



F.I.S. Flexicurity integrated services

Desk Analysis in the Netherlands

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Introduction

The present study is realized in the framework of the Industrial relations and social dialogue **Project FIS** (Flexicurity integrated services) with support from the European Union.

The research, realized in parallel in Italy, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Romania and Belgium, is targeted to in-depth examination of the national overview concerning the demand and offer of training related services for companies and workers provided by Social Partners and by other public or private organizations.

Given the multitude of definitions concerning flexicurity in the countries involved the study will focus on training, considering the entire chain of services associated with it (training needs analysis, evaluation of training, job seeking and so on).

The research is organized in three main parts.

In the first part, the general national framework of the Dutch labour market, with particular reference to managers is described. In the Netherlands, there is not a distinction between managers and executives as exists under Italian law.

The chapter also outlines the fundamental elements of the legal and financial services relating to training with the aim to highlight the role and peculiarities of the social partners.

In the second part some examples in the field of services for market labour policies, are analyzed.

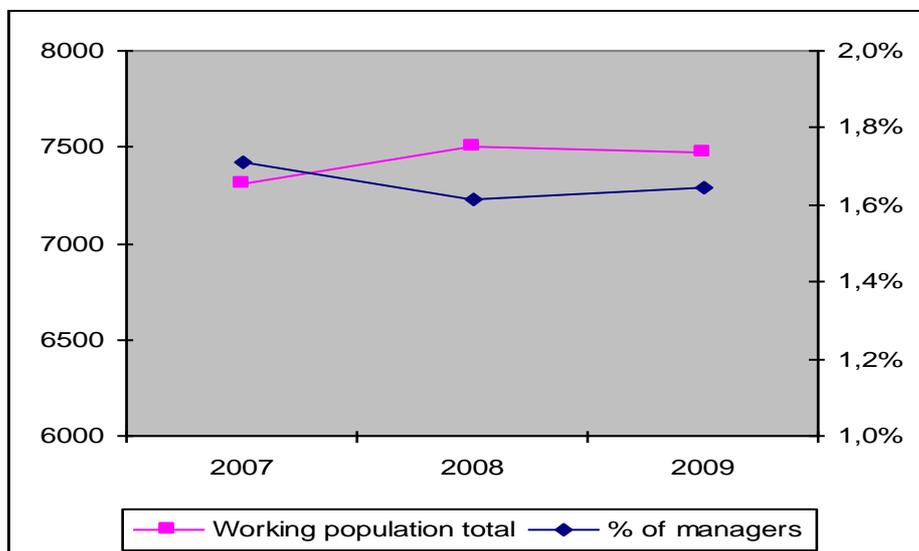
In the last chapter the study identifies main elements that characterize distinctive and innovative integrated services in the Netherlands.

1. National Framework

1.1 The labor market of managers in the Netherlands

The Dutch statistical agency Statistics Netherlands (*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*, CBS), publishes data on the number of managers. CBS makes breakdowns possible by a) gender, b) age and c) educational level on which the managers operate. Unfortunately, the data on ages is for the most part missing. There is no data available for the age groups under 35. However, it can be expected that the share of managers in these younger age groups will be low. In addition, the breakdown by age is only available for the managers operating on university educational level. Here too, the missings might not pose a very large problem, as figure 1.2 shows that the majority of managers operates on the basis of university level education. Data from CBS are available until 2009; for this report data for the years 2007, 2008 and 2009 are presented. Where there have not been considerable changes, only data for 2009 is presented.

Fig. 1.1 Working population (x1000) and share of managers (trend 2007-2009)

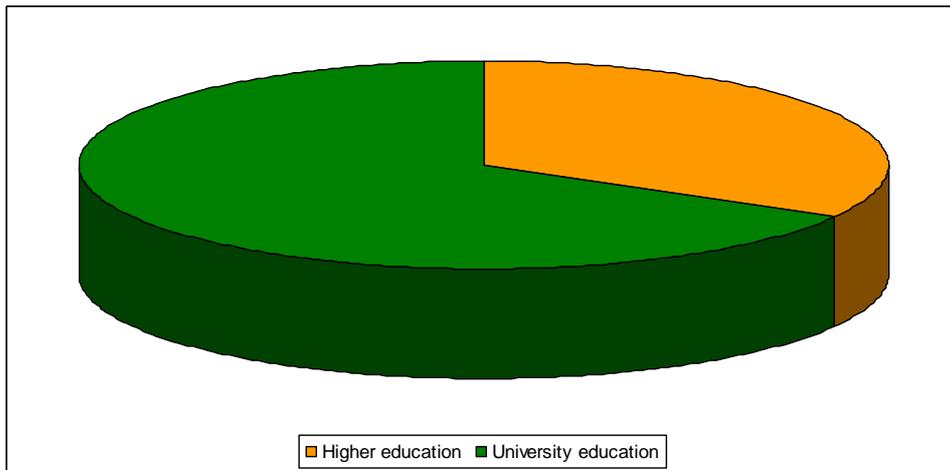


Source: Statistics Netherlands, Statline databank

Figure 1.1 above shows that the Dutch working population increased between 2007 and 2008 with about 200,000 and then slightly decreased (with 30,000) again between 2008 and 2009. As figure 1.1 shows, the development in the share of managers shows quite the opposite: While the total number of people active in the labour market increased, the

amount of managers as a share of the total working population decreased between 2007 and 2008 with 0.1 percentage point. Between 2008 and 2009, the share of managers remained almost stable. Figure 1.2 below shows the breakdown within the population of managers in educational level at which they operate. As can be seen from the figure, the majority (around two-thirds) operates on university education level.

