

# Wajong monitor: first report

An analysis of the new Wajong Act  
(the Invalidity Insurance Act for Young Disabled Persons)  
in the first half of 2010

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# Key points<sup>1</sup>

For the first time in years, the number of applications under the Wajong Act (Invalidity Insurance (Young Disabled Persons) Act) has decreased for several consecutive quarters. In the first quarter of 2010 the number of applications fell by 3% compared to the last quarter of 2009. And in the second quarter the number of applications decreased by another 10% compared to the previous quarter.

Influx also decreased in the first half of 2010 for the first time in years, albeit to a limited extent (the decrease in applications only has an impact on the influx after 3 to 4 months). Influx in 2010 (estimated at 16,700) will be approximately 1,000 lower than influx in 2009 (17,600). Although there is still great uncertainty, we believe there is a greater chance of further decline than of renewed increase.

In June the influx under the new law was broken down as follows: benefit scheme 13%, work scheme 54% and study scheme 33%. The impact of start-up effects associated with the introduction of any new law means we do not yet have a stable picture of the composition of the influx. That will take until at least the end of this year. Nonetheless, a percentage of 13% in the benefit scheme is significantly lower than expected when the law was drafted.

The first experiences indicate that the new Wajong Act has been positively received by the people for whom it provides coverage. The value of the new Wajong Act can be summarised along three lines, according to them:

- The new Wajong Act provides assistance and incentives.
- The new Wajong Act provides prospects.
- The new Wajong Act offers room for recovery.

At the end of 2009, almost 25% of people covered by the Wajong Act (also known as 'Wajongers') were working. That is 1 percentage point less than in the previous year. In absolute terms, the number of Wajongers who were working increased by 3.3%, despite the economic crisis. This increase is fully concentrated at regular employers. It is remarkable that there has been an increase in the number of Wajongers who are working, despite the economic crisis. This is evidence on the one hand of the efforts to help Wajongers to find work, but on the other hand it also demonstrates that it is often difficult to make a comparison between the employment of Wajongers and 'normal' employment. Even when it comes to 'regular' work.

Employers' attitudes with regard to hiring Wajongers vary but are generally positive. It also emerges that employers who employ Wajongers have a more realistic picture of the possibilities of these individuals than employers who do not have any Wajong employees. The fact that still only 4% of employers employ a person covered by the Wajong Act shows that employment for people covered by this act requires major efforts. That is why UWV has stepped up its service provision to employers.

<sup>1</sup> This publication is a summary of the Wajong monitor: first report. The full report can be found on UWV's website: <http://www.uwv.nl/overuwv/kennis-publicaties/kennis/index.aspx>



# 1 Introduction

The new Wajong Act was introduced on 1 January 2010. UWV set up a Wajong monitor in cooperation with SZW (the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment) in order to be able to evaluate the new law and provide Parliament with information. This report is the first version of this monitor.

This monitor is primarily dominated by the transition from the old to the new Wajong system, which means that we concentrated on what was noticed in the influx in the first six months of the new law. We contrast this with the development in influx in the two years previous. As preparation for the next monitor, we also analysed trends in participation and reintegration under the old Wajong system. This analysis is a baseline measurement for the analysis of participation under the new law. In view of the short time period between the introduction of the law and the publication of the monitor, we cannot yet comment on (the effect of the new law on) the labour participation of Wajongers. This aspect will be addressed in subsequent monitors however.

Before we discuss the findings of the analysis, we will first briefly discuss the most important changes in the new law and the start-up effects associated with the introduction of the new law.

We can summarise the findings in the first monitor in three general directions:

## 1. The first impression of the new Wajong Act.

This focuses on the questions:

- What development has taken place in the influx in the first six months of 2010?
- What is the breakdown across the various schemes?
- What are the characteristics of the Wajongers in the new system?
- What first perceptions of the new law do Wajongers have?

## 2. General trends in the development of the Wajong Act.

This focuses on the question:

- What factors explain the development of the Wajong Act?

## 3. Trends in participation and reintegration (old Wajong Act).

This focuses on the questions:

- What is the development in the labour participation of Wajongers?
- To what degree and in what form are reintegration instruments used?
- What attitude do employers have towards hiring Wajongers?

We conclude with a number of expectations with regard to the new Wajong Act.

