

The Netherlands: ERM Comparative Analytical Report on Recent Policy Developments related to those Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET)

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The NEET rate of the Netherlands is 4.1% and is the lowest in Europe. The Netherlands also has the lowest youth unemployment percentage of 7,4% in Europe. Despite this low percentage, the government is taking many measures to prevent youth unemployment and young people not attending school. The policy is twofold; on one hand the government wants to prevent that young people become unemployed due to the financial crisis. Youngsters are stimulated to continue their study. On the other hand, long-term unemployed young people are encouraged to work, learn or do both.

1. Introduction

1.1 What is the level of interest among the different stakeholders in your country (policy makers, the media, employers and trade unions) in the issue of NEETs? What are their reasons for having a high/ low level of interest in the topic? (Expected length 100 words)

There is a medium level of interest in this topic, because the issue of youth unemployment isn't a big problem in The Netherlands. Youth unemployment strongly depends on the economic cycle in The Netherlands and since the beginning of 2010 there is a decline in youth unemployment. The Netherlands has a NEET rate of 4.1% and a youth unemployment percentage of 7,4%, which are the lowest percentages of Europe. The last ten years the government introduced several measures to prevent early school leaving and youth unemployment, and most of these work quite well. There is relatively more attention for the problems caused by ageing of the population and labour participation of older workers.

1.2 Using the following table, please identify which sub-groups of NEETs are of particular concern to the different stakeholders in your country. Please indicate the relative importance of each group to the different stakeholders; for each group please state whether they are felt to be of 'significant concern', 'some concern', or 'no concern' to the different stakeholders.

	Public/media debate e.g. the extent to which the issue is discussed within the news media	Mainstream Policy e.g. the range of policy documents tackling the issue, the amount of investment committed to tackling the problem	Employers e.g. the extent to which this issue is raised as a concern, e.g. through lobbying / pressure on the government, involvement in the design and/or implementation of relevant policies	Trade unions e.g. the extent to which this issue is raised as a concern, e.g. through lobbying / pressure on the government, involvement in the design and/or implementation of relevant policies
Young people who are unemployed	Some concern	Significant concern	Significant concern	Significant concern
Young people who are in 'precarious' or unsuitable employment (e.g. temporary contracts, forced self-employment, part-time work, or jobs which are not commensurate with their level of qualifications)	No concern	Some concern	No concern	Some concern
Early school leavers – young people who have dropped out of education before obtaining an upper secondary level qualification	Some concern	Significant concern	Significant concern	Significant concern
Young people with qualifications which do not meet labour market needs	Some concern	Significant concern	Significant concern	Significant concern
Teenage/ single parents	No concern	No concern	No concern	No concern
Migrants and minority groups	Some concern	Significant concern	No concern	Significant concern
Young people with disabilities	Significant concern	Significant concern	Significant concern	Significant concern
Young people from workless families	No concern	Some concern	No concern	No concern
Young people from disadvantaged areas	No concern	Some concern	No concern	No concern

Young people with tertiary education who have been unsuccessful in accessing the labour market	No concern	No concern	No concern	No concern
Other (please specify):				

1.3 Are there any policy measures in your country targeted at those NEETs with tertiary education? If yes please describe these briefly (expected length 100 words).

There are no measures specially targeted at NEET's with tertiary education.

2. NEET Policies and Measures

2.1 Measures to tackle early school leaving

Preventive Measures to tackle early school leaving

2.1.1 Please provide a short overview of your country's approach to preventing early school leaving. Where does the focus of policies and measures to prevent early school leaving lie?

The focus of policies to prevent early school leaving lies on lower grade schools. Many of these neglect their absenteeism records and the dropout figures are relatively high amongst the students. The government wants to halve the dropout figure from 71,000 in 2002 to 35,000 in 2012 by introducing several measures. In 2016 the goal is 25,000.

2.1.2 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to prevent early school leaving in your country. Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

Table 2 - Early School Leaving: Preventive measures

Early School Leaving: Preventive measures	
Name of measure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Description of the measure: aims and objectives 2. Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local) 3. Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral? 4. How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)? 5. Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs? 6. Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?

Measure 1: Stricter supervision by Inspectorate for Education	<p>Schools that fail to comply with the law are under control by the Inspectorate for Education. School are obliged to register absent students.</p> <p>National</p> <p>Unilateral</p> <p>National state funding</p> <p>General measure</p> <p>No</p>
Measure 2: Digital tracking system	<p>Potential dropouts are detected in an early stage</p> <p>National</p> <p>Tripartite</p> <p>National state funding</p> <p>General measure</p> <p>No</p>
Measure 3: Career orientation	<p>Too many students drop out of school because they have made a wrong choice of study. Good career guidance, through personal counselling, will help students make the right study choice.</p> <p>National</p> <p>Unilateral</p> <p>National state funding</p> <p>General measure</p> <p>No</p>

2.1.3 Please provide a more detailed description of the preventive early school leaving measure which you think is the most effective measure in your country (this measure should be additional to those included in the table above). In addition to the questions raised in the table above, your description should include the details outlined below: When was it introduced and why? How long will it run for?

Measure: School Ex Program.

Aim: Encourage young people to continue to learn when they have poor employment prospects.

- Is it a mainstream or pilot project?

It is a mainstream project which was introduced in 2009.

- What is the scale of the initiative and how much funding has been allocated to it?

The scale of the measure is national and there is €16 million available to achieve the objective.

- Who runs the initiative (is it a public, private or third sector initiative)?

This initiative is implemented by the government.

- What is the target group? How many young people benefit from it?

The target-group is students with a intermediate secondary vocational education who are planning to leave school. The objective of the program is to stimulate 10.000 students to continue to learn.

- What activities are involved?

Through personal coaching students will be advised about their options. When a student doesn't want to continue learning, then they are led to a project where they can gain work experience. In particular, it starts with the mentor at school who is supposed to discuss the future of the student. The main aim is to stimulate students to continue to study (broader and or deeper). If they want to quit studying, they are guided to specialized departments of the public employment service, either with or without guidance from the school.

- What are the success factors?

The success factors are the personal attention and guidance. Because of the personal coaching students can make an informed and conscious decision.

- Is there any formal evidence of its success (both quantitative and qualitative)?

In 2010, the objective was achieved: more than 12.000 low education students have chosen to stay in school and continue a second study with better employment prospects. Also 1.300 students have registered at UWV (national public employment services organisation) to find a job.

Reintegration measures to tackle early school leaving

2.1.4 Please provide a short overview of your country's approach to the reintegration of early school leavers. Where does the focus of policies and measures lie?

The government and the social partners are trying to help early school leavers through different measures. The focus is to make young people active as quickly as possible, through an internship or voluntary work. The social partners are working together with all parties who are involved in getting young people back to school or getting early school leavers a job.

2.1.5 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to reintegrate early school leavers in your country. Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

Table 2 - Early School Leaving: reintegration measures

Name of measure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Description of the measure: aims and objectives 2. Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local) 3. Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral? 4. How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)? 5. Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs? 6. Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?
Measure 1: Agreement Social Partners	<p>The social partners have arranged that every school-leaver who sits home for more than three months is offered an internship. The social partners make arrangements with various sectors (e.g. construction and metalworking) , so that young people can work at companies after their internship.</p> <p>National</p> <p>Tripartite</p> <p>National state funding</p> <p>General measure</p> <p>No</p>
Measure 2: Voluntary work	<p>Youngsters who dropped out of school can learn a lot from voluntary work and it's better for their Curriculum Vitae than doing nothing.</p> <p>Regional municipalities must offer young people voluntary work</p> <p>Unilateral</p> <p>National state funding</p> <p>General measure</p> <p>No</p>
Measure 3:	No additional measurements.

2.1.6 Please provide a more detailed description of the reintegration early school leaving measure which you think is the most effective measure in your country (this measure should be additional to those included in the table above). In addition to the questions raised in the table above, your description should include the details outlined below:

- When was it introduced and why? How long will it run for?

This measure was introduced in February 2011. It was introduced to identify NEET's more accurately and to help them more quickly. It is unclear when this project stops.

- Is it a mainstream or pilot project?

At first it was a pilot, now it has become a mainstream project.

- What is the scale of the initiative and how much funding has been allocated to it?

The scale of the measure is national, but it is executed by municipalities. It is not clear how much funding has been allocated to it.

- Who runs the initiative (is it a public, private or third sector initiative)?

The initiative comes from the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment.

- What is the target group? How many young people benefit from it?

This measure is focused specifically on NEET's. Only youngsters who do not attend school and who are unemployed benefit from this measure.

- activities are involved?

