

Evaluation Termination of Pregnancy Act

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November 2005, more than 20 years after introduction, the Termination of Pregnancy Act was evaluated. The study shows that both objectives of the Act are met: for women in need assistance is available, while the unborn child is protected by rules and procedures. According to the evaluation, the Termination of Pregnancy Act is observed very closely.

Some other outcomes:

- Most women considering abortion, 63% in 2004, are referred to an abortion clinic or hospital by their general practitioner.
- Around 60% of all abortions was performed on women younger than 30. The incidence is highest in the age group 20-24. At the moment of treatment, 50% of the pregnancies is younger than 6 weeks.
- The majority of women terminating a pregnancy is of foreign origin, most of them first generation non-western immigrants. Within this group the abortion rate is between 2.5 and almost 9 times higher than that of the autochthonous women. A possible explanation for the overrepresentation of this group may be that many of these women are, more than the generation after them, dependent from their countries of origin for information on contraceptives and family planning.

The evaluation report also makes recommendations, a.o.:

- include curettage in the Termination of Pregnancy Act
- remove the mandatory 5 days of reflection from the Act
- improve education and prevention programmes focussed on migrant communities