



THE NETHERLANDS

1. Background Information

Contact Information

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Function: Project coordinator; workplace supervisor/ project staff

Responsibilities: INWORK coordination; Supervise and support marginalised and vulnerable groups in finding appropriate work, support inwork project

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Description of activities in the field

RG's reintegration programmes

- Hi5
- De Derde Schinkel
- Target group volunteers at the drop-in centres
- Activating projects within the drop in centres (kunst suite, kunstproject princehof)
- Group posting within the parish of the church of Amsterdam
- Colors (shop) / candle project
- The neighbourhood farm/ Buurtboerderij (social firm)
- Amsterdam Underground

Hi5

The Hi5 project is a procurement project in Amsterdam with RG as main contractor and 4 other organisations as subcontractor. The main aim of this project is to support the specific group of drug users, homeless people and people with mental health problems in participating in work and reintegration programmes. The variation in the HI5 programmes is big: HI5 includes more than 100 different work and reintegration projects, including crafting activities, gardening programmes, catering, cleaning, handyman work, administration and so on. This big range of opportunities makes that everyone can find suitable work. Moreover HI5 can ensure promotion and throughput, which on a long term contributes to more satisfaction and motivation among workers.

HI5 participants are supported by process counsellors. They support them in finding appropriate work and keeping them on track. Additional support is provided by work counsellors, who support the workers directly on the workplace. HI5 participants receive social benefits and do not receive additional money for their work.

De Derde Schinkel

De 'Derde Schinkel' is a work placement department, which combines 6 different firms in one building. These firms offer work to people with a large distance to the labour market and have a specific focus on the development of basic labour skills. Work includes catering, bookbinding, reprographics and sewing.

The Neighbourhood Farm

The Buurtboerderij (Neighbourhood Farm) is a social firm and part of the RG. The farm is located in the western part of Amsterdam and carries out low-threshold activities for people in the neighbourhood. Additionally, people can pop in and enjoy basic and cheap meals. Together, some paid staff members, many volunteers and HI5 participants run the farm.

Support in the Drop-ins

The RG runs 8 different drop-in centres across the whole city of Amsterdam. Visitors participate actively in all these drop-ins and carry out different kinds of activities.

Activation projects in the drop-ins

Most of the drop-ins offer the opportunity for different kinds of activation – not necessarily linked to production and work. These activities include painting, drawing, making music or writing.

Colors (shop) and the candle-making place

RG has a small shop where the products, which are produced in the various work- and reintegration programmes are sold. A candle making work place is set up at the same place. This workplace is particularly interesting for people, who want to do easy and creative work in a structured environment.

Corvershof

RG has a group detachment agreement with the protestant parish of Amsterdam. Hi5 participants work in the Corvershof building as host, which includes different types of work: cleaning, internal removals, receptionists, catering and gardening.

Amsterdam underground

Amsterdam Underground specifically focuses on (ex)homeless people, who organise walking tours for groups in Amsterdam and give a different view on the city from the perspective of those who live on the streets. The tour guides are selected on their specific experience and they receive training, coaching, a mobile phone and a small compensation for their work. Tours take approximately between 1,5 and 2 hours and are often booked by companies, tourists and people who want to hear more about homelessness in Amsterdam.

2. State of the art

2.1. State of the art – policies

Introduction

The unemployment rate in the Netherlands has been quite low until recently. This was partially caused by a large group of people with chronic diseases, who were considered as incapable to work in a regular job. For them structural income regulations applied, such as the Work and Social Assistance Act (WWB), the Work Disability Law (WAO) and the Law on Labour Support for Disabled Youth (Wajong), which are the national laws that regulate structural financial assistance for people with labour disabilities. Also, homeless people and drug users are considered to have limited access to the labour market. Therefore, subsidised labour activities have been established. These activities provide a structured daytime schedule and a safe environment.

Government policies

The government strives to create a broad labour market participation. Personal responsibility is not only stimulated, but also expected. If someone is unable to work in the regular labour market, they are stimulated to work under specific regulations and work programmes (e.g. supported employment). These programmes focus on people with mental, physical or psychiatric problems, who are unable to work in the regular labour market.

Participation

The municipalities are responsible for the reintegration and participation of vulnerable and marginalised groups and the implementation of the law. Since 2001 The Netherlands is divided into 43 municipal regions, when dealing with social care and addiction treatment policies. Social care includes shelter, enforcement, prevention and recovery. Each municipal region has the obligation to act, but also the freedom to develop and implement suitable programmes, which suit the specific local needs. These programmes include reintegration, participation, integration and adult education. The national government provides municipalities with a lump sum to make sure that marginalised and vulnerable groups stay at work or to empower people to participate more actively in civil society. This budget is currently under great pressure. While the budget is decreasing, it is expected that the target group will increase.