In the Netherlands there is a Regional Registration and Coordination (RRC) institute. The RRC records the number of young people without basic qualifications and can also guide young people into school, training or work. In practice, it sometimes happens that the RRC coordinator misses important information about these young people because data are not always linked between UWV (national public employment services organisation) and municipal social services. The measure will allow better information exchange and thus a better control over truants.

- What are the success factors?

The biggest success factor is that the different parties who are involved, can work more accurately together. Thus the NEET's can be helped better and faster.

- Is there any formal evidence of its success (both quantitative and qualitative)?

In four regions, there have been successful experiments with sharing data. This measure is now being extended to 39 regions.

2.2 Measures to facilitate access to employment

Facilitating the transition from school to work

2.2.1 Please provide an overview of your country's approach to facilitating school to work transitions. Where does the focus of policies and measures to facilitate transitions lie?

The focus lies on a better match between labour demand and the qualities and skills of young people. The needs of employers and the skills of youngsters have to be matched better for a successful school to work transition. There is also a lot of attention for internships and so-called 'learn-work jobs'. The learn-work job is different from an internship. The student gets a salary and the company has to be a recognized 'learning company'. Youngsters can gain experience through this measure and this makes the school-work transition easier. The government, knowledge institutions and the social partners are working together to maintain and create as many internships as possible to facilitate a good school to work transition.

2.2.2 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/

measures to facilitate school to work transitions in your country. Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

Table 4 - Access to employment: Measures to facilitate school to work transitions

Access to employment: Measures to facilitate school to work transitions	
Name of measure	<p>1. Description of the measure: aims and objectives</p> <p>2. Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local)</p> <p>3. Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral?</p> <p>4. How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)?</p> <p>5. Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs?</p> <p>6. Is the measure specifically targeted at NEETs who already have a tertiary education?</p> <p>7. Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?</p>
Measure 1: Creating internships	<p>A national hotline 'shortage of internships' has been introduced. If there is a shortage of internships in a specific region, the knowledge institute Colo will take action. The main function of Colo is research and publicity, and contacts with sector organisation en local governments, to stimulate firms to create or maintain internships.</p> <p>National</p> <p>Bipartite</p> <p>National state funding</p> <p>General measure</p> <p>No</p>
Measure 2: XXL Jobs	<p>Youngster who just finished school are invited for XXL Jobs. These are jobs in sectors where the departure of older people will lead to a shortage of skills and knowledge. The older employees will transfer their skills to the youth and the youth have a good guidance into the labour market.</p> <p>National</p> <p>Tripartite</p> <p>National state funding</p> <p>General measure</p> <p>No</p>

Measure 3:
Maintaining
internships

There is €110 million available to maintain internships in sectors who are affected by the financial crisis.

National

Bipartite

National state funding

General measure

No

2.2.3 Please provide a more detailed description of the school-to-work transition measure which you think is the most effective measure in your country (this measure should be additional to those included in the table above). In addition to the questions raised in the table above, your description should include the details outlined below:

Name: Learning companies

Aim: Students have the chance to gain work experience while in school

- When was it introduced and why? How long will it run for?

It was introduced in 2009. Through learning companies students have the chance to 'learn by doing' and get acquainted with business life. Companies have to get a certificate to become a learning company.

- Is it a mainstream or pilot project?

Mainstream

- What is the scale of the initiative and how much funding has been allocated to it?

The scale is national and the government had made €25 million available.

- Who runs the initiative (is it a public, private or third sector initiative)?

It is a public initiative and is executed by the schools and learning companies.

- What is the target group? How many young people benefit from it?

Youth with a low education without good labour prospects.

- What activities are involved?

Learning companies have to have a clear profile on the website 'www.stagemarkt.nl' (a website especially created for students who are seeking a 'learn-work job'). This way the student can consciously choose the job that fit their needs and vacancies are filled more quickly.

- What are the success factors?

Students will gain work experience and have the chance to continue to work in the learning company.

- Is there any formal evidence of its success (both quantitative and qualitative)?

In the first quarter of 2011, the number of learning companies continued to grow to 223.000. This is a 10% growth since the beginning of the financial crisis.

Measures to foster employability

2.2.4 Please provide an overview of your country's approach to fostering employability among NEETs. Where does the focus of policies and measures lie?

There is a focus on collaboration between different stakeholders to foster employability. With better collaboration between the government, social partners, municipalities, school, employers and the UWV, unemployment can be reduced.

