
Counselling – The Netherlands

1. Current Situation resp. reform approaches in the field of vocational guidance and counselling

Privatization of vocational guidance and counselling

In 1996 the vocational guidance and counselling system has been completely reorganized. Before this reorganization the Centres for Work and Income (CWI) - being part of the local employment centres - offered and implemented advisory and training services in addition to employment service. In the past being fully state-financed, these organizations were from this time privatized and now work as AOB (Advies für Onderwijs en Beroep : employment agency) without any state support. Services like vocational guidance or career counselling are offered against payment. In the meantime the CWI's are only in charge of the payout of social contributions to unemployed persons who are difficult to place.

At the same time the school system was completely restructured in the field of vocational training. Various types of schools were merged to approx. 50 Regional Trainings Centres (ROCs). These are autonomously administered by input-output financing and are responsible for the teaching staff, pupils' input as well as for relations/connections with the region. The size varies from 2.000 to 15.000 pupils, depending on the area. Presently ROCs are the only state-run organizations that implement vocational guidance and counselling. The few private training institutions in Netherlands are irrelevant in this regard. After their privatisation some of the former COAs have affiliated to ROCs, i.e. they work for ROCs against payment. This has resulted in a great loss of expertise in the area of vocational guidance and counselling.

A study carried out in 2002 by OECD certifies that labour market and consumer information systems which can be utilized for counselling are available in high quality and at a sufficient rate in the Netherlands. However, a clear role of government is missing in this system of vocational training and counselling fragmented by decentralization and privatisation. A coherent structure is lacking. There is too little attention paid to career counselling as well as to the connection to the labour market within the educational system.

Current themes and trends:

Presently ROCs develop proposals for vocational counselling and other services. The coordination between vocational training and labour market is a contemporary issue. For this purpose advisory committees were founded, also comprising representatives of the regional economy. Highest priority is paid to the question how the high rate of early school leavers can be reduced. Many young people do not reach the minimum qualification determined by the state.

All in all the development regarding vocational counselling tends towards provision of ICT solutions (webbased information, electronic assessment etc.) and towards products from service sector. CWIs (former local employment centres) gave up their tasks and refer to private enterprises, e.g. temporary employment agencies. Unemployed persons get financial support to buy services of a private enterprise.

International mobility

International mobility is not a target of vocational counselling. Primarily mobility takes place in the field of exchange measures for apprentices. Individual counselling plays an unimportant role up to now.

2. Organizations offering counselling on vocational guidance for the crafts sector

| Area | Institution | Type of counselling | Counselling | Special target groups |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| state-run employment administration | CIW (Centre for Work and Income) | no counselling on vocational training, only employment service | one-on-one interviews | job applicants, unemployed persons |
| School facilities | ROC (vocational training centre in one region), <i>there are 50 ROCs in the Netherlands</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on labour market • Information on professions • choice of profession • aptitude test | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one-to-one interview • group work • assessment • information days for pupils • information tour to enterprises / industrial units • lectures at vocational schools (VMBO) | Pupils, apprentices, emigrants |
| | Kenniscentra | counselling of training institutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information days • fairs • Website | training institutions |
| Other organizations | Private human resources agencies AOB-Compaz (privatized COAs) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • choice of profession • aptitude test • supply of services for ROC's | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one-to-one interview • group work • Assessment • information days for pupils • information tour to enterprises / industrial units • lectures at vocational schools (VMBO) • Website | Pupils, apprentices, unemployed persons |
| | Temporary employment companies (e.g. Randstad, Start) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment service • training of job applicants • career counselling | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one-to-one interview • group measures • fairs | unemployed persons, job-seeking persons |
| | LDC (Centre for development of information material) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of information and education material • Website for pupils | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairs • Website | Pupils, trainers, counsellors |

3. Craftspeople going abroad

According to the National Agency the LEONARDO DA VINCI is hardly used by the target group. EURES counselling is utilized occasionally.

4. Information sources for crafts sector on vocational training and employment chances abroad

| Source of information | Art der Information |
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| EURES counselling | Counselling on chances to work abroad, addresses, brochures etc. |

5. Potential users of MOBILINT training modules

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| Employees of training organizations (ROCs and VMBO). There are tutors, deans, mentors who could play a role in this area. |
| Employees of AOBs (vocational counselling agencies at ROCs) can play a role regarding sensitisation of craftspeople for mobility. |
| Employees of private human resources agencies (z.B. http://loopbaanbegeleiding.pagina.nl/) |
| Eures counsellors |
| University of Deventer qualifying vocational counsellors |