Vulnerable groups

A few people depend on long-term care for their daily life. This care is a necessary precondition to participate in the society. Previously there existed a number of different financing structures. For instance the municipalities money for reintegration and the healthcare insurance for daytime activities for people with severe disorders. There is a significant gap between those two and a large cultural difference, which complicates their cooperation.

Social work

Municipalities offer social work places. The government is responsible for the screening of the work disabilities. There are two kinds of

indications:

Supported employment:

Supported employment is meant for people with a work disability. The support facilitates the group to get a paid job in the normal economic circuit. There are a lot of instruments for support, such as a job coach to find a job and wage dispensation.

Sheltered employment:

A Sheltered workplace is a workplace specially made for people with a work disability who cannot work (temporarily or structurally) in a normal economic circuit.

Budget cuts and new national policies

Healthcare cuts

In the Netherlands we still have a national care act (AWBZ) that covers the healthcare costs of people with (chronic) diseases. This law also covers the daytime activities of people with severe psychiatric (and/or physical) disorders. Many organisations who organise daytime activities for this group are funded by AWBZ resources. They get a fee for every hour/half day that a client participates.

These activities are organised by large health care providers but also by smaller projects and organisations that provide for a large number of different activities. In Amsterdam for instance, people can choose from up to 600 activities which are published on www.jekuntmeer.nl, the website developed by De Omslag.

In 1968, 50.000 people got AWBZ financed care. In 2011 this number has increased tot 600.000. The expenses grew from € 0,5 billion tot € 24,5 billion in 2011. This is leading to a deficit on the national budget. The economic crisis has worsened this problem. Now the Dutch government is working on measures to limit the expenses for the AWBZ. The following measures will be taken:

- the daytime activities will be taken out of the care act (AWBZ) and will be decentralised: the municipalities will be responsible to these activities
- at the same time the available budget will be decreased with 25%. Also the number of people (due to other cuts) that need these activities will increase. So municipalities will be responsible for more people with budget;
- in the AWBZ act the clients with severe health problems have the right to access to care (i.e. to day time activities). This right will disappear. Central in the policies of the municipalities is the own responsibility of the person concerned. It is expected that a person with a chronic disease or handicap will be responsible to organise its own support. If needed the local authority can offer additional support the participation of the person. This new approach focuses on the empowerment of vulnerable people. However, it could be questioned whether this approach will work for the most marginalised groups.

It is now expected that this policy change will be in effect by January 1st 2015.

Welfare cuts

At the local level the budget for welfare policies has been decreasing since many years. Here also, the crisis has worsened the situation.

As a consequence, many community centres have been closed. Others continue with less staff. The number of activities in the community has been reduced. This limits the possibilities for vulnerable people to participate in “regular” activities in their neighbourhood and makes the inclusion more difficult.

Social policy

At the local level municipalities have been very active to stimulate jobless people to participate in society with social assistance. Recently this support has been reduced significantly. The municipalities have hardly any budget to stimulate the reintegration and participation.

Also, the budget for sheltered employment decreases in the forthcoming years. Nowadays 90.000 people with larger distance to the labour market are working in sheltered employment companies. They get a salary, often a little more than the minimum wage. In the forthcoming years the number of people that will be allowed to work in sheltered employment will be decreased to 40.000.

Moreover, young people with labour disabilities will no longer get support from the Wajong law. The local community should support them to find some kind of daytime activity/work.

Alternatively, the Dutch government has developed the so-called Participation Law. This Law wants to stimulate employers to hire vulnerable people. One of the measures will be that they will be compensated. For instance: when someone of the target group produces only 50% in comparison with a normal worker, they will be compensated with a subsidy (up to cost of 100% of the minimum wage). Another measure was a provision that in the future, 5% of the staff of a enterprise larger than 25 staff, should consist of workers with labour disabilities or other vulnerable groups. However, due to large pressure of the employers, this measure is postponed. Now the government expects that each year 10.000 people from this group will be employed. If this figure will not be met, the 5% rule might be implemented in the year 2020.

Summary

The government is stepping back. In other words: they say that the support will be limited to the most vulnerable who should still get the essential support. For others their own responsibility will be the basis. People should first try to organise their needed support themselves, with the help of their direct environment. Public support will only be given if all else fails.

2.2. State of the art - practice

Title of the initiative	Short description	Which target groups can benefit?	Which kind of organisation implements this initiative?	How is this initiative being financed?
Social firms	A Social Firm is a type of social enterprise that generates its income through the sale of its goods or services and has been set up specifically to create good quality jobs for people severely disadvantaged in the labour market.	Target group: people severely disadvantaged in the labour market. At least 25% of people employed in a social firm face major barriers in the labour market. Preconditions: motivation, basic reliability and stability in functioning.	Private or public organisations	A social firm generates at least 50% of its income through trade. A social firm re-invests its profits to create more jobs. Also, social service money, wage supplements, and health insurance.
Reintegration projects	Projects who aims to reintegrate People. Those who are not able to work, keep their social benefits while working and/or training at a sheltered workplace in order to reintegrate.	People with psychiatric problems, homeless people, drug addict and offenders.	These initiatives are generally implemented by health care, addiction treatment or social support organisations.	Health insurance and social benefits.
Client centred initiatives	client centred initiatives are projects that are largely initiated and managed by clients themselves.	Usually people with a psychiatric background, but could be any vulnerable group.	These initiatives are implemented by the clients themselves, but often part of a larger organisation.	Different kinds of financial structures. Mostly paid by de municipalities.
Social work places	a workplace specially made for people with a work disability who temporarily or structurally cannot work in a normal economic circuit. These workplaces hire their employees according to their work capacity and pay them a salary.	People with psychological and/or physical problems.	Usually they are run by the municipal government	Financed by the municipality and through their delivered services.

3. Organisation of work and reintegration programmes

The major difference between the four abovementioned categories is who manages the project, and their basic (financial) organisation, namely: firms/market players, health care organisations, clients and municipalities. Then again it is not a strict distinction, and boundaries often become blurry. For instance: social firms generally depend considerably on the same subsidies as the reintegration projects, client centered initiatives are often part of the larger health care organisations that also offer reintegration, and sometimes social firms offer social workplaces. Moreover, in the current changing climate, health care organisations are aiming more and more for more for social firm models.

So far -when not merged into one organisation- the cooperation between the different classifications has been limited. It is to some degree a matter of chance in which of the groups the clients end up, and in principle they could work in any of these places. Theoretically the basic idea is that those with the greatest distance to the labour market start in a reintegration project (which could also be a social firm or a client centered initiative) before moving on to a paid job at a social work place or on the labour market. This flow is rather complicated though, due to the individual client problems as well as administrative, financial and bureaucratic barricades. This tends to slow down the professional progress of clients in some ways, but in the meantime large organisations and formalized networks -such as the previously mentioned Hi5- frequently offer a huge variety of reintegration and work opportunities, between which clients move more easily. This more flexible internal cooperation does contribute to client progress and development.

In line with the participation law it is expected that the structures of these categories will change in the near future, particularly of the social work places and that the client flow from reintegration to work will be stimulated.

4. Inspiring practice examples

Organisation	Title of the initiative	Short description	Contact person	Contact details (adress, phone, email)
The Rainbow Group Foundation	Hi5	Hi5 is an cooperation of originally five organisations in Amsterdam. It gives people who have a large distance to the labour market an opportunity to participate in work projects. The work is very varied. The social service of Amsterdam finances the project.	Marieken Wattel	06-52482872 mwatte@deregenboog.org
Beer brewery De Prael	De Prael	De Prael is an social firm, where they brew beer. The beers are sold to bars in the area and in the restaurant/bar on location. All participants have a large distance to the labour market.		Oudezijds Voorburgwal 30 1012 GD Amsterdam T 020 408 44 70 www.deprael.nl
Landzijde	Kwekerij (nursery garden) Osdorp	The nursery garden Osdorp is a social firm, where the target group can work. They cultivate and sell vegetables.		www.kwekerijosdorp.nl
Scip	Toby Vroegh	A Client organised publishing house.	Ton Janssen	www.scipweb.nl www.tobivroegh.nl
Tactory Bikes (similar in Amsterdam: http://roetz-bikes.com/nl)	Tactus Verslavingszorg	http://www.tactorybikes.nl/contact		Tactory Bikes Emdenstraat 9c 7418 BR Deventer (0570) 660811
De Stadsbrug	Utrecht Underground en Fietsie Foetsie en de Speedservice	http://www.destadsbrug.nl/		http://www.utrechtunderground.nl/home

5. Other organisations and stakeholders

Organisation	Description of the organisation	Contact person	Contact details (adress,phone, email)
De Omslag	Foundation De Omslag is an independent, project- and network organisation for activating and work issues for marginalized and vulnerable groups.	Corine van de Burgt	www.deomslag.nl info@deomslag.nl

6. Critical factors/determinants

Critical factors which are necessary to set up a successful work-project:

1) Clear objectives

It is necessary that the workers and the target group know what the goals are. Why does the project exist and what do you want to achieve. If the targets are divided it is more likely that they are achieved. The target group has to know what they are going to learn. What they are going to do and what they have to gain from it.