## Most important changes in the new law

As stated earlier, the main goal of the new law is to increase the labour participation of young people with disabilities. The emphasis in the new Wajong Act is therefore on what Wajongers can do rather than what they cannot do. The main idea behind the new law is that most young people are still developing at the age of 18. This is also true of their possibilities for performing work. In order to activate the new people under the Wajong as much as possible, a number of components of the Wajong scheme have been adapted. The most important of these are mentioned below:

### • The abilities of Wajongers are the focus:

Under the old Wajong Act, 98% of Wajongers were declared fully labour incapacitated. That means that a person covered by the Wajong Act was not deemed capable of independently earning at least the statutory minimum wage (WML) in regular work. In the new Wajong Act, the emphasis is on what Wajongers *can* do rather than what they cannot do. This means that the assessment provided for in the new Wajong Act must also determine the participation possibilities of the group that is unable to earn more than 75% of the WML. Participation here is defined as the performance of any form of work by which any wage can be earned.

### • The law is divided into three schemes:

The right to labour support is the focus for young people with disabilities who have the prospect of performing paid work. They are admitted to the so-called **work scheme**. Young people whose prospect of work cannot be ruled out are also admitted to the work scheme. Young people who, as the result of illness, have no prospect whatsoever of a job, not even if provided with support, because of medical or labour reasons, continue to be entitled to an unchanged Wajong benefit in the **benefit scheme**. For them, income protection is the focus. This part of the new Wajong Act is similar to the IVA (Full Invalidation Benefit Regulations) in the WIA (Work and Income (Capacity for Work) Act). Wajongers who study or are still in school do not receive a full benefit. They receive 25% of the WML as study allowance. These people fall under the so-called **study scheme**.

### • Provisional and definitive assessment:

The underlying idea that Wajongers are still developing at the age of 18 is translated into the work scheme in the distinction that is made between a provisional assessment after the initial application and a definitive assessment at a later point in time. From the age of 18 to 27, young people admitted to the Wajong work scheme receive assistance in finding and keeping work. The definitive assessment takes place when the individual is 27 years old. At that point the individual's

remaining earning capacity (with or without labour support) is determined and the definitive assessment takes place with regard to permanent application of the Wajong Act.

- **New elements in labour support:**

Two new instruments have been introduced to help individuals find and hold a job: the participation plan and the offer of work. **The participation plan:** A new instrument for boosting the participation of people in the Wajong work scheme is the preparation of a participation plan. The participation plan indicates what the young person should be able to do - whether or not with the aid of reintegration instruments - and what support would be necessary. **The offer of work:** If a young person in the Wajong work scheme does not manage to find paid work with an employer, whether or not with the assistance of UWV, UWV can make him an offer of work as soon as a suitable position is available.

- **Work must pay:**

The new law not only introduces new instruments, it has also been amended with regard to earnings from work in order to make work more attractive. Wajongers who work but earn less than the WML and more than 20% of the statutory minimum wage (WML) may keep half of every extra euro earned. This could make their income higher than 75% of the WML and as such working more will also be worth it.

- **Obligation to accept offer of work and sanctions:**

The rights of Wajongers are expanded in the new law. The obligations have also been expanded, however, and the accompanying sanction regime for Wajongers has been tightened up. Under the new Wajong Act, young people have the obligation to accept an offer of work ('suitable work') if the work is in line with their abilities. A refusal of an offer of work or the failure to cooperate with reintegration results in termination of the benefit.

### Start-up effects

The law applies for anyone who submits an application from 1 January 2010. Since a maximum decision term<sup>2</sup> of 14 weeks applies for an application, the influx under the new law did not start until April. The introduction of any law is accompanied by start-up effects. That also applies for the new Wajong Act. Because of the start-up effects, we see some Wajong groups earlier than others. People who have been refused admittance to the Wajong system, for example, are entered in the registration systems earlier than individuals for whom a participation plan must be drawn up as part of the Wajong scheme. The analyses in the monitor show the impact of these start-up effects in many areas. That means that there is still no stable picture of the situation under the new Wajong Act and that we must be cautious in drawing conclusions therefore.