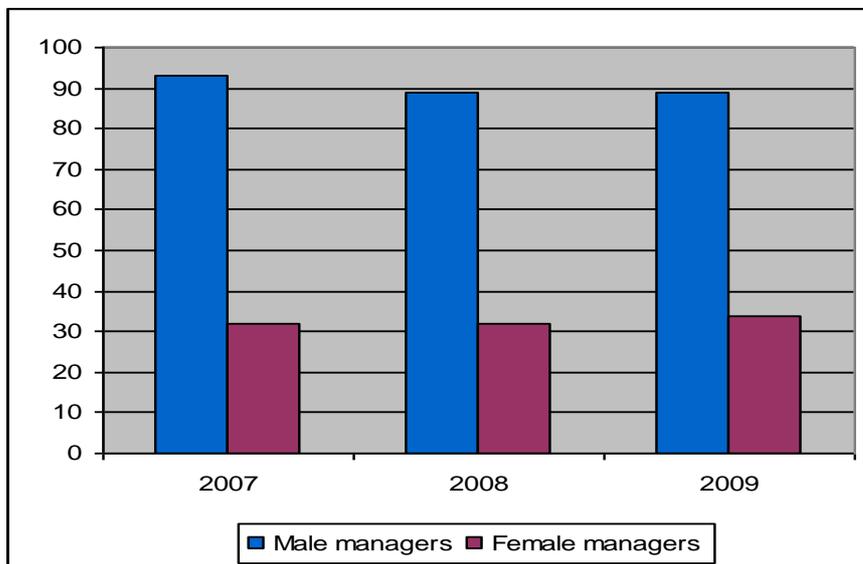
Fig. 1.2 Educational level at which managers operate (2009)



Source: Statistics Netherlands, Statline databank

The development in numbers of male and female managers between 2007 and 2009 is reflected in figure 1.3. The figure shows that the number of managers decreased between 2007 and 2008 with around 40,000, and then remained stable. The number of female managers was stable between 2007 and 2008, and then increased slightly (with 10-20,000 women) between 2008 and 2009.

Fig. 1.3 Number of female and male managers (x1000) (trend 2007-2009)

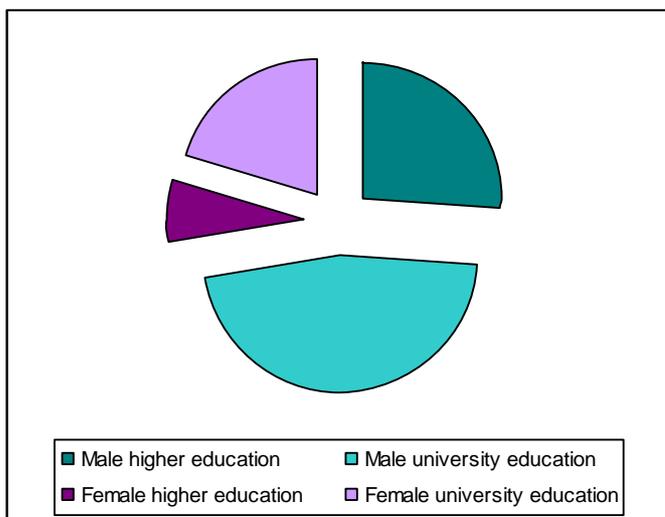


Source: Statistics Netherlands, Statline databank

Figure 1.4 below combines the data shown in figures 1.2 and 1.3 to give insight into the interaction between educational level and gender. The purple parts show the share of women while the green/blue parts show the male managers. As can be seen from the

figure, the share of managers operating on higher level education (darker parts) is for both men and women smaller than the share operating on university level. However, this share is relatively larger for women. The share of male managers operating on higher level education is more than half of the total, while for women this share is less than half. In other words, female managers operate more often than men on university level.

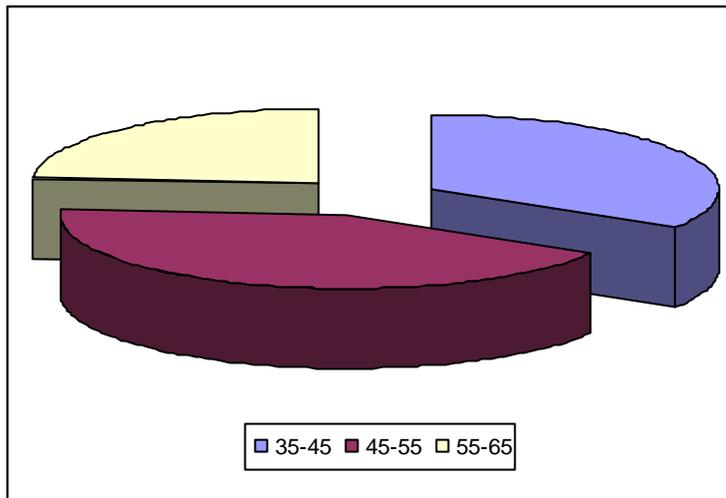
Fig. 1.4 Breakdown by education and gender of managers (2009)



Source: Statistics Netherlands, Statline databank

Lastly, figure 1.5 below shows the breakdown in age groups. As mentioned above, only data for age groups aged 35 and up are available from Statistics Netherlands. This data shows that the majority of managers is aged between 45 and 55. The second largest group is aged between 35 and 45, while a smaller group (almost half of the 45-55 age group), is aged between 55 and 65.

Fig. 1.5 Breakdown by age groups of managers (2009)



Source: Statistics Netherlands, Statline databank

Forecasts for the future

After the overview of the recent state of affairs regarding the labour market position of managers, the question remains: What are expected trends regarding the labour market for managers? There are no data reports showing the answer to this exact question. There is however a core publication concerning the labour market that shows the expected developments for various educational levels and for different subgroups of professions. This publication is regularly issued by the Research Centre for the labour market and education from Maastricht University, abbreviation ROA. The latest issue was published in November of 2009 and gives forecasts until 2014 (ROA 2009). First of all, the crisis is currently only slowly passing; for the medium-term future the ROA predicts a minor increase in the demand for labour that varies highly across sectors and professional groups.

Regarding educational level, the demand for lower educated workers is expected to decrease. As most managers are required to have at least a medium level education, one could conclude that the demand for managers and professionals will not decrease considerably. For university graduates the estimated trends are however also not very positive: due to a relatively large number of graduates coupled with a low outflow of workers in that education segment, the labour market perspectives of university graduates are worse than for school-leavers with only a bachelor level education. Regarding sectors, the largest increase in the Netherlands is expected for medical professions. This can include lower-educated nurses to professional specialists. The

largest decrease in employment possibilities is expected for economic, legal and administrative functions.

