It is the intention that the NWO directorates of the various academic fields, including the humanities, will look into which of the measures proposed by the NWO are appropriate for their own areas of work. For example, the NWO scientific field of Earth and Life Sciences (biology, geology and oceanography) has adopted the general NWO policy and has reserved 7.5 million guilders between 2000 and 2010 for actions to put more women into permanent positions. Of that amount, 6 million is intended for transforming 26 full-time positions into part-time positions, with a collective magnitude of 1.4 fte. If at least one of the two part-time positions are filled by a woman, the universities can be considered for reimbursement of the additional costs for four years. In this manner the number of female university lecturers can be raised to a minimum of 20%; it is presently 16%. A half million guilders is being directed to facilitate the reentry of women who broke off their research careers temporarily for family care. Finally, 1 million is reserved as a contribution to the ASPASIA incentive programme.

The necessity for taking such measures is twofold. On the one side, they draw on unused talent, to enrich the academic world and its administration. On the other side, no means are left untried in order to supply the urgent academic personnel shortage. The work force in universities is aging. Many professors and senior lecturers will be retiring in the coming years; if they are not replaced there will be a serious shortfall by as early as the year 2003 (Van Vucht Tijssen 2000).

### 3. Glass Ceilings

#### ... in the General Labour Market

In addition to the relative underrepresentation of women in the cultural labour market, it must be noted that their high qualifications do not translate into correspondingly high positions. In many institutions the influx of women has indeed begun, but they do not flow through to leadership functions. Because it is not easy to say why that happens, one speaks of a "glass ceiling." This indicates the difference between the percentage of women in higher vocational and academic disciplines and the proportion of women in management functions. The glass ceiling functions as an invisible barrier that impedes the flow through to management functions (De Olde and Slinkman 1999, 28).

During the preparation of their emancipation memorandum, *Van vrouwenstrijd naar vanzelfsprekendheid* the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment Opportunities (SZW 2000), consulted the *Enquête Beroepsbevolking 1997* in an attempt to establish which branches of business were more or less accessible for as women managers.

To begin with, the analysis showed that a shift had taken place during the period 1988-1997: proportionately fewer women worked in lower vocations than before, and more in middle, higher or academic vocations. Women occupy 35.5% of all higher vocational and academic positions, men 64.5%.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> ASPASIA is expressly not intended to create extra positions, but is limited to the promotion of university lecturers to senior lecturers.

<sup>151</sup> That means that 25% of all women perform work in higher or academic professions; of all working men, 29% (De Olde and Slinkman 1999, 11).

The next step was to look at the percentage of women in management functions in higher and academic vocations. According to the definition that the Central Bureau for Statistics employs, a management function is a position where leadership is given to ten or more people. If women and men could move into management functions equally, 35.5% of all management functions should be filled by women. That is not the case; in practice it is only 18% (*Table 15*)<sup>152</sup>. About half the number of positions that one would expect to be in the hands of women are occupied by men; the glass ceiling therefore has a thickness of 50.1.

From the research it did appear that women in academic professions did enter management functions more quickly than women in higher vocations, although more women had pursued higher vocational training than academic education.

The research showed that the glass ceiling was present in all sectors of the economy, although the thickness differs depending on the sector. In the Business Services and Trade sectors, at 20 and 18.1 respectively, are the most accessible for women. In contrast, the glass ceiling in the Industrial and in the Construction sector is 100, in Transportation and Communication 43.1, and Public Administration 42.2 (De Olde and Slinkman 1999). In public administration the glass ceiling is visible in the percentage of women in politics or in public administration. The Cabinet and Lower House of the Dutch parliament score the highest with women occupying 27% of the ministerial posts and 36% of the places as state secretaries, and with 36% of the members of the Lower House women, respectively. A survey of the percentage of women in political functions from 1986 to 1999 indicates that the numbers of women in such areas are steadily growing<sup>153</sup>.

*.... in the Cultural Labour Market*

The ceiling is strikingly thick in the Education sector, precisely where so many women study: 74.4. With this, Education is, after the Industrial and the Construction sector, the most deprived sector for women. Several figures can clarify this. From an investigation undertaken by the Educational Inspectorate in 1994, it appears that in 1992 only 4% of the seats on the Boards of Directors and central administrations of polytechnics were occupied by women. To increase these numbers, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences instituted a special measure to encourage polytechnics to name more women to leadership functions. Schools which appointed a woman to a permanent position in the directorate or central administration in 1995 or 1996, and had a plan in place for "positive action," could be considered for a bonus of f 300,000. Only a few of the institutions made use of this opportunity.

In 1998, 25% of the university Boards of Trustees were women; the goal was a minimum of 20%. 1997 saw the naming of the first woman chairperson of a Board of Directors (OC&W 1998).

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<sup>152</sup> From Eurostat data it appears that The Netherlands is very close to bringing up the rear in Europe; only Italy has a smaller percentage of women managers, at 16.5% (SZW 2000, 35).

<sup>153</sup> Since 1992 the government has set goals for the participation of women in politics and public administration. For the Lower House the goal set in 1996 was more than 35% women, and in 1998, an increase of 5% in every successive election until equal representation is achieved. For the European Parliament, the Upper House and the Provincial Assemblies the percentage was set at a minimum of 30% in 1999 and an increase of 5% in every successive election until parity is reached. For municipal councils with the election of 1998 the goal was 30%, to be increased by 5% in each successive election until parity is reached. For mayors and Royal Commissioners the 2002 goal is 25%, and for directors of District Water Boards, 15%.

In the Cultural and Miscellaneous Services sector the ceiling is relatively thin, because the proportion of women in management functions is relatively high: 23.9. Still, that ceiling can be seen in the cultural sector when, for example, one looks at the membership list of the Association of Dutch Theatre Companies. Only 18% of the theatre artistic directors are female, as opposed to 38% of the general (financial) directors. There are also directors who split their functions: 6% of the artistic directors do so, and 2% of the general (business) directors.

Comparable figures are found among directors and assistant directors of art museums. In 1996/1997 31% of the directors or assistant directors of the 20 most important art museums were women. The percentage of women directors or assistant directors in the eight most important art museums, of international stature, was only 12.5%.

**Table 6: Percentage of women directors and staff members of public funds and the Cultural Council, 1996/97**

	Board	Bureau	Director
Fund for Amateur Art	--	--	--
Fund for Visual Arts, Architecture and Design (1997)	17	52	M
Fund for Literature (1997)	40	44	F
Fund for Dutch Film (1996)	14	78	M
Fund for the Performing Arts (1996)	--	--	M
Fund for Creative Music (1996)	0	100	F
Mondriaan Foundation (1997)	17	58	M
Cultural Council (1997)	44	54	M

Source: Based on calculations by Ineke van Hamersveld.

### *Different Career Needs*

There are various barriers that help maintain the glass ceiling. They are related to each other and they can reinforce each other. According to the argument most often heard, what is termed the "pipeline theory," women do not have enough experience because they have not been active in the labour market for long enough. They just need more time. That theory doesn't appear to hold water in the cultural sector. For twenty years now women have formed the majority of the number of graduates. The first group, from the first half of the 1980s, has by 2000 long since acquired the age and experience to be sitting in manager's chairs.

Another important cause that is often cited is that the job of manager is seen as a male job, with its particular demands and rules of the game. These are expressed in the organizational culture (De Olde and Slinkman 1999, 34) which, for instance, impedes women who work part-time, because the organizational culture for people in higher positions demands permanent availability. It expresses itself not only in the demand for permanent accessibility, but also in higher work pressure. From various surveys conducted by the Dutch Centre for Directors of its members, it does appear that the work pressure on those in leadership functions is rising. In 1968 only 11% of the directors had a working week of 60 hours or more, but by 1983 that had risen to 20%, and by 1994 nearly half (46%) worked a minimum of 60 hours a week (Van Bergen 2000, 67).

Many women have no ambitions for top functions because they find the time investment and level of stress that goes with these functions unacceptable. The INGBank career training

programmes provided this insight. Women in this bank, urged by their employer to advance their career, discovered that their priority did not lie in fighting their way up the ladder in the organization, and paying such a high price for it in their private life. Their choice was for enjoyable work (Van Bergen 1998, 98). In women's careers, status and money do not appear to have decisive significance. As a rule, women have another career strategy: not rising as fast and far as possible on the leadership ladder, but oriented more to the content of the work (De Olde and Slinkman 1999, 35-36).

If women opt for a part-time job (less than 35 hours per week), there can be two reasons that play a role in their decision. The most important is connected with the desire to unite career with functions as a carer, such as raising children, family care, etc. More women than men take this option<sup>154</sup>. The second reason why women do not find working many hours attractive is because they are more quickly inclined than men to want to do other things in addition to their work. Part-time work can be better combined with a career oriented to the content of the profession than can a management function in today's business culture. Seen from this perspective it becomes clear how important preconditions are, such as the opportunity to make use of adequate and affordable child care.

From the research into the careers of women and men in the theatre comes the remarkable fact that having a role as carer (for children) is not an impediment to such a career. Yet women, on the average, are less satisfied with the course of their career than men. At the beginning of their career the situation is just the opposite. The dissatisfaction among women is to a large extent to be traced back to the limited number of hours that they work in the performing arts: an average of 25 hours per week. Men, in contrast, work an average of 32 hours per week. The more experience performing artists have, the more work they get and the better known they become.

One of the reasons that women in theatre on the average work fewer hours per week is the absence of sufficient roles for women. The difference between female and male roles has been constant for years now, while the female/male percentages in the acting profession have changed drastically. While competition among women has thus risen, for men it has fallen (Struyk and Rengers 2000, 31-35). The dissatisfaction among women is thus caused by a phenomenon that has to do with the content of their work. The need for career development and personal growth is not realized to its fullest.

#### **4. Getting What They Deserve?**

Because more women than men work part-time, they don't get ahead as far and build up less in the way of a pension. They therefore run greater financial risks in the case of divorce or separation, or early spousal death than do men. Under Dutch law regulating survivor's pensions, which covers both women and men, women with even a modest income have little chance of benefit. No benefit is paid out if there is an income from labour or another benefit of 4022,54 guilders per month (base year 2000).

There are also general developments that can influence the financial position of women in a more positive sense, such as the greater willingness of employers to move to flexible working hours, financing child care, or providing reimbursement for such services.

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<sup>154</sup> In 1997 58.6% of working women have a part-time job, against 10.5% of working men (De Olde and Slinkman 1999, 37).

The different career strategies of women help in part to maintain the glass ceiling, and also explain in part the fact that women's high qualifications have not been translated into high salaries. Salaries provide a keen indication of the actual social and economic position of women in the labour market.

For instance, it appears that all women who have completed higher vocational training - including art training - earn less than their male colleagues, both per month and per hour. Women who have completed courses in art training earn an average of 21% less than their male colleagues, that is f 689 less per month. The differences between the monthly salaries are greater than between the hourly wages. That is to say, monthly salaries reflect the fact that more men than women have a full-time job: 40% of the women as against 49% of the men who have taken arts training. The percentage of women who have a permanent contract is 44%; 57% of the men have such a contract. The table below reflects the labour situation about a year and a half after graduation. Research into graduates of art training in 1995 also found that women less often have paid work than men, and more often have unpaid work.

**Table 7: Monthly and hourly pay of art academy, theatre school and conservatory graduates, 1997**

**7a: Visual Arts**

	Monthly salary		Hourly wage	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Visual artists	1839	2348	11,57	14,35
Applied visual arts: design	2711	3332	16,04	18,45
Applied visual arts: audio/video	2860	3952	17,20	30,46
Visual arts teachers	2243	3588	18,81	21,87

**7b: Performing Arts**

Actors/performers	2349	3844	16,85	21,72
Drama teachers	2715	3408	20,91	24,85
Musicians	3031	3589	23,18	23,30
Music teachers	2436	2729	22,80	22,71
Average	2605	3294	18,20	21,04

Source: Based on calculations by Merijn Rengers.

**Table 8: Social position of performing and visual artists, 1996**

	% Women
Paid work	68
Volunteer work	8
Unemployed	12
Study	11
Other	2

Source: Van der Linden, Rameakers and Pagrach 1998.