## 2 The (new) Wajong Act in the first six months of 2010

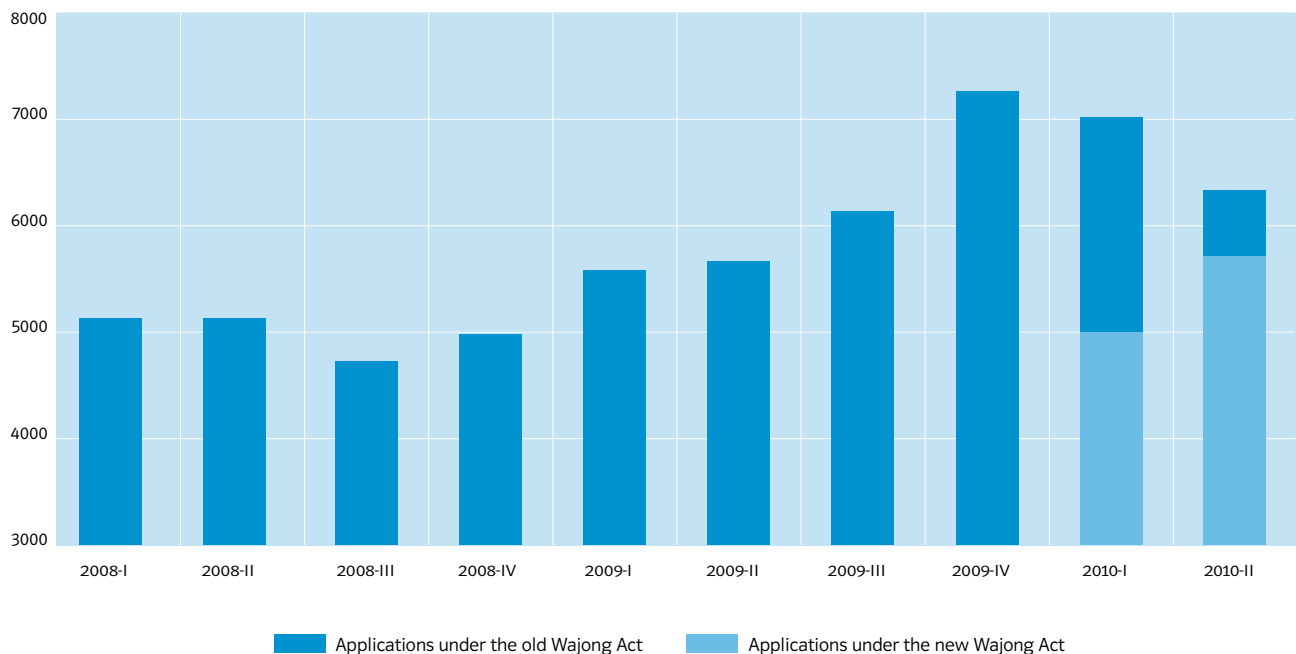
### What development has taken place in influx in the first six months of 2010?

For the first time in years, the total number of registered applications (old and new Wajong Act) has decreased for several consecutive quarters (see figure 1). In the first quarter of 2010, the total number of applications decreased by 3% compared to the previous quarter, and this number decreased by another 10% in the second quarter. However, 20% of the applications in the first half of 2010 related to the old Wajong Act. This means that the first half of 2010 not only involved the new Wajong Act, but also the old Wajong Act. There are two reasons why applications for the old Wajong Act were still registered

in 2010. The first is that some applications submitted just before the end of 2009 were not registered until 2010. A second reason is that there is a group of individuals covered by the Wajong Act who have reached the age of 17 and are applying for a Wajong benefit<sup>3</sup>.

The number of claim decisions is decreasing as well, albeit slightly. Because of the length of the decision term, the decrease in the number of applications has a delayed effect on the development in the number of claim decisions. The majority of the claim decisions (60%), therefore, still pertain to the old law. The claim decisions for the new Wajong Act show clear start-up effects.

Figure 1 Applications registered per quarter <sup>4</sup>



<sup>3</sup> If the client had reached the age of 17 as of 1-1-2010 and the application was submitted before 1-1-2010, he/she is still eligible for the old Wajong Act. However, the application is only processed a few months before the age of 18 is reached, and that can therefore still take most of 2010.

<sup>4</sup> After data-cleaning.

In the beginning, the decisions were all rejections. In the months that followed however the rejection rate decreased rapidly. In June the rejection rate was 35%, which is still somewhat higher than under the old Wajong Act (33%).

The same applies for the new benefits as for the claim decisions<sup>5</sup>. The number of new benefits decreased slightly in the first half of 2010 in comparison to the second half of 2009. The development in the number of new benefits is even more delayed with respect to the decrease in the number of applications. Consequently most of these are new benefits that fall under the old law (70%).

### What is the breakdown across the various schemes?

Although the breakdown across the various schemes under the new Wajong Act (see table 1) shows a certain degree of stability for the last few months, it is presumed that a reliable verdict on the final picture will only be possible in time. Nonetheless, at about 13% the percentage of people in the benefit scheme is clearly lower than expected when the law was drafted. The mirror image of that is that the group of young people whose prospect of paid work cannot be entirely ruled out is larger than assumed.

When the law was drafted, it was forecast that the benefit scheme would account for 30%. An important reason for the difference between the forecast and the 13% we see now is that the forecast was based on the influx in 2006. We are now several years further on and the influx into the Wajong system has increased. In 2009 the number of new benefits was 30% higher than the number in 2006. We can assume that this increase did not take place in the group that is currently headed towards the benefit scheme (the group with serious disabilities) but in the group with less serious disabilities. If we take this into account, the comparable proportion of Wajongers who are in the benefit scheme declines to just over 20%.

A percentage of approximately 20% is still higher than the percentage we are now seeing. There could be two logical reasons for this. In practice the new scheme probably proves to be somewhat stricter than we expected. Stricter in the sense that it is more difficult to determine in advance that an individual will have absolutely no prospect of paid work at any point in time. We saw the same picture with the introduction of the WIA. That is why, just as with the WIA, we will probably see a substantial flow from the work scheme to the benefit scheme. A second logical reason is that the breakdown is still characterised by start-up effects.

The percentage of Wajongers who are in the work scheme is to date approximately 54%, and the percentage in the study scheme is approximately 33%. But we must be cautious when drawing conclusions. Not only because of the start-up effects but also because we must take into account substantial flows between the various schemes. We do not yet know how this will turn out. Only a few transitions have yet taken place in the first half of 2010.

### What are the characteristics of the Wajongers in the new system?

Because of the start-up effects, it is only possible to make pronouncements to a limited extent on the characteristics of the influx into the new Wajong. It is clear however that the characteristics of the influx into the various schemes are so far in line with expectations. Wajongers who have serious illnesses mainly enter the benefit scheme and most of the young people who enter the study scheme are 18/19 years old.

In the **benefit scheme** we see roughly two important groups of people. The first group has (very) serious or moderate mental impairments. This represents 30% of the people in the Wajong benefit scheme. This group generally enters at the age of 18. The second group consists of people who have psychological illnesses. 35% of the people in the Wajong benefit scheme belong to this group. This group often enters later since these types of illnesses often do not fully develop until a later age. Compared to the total influx, the **study scheme** contains relatively few individuals with a psychological illness (11%) and relatively many with a physical illness (15%). Almost three quarters of the individuals in the study scheme have a developmental disorder. In this group the less serious categories of mentally impaired<sup>7</sup> (35%) and disorders in the autistic spectrum (19%) are overrepresented. In all cases these are young people who cannot independently earn the statutory minimum wage in regular work at the moment.

The average age for people entering the **work scheme** is 22; as such they are on average older than the total entering group. This is because many Wajongers who are younger than 20 are still at school and enter the study scheme. Of the people in the Wajong work scheme, 64% have a developmental disorder, 27% have a psychological illness and 9% have a physical illness. Within the group with developmental disorders, we mainly see individuals with (very) slight mental impairments (31%), a disorder that falls within the autistic spectrum (12%) and people with an attention deficit disorder (ADHD) (11%).

	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10	Apr-10	May-10	Jun-10	Number first half of 2010
Benefit scheme	-	100%	86%	19%	12%	13%	407
Work scheme	-	0%	6%	47%	51%	54%	1,297
Study scheme	-	0%	8%	34%	37%	33%	889
Total	-	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	2,593

<sup>5</sup> There are three counting moments in the handling of a Wajong application: The moment an application is registered, the moment of the decision (rejection or granting) and the moment on which the benefit (payment) is determined: new benefit. The official statistics always refer to new benefits when talking about influx.

<sup>6</sup> Breakdown is corrected for temporary registration (1<sup>st</sup> half 2010) in the work scheme of people who are studying.

<sup>7</sup> People with a slight to very slight mental impairment have an IQ between 50-85 and usually also have other disabilities (comorbidity).

## What first perceptions of the new law do Wajongers have?

In order to chart out how Wajongers perceive the new law, 44 new covered people were interviewed during two rounds for the monitor<sup>8</sup>. They are part of the first group of people covered by the new Wajong Act.

The perception survey indicates that the new Wajong Act has been positively received by the first group of people it covers. In general the young people want to take part in society and see the Wajong as an opportunity that makes this possible for them. They are motivated to start working. The value of the new Wajong Act can be summarised along three lines:

- The new Wajong Act provides assistance and incentives: people in the Wajong work scheme say they would like to start work or a study/educational programme. The help that UWW offers in this respect is appreciated.
- The new Wajong Act offers prospects: some of the Wajongers already have experience with the social services. For these people, the intensive support of the new Wajong Act gives them prospects for getting their life on track.
- The new Wajong Act offers room for recovery: the income support provided under the Wajong Act gives the group of people who must first recover before focusing on work the room to recover.

### **Knowledge of the new law: purpose, participation plan, work pays, rights and obligations**

Although the new law was introduced only recently, it is striking that the first group of new entrants to the Wajong schemes already know quite a bit about the new Wajong Act. The participants in the perception survey know that the new Wajong Act is mainly focused on support in finding work or an educational programme. It is clear to Wajongers that they must seek work. Everyone is also familiar with the participation plan<sup>9</sup>.