1.2 Welfare to work; the rules and the actors

Main actors involved in the Dutch system of welfare to work

Since 2002, the role of the Dutch social partners in the design and execution of welfare to work policies has been almost abolished. From 1991 to 2002 the social partners and the municipalities shared responsibility for reintegration activities. However, it turned out that this cooperation was inefficient and led to poor results because the three actors repeatedly failed to reach consensus. The social partners do however, still play an important role in advising the government via bipartite and tripartite advisory bodies. In addition, the social partners partly shape the implementation of welfare to work policies within the process of collective bargaining (Schils 2009).

The main (public) body that deals with benefits, activation and re-integration of unemployed and work-related disabled workers is the Institute for the Implementation of Employee's Insurance, abbreviation UWV (*Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen*). Besides ex-workers that in most cases have built up rights to benefits and can therefore go to UWV, people can apply for social assistance at their municipality. The municipality, like UWV, play a role in activation and re-integration of these people on social assistance. The UWV and municipalities also work together in so-called 'Work Squares', where people eligible for various types of benefits can register and receive assistance. Because people that are no longer eligible for work related benefits can move on to social assistance, this type of cooperation is useful.

The social partners do not play a role in the activities of UWV or the municipalities. Apart from these public bodies for re-integration there is of course also the private employment placement sector. This sector is highly developed in the Netherlands, with large agencies such as Manpower, Adecco and Randstad accounting for the majority of market share. Around 2-3% of employees work through such a private employment agency at any given time. In the Netherlands, there is quite a degree of partnership between the public and private employment service. For example: since February of

2011, all unemployed that register with UWV (a requirement in order to obtain unemployment benefits), engage in 'speeddates' with private work agencies within three weeks. These 'speeddate sessions' are organised within the offices of UWV where the private companies come to present themselves and 'speeddate' with the newly registered unemployed.

Finally, from 2002, the market for re-integration services has been privatised. This means that UWV has to 'buy' reintegration services from private reintegration companies. This is a quite unique situation compared to other countries. The market is open for all companies offering services with no registration or regulation from the Dutch government. To secure a certain level of quality, foundations within the market for re-integration services have developed initiatives to offer an overview of all available providers and install quality hall marks that firms can apply for. These services are geared towards increasing skill levels and introducing people into the labour market. The companies offering these services are mostly small enterprises, often specializing in a specific sector or occupational group.

Main characteristics of Dutch active labour market policy

Unemployment benefit recipients in the Netherlands are activated to search for a 'suitable job', and the definition of what constitutes a suitable job varies according to the duration of the benefit entitlement. In the first six months, a 'suitable job' is a job that is in line with the 'qualifications and skills of a worker and which also fits the physical, emotional and psychological capabilities of the worker' (UWV 2008). After those six months, the nature of a suitable job shifts to include a wider range of possible jobs. Then, after one year, or when the worker receives social assistance, all jobs count as 'suitable'. To receive benefits, unemployed workers are required to have four 'search activities' per four weeks. Search activities range from applying for jobs to taking a capability test or starting one's own business.

Besides unemployed workers there is also a group of workers that is not yet fit for work or that are partly disabled for work. The group that is not yet fit for work due to sickness or lack of qualifications need to be prepared for the labour market before they engage in

looking for a ‘suitable job’. They enrol in a reintegration program that is often, as mentioned above, bought from a private reintegration enterprise. For this group, the reintegration services are mainly aimed at solving health problems, personal problems such as social skills, and increasing basic qualifications such as mastering the Dutch language. Due to huge spending on reintegration services from private companies in 2009 and 2010 however, the budget for UWV was frozen in the second half of 2010. In addition, in light of required decreases in public spending to deal with the effects of the economic crisis, the budget for these private re-integration services will be substantially brought down between 2012 and 2015.

Main trends in the Dutch system of welfare to work

Since the 1990’s reforms have taken place in the Dutch system of unemployment insurance and labour market policies. There has been a move away from merely paying benefits to activating benefit recipients to engage in the labour market. In other words there has been a shift towards *activation*. An important spark for this development was an explosive growth of the number of people on disability benefits in the late 1990s. The social partners were held partly responsible for this increase, as they had invented a system that benefited older workers and employers but that put a huge financial burden on society. This contributed to the fact that they were no longer given any role in the administration of social security.

Compared to other European countries, the Dutch active labour market policy is considered highly successful, reflecting in high labour market participation and low unemployment figures (see table 1.1 below).

Table 1.1. Harmonised unemployment rate, December 2010

Country	Unemployment rate
Belgium	7.8
Romania	7.4
Slovakia	14.1
Italy	8.4

Greece	14.1
<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>4.3</i>
EU27	9.6

Source: Eurostat

Also, in the field of long-term unemployment and benefit recipients, major improvements have been realised. The Dutch government has increasingly emphasized on improving incentives for jobless people and conceptualising this in legal terms (Sol et al, 2008). For people that are not able to engage in regular work, the view is that they should participate as much as possible through e.g. subsidized work projects and volunteer work. The main aim is that everyone, except for people with severe disabilities and parents with very young children, should participate one way or the other. The requirements for acceptance of any kind of participation, e.g. for youngsters until the age of 27 this can also entail an education, are still in the process of becoming more strict. Under the current crisis and budget cuts on most benefit schemes, this remains as pressing as ever and will most likely continue in the years to come.

Role of training in activation and welfare to work

Training and education as well as life-long learning play a role in the Dutch welfare to work system, though it is not placed at the core of the system. Also, recent budget cuts in light of the economic crisis have severely restricted the funds that public bodies such as UWV and the municipalities have for training. This affects the people that are outside of the labour market due to unemployment, inactivity or work related disabilities. Training can be an important element within activation services that aim at increasing the employability and labour-market participation of people dependent on benefits or social assistance. As we will see below in section 1.3, it seems to be more focussed on workers within employment or that are threatened with dismissal. For workers within employment faced with dismissal, training is more accessible due to sectoral training funds managed by the social partners. This also explains the fact in contrast to the social security system, social partners are included in the administration of training.

1.3 The training system

General overview: sectoral funds and collective labour agreements

In the Netherlands training is predominantly organised through a system of sectoral funds for education and development. The social partners in a specific sector manage the funds. Employers can use these financial means that are managed by the funds. A site of certified sectoral funds gives an overview of 89 Sectoral funds currently operating ([www. opleidingenberoep.nl](http://www.opleidingenberoep.nl)). A study on sectoral funds counted 140 funds in 116 sectors in 2007. Around 85% of employees are covered by a sectoral fund (Ecorys, 2008, p. 8). Not all sectoral funds focus on training. However, most funds aim to obtain and retain well skilled personnel by offering enough employment opportunities, promoting training and improving the quality of the work (ibid).

Specific work-related training is the main goal for the majority of the funds. However, the next most common aim is education for further development, which can be considered a way to increase employability and therefore flexicurity. Another flexicurity-related goal, stimulating job-to-job transitions, is a specific goal of 30% of the funds analysed for the Ecorys study. These job-to-job arrangements are focussed most on attracting new personnel. The sectoral funds focus more and more on preventive job-to-job activities such as employability and social innovation. One element that contributes to this is training regarding job-specific skills as well as training skills related to general development. The sectoral funds expect to further develop their job-to-job activities in the near future.

In sum, the sectoral funds that were studied in the Ecorys project focussed mostly on the staff in the sector and if not, they aimed to elaborate their training and development activities to attract highly skilled and scarce personnel. The focus of these activities is therefore less on people outside the labour market that have a weak position or a distance to the labour market due to lack of skills and qualifications. These people are often not on the radar of these funds and only have the welfare system, that also insufficiently focuses on training and development. A final aspect that the Ecorys study revealed was that the sectoral funds hardly develop activities for workers that wish to start their own business. All in all, sectoral funds focus mainly on their own personnel

or highly sought-after personnel. For further details, see the sections below on the characteristics of workers that engage in training and development.

Funding

The funds are financed by the companies that are member of the funds. In the public sector the funds are financed by the government. The specificities of the fund are negotiated between social partners and laid down in collective labour agreements. The funds vary in size and therefore possibilities for training. Large funds with many possibilities can for example be found in the catering sector, construction, bakeries, furniture manufacturing, and the metal and electro-technical industries. Smaller funds exist in for example the wooden floors sector and the fruits and vegetables sector.

Box 1.1 Example of request for education from a sectoral fund

The fund for trade in fruits and vegetables reimburses the costs of a course for an employee. The employer takes the initiative. On the site of the fund he finds a list of courses to choose from. If he does not know which course to take he can get a career advisor to make a 'career scan' of the worker, resulting in a list of possible courses. In both cases the employee can start the course without permission from the fund. The employer can declare the costs afterwards. If the employer wishes to offer a course to the employee that is not on the list, the fund has to give permission for the course beforehand.

Training provisions in collective labour agreements

Related to the sectoral funds, social partners negotiate provisions regarding training within their collective labour agreements (CLAs). Around 85% of Dutch employees is covered by a CLA (Van Klaveren and Tijdens 2008). Already since the early 1990s, the Dutch social partners have stated in joint publications that they aim to increase employability for targeted groups of workers. The Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment reviews the provisions on employability in collective bargaining twice a year. Employability is here defined as follows: various types of education, leave for training, development plans, career development, mobility, motivational remuneration

schemes, and employability policy that is clearly targeted towards the labour market, and to specific target groups.

In the most recent overview of the Ministry (fall 2010) of 114 CLAs, it was found that all but one CLA contained employability provisions. In 40 CLAs there was a clear integrated package of employability provisions. The Ministry uses the term ‘integrated’ for a coherent set of mutually supportive provisions that are taken up in the CLA under the heading of employability. This is in contrast to the rest of the CLAs where various elements of employability are taken up separately and there is no clear reference to employability or an integrated set of various provisions (see table 1.2 below). Education and training leave are the employability aspects that most CLAs contain provisions on (SZW 2010, p. 29/30).

Table 1.2. Employability elements in Dutch CLAs (fall of 2010)

Employability elements	Number of CLAs	Share of employees (within observed CLAs)
Training and education	112	99%
Training leave	101	86%
Development plans	90	81%
Career development	88	84%
Motivational remuneration schemes	11	11%
Employability policy geared towards the labour market	79	58%
Employability policy for target groups	45	42%
Total (total diverges because some CLAs contain multiple provisions)	113	99%

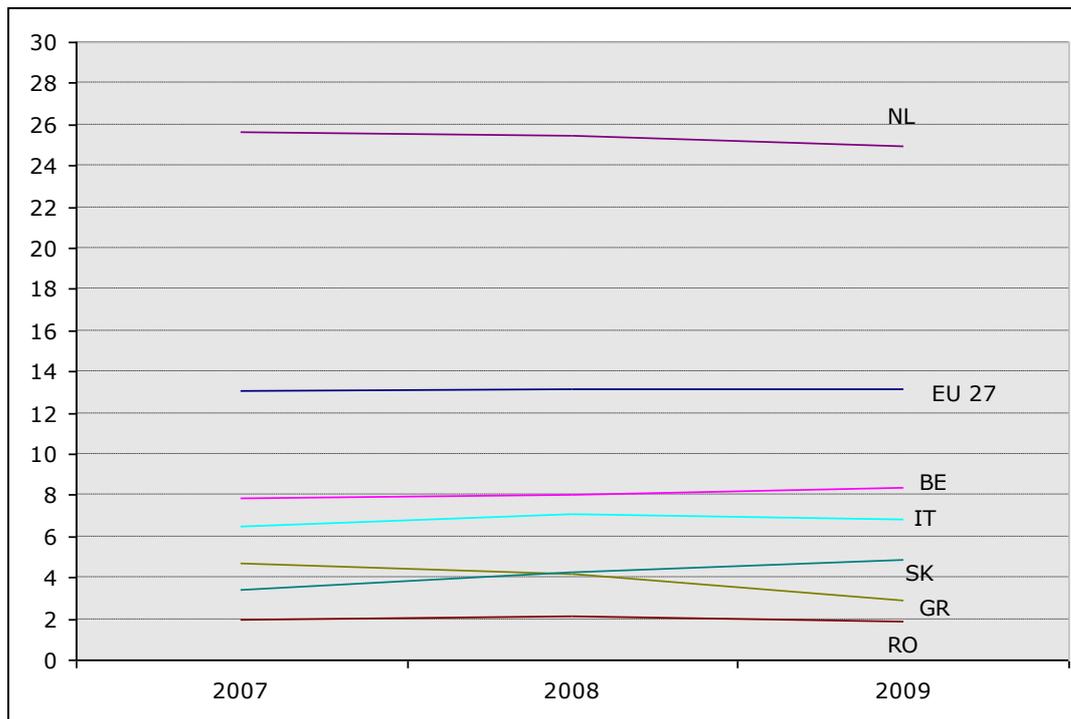
How many people engage in training?

