



Rules for demonstrations

People in the Netherlands have a constitutional right to demonstrate but there are rules for doing it. It is important that both the police and demonstrators know what they are.

The National Ombudsman provides detailed guidelines in his report *The Right to Demonstrate Peacefully*. The main rules are summed up on this card.

The National Ombudsman of the Netherlands

Have you complained to the police about police conduct and not got a satisfactory answer?

The National Ombudsman may be able to help. Phone 0800 33 55555 or visit www.nationaleombudsman.nl

The report *The Right to Demonstrate Peacefully* is on the website.

The National Ombudsman.

Good for you

and good for government.

Advance notification procedure

- Solo protests do not need to be notified to the authorities
 - All other demonstrations must be notified in advance
 - Arrangements for demonstrations may be agreed with the authorities in advance, but this is not obligatory
 - Nobody except the mayor (*burgemeester*) has the power to impose restrictions or conditions*
 - Extra restrictions may be imposed concerning particular places (embassies, government buildings, etc.)
 - Nobody except the mayor has the power to forbid a demonstration*
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- **During the demonstration**
- There is no such thing as a permit for demonstrations
 - The police are entitled to ask to see the notification form
 - Nobody except the mayor can order the dispersal of a demonstration*
 - No demonstration may be dispersed solely on the grounds of non-notification
 - The police can ask to see identity papers if this is necessary to their investigations or for security reasons

* Restrictions may not be imposed on the freedom to demonstrate except in the interests of public health, road safety or public order