The first round of interviews highlighted the fact that in the perception of Wajongers, the participation plan is still

not concrete enough for them to take action themselves. This group perceives the participation plan as a report of the talk that they had with the UWW labour expert. The second round of interviews with people who are actually focused on working to find work highlighted that the participation plan had been translated into a more concrete reintegration plan. This concrete reintegration plan was prepared by the job coach and/or the reintegration agency.

Working is not always seen as worthwhile in a financial sense: Wajongers still have mixed feelings about the principle 'work pays'. The Wajongers know that if they work, they will have more money to spend. That is communicated and explained to them. But how the calculation of their Wajong benefit in combination with their earnings from work takes place is difficult for them to understand. It also emerges that the legislator's intention and the feeling perceived by the Wajongers do not always coincide. Under the new law, in contrast to the old law, a person covered by the Wajong Act who works may keep half of his income from work. So working does pay. Some new entrants to the Wajong schemes find it incomprehensible however that the hours they work are directly deducted from their Wajong benefit. It seems to them as if they have to hand over half of their earnings. This does not result in a strong motivation for them.

Most respondents are motivated to find work. They do not seem so aware of the rights and obligations however. This is because they do not perceive applying for jobs and complying with the agreements in their participation plan as obligatory but as matters of course. Because of this attitude they are not so aware that sanctions can be imposed. A number of them are aware incidentally that failing to cooperate can have consequences for the benefit. Finally, it emerges from the interviews that it is not clear to all participants in Wajong schemes that the definitive assessment does not take place until they are 27 years old.

<sup>8</sup> The survey was carried out by TNS/NIPO and is described in the report: *First experiences under the new Wajong Act*.

<sup>9</sup> The participation plan indicates what the young person should be able to do - whether or not with the aid of reintegration instruments - and what support would be necessary. It is the first step in support in finding and keeping a job.



# 3 General trends in the volume development in the Wajong schemes

The first impressions of the influx under the new Wajong Act show that there are changes. We can already draw cautious conclusions about some points, for example the percentage that enters the benefit scheme. Because of the start-up effects and the pace at which the changes have an effect, it is still much too early for a definitive verdict however. We also cannot only limit ourselves to just the new Wajong for a verdict on the development of the Wajong in the first half of 2010; we must take the whole Wajong into consideration. This applies because of the time that is needed for supporting people in seeking and holding a job and certainly because of the time needed to achieve the primary aim of the new law: participation. In this chapter therefore we discuss the general trends in the Wajong system and in the next chapter we look at trends in participation and reintegration under the old Wajong Act.

## Influx is decreasing

For the first time since the beginning of this century, the number of new benefits is decreasing. We expect that the influx in 2010, at approximately 16,700, will be almost 1,000 less than in 2009. This decrease is the result of changes in the structural factors that affect the development in influx and of the introduction of the new law.

## What factors explain the development of the Wajong?

Four key structural factors determine the trends in the influx into the Wajong system: the number of young people, the through-flow from social assistance, the number of pupils in secondary special education (VSO) and practical education (PRO) and increasing diagnosis of the so-called new conditions, such as autism. In addition to the structural factors cited, economic developments and the new law also have an effect on the influx.

**The number of 18-year-olds** in the population, the most important source of new entrants to the Wajong system, increased by approximately 10% in the first decade of this century and peaked at 205,000 in 2009. From 2010 this number will start to decrease. The decrease in the number of 18-year-olds will cause the future influx to be lower.

**Through-flow from social assistance:** because of the introduction of the WWB (Work and Social Assistance Act), the municipalities have a financial interest in reducing social assistance expenditure. One of the effects of this is that from 2005, the population of social assistance recipients will be screened for people potentially entitled

to admittance to the Wajong system. Although there has always been a certain degree of through-flow from social assistance (approximately 800 per year), this through-flow increased strongly from 2004, peaking at 3,000 in 2007. The through-flow has decreased since 2008 however; after all this was a temporary effect because the screening of the population of social assistance recipients is a one-time action. The influx in 2009 was almost 1,000 lower than the peak in 2007. We expect this decline to continue in 2010, though the decrease will be smaller than in 2009. We still do not know the structural level of the through-flow.

The decrease in the through-flow from social assistance also has consequences for the characteristics of the influx. The average age of the influx is decreasing and the percentage of individuals in the Wajong system with psychological illnesses is declining.

**Influx from VSO/PRO:** in contrast to the decreasing through-flow from social assistance, the number of pupils in secondary special education (VSO) and practical education (PRO) is still increasing. The increase is smaller than in the past years however. We know from the past that an increase in the number of pupils in VSO/PRO translates into a similar increase in the influx into the Wajong schemes. The growing number of pupils therefore increases the influx.

