



European
Commission

PROVIDING ADVICE
AND TRAINING ON HOW
TO SET UP YOUR
OWN BUSINESS

Self-employment

Information review: October 2015

THE NETHERLANDS

The practice provides a platform for unemployed persons who want to become self-employed. The practice is open to everyone in the city of Amsterdam and specifically targets those above the age of 40.

Participants who choose to become self-employed are given the opportunity to follow a six-month training course and guidance with a tailored orientation/start-up phase.

In 2007, an evaluation deemed the pilot a success, as it was more cost-efficient and serving more beneficiaries per year than comparable practices. As a result, the city of Amsterdam no longer sub-contracts self-employment services to external parties but exclusively implements this approach.

Name of the PES

Eigen Werk Amsterdam
Self-employment Amsterdam

When was the practice implemented?

2006 – On-going

Which organisation was involved in its implementation?

1. The participants can receive training from either of the two private organisations – Startwijzer BV or Friedeberg Consultancy BV.
2. PES directs unemployed people who are interested in self-employment to the project team.
3. National organisations are involved in the delivery of workshops.

Which social groups were targeted by the practice?

- Jobseekers:
- ▶ All unemployed
 - ▶ Older (above 40)
- People seeking training:
- ▶ Out of work: adults

What were the practice's main objectives?

The purpose of the practice is to activate unemployed people by providing advice and training on how to set up own business. During the pilot phase, the idea was to test whether the set-up of this method is more efficient than existing methods.

What activities were carried out?

The orientation phase involves individual and group activities including (depending on need) workshops with external organisations such as the chamber of commerce, social partners, financing, etc. It is aimed at providing information on:

- ▶ What self-employment entails;
- ▶ Legal status/paperwork requirements;
- ▶ How to develop an entrepreneurial plan;
- ▶ How to develop unique selling points;
- ▶ Financing (sources, rