

Policy advice,  
research findings  
and stakeholder involvement

Mirjam van Leeuwen & Karin Westerbeek  
Dutch Education Council



..raad  
wijs  
onder

# Dutch Education Council

- Founded in 1919
- Government and parliament
- 11 members and 20 staff



Data – information –  
knowledge – scientific  
evidence

- 1 Identification & definition
- 2 Analysis
- 3 Reflection, interpretation &  
normative position
- 4 Advice, alerts & recommendations

Policy and  
Governance

(Education)  
Practice

# Identification and definition

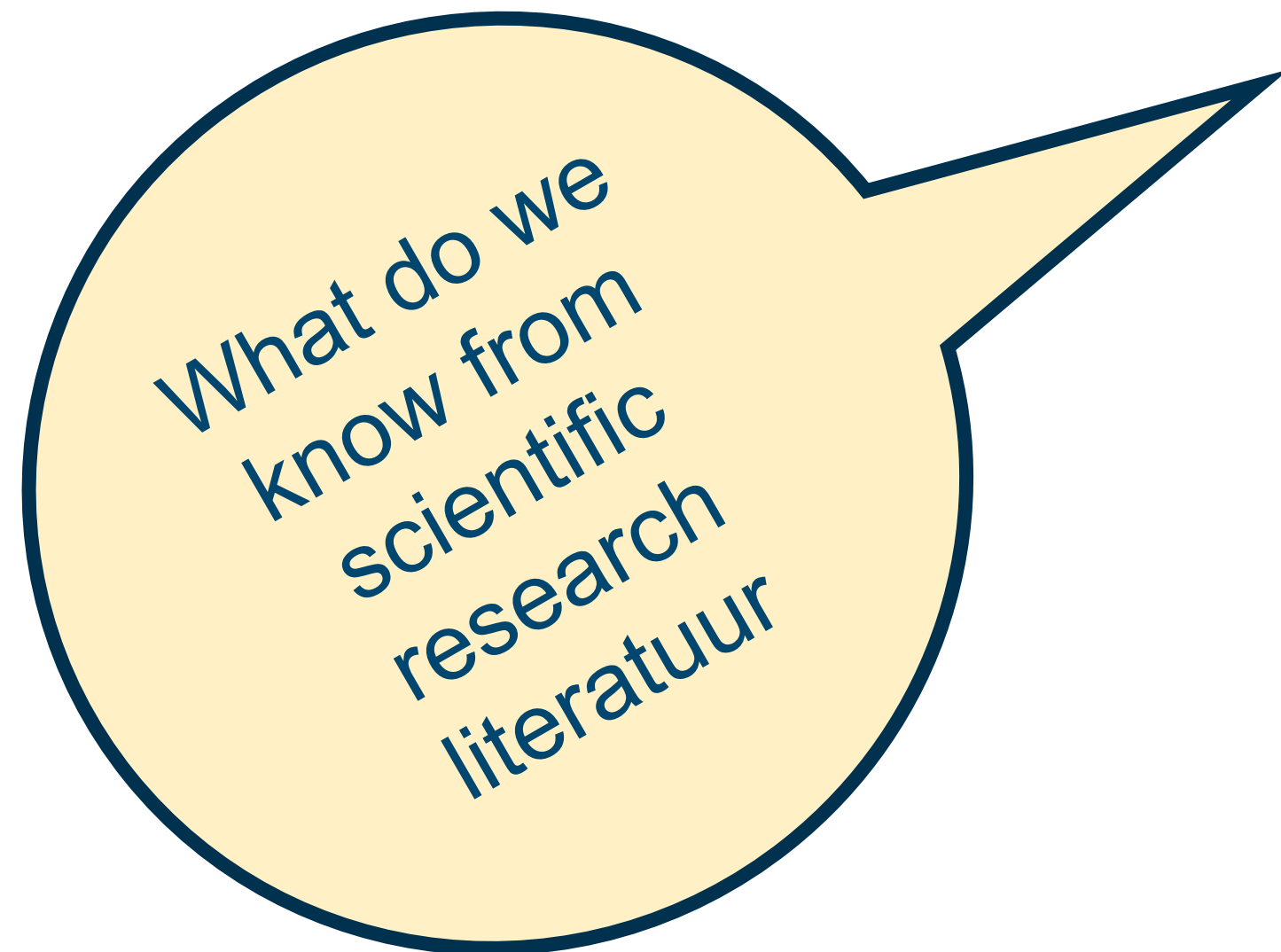
- What problems emerge? On what issues is our advise needed?
- How to define/“frame’ the problem/issue? From what perspective, based on which value(s)?

Consulting stakeholders for their view on trends, issues & problems

Perspectives:  
- five public values  
- specific scientific discourse

# Analysis

- Manifestation of the issue-problem?
- What, from which sources, is known about prevalence, urgency?