**New illnesses:** the growth in the percentage of Wajongers who have disorders in the autistic spectrum and attention deficit disorders (ADHD) continues. This trend does not seem to have stopped in the first half of 2010. Since more men than women are diagnosed with these types of conditions, a higher percentage of men as compared to women are admitted to the Wajong schemes. It is difficult to assess what the increasing diagnosis of these illnesses means for the size of the influx, however, because this is also one of the factors behind the rise in the influx into VSO/PRO. It is also questionable whether this is all extra influx. It could also be a shift in diagnoses.

**Economic crisis:** alongside the structural factors mentioned, the economic crisis has also been a factor. The impact of the crisis on the size of the influx is difficult to determine. We can see that the crisis has had an effect from the fact that the percentage of Wajongers who are working decreased in 2009 compared to 2008. One way in which the crisis may have an effect is in an increase in the through-flow from VSO/PRO. In a crisis, there is less

demand from employers for workers. This makes the transition from school to work even more difficult for disabled people. It may be the case that in an economic crisis, a larger percentage of the pupils who complete VSO/PRO apply for a Wajong benefit. If that happens, the influx will increase more strongly in the crisis years. The fact that we see a decrease in the influx indicates however that any such effect cannot be that great.

**The effects of the new law:** the introduction of the new law also has consequences for the influx. To some extent this is to be expected. The Explanatory Memorandum to the new law contained the expectation that the influx under the new Wajong Act would decrease by approximately 10% as the result of behavioural effects. We cannot yet ascertain whether this is the case. It is still too early. We are seeing two effects that were not envisioned, however. Firstly we see an **anticipation effect**. The anticipation effect means that a group of potential entrants to the Wajong schemes (or those in their environment) opted last year to apply for a benefit under the old regime. Because of the perception that the

new Wajong system is more restrictive, for example, or because of the fact that young people who are studying no longer receive a full benefit but just an allowance. The anticipation effect created additional influx in 2009 and also distorts the picture in 2010 as a result of overspill of influx into 2010. The anticipation effect also causes a shift of applications over time. We do not assume that the peak in 2009 was the result of additional Wajong applications that would otherwise not have been submitted. Given this assumption, the higher influx in 2009 must also therefore result in lower influx after 2009. After all, you can only submit an application once. We do not know how this decrease in the influx will be spread over time. Presumably the largest effect will be in 2010.

Besides the anticipation effect, there is also a **technical reason** that affects the influx. With the introduction of the new law, the maximum decision term for a Wajong application was extended from 8 to 14 weeks in connection with the introduction of the participation plan. This had a one-off lowering effect on the influx in 2010.

# 4 Baseline measurement: Trends in participation and reintegration under the old Wajong Act

The main objective of the new law is to increase the participation of Wajongers. The new law has not been in force long enough to give any verdict on the law's effect in this respect, however. We did carry out an analysis of the participation and reintegration of people covered by the old Wajong system as a baseline measurement. Aspects in this include the labour participation of Wajongers, support in keeping and finding work, the use of facilities for work and the attitude of employers towards Wajongers who are working.

## How has the labour participation of Wajongers developed?

At the end of 2009, almost 25% of all Wajongers were working. That was 1 percentage point less than in the previous year. In absolute terms, however, the number of Wajongers who were working increased by 3.3%, despite the economic crisis (see table 2).

The decrease in the percentage of Wajongers who are working mainly occurs in the recent influx. If recent influx cohorts are compared to each other - at comparable moments in time - we see a decrease in the percentage of Wajongers who are working, particularly among the youngest influx groups. This decrease is related to the economic crisis. We see a clear dip particularly at the beginning of 2009. In view of the limited decrease in the percentage of Wajongers who are working, these individuals were clearly affected less by the crisis than 'normal' employees. This also indicates however that employment among Wajongers is often not 'normal' employment, even if they perform so-called regular work. For a large part of the Wajongers, work implies work under sheltered conditions (sheltered workshop) or work on the regular labour market with (intensive) assistance and/or compensation for the loss in productivity.

Of the 25% of Wajongers who were working, just over 11% were working at a regular employer and just over 13% were working in sheltered workshops (under the Sheltered Employment Act - WSW). The number of Wajongers who work at a regular employer increased by just over 6% in 2009 compared to 2008. The number of employers who employ a person covered by the Wajong Act also rose in 2009 (from 3.6% to 3.8%), despite a decline in the total number of employers by 3% as a result of the crisis. It is a fact however that in 2009, just over 96% of employers still did not have any Wajong employees.

More Wajongers are actually part of the labour process than represented in the figures from the particular reference moments. Many young Wajongers have a work pattern characterised by a lot of short-term work. Consequently the total percentage of people that work or have recently worked among people who have recently entered the Wajong is, in a year, about 10% higher than at any given reference moment.

The participation of men differs from that of women. From the moment of influx, the percentage of women that works lags behind the percentage of men. Until two years after influx we see no change in this. This difference in participation level cannot be explained by differences in illnesses. There is also a clear difference in participation between the age categories < 25 years and >= 25 years. Among people who entered the Wajong system before the age of 25, the percentage that works increases in the period after entering. Among people who enter the Wajong system at a later age (older than 25), the percentage that works remains the same or decreases. The analysis of the reintegration instruments also indicates that older people covered by the Wajong also need more social activation before being able to find work. So it is often harder to place people who enter the Wajong schemes at an older age in jobs.

	End of 2008	End of 2009	Change (%)
<b>Active file</b>			
Number of Wajongers	178.590	191.957	7.5%
Number of working Wajongers	46.113	47.614	3.3%
Regular employer	20.657	21.961	6.3%
Sheltered workshops	25.456	25.653	0.8%
<b>% of working Wajongers</b>			
% working at regular employer	11.6%	11.4%	
% working in sheltered workshops	14.3%	13.4%	

## To what extent and in what form are reintegration instruments used?

### Support in finding and keeping work

Wajongers generally need assistance, but support in seeking and holding a job takes time. How much time is shown by two different patterns? The first pattern follows from the use of programmes. If we look at the use of programmes among the various influx cohorts at the reference moment at the end of June 2010, it emerges that the use of these increases significantly the longer the influx cohort has been involved in the Wajong system. This is because a reintegration programme is not always the first resource used. For example, a reintegration programme is usually not relevant until after a young person has completed his education or treatment or if he loses his job. For the regular programmes, UWV has used a so-called Comprehensive Approach since 1 April 2010<sup>10</sup>.

Up to the end of June 2010, one or more programmes have been used for 28% of the Wajong influx from 2008<sup>11,12</sup>. The percentage of programme use at the end of June 2010 for the 2009 influx is 22%. This is 6 percentage points lower than for the influx from 2008. This is logical: after all, the influx from 2009 entered the system one year later than the influx from 2008. Consequently, the influx from 2009 to the end of June 2010 had less time to start a programme. For the influx from the first half of 2010, the percentage for whom programmes have been deployed is, at 9%, already approximately 20 percentage points lower in comparison to the influx of 2008, which is logical given the recent moment of influx. The percentage will increase as the moment of influx recedes further in time. This will be more visible in the next Wajong monitor.

The second pattern which indicates how much time is required for the assistance with finding and keeping a job follows from the development in the percentage of active programmes. Of the people who entered the Wajong system in the first half of 2008 and for whom a programme was deployed in the period between influx and the reference moment at the end of June 2010, 55% still had an active programme at the end of June 2010. As indicated earlier, these are not necessarily programmes that were started immediately after the start of the Wajong benefit (after all, an average programme takes one year); these can also be (follow-up) programmes that started just before the reference moment at the end of June 2010 and have only been active for a short time. For the time being there are no indications that this is any different for the influx into the schemes under the new

Wajong Act: here too we assume that assistance with finding and holding a job takes time.

We can conclude from both patterns that a number of years will most likely still have to pass before conclusions can be drawn about the effect of the law on the aspect of assistance with seeking and holding a job. We can ascertain however that insofar as programmes for finding work are involved, half of the programmes result in placement. Half of these cases involved long-term placement.

With regard to reintegration, we ascertain that individuals for whom a programme is used are more likely to work in the long term than those for whom that is not the case. We also see that the need for support increases during an economic recession. People who entered the Wajong schemes in 2009 were relatively more likely to start a programme within six months than people who entered the Wajong schemes in 2008. The economic crisis makes it more difficult to find a job, so more support is needed.

If we look at the different groups within the Wajong schemes, it emerges that programmes are mainly used for participants with a slight to very slight mental impairment, a disorder in the autistic spectrum or an attention deficit disorder (such as ADHD).

### Use of facilities for work

Often a person covered by the Wajong Act needs extra facilities in order to be able to perform his/her work properly. In general the use of facilities, just as the use of programmes, increases the longer the person has been receiving a benefit. The job coach is the facility most often deployed. In most cases, the individual involved is a person with a mental impairment or developmental disorder. 12% of the people entering in 2008 were assigned a job coach at some point between the moment of influx and the end of June 2010. This is 7% for the 2009 group. There have been very few cases so far of the assignment of a job coach under the new Wajong Act. Another important instrument is the instrument of wage dispensation. At the end of 2009, wage dispensation was granted for 35% of all Wajongers who were working for a regular employer (which does not mean, incidentally, that they are all still working with wage dispensation). That is not the case however at the moment of influx. Just 1% of the people entering in the first half of 2010 were granted wage dispensation between the moment of influx and the end of June 2010. 4% of the people entering in 2009 were granted wage dispensation between the moment of influx and the end of June 2010; this number rose to 8% for the 2008 group.

<sup>10</sup> As part of the Comprehensive Approach, the reintegration company provides assistance to the client for a period of maximum 2.5 years. In first instance the company's activities are focused on leading the client to work. The support provided to the client by the reintegration company continues after placement. After the client has resumed work, the emphasis is on monitoring the client's performance in his new workplace. The aim is to ensure that the client remains employed. If the client should nonetheless become unemployed during the aforementioned 2.5-year period, the reintegration company ensures that the client is once again led towards the labour market.

<sup>11</sup> The majority of people who have entered the Wajong schemes have therefore not (yet) had a reintegration programme. On the one hand this is because the person has (temporarily) not had the possibility of paid work. On the other hand because the person does not (yet) need this type of support, for example because he or she is still in school or is already working (without having followed a programme).

<sup>12</sup> The percentage of reintegration programmes started at the reference moment at the end of June 2010 means that a programme was started for the individual at some point between the moment of influx into the Wajong system and the reference moment at the end of June 2010. The programme may have ended before the reference moment or may still be active.



## What attitude do employers have towards hiring Wajongers?

The participation of Wajongers can, generally speaking, only be increased if more employers hire these people. In this context it is important to know what attitude employers have towards Wajongers.

A survey by UWV<sup>13</sup> shows that employers' attitudes towards Wajongers vary, but can generally be characterised as positive. Employers who currently have a Wajong employee generally have a stronger opinion than employers who do not employ any such individuals. In some regards employers who have a Wajong employee are more positive and in other regards less positive than respondents without any employees covered by the Wajong Act.

In general employers are positive about the motivation of Wajongers and believe that these individuals can do more than one might first assume. Employers are most concerned about the vulnerability of these individuals within an organisation. Employers also feel that there is a good chance that Wajongers will be less productive. Employers who do employ a person covered by the Wajong Act have a stronger opinion in this regard than those who do not employ any Wajongers. Experience with an employee covered by the Wajong Act does not, therefore, automatically mean the employer's perception is positive in all regards. Experience with Wajongers seems to result in a more realistic picture on the part of the employer.

## Reasons for employing someone covered by the Wajong Act:

The most important reasons cited by employers who currently employ a person covered by the Wajong Act are: their desire to be socially committed, the opinion that simple tasks can be performed just fine by a person covered by the Wajong Act and the financial appeal of the subsidy schemes.

## Reasons for not employing someone covered by the Wajong Act:

The most important reason cited by employers who have employed a person covered by the Wajong Act in the past but who do not currently have such an employee is that 'there is no place for a Wajong employee' in the organisation. Another important reason cited by this group of employers is a bad experience in the past. The group that has never employed a person covered by the Wajong Act primarily said that the company's work did not lend itself to hiring such employees or that they simply 'had never thought about it'.

The fact that still only 4% of employers employ a person covered by the Wajong Act shows that employment for people covered by this act requires major efforts. That is why UWV has stepped up its service provision to employers. By concluding agreements with employers (such as Albert Heijn) and employers' organisations like the Federation of Private Employment Agencies (ABU), almost 5,000 jobs for Wajongers have been promised.

<sup>13</sup> This survey was performed in the context of the evaluation of the Employers' Campaign effect measurement. Data from this survey were used for this monitor to chart out employers' perceptions and attitudes towards people covered by the Wajong Act.



# 5 Expectations for the new Wajong Act

The influx into the new Wajong system prompts the expectation that the percentage of people in the benefit scheme will be considerably lower than assumed when the law was drafted. This will probably indeed be the case with regard to the influx. The percentage of 13% which we saw in the last months only applies for the moment of influx however. We expect that substantial flows will also take shape after influx, as we see with the WIA as well. Flows will arise from the study scheme to the benefit scheme but also mainly from the work scheme to the benefit scheme. This means that the percentage of the benefit scheme in the Wajong *population as a whole* is expected to be higher than the 13% that applies now for the *influx*.

We indicated that the influx in 2010 is expected to be approximately 1,000 lower than in 2009. If we take into account all the factors that determine the development of the influx, then we consider it more likely that the influx will further decrease than increase anew. In that consideration we do not yet take into account any behavioural effects of the new law. The uncertainties are still great however.

In the next monitor we will discuss in detail the labour participation under the new Wajong Act. We must keep in mind however that this participation will be relatively low in the beginning given the development in the recent influx cohorts and given the start-up effects. The analyses also show that it will be some time before clear developments will become visible in the participation rate.