A key indicator for the development of flexicurity is lifelong learning; the European Commission has denoted it as one of the four flexicurity components (European Commission 2007). The two figures below show the share of workers in the age group 18-64 that participates in lifelong learning. In this comparison data for the Netherlands is compared to that for the other countries in this comparative project, and to the EU27.

Figure 1.6 first shows the shares of workers engaged in lifelong learning in all countries, while figure 1.7 indicates the share of workers in lifelong learning within the occupational groups managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals¹. The data in the figures is derived from the Eurostat Labour Force Survey (LFS)

¹ See website Eurostat: <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/education/data/database>

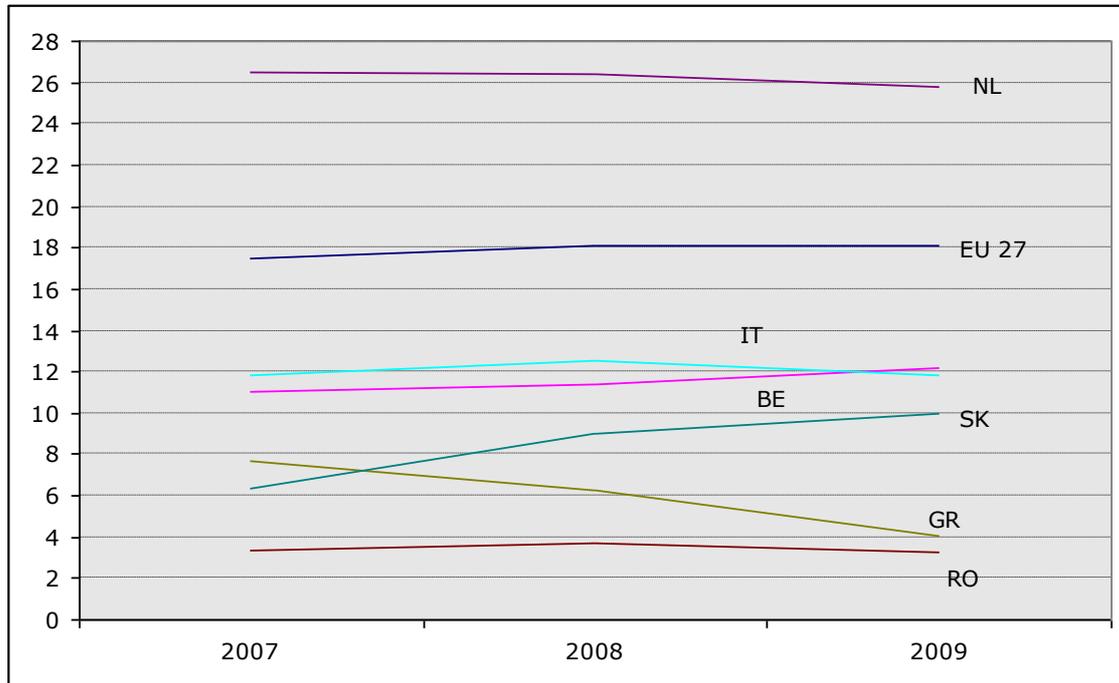
Fig. 1.6 % of participation in lifelong learning 18-64 years, total



Source: Eurostat Labour Force Survey

Figure 1.6 shows that the Netherlands is the only one of all countries included in the study with a share of workers engaged in lifelong learning of around double the EU average. For the EU27 and in Belgium, Italy and Romania, the share of workers engaged in lifelong learning has not varied much between 2007-2009. In Greece and the Netherlands, we can observe a clear decline, while in Slovakia the share has. From figure 1.7 we can see that for all countries including the EU27 average, except for the Netherlands, the share of workers engaged in lifelong learning among managers and professionals is (much) higher than among the average worker. In other words, the gap between the Netherlands and the other studied countries is much smaller for the manager and professional occupations. The developments in lifelong learning have remained relatively stable most countries. The developments observed for all workers in Slovakia and Greece seem to be more pronounced among the manager and professional occupations: in Slovakia there is a clear and sharp increase while in Greece there is a substantial decline (around 50%).

Fig. 1.7 % of participation in lifelong learning 18-64 years, managers, professionals, technicians



Source: Eurostat Labour Force Survey

Who receives training?

The Ecorys study of 2008 found that training policies are for the most part aimed at the employees already hired by the firm. However, over half of funds involved in education also aim to train potential future employees, from other sectors, but mostly from schools. This can however pose problems when the future employee is from another sector as training is very much sectorally organised. The Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment also provides data on the characteristics of workers that engage in training and education and which type of training and education is given (SZW 2010). This data is available until 2008/2009 and only applies to people that engage in training and education in combination with a working status. The share of persons in training and education is the highest among employees (47% in 2008). The second-largest group are people that are looking for a job (32%). The share of self-employed entrepreneurs engaged in training and education is 30%, while the share among people that do not participate in the labour market (and are also not registered as looking for a job) is 6% (SZW 2010, p. 73). There is furthermore data available on the *type* of training and education for these different groups (see table 1.2 below). We see

outliers for the group of unemployed persons looking for work: they most often participate in education and less often in training (a course).