# Reflection, interpretation, normative position

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- From what perspective, which values?

Added  
(external)  
member to the  
council

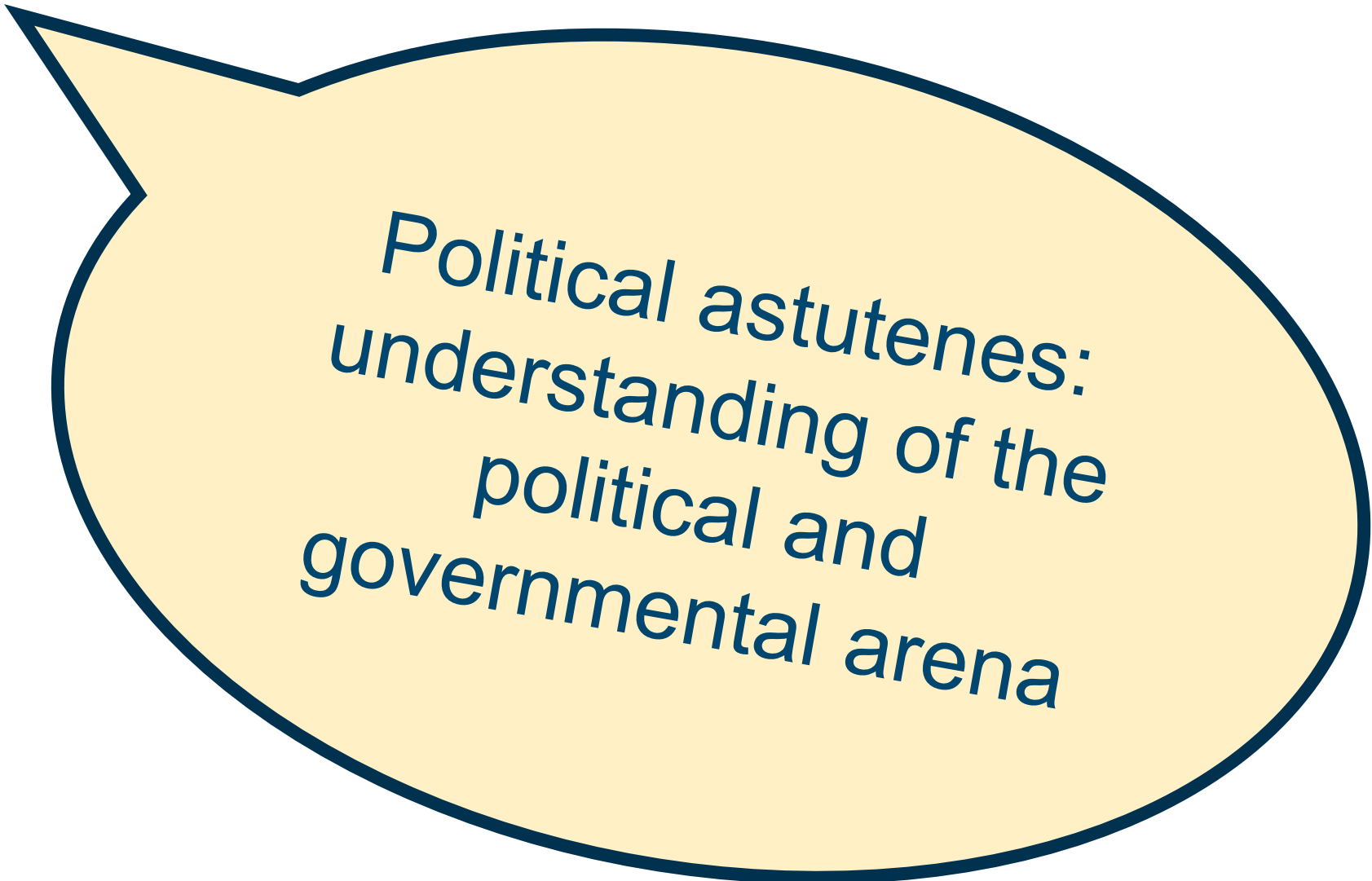
What are perspectives  
from educational  
practice, e.g. that of  
teachers or parents?

# Advice, alerts, recommendations

- Manifestation of the issue-problem?
- What, from which sources, is known about prevalence, urgency?



Who should  
we address?



Political astutenes:  
understanding of the  
political and  
governmental arena

# Keeping eyes and ears open

Collecting knowledge and insights & listening:

- Educational practice, school setting
- Professionals and experts
- Organized or on an individual basis

## Denk mee over het Werkprogramma 2023

Nieuwsbericht | 08-03-2022 | 13:07

De Onderwijsraad is gestart met de voorbereiding voor het Werkprogramma 2023. Aan welke onderwerpen en vraagstukken in het onderwijs zou de Onderwijsraad in 2023 aandacht moeten besteden? Wij nodigen betrokkenen uit het onderwijsveld uit om mee te denken. Het Werkprogramma verschijnt in september 2022.