Gross earnings of women in theatre are an average of f 833,33 less per month than those of their male counterparts. That difference is however fully attributable to the difference in the number of hours worked (Struyk and Rengers 2000, 32). In jazz and improvised music the differences in

pay are also, on the whole, similar. The size of a jazz income is dependent on a number of factors, such as the number of performances, the pay per performance and incomes from other musical activities such as giving lessons. Women perhaps appear less than half as frequently as do their male colleagues, and receive somewhat lower pay, but they earn more by giving lessons (Ildens and Van der Velde 1998).

## **5. Emancipation Policy Moves Ahead**

It would appear that women in the cultural sector are confronted on various fronts with the same mechanisms as women working outside the cultural sector. It is time, then, to see how this complex sector is being handled in emancipation policy.

The central questions on the present day emancipation policy are - who has power and how does it work. Labour, paid and unpaid, is an important issue in this policy field. It is thus not surprising that in the latest emancipation memorandum from the Ministry of Social Affairs, which bears ultimate responsibility for equal opportunity policy, a central role has been reserved for labour and care (SZW 2000). The memorandum covers trends, analyses and policy proposals. Appearing in the early spring of 2000, the memorandum has been laid before advisory councils, such as the Educational Council and the Social-Economic Council,<sup>155</sup> and various social groups for commentary. The reason given for this is the desire to provide a foundation and develop wide social support for the policy. As in the Dutch cultural policy, special attention is given to minority women and youth (young women). On the basis of the envisaged feedback, concrete proposals for action will be drawn up that will lead to a long-range policy plan for emancipation to appear later. The Cultural Council is conspicuously absent from the advisory councils to whom the memorandum is being presented.

In the memorandum, *Van vrouwenstrijd naar vanzelfsprekendheid*, it is noted that only a small number of women have achieved financial independence. In order to remove one of the causes for this - problems women (and men) have in combining work and private life - various measures are to be introduced or reinforced. In principle, 60 million guilders will be set aside for such activities. Among the possibilities being considered are the expansion of the number of child care places, better paternity leave regulations, and new laws and regulations in the area of working hours. For instance, on July 1, 2000, the Working Hours Adjustment Act takes effect. This law anticipates the Work and Care Act; both have the purpose of helping to encourage the economic independence of women.

In addition to work and care, power and decision-making is a second pillar of the new emancipation memorandum. It is not for nothing that both these pillars can be considered as important "classics" in the emancipation process. The Cabinet has resolved to take an active role, through research, subsidies and encouraging the exchange of information, in realizing proportionate representation of women in top functions (SZW 2000). The new resolutions strive to remove those barriers which women encounter in their working lives.

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<sup>155</sup> The other Councils are the Advisory Council on International Questions, the Housing, Regional Development and Environmental Council, the Council for Public Administration and the Council for Social Development.

### *Mainstreaming*

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment Opportunities's emancipation memorandum deals in broad outlines and common denominators. For that reason, women in the cultural sector are not spotlighted as a group. Emancipation policy in general has been a "facet policy" since 1992. This means that the facet of emancipation must be included in the general policy of particular ministries, a form of integral policy implementation that is also termed "mainstreaming". That is to say, each Ministry implements the general emancipation policy in its own policy area.

The emancipation policy for the cultural sector can be found in the memorandum *Emancipatie in het WVC-beleid*, written in 1991 under the authority of the then Minister of Culture, Hedy d'Ancona. For her, as for her predecessors, "affirmative action" was an important instrument for combating the underrepresentation of women in vocational practice over time<sup>156</sup>. As women achieve key positions, the reasoning ran, their talents would not remain unused and lead to equality over the long term. Such "positive action" could be applied to the composition of external advisory panels for the government. Moreover - and this is crucial - d'Ancona wanted to determine whether it was possible and desirable to include positive action in the grant conditions of cultural institutions (Van Hamersveld 1998, 214-215).

The target group for this emancipation policy was chiefly composed of culture producers. Other professions such as PR staffers, editors, managers or directors of art institutions were not mentioned explicitly.

### *Delete culture*

In 1994 the cultural sector was handed over from the Ministry of Welfare, Health and Culture (WVC) to the new Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences (OC&W). Culture played no significant role in the first emancipation memorandum from the new ministry, *Een kristal van kansen* (1998). Education and science received almost all the attention. In the paragraphs about culture it was merely noted that the old WVC Ministry had provided a financial contribution for research into tracking the careers of female and male visual artists one and a half to two years following graduation<sup>157</sup>. According to the memorandum, the research results could not attribute the difference in the recognition granted between the work of women and men to differences in assessments of the quality of their work. Career success and satisfaction depended rather on self-confidence, a sense of well-being, and favourable social conditions. The Ministry of OC&W did not follow up on this conclusion with any conclusions of their own regarding policy development. On the contrary; in referring to additional activities financially supported by the former WVC such as research on women in the media including a conference on that subject and continuing grants to the NOS-Bureau Beeldvorming v/m (public broadcaster), the memorandum decided that all was well with the position of women in the cultural sector (OC&W 1998, 35-37).

In an overview of policy priorities for the years 1998-2002 culture is mentioned exclusively in connection with subsidies for two institutions: the NOS-Bureau Beeldvorming v/m and Axis,

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<sup>156</sup> Positive action intends to achieve proportionate representation of women in the labor market, in both a qualitative and quantitative sense.

<sup>157</sup> Ms. Top performed her research in the early 1990s.

Bureau for the Arts v/m<sup>158</sup>. Both institutions work towards breaking through the stereotypical images of women and men. Axis is even financed with a separate emancipation budget. However, "in some policy areas, research is commissioned by the respective ministry as result of proposed policy measures". The memorandum *Een Kristal* refers to the possibility that, in some policy areas, research is commissioned by the respective ministry to evaluate the results of the intended policy.

The total budget for emancipation in education and science for the government period 1998-2002 is 11 million guilders; the separate emancipation budget for the cultural sector is f 375,000 (OC&W 1998, 42-43).

In view of the importance that the Ministry of Social Affairs attaches to advancing emancipation, buttressed by intensive policy in which research, subsidies and exchange of information are employed as instruments, the conclusion reached by OC&W can, at the least, be termed surprising. The ministry has a long and exemplary history in the field of emancipation in education and science, but it looks as if somebody doesn't have a clue what to do with that completely different and elusive policy field called "culture".

The present Ministry of OC&W is not the first Ministry of Culture that has had problems with the implementation of emancipation policy for the cultural sector. In the past 20 years emancipation policy for the cultural sector has always been handled with extreme reluctance by successive Ministries of Culture. In the very first emancipation memorandum from the Ministry of Culture, in 1981, the concept of emancipation was still attached to the content of artistic expression, and it was suggested that emancipation in cultural policy was steering toward "socially engaged art". Because since the beginning of the 1980s the principle of quality, and not "social involvement," has been at the centre of the general cultural policy, there has always been a tension between the goals of the art and emancipation policies. For that reason the government (to use their own words) could "take no role in guiding or stimulating" emancipation. In the memorandum from WVC Minister d'Ancona, it literally states: "The possibilities for the government, and in particular the Minister of Culture, to actually influence particular developments are limited" (Van Hamersveld 1998, 218).

### ***Culture back on the agenda***

The memorandum *Een kristal van kansen* appeared in mid-1998. At the end of 1998 the Lower House received a letter from the Ministry of Social Affairs which states that preparations are under way for a collective emancipation action plan for all departments. This action plan flows out of the agreement reached over joint policies by the three political parties in the present ruling coalition, that every department would establish and carry out at least three concrete tasks in the area of emancipation during their respective terms. The letter implicitly confirmed that emancipation policy is a responsibility for the individual departments. The tasks must be connected with the central themes of the emancipation policy set out by Social Affairs. The action plan itself was to be presented to the Lower House in the spring of 1999.

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<sup>158</sup> In the Arts Plan 2002-2005, the Cultural Council has issued a negative reaction to the Ministry of OC&W regarding the continuation of Axis, Bureau for the Arts v/m. The council is indeed of the opinion that there is a place for an institution that devotes attention to gender issues, but the manner in which Axis has profiled itself is not very convincing (Raad voor Cultuur 2000, XX). If the Ministry of OC&W accepts this advice, Axis will shut its doors at the beginning of 2002.