2.2.5 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to foster employability of NEETs in your country. Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

Table 5 - Access to employment: Measures to foster employability (to include apprenticeships)

Access to employment: Measures to foster employability (to include apprenticeships).	
Name of measure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Description of the measure: aims and objectives 2. Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local) 3. Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral? 4. How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)? 5. Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs? 6. Is the measure specifically targeted at NEETs who already have a tertiary education? 7. Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?

<p>Measure 1: Temporary contracts</p>	<p>1. Youngsters are in a fragile position in a period of financial recession, because many have a temporary contract. Since the recession employers are entitled to give youngsters a temporary contract four times instead of three times (before the contract becomes indefinite). Also, the temporary contracts have a maximum duration of 48 months instead of 36 months.</p> <p>2. National</p> <p>3. Unilateral</p> <p>4. National state funding</p> <p>5. General measure</p> <p>6. No</p> <p>7. No</p>
<p>Measure 2: Collective labour agreement</p>	<p>1. In 32 collective labour agreements, agreements were made about creating special 'work experience jobs' for young people.</p> <p>2. National</p> <p>3. Bipartite</p> <p>4. National state funded</p> <p>5. General measure</p> <p>6. No</p> <p>7. No</p>
<p>Measure 3: Regional approach</p>	<p>1. The government has concluded covenants with 30 regions. Every region has a different regional plan to foster employability among youngsters.</p> <p>2. Regional</p> <p>3. Bipartite</p> <p>4. National state funded</p> <p>5. General measure</p> <p>6. No</p> <p>7. No</p>

2.2.6 Please provide a more detailed description of the measure which you think is the most effective measure in your country to foster the employability of NEETs (this measure should be additional to those included in the table above). In addition to the questions raised in the table above, your description should include the details outlined below:

Measure: Matching offensive

Aim: This will ensure that the needs of employers and the skills of young people are better matched.

- When was it introduced and why? How long will it run for?

It was introduced in 2009 as part of the 'Action plan youth unemployment'.

- Is it a mainstream or pilot project?

Mainstream

- What is the scale of the initiative and how much funding has been allocated to it?

The scale of the measure is national and there has been €10 million allocated for the execution.

- Who runs the initiative (is it a public, private or third sector initiative)?

The government has introduced the measure and it is executed by the UWV (national public employment services organisation).

- What is the target group? How many young people benefit from it?

There is a specific focus on youngsters who cannot find a job or lost their job due to the financial crisis.

- What activities are involved?

The UWV is ensuring that the needs of employers better reflect the qualities of the youth through mediation and training. There are also so called 'EVC-projects' through which youngsters can achieve an experience certificate. With this certificate they can show their achieved skills to potential employers.

- What are the success factors?

If the match doesn't succeed, there is a 'after care scheme', that will help the youngster find another job and help the employer to find another employee.

- Is there any formal evidence of its success (both quantitative and qualitative)?

The 'Action plan youth unemployment' (where the matching offensive is a part of) shows positive results. More than 137.000 youngsters have found a job or an internship since the start of the action plan in September 2009.

Removing practical and logistical barriers

2.2.7 Please provide an overview of your country's approach to removing practical and logistical barriers for NEETs. Where does the focus of policies and measures lie?

There is specific attention for removing barriers for young people with disabilities and disadvantaged youngsters. The government wants to make it easier for them to find and keep a job.

2.2.8 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to remove practical and logistical barriers to employment for NEETs in your country. Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

Table 6 - Access to employment: Measures to remove practical and logistical barriers

Access to employment: Measures to remove practical and logistical barriers	
Name of measure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Description of the measure: aims and objectives 2. Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local) 3. Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral? 4. How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)? 5. Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs? 6. Is the measure specifically targeted at NEETs who already have a tertiary education? 7. Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?
Measure 1: Collective labour agreements for young people with a disability	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In one-third of the collective labour agreement¹, agreements were made about creating jobs for young people with a disability. 2. National 3. Bipartite 4. Private (firms) 5. Measure especially for young people with a disability. 6. No 7. No
Measure 2: Law ability to work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Young people with a disability are getting help with finding and maintaining a suitable job. The main activity is to stimulate employers to make arrangements for partly disabled youngsters. Fiscal arrangements cover at least part of the costs. 2. National 3. Unilateral 4. National state funding 5. Specifically for young people with a disability 6. No 7. No

Measure 3: Chances for fragile youngsters

1. For youngsters with problems, additional facilities are implemented. Examples are:
 - 24 hour care schemes
 - support and guidance to the labour market.
2. National
3. Tripartite
4. National state funding
5. Specifically for youngsters with problems
6. No
7. No

Employer incentives

2.2.9 Please provide an overview of your country’s approach to incentivising employers to recruit young people (who are NEET). Where does the focus of policies and measures to incentivise employers lie? Where possible you should use only one word or Yes/No (e.g. how is the measure funded? answer: regional; is this measure a NEET specific measure? answer: Yes).