## Panel over privaat aanbod in het onderwijs

Nieuwsbericht | 03-06-2021 | 13:18

Op 17, 22 en 24 juni houdt de Onderwijsraad online panels over privaat aanbod in het onderwijs. Hoe kun je zorgen voor gelijke kansen als een deel van de leerlingen gebruik maakt van private huiswerkbegeleiding? Hoe kies je als school met welke partijen je in zee gaat? We zoeken leraren, schoolleiders en bestuurders (po en vo) die willen meedenken over deze vraagstukken en die hun zorgen en goede voorbeelden met ons willen delen.



# Experts by experience

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## Dutch Youth Education Council

“When I have to work online for school, my time is being tracked. This gives me a lot of stress. I start thinking about the amount of time I’m spending and it makes me insecure.”

“Final year of primary education was fun and easy, but in the first year of secondary education you had to work hard. I would’ve liked some help with that.”



# Input from politic & policymakers

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- Set moments in time for meetings with the commissioning party
- Informing members of parliament (spokespersons for education) for each political party
- Meetings and briefings with parliament (House of Representatives and senate)
- Regular meetings with the ministers of education

# How do scientific results, policy information and stakeholder views find their way to the council?

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## Role of council advisors in advice trajectory

- In an expert council, stakeholder involvement is not evident
- 11 advisors
- Role as information managers: providing the information on the basis of which the council members decide. (We write, they decide)
- Combining knowledge of research, policy and practice with awareness of stakeholder interests/views.
- Commission (four members of the council) is paired with a project team (four council advisors). Head of the commission plus project leader form a tandem



# Tasks differ depending on stage of the advice trajectory

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Different tasks and roles in different stages of the advice trajectory

A regular advice trajectory: 9 - 12 months (after work program stage)

- Orientation stage
- Outline stage
- Writing stage
- Publication stage

Stage	Product for the council members	Goal of this stage
Orientation stage	Information report	Provide an overview of knowledge available to help the council to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Come up with a precise advice question</li> <li>• Decide what kind of advice it should be</li> <li>• Gain state of the art knowledge of the particular advice topic</li> </ul>
Outline stage	Advice outline = main message, supporting arguments and recommendations	Guide the council in developing the outline of the advice
Writing stage	First draft of advice report	Present a first complete draft to the commission and council, that can be discussed
Publication stage	Final advice report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finetuning of the advice</li> <li>• Enhancing impact</li> </ul>

Stage	Product	Activities as information specialists, leading to product
Orientation stage	Information report	<p><b>Broad desk research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of policy documents</li> <li>• Academic papers</li> <li>• Position papers</li> <li>• Media</li> <li>• Previous Education Council advices</li> <li>• Stakeholder analysis (presentation Sandra Loois)</li> </ul> <p><b>Interviews</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experts in the field</li> <li>• Visits of practice</li> <li>• Stakeholders (panel discussions)</li> <li>• Policy: ministry of education</li> </ul>
Outline stage	Advice outline	<p>Social media: call for contributions If necessary: contract research</p> <p>Plan for communication</p>
Writing stage	First draft	<p>In depth desk reseach Stay up to date with newly issued research, practice and policy documents</p>
Publication stage	Final advice report	<p>If necessary: additional contact with stakeholders and/or experts If necessary: expert reader</p> <p>Publication strategy</p>

# An example: 'Emphasising the public character of education'

**Orientation:** Council notes a problem: growth and intermingling of private provision of education harms equal opportunities

What are we talking about? Private schools, private homework institutions, exam training? Just secondary education?

Large body of international literature

Experts in the field: equality of education

Practice: finding examples

Talks with the ministry

Speaking to teachers, school leaders

But also: to private providers

**Outline:** Lack of data and research in the Netherlands, so research institute and academic paper on 'publicness'

What does 'public' mean when we talk of public education? What is it that we want to say?

**Writing stage:** Council: private providers can boost innovation in public education, but its dangers are real.

Schools should take their public character seriously.

## A few challenges for council advisors

- Council members from academia thinking the answer is to be found in ever more (desk) research. We know: scientific findings never directly lead to policy advice.
- Or the opposite: strong views for which no evidence can be found.
- Stakeholders who confuse 'being heard' with 'my point of view has been' adopted by the council.
- Getting to the next stage: tendency to be too careful



This only works under certain conditions:

- Each of the advisors stays up to date in an area of expertise (secondary education, equal opportunities, inclusive education, etc.). Distribution of these expertise areas.
- The advisors have ample opportunity to visit both national and international conferences
- Advisors have access to all scientific journals
- Traineeships are being offered to students doing a research master



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Prins Willem Alexanderhof 20  
2595 BE Den Haag  
Nederland

[www.onderwijsraad.nl](http://www.onderwijsraad.nl)

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