The Ministry of OC&W has retraced its steps: culture is back on the agenda. For the first time in the history of emancipation policy for the cultural sector, alternatives to subsidies will be implemented. The Ministry of Culture has submitted four points: three in the field of education,<sup>159</sup> one in the field of culture. The latter includes realizing the goal of increasing the number of women in advisory councils and commissions and in boards of directors. The impetus for presenting this action point was the outcome of the rough survey mentioned at the beginning of this article, which the Committee on Cultural Governance conducted on the composition of the boards of directors of a number of large and medium-sized cultural institutions in the city of Amsterdam. This investigation was part of a project regarding the revitalization of cultural management. From the research it appeared that women made up only 20% of the boards surveyed. In the accompanying background information from the Ministry concerning the action point regarding the increasing participation of women in culture, as producers and consumers, and their underrepresentation in decision-making positions were contrasted with each other.

What does the Ministry of OC&W plan to do in concrete terms concerning this action point? First, research will be carried out regarding the proportion of women in decision-making positions, the explicit and implicit conditions that play a role in naming persons to these positions, and possibilities for concretizing a more even balance in advisory councils, commissions, prize juries and boards of directors<sup>160</sup>. Secondly, the results of the investigation will be transformed into action. At the end of 2001 there will be another examination of the composition of the directorates of Amsterdam cultural institutions.

Departments must report on progress annually to the coordinating cabinet minister; on the basis of these reports the coordinating minister must also present an annual report to the Lower House of Parliament, the first report coming in 2000 (Sdu 1999).

The action plan relinquishes the idea that emancipation policy is mainly intended for cultural producers and institutions that disseminate information, or juries and commissions that appraise their work. The range of action also extends to general cultural institutions that are not immediately in the service of a subsector.

### *Quotas and Affirmative Action*

The question remains how an increase in the number of women in decision-making and advisory positions can be realised. A greater awareness of the disproportionate distribution of seats does not automatically lead to desired changes, because each institution makes use of its own network. Women, who are more focused on the content of their work than on networking, are not very "visible" in networks. Data banks such as Toplink and Atana can offer a solution to this problem. Toplink acts as an intermediary in securing women for boards of directors and advisory councils. In addition, Toplink tries to influence the culture of the appointment process toward greater diversity and a more balanced female/male composition. The initiative must, however, proceed from the institutions themselves; perhaps in the future the Amsterdam cultural institutions will be among them. Atana scouts for new directors, commission members and advisors for the cultural

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<sup>159</sup> The three action plans for education are: modernization of conditions for employment and labour relations; attention to emancipatory aspects of communication and information technology in primary and secondary education; and liberalization of school hours.

<sup>160</sup> Survey results of women sitting on visual arts granting committees: In 1983 16% women vs. 84% men; 1988, 32% women and 68% men; 1997, 38% women and 62% men. De Nooy & Toussaint, 1999. While clearly the number of women sitting on granting committees is rising, it has not yet mirrored the number of female applicants.

sector. Atana's concern is exclusively to find persons with dual cultural backgrounds. Potential new directors who fulfil this profile are brought in contact with cultural institutions. Selected participants receive a training programme consisting of a series of classes with facts and background information about policy and practice, seminars under the leadership of experienced managers from the cultural sector, and working visits to the Lower House, the Cultural Council and other relevant cultural institutions.

Active intervention such as those activities which Atana support, has more chance of success than tools such as quotas or affirmative action. In the cultural sector these are generally experienced as an unwelcome form of coercion, as "artistic environmental pollution."

Quotas and affirmative action policies have also been regarded as undesirable by women. In the year 2000 young women are not attracted by concepts such as equal opportunity and/or emancipation policy. They are not organised and accept the achievements of the second feminist wave as a matter-of-course. It is not for nothing that at the moment 60% of women between 25 and 34 years of age are economically independent, while women between 55 and 64 that figure is only 14% (SZW 2000, 15).

Finally, there are two factors which would not make the introduction of quotas or affirmative action for cultural institutions easy. The first has to do with the progressive image that is ascribed to the cultural sector, and that the sector itself actively disseminates. The label of "progressive" that is attached to artistic expression also automatically carries over to all those working throughout the entire sector. This mechanism complicates all thinking in terms of inequality. In addition, it creates the image of the cultural sector as being the women's sector par excellence, a sector in which talented female artists have for years been presenting themselves powerfully and with self-confidence - an illusion that the present situation makes any form of emancipation policy unnecessary<sup>161</sup>.