2) Clear perspective on possibilities and growth of the target group

The target group has a lot of vulnerabilities. Knowledge of these vulnerabilities should be used to make the work place suitable for the target group. Then it is possible to see what the capacities and skills are that can be trained.

3) The trained skills must be relevant for the labour market

Contact with the labour market over which skills have to be trained, and responding to the current labour demand makes projects more meaningful.

4) Good training and coaching of the participants

When the participant gets a good training and supervision they can achieve more. There are several ways to do that. The work project has to choose a work method. Individual coaching and supervision are also necessary. There has to be time for interviews and evaluations. Progress has to be made visible and measured.

5) Client control, participation and inclusion

Client participation is important to get people involved. The best way to empower the target group is to make them responsible, not only for their own development, but also for the project results.

7. Problems and barriers

7.1. Organisational problems

Progress opportunities are complicated due to negative financial incentives. The target group tends to get less benefits and loses some financial support when they get a salary. Frequently they can earn more when working at a social work place in combination with their social benefits, than when they work part-time for a minimum wage.

7.2. Policy related problems:

The 43 municipal regions have been actively stimulating jobless people to participate in society with social assistance. However, recent budget cuts have led to a significant decrease in municipal labour support.

Moreover, in the near future, young people with labour disabilities will no longer get support from the Wajong law. The local community should support them to find some kind of daytime activity/work, but their ability to do so might be very limited.

The municipalities hardly have any budget to stimulate the reintegration and participation.

Also, the budget for sheltered employment decreases in the forthcoming years. Nowadays 90.000 people with larger distance to the labour market are working in sheltered employment. They get a salary, often a little more than the minimum wage. In the forthcoming years the number of people that will be allowed to work in sheltered employment will be decreased to 40.000.

7.3. Target group related problems:

Many individuals in this target group have severe psycho-social problems. For a number of them the stabilisation of their living situation might be a huge achievement, and could result in better employability. However, many of them have lived in the margins of society for the majority of their lives and have not been employed for decades. Their unemployed personal histories can cause limited professional capabilities or motivation to reintegrate. Hence, it will be a huge challenge (and in some cases not possible) to help them become less dependent on public services.

7.4. Other problems:

National unemployment levels are increasing. Our target group gets less attention and is possibly not capable of competing with those with no labour disadvantage.

8. Necessary support

Support from the labour market

- ⤴ Willingness to take on board and continue to support those individuals that have proven to have the capabilities at the social work place.

Support from the municipalities

- ⤴ A willingness to financially support the employment, professional counselling and training of the most vulnerable groups.

Support in entrepreneurship and marketing skills

Support in cooperation and network strengthening to enable the correct placement of clients and to facilitate professional progress.

9. Main challenges

What are the main challenges for the future regarding work integration of marginalised and vulnerable groups?

Social Firms

At present there is a climate in the Netherlands to stimulate social firms/social enterprises. For several reasons;

- daytime activities in a social firm setting are considered to be more valuable for the people concerned; social firms also tend to report good results. The firms help people develop skills and capacities to grow to paid staff member or apply for regular jobs outside the firm;
- social firms work with less public money and lower prices for daytime activities, because of the income they earn with the selling of products and services;
- social firms obtain a lot of support, both from the public that likes to buy the product as well as from mainstream employers that offer expertise for marketing, development of specific skills etcetera.

Although some very successful social firms have been established, many of them face practical problems such as:

- lack of entrepreneurship, lack of marketing skills
- no access to capital, which blocks the chances for growth
- problems finding the right staff

Not all relevant day time activities can be offered through social firms. But many social projects do have the possibility to get more income from the market by selling products, or by delivering services for which some income can be gained.

Participation law

Another challenge lies in the previously mentioned participation law, which aims to stimulate employers to hire vulnerable people. The goal to have any enterprise with more than 25 employees hire a worker with a labour disability is challenging in the sense that it moves a large group of people from sheltered work places to the regular labour market, where employers will be required to accept and deal with the vulnerabilities of our group, and support will be provided more at a distance. It will not only be challenging to provide good support in such situations, but it will also be challenging for the target group to compete with other unemployed and to continue offering support and meaningful daytime activities to those who are not capable of (re)integrating.