The focus lies on subsidies. Employers are rewarded primarily by grants from the UWV. Especially companies who are ‘learn companies’ are getting subsidies for hiring young people with a low education and companies who hire youngsters with a disability.

2.2.10 Please complete the table below with a brief description of up to three policies/ measures to incentivise employers in your country.

Table 7 - Access to employment: Employer incentives

Access to employment: Employer incentives	
Name of measure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Description of the measure: aims and objectives 2. Scale of measure (i.e. national, regional or local) 3. Is the measure tripartite, bipartite or unilateral? 4. How is the measure funded (national state funding, European funding, private funding)? 5. Is this a NEET-specific measure, or is it a more general measure which also has an impact on NEETs? 6. Is the measure specifically targeted at NEETs who already have a tertiary education? 7. Is the measure specifically targeted at young people from a disadvantaged background or a minority group?

<p>Measure 1: Notification trial for unemployed youth</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. With this measure an employer can hire a unemployed youth at no cost for three months. If the youngster performs well, the employee can hire him for real. 2. National 3. Bipartite 4. National state funding 5. General measure 6. No 7. No
<p>Measure 2: Provincial grants</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with a physical burden is often suitable for unskilled youth. Employers can use this subsidy scheme to make this physical work more comfortable and thus more attractive. 2. National 3. Bipartite 4. National state funding 5. General measure 6. No 7. No
<p>Measure 3: Work first project</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If an employer hires a young person via a 'work first project', he gets a wage subsidy. 2. National 3. Bipartite 4. National state funding 5. General measure 6. No 7. No

2.2.11 Please provide a more detailed description of the employer incentive which you think is the most effective measure in your country (this measure should be additional to those included in the table above). In addition to the questions raised in the table above, your description should include the details outlined below:

Name: Subsidies for innovative projects for disabled youth

Aim: Employers will get a subsidy when hiring a young disabled person

- When was it introduced and why? How long will it run for?

It was introduced in 2006 to make sure more young people with a disability find and maintain a suitable job.

- Is it a mainstream or pilot project?

Mainstream

- What is the scale of the initiative and how much funding has been allocated to it?

The scale is national. The UWV fills the minimum wage up to 75% for a period of five years.

- Who runs the initiative (is it a public, private or third sector initiative)?

It is a public initiative.

- What is the target group? How many young people benefit from it?

This initiative is specifically for employers who are thinking of hiring a young person with a disability. Approximately 200,000 disabled young people will benefit from the measure.

- What activities are involved?

The workplace and the work environment are adjusted to the needs of the disabled one. For this employer gets a tax deduction.

- What are the success factors?

The only success factor is the subsidy.

- Is there any formal evidence of its success (both quantitative and qualitative)?

More collectively labour agreements were conducted with arrangements for creating jobs for young people with a disability. And more and more employers are willing to work with disabled.

3. Conclusion

There is sufficient attention to the issue, and many different measures are taken. Again we stress that NEET's are not considered a major problem in the Netherlands. Youth unemployment is relatively low in the Netherlands.

There is however a phenomenon that is closely related to the NEET. This is the Wajong, an arrangement for young disabled employees. The Wajong population has increased over the past decade. To be precise, the major part of Wajong-people cannot be considered to belong to the NEET-population, because they are so severely handicapped (physically and/or mentally) that they are not fit for the labour market. But the opinion of the present government is that at least part of the Wajong population can work. Plans are being developed to push this group towards the labour market.

- - What has been the impact of EU level action in this field on the NEET agenda in your country?

Most measures are nationally implemented. The impact of EU level action is no major push factor.

- - What should different stakeholders do more of in your country to address the problem of young people who are NEET? What could they do differently?

Different stakeholders are already doing enough to combat the problem of NEETs.

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