Table. 1.2 Characteristics of training for labour market status, % (2008-2009)

Labour market status	Education	Learning on-the-job	Part-time education	Training (course)
Total	16%	11%	17%	69%
Employee	15%	11%	17%	70%
Self-employed	17%	8%	17%	70%
Not working, looking for work	44%	12%	20%	41%
Not participating	18%	5%	21%	65%

There is not much variation in the degree of participation in training between men and women and between contract type, i.e. a permanent or temporary job. The last important characteristic that has been measured by SZW is the financing party (see table 1.3 below). What we expect can be seen from table 1.3: training for employees is mostly paid for by the employer while self-employed entrepreneurs mostly pay for their own education. More striking is the fact that people looking for a job, and people that are not-participating also mostly finance their own education and training privately. Another striking feature is that there are hardly any cases where the employer and the individual share responsibility for this investment.

Table. 1.3 Financing of training for labour market status, % (2006-2008)

Labour market status	Employer	Employee, self-employed, non-participant	Combination of employer and individual	UWV
Total	81%	19%	4%	1%
Employee	86%	14%	4%	0%
Self-employed	33%	73%	1%	0%

Not working, looking for work	31%	59%	0%	24%
Not participating	22%	81%	0%	3%

Recent trends: training during the crisis

From 2008, in light of the economic crisis, the sectoral funds were used to stimulate job-to-job transitions. In addition, the government stimulated employers to train their workers by means of ‘competence certificates’ (Elders Verworven Competencies, EVC’s) and training bonuses. The EVC’s are a way to lay down the skills and competences that employees have required on the job, and that are therefore not yet reflected in diploma’s etc. The Dutch Council for Work and Income, (*Raad voor werk en inkomen, RWI*²) has investigated these activities related to training during the crisis (RWI 2009). The data they found is based on in-depth qualitative case-studies of 19 firms. In all the firms that RWI studied, employers had indeed invested in the training and education of workers that were part-time unemployed due to the crisis. This is however generally targeted towards the current job and less to general skills. The training requirement has taken a wide range of forms: in first instance most firms opt for short, internal training trajectories. The reasons for this were the costs of training and uncertainty about the duration of the training. Secondly, firms opt for short, external training trajectories with private providers. The aim of these courses were mostly the expansion of general skills such as software and language courses. Also, firms used the options to give their workers competence certificates (EVC’s) to codify on-the-job learning. Only after these short-term activities, some firms started to engage in longer-term trajectories.

Support for training by firms was given by the trade unions and also by UWV, municipalities and the so-called ‘mobility centres’ that were set up by UWV together with firms and municipalities to deal with outplacement of workers facing dismissal. The mobility centres not always played a clear role in the process as they mostly target workers facing dismissal and not part-time unemployed workers. When they did play a facilitating role, this was mostly in advising the firms. This training and education in

² The RWI is a consultative agency and centre of expertise for employers’ organisations, trade unions and municipalities in the Netherlands. It deals with issues relating to work and income.

light of the crisis was not without problems. First of all: The criteria for approval of the training and education trajectories and how the trajectories should be administrated were not always clear for the firms. A second issue was the organisation and implementation of the training: mostly for small firms. Problems related to the various options for training and education, how to select between the different providers, and how to determine the extent and duration of training. Small firms and firms with little experience in the field of training and education experienced most difficulties. A third issue was the financing of the education. This mainly played a role for international firms with a holding in another country. Also, firms had difficulty getting loans from banks due to the economic crisis.

The research also investigated training and education in light of job-to-job transitions. These activities are mostly more elaborate than those regarding part-time unemployment. The training is targeted towards employment in another firm and is therefore often longer term and also more formalised than in the case of part-time unemployment. For job-to-job, the social partners have often negotiated outplacement trajectories and have laid down agreements on education and training in covenants. The budgets are also larger, and often formal educators are hired. The organisation was also often done within the mobility centres.

Fflexicurity (integrated) services for training

Unfortunately, the study on training in the light of the economic crisis does not give insight into training and education for different professional groups. What the study does show is that success of training and education is often dependent on the degree of cooperation between various parties (e.g. firms, unions, UWV) and the support received by firms and workers. The Ecorys study from 2008 (Ecorys 2008, p. 51/52) found that of the sectoral funds, almost half engaged in cooperation with other sectors. The cooperation can be related to many aspects; the main aspects are mobility, hiring of new personnel, education and training. Cooperation between sectors is most common in funds in industrial sectors and less common in government funds. The funds that were researched in this study feel that intersectoral mobility and cross-sectoral activities are the way for the future. At the time of the Ecorys study, the funds engaged only to a very minor extent in job-to-job transitions from employment to independent

entrepreneurship. This is related to the fact that due to the economic situation at that time, employers were focussed most on attracting new personnel rather than helping employees to find employment outside of the current firm. The situation dramatically changed when the economic crisis hit. In this sense the current economic downturn is a situation in which to develop education and training further.

2. Best practices

2.1 Recent trends in higher-skilled employee and management training services

Training in relation to flexicurity on the agenda

The Dutch Council for Work and Income (RWI) has developed various activities to promote training to stimulate flexicurity. The type of flexicurity that they promote is job-to-job mobility linked to employment security. In 2008 the RWI published an advice entitled “From job to job: activities for employees threatened with dismissal, the role of training and education funds and intersectoral mobility”. In this advice and in their further activities, the RWI promotes cooperation between various labour market parties to engage in training to stimulate mobility. They assign a large role to the Sectoral funds that have to look beyond the boundaries of the sector in which they operate in order to stimulate a better functioning of the labour market.