For large institutions such as polytechnics and universities, where the distance between administrators and teachers and students is larger than in the case of cultural institutions, quotas and positive action seem less of a problem. In the 1997 Equal Representation Act, the Ministry of OC&W has therefore required these educational institutions to draw up goals every four years regarding the proportion of women in the highest functions. They must indicate how these goals can be reached and prepare an evaluation at the end of each four year cycle. There are, however, no sanctions connected with the law, as either stimulus or punishment. In the *Een kristal van kansen* memorandum, one of the main objectives is to improve the position of women teachers and administrators.

In order to facilitate the upward movement from university lecturer to senior lecturer, the Minister has promised financial support via a temporary incentive fund ASPASIA, beginning in 1999. This support will amount to .5 million guilders in 2002; the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research is also reserving an annually increasing sum - 1.5 million guilders in 2002 - for this fund (Timmerhuis and Bringmann 1999).

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<sup>161</sup> However sobering the figures are -- reducing the notion of a rosy situation to an *idée fixe* -- there is also a flip side. Since the 1970's the advance of women artists has been unstoppable, and they have enriched art in their own way, often with work in which aspects of being a woman resound.

### *Investing in Talent and the Future*

Expanding the target groups of the emancipation policy in the cultural sector could mean a breakthrough that considerably broadens policy opportunities. This shift opens the door for translating general measures from the co-ordinating Ministry of Social Affairs. The policy that the Ministry of Culture should be following is rather in the area of research and measures than in the area of subsidies.

Although research is an instrument frequently employed by policymakers, including in the area of emancipation, research concerning emancipation in the cultural sector stands out as exceptional. Certainly, research can perform a good service in policy preparations. A couple of options: investigations in the service of education and the sciences could focus on the reasons that students give for their sex-specific patterns of choice in art training and the university field of Language and Culture. Such research could provide insights which could be used to more adequately influence the educational track prior to and in advanced vocational training and academic education. After all, the stubborn differences in choice of studies to a large extent explain the sex segregation in the labour market (SCP 1998, 218). Moreover, it is true that small differences in starting positions translate into large differences in the labour market, which, among other things, result in lopsided distribution of income. In economics this is termed the "winner takes all" effect.

Another example: the Ministry of Social Affairs attaches great value to monitoring in order to carefully chart developments in emancipation policy over long periods. Such a tool could also be employed in the cultural sector. It is indeed important that a clear distinction is made among women who obtain their principle income through creative work, women who are employed in cultural institutions, women who are involved in teaching in vocational art training and in Language and Culture, or in research, and finally women who are active in politics and public administration. Moreover, for women with an artistic vocation it is more true than for other groups that the very particular dynamics of the cultural labour market must be taken into account. One of the characteristics of the artistic market is that those working in it often have various jobs at the same time, both inside and outside the cultural sector. Another characteristic is the very lopsided distribution of income among those practising in various disciplines. In addition, some artists perform their work as paid employees, while others, on the contrary, are self-employed small entrepreneurs (Langenberg 1999, 36-40).

In order to establish how careers develop, it makes sense to invest in research into career development by tracking students graduating from school. Such an investigation, also split up into various groups of women in the cultural sector, could among other things, give an answer to the question of where that large number of graduates in art training and Language and Culture are going if they are not showing up in the cultural sector, and what their reasons are for the choices they are making. Perhaps such research could also explain why women submit so few grant applications, both in the visual arts and in academic research (Withaar 1987, Brouns 1999).

In all types of research it is desirable to make distinctions recognizing ethnic and cultural differences among women, so that the various educational and life courses can be followed for different groups of women, and policy measures attuned to them. Finally, it would also be worthwhile to introduce various age categories in order to make clear the differences between various generations.

With research into women in the cultural sector, one could make connections with ongoing international (comparative) investigations into women in the arts and media professions. One could also seek co-operation on another front, namely with research projects taking place occasionally or on a regular basis. By adding explicit questions regarding women and reporting back on the results, much could be gained with a minimum investment.

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