There are also other parties that develop initiatives in this respect. In January 2011, a group of employers’ organisations and trade unions issued a manifesto in which they argued to increase investments in training to increase the skill level of workers (AWVN et al. 2011). They argued that a focus on knowledge and new employment conditions are crucial. More specifically, social partners should invest in retaining and developing knowledge and skills for all educational groups, for all age groups, for people that are initially more inclined to work with their hands or with their heads, and for both permanent employee, flexible workers and self-employed. Employment conditions should facilitate this: they should support employability, prevent fall out and stimulate vitality, and actively seek to attract groups that are now still outside the labour market such as people with disabilities.

The nine job-to-job projects

The largest project to further stimulate training are nine newly set-up projects funded by the ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. These projects are aimed to stimulate job-to-job transitions and have a strong focus on training and the further development of the knowledge industry in the Netherlands. A main element of these projects is that employers and trade unions take the main responsibility for this. Social partners receive a financial compensation of 2,500 euros maximum per employee that is successfully outplaced to a new job. Firms however must invest a similar amount themselves. For the entire project, two million euros are reserved by the Dutch government.

This new approach to job-to-job transitions entails that employers and regional employers' associations quickly guide employees that are faced with dismissal to another job. The aim is to decrease the benefit requirements for these people. Nine projects have been selected by the Minister that will receive the financial contribution from the Ministry. The main reason that these nine projects were selected is because the Minister feels they show future prospects for the further development of job-to-job. The Minister feels that these nine projects show the possibilities in practice, as investigated by the social partners themselves. The results will offer a range of options for learning and further development. The goal is to deal with large labour market problems such as the ageing of the workforce and the development of the knowledge economy. The social partners are given a leading role in developing this further. The approach also helps to deal with pressing problems for the labour market. Employees that are superfluous in one sector can help in sectors where more workers are needed. The new approach should mainly help to combat long-term unemployment.

Per project, at least 50 employees that are threatened with dismissal should participate. The financing for the project is taken from government funds for combating the effects of the economic crisis. The projects are also aimed at increasing the role of employers, next to the role that UWV and the mobility centres already have. Table 1.4 below gives an overview of the projects that are financed within this experiment.

Table 1.4 Innovative projects to stimulate job-to-job and training

	Name project	Organisation	Region
1	Experimental trajectory to stimulate job-to-job in the carpentry sector	Sectoral fund for employment, training and education in the carpentry sector	Whole of Netherlands
2	‘Repositioning of skilled workers in construction’	The organisation of small- and medium-sized enterprises in the city of Eindhoven	South-east region (Eindhoven)
3	‘With knowledge a step ahead’ in various sectors	Department of largest-employers association (VNO-NCW) for the middle of the Netherlands	City-triangle mid-Netherlands (city of Apeldoorn)
4	‘Plan H – job-to-job’ in various sectors	Cooperation project de Rietvelden-De Vutter	‘City of Den Bosch (Mid-South of the Netherlands)
5	Outline how to approach ‘job-to-job’ in healthcare	Medical care and welfare in region Den Haag	region Den Haag
6	‘Cooperating sectors at work’ in the graphical sector	Sectoral fund for training and education in the Grafical media sector	Whole of Netherlands
7	Transfercentre Maasland Hardenberg	Largest Christian trade union and Bono foundation	Mid-East region of the Netherlands

8	Form job to job, from income to income in construction	Largest trade union for construction workers	City of Woerden in the middle of the Netherlands
9	'Real estate total from job to job transitions' in de painters sector	Educational scheme between training institutes and firms, for painters	City of Nijmegen (South- East of Netherlands)

As can be seen from the overview above, there is a variation in the extent to which sectors cover various regions and sectors: some experiments focus on one sector and one region, while other experiments focus on one region but cover various sectors. Finally, experiments can cover all sectors but focus on one region. Experiment number 7 covers various sectors and combines job-to-job transitions with an experiment whereby employers continue to pay the wage of the worker faced with dismissal for a longer period of time. This last aspect is added to determine the extent to which employers are stimulated to offer job-to-job guidance to a worker. After an initial period of responsibility for the employer, the worker is hired by the Transfer centre which provides activities such as intake, coaching, and further training and education. The aim is to strive for a sustainable long-term employment relationship.

Another interesting example is experiment number six for the graphical media sector. This project covers various sectors (despite the name) and is demand oriented. Both the sectors that outplace and those that receive the workers contribute to the costst for training and education (hybrid financing). The already existing mobility centre for the graphical sector is expanded to include other sectors and instruments for mobility and career planning are synchronised. Instruments such as EVC's, further training and 'employability-checks' are implemented.

TOA/Brainport project

Apart from the nine job-to-job projects there is an initiative in the region of Eindhoven in the South of the Netherlands aimed at increasing the number of high-skilled workers in the technology sector. Brainport is the name given to a region around Eindhoven that is designated as a creative and innovative working space to attract top-class companies

and knowledge institutes. The aim is to create a region that is leading in inventing cutting-edge technology that will contribute to a safer, greener, and care-oriented society and sustainable economic growth in the Netherlands. In fact, the region Eindhoven is the core of the Brainport project, but it is the heart of a larger network spreading across the South-East of the Netherlands and across the Dutch border. There are five target sectors: High Tech Systems & Materials, Food, Automotive, Lifetec en Design.

The labour market in the Brainport region is shifting mostly under the pressure of the impending ageing of the workforce. From 2012, for every older workers retiring, there will only be one young trained worker entering the workforce. Already during the last couple of years, large numbers of vacancies in the five target sectors remained unfulfilled. In addition, prognoses show that the demand for workers will increase further, despite the current recession. The TOA/Brainport program focusses in this demand by working towards the retaining and attracting of technicians.

Brainport is part of TOA, a nation-wide program aimed to target the lack of technicians, which is becoming a threat to the innovative capacity of the Dutch economy. TOA is an abbreviation of the Dutch words for Technology, Education, and Labour Market. TOA/Brainport is part of the Dutch TOA and focusses on the specific labour market demands in the Brainport region. The national TOA program was set up in 2008 by the Dutch government. The program targets regions, has an integrated approach, as is fueled by the demand for technicians in the Dutch business community. The aim of TOA is not to develop new policies but to strengthen existing policies. The driving force hereby is the business community. TOA is governed by representatives of the employers' organisation in the technical sectors, training institutions for the development of the technical professions, and the Ministries of social affairs, economic affairs and education.

TOA has outlined four target areas:

- 1) the job-to-job transitions of personnel by means of extra education;
- 2) the inflow of workers from other sectors in technical sectors;
- 3) the inflow of youngsters into technical education; and
- 4) attracting international students and knowledge workers.

TOA develops activities when the ‘market’ demands it. Projects range from making technical studies more attractive for youngsters and better aligning the technical education program with the demands of the market to (re-)educate workers and attract international knowledge workers. Via TOA/Brainport there are now 250 firms that are actively involved in the program. TOA/Brainport can be seen as an ‘action centre’ that obtains, gathers and shares knowledge about:

- Translating innovations to the demand and supply of workers;
- The ‘human capital agenda’ within companies;
- Trends based on data and research, from a monitoring role;
- Activities that result in having technicians with the right skills in the right job, at the right time.

(Source: <http://www.toawerkeninbrainport.nl>)

2.2 Weaknesses and elements of improvements

What works? Criteria for best and worst practices and what we can learn

Analysing the above, the next step is to determine the best and worst practices. Despite the fact that unfortunately much data only for managers is absent in the Netherlands, something can be said on the role of the social partners, and of their sectoral funds for training and education. In the Netherlands it is clear that the social partners focus mostly on high-skilled workers and on people that have a close link to the labour market. Much less time and effort is directed towards people that are long-term unemployed and that have disabilities, lack skills etc. This is the outcome of the fact that social partners are not included in the social security system and therefore do not have a clear connection to groups outside the labour market.

Regarding the system of sectoral funds for training and education, the focus on the own sector can pose problems for mobility. This is however a logical outcome of the way the funds are set up and how they are financed. It is very hard to organise training and education for people that officially are the responsibility of another fund (e.g. to attract highly sought after workers). Another issue is in which workers to invest most. Research (SZW 2010) shows that highly educated workers receive more training than

lower educated workers. Is this the most efficient way to spend the funds? Who should benefit most from investments in training and education and why? More knowledge is needed of the variations in training and education also for professional groups. Finally, financing is in the overriding majority of cases one-sided, i.e. by the employer *or* the worker. In the nine job-to-job experiments there is more attention for hybrid funding. What are the advantages and disadvantages of one-sided or hybrid financing? This might be a promising way forward to balance responsibility over various groups.

3. Distinctive and innovative elements

3.1 Distinctive and innovative integrated services

It is important to pose ourselves the question what we consider distinctive and integrated and why? The experiments in the Netherlands were chosen much in line with these criteria and certainly contain such elements. Distinctive and innovative in the Dutch case are flexicurity services that focus more on:

- Hybrid financing of training and education
- Cooperation between various groups: social partners, firms, education facilities, mobility centres, UWV, municipalities etc.
- The cross-cutting of the sectoral barriers that have been installed through the strong sectoral organisation of the social partners and the setting up of corresponding sectoral funds for training and education.

3.2 Future possibilities for flexicurity integrated services

In the Dutch case, much focus is on the outcomes of the nine job-to-job experiments and what they can contribute to our understanding of best practices and ways to pursue in the future. Regarding the sectoral funds, the Ecorys study found that sectoral funds that engage in training of their personnel are too little concerned with measuring the effectiveness of the activities financed by the fund (Ecorys, 2008, p. 73). This might also be a fruitful endeavour in the future to develop training further. Also, more insight into which investments are most effective, for who, and why is needed to further extend training and education activities.

What is still very much missing from the experiments and from the Dutch system in general is the integration between various groups in the labour market. The social

partners and firms focus their attentions on the role of insiders (in employment) and outsiders that do not participate in the labour market. This is the outcome of the lack of integration of labour market policy and social security policy, mainly regarding the role of the social partners. Trade unions and employers do find training of people outside of the labour market important, but they are not incorporated in the institutions for these groups. Integration should also focus on this aspect. This is needed to realise another important component of flexicurity: combatting segmented labour markets. A one-sided approach to training will lead to unequal investments and therefore to more unequal (unintended) outcomes.

4. Research sources

4.1 Web sites

Information on sectoral funds for training and education	http://www.opleidingenberoep.nl/ts/ob/about.php?item=werkgevers&subs=3&subitem=3
Data on lifelong learning, breakdown by occupational groups	http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/education/data/database
Information on the Brainport project	http://www.toawerkeninbrainport.nl/
Information on quality hall marks for the re-integration services industry	http://www.blikopwerk.nl/

4.2 Publications

AWVN, CNV Vakmensen, FNV Bondgenoten en De Unie (2011)	<i>Naar nieuwe arbeidsverhoudingen Mensen maken het verschil, mensen realiseren groei.</i>
Sol, E., M. Sichert, H. van Lieshout en T. Koning (2008)	Activation as a Socio-Economic and Legal Concept: Laboratorium the Netherlands. In: <i>Bringing the Jobless into Work? Experiences with Activation Schemes in Europe and the US</i> . W. Eichhost, O. Kaufmann and R. Konle-Seidl (eds.) Springer.

Ecorys (2008)	<i>Hoe werken sectorfondsen?</i>
European Commission (2007)	<i>Towards Common Principles of Flexicurity: more and better jobs through flexibility and security.</i> Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities
ROA (2009)	<i>De arbeidsmarkt naar opleiding en beroep tot 2014.</i> ROA-R-2009/5. Maastricht University, School of Business and Economics
Schils, T. (2009)	Chapter 5: The Netherlands. In: Beer, P. De and T. Schils (2009) <i>The Labour Market Triangle. Employment Protection, Unemployment Compensation and Activation in Europe.</i> Edward Elgar
RWI (2009)	<i>Scholing in crisistijd</i>
SZW (2010)	<i>Najaarsrapportage CAO-afspraken 2010.</i> Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid, Den Haag
SZW (2010)	<i>Trendrapport Aanbod van Arbeid 2009.</i> Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid, Den Haag
UWV (2008)	<i>Kroniek van de sociale verzekeringen 2007.</i> Amsterdam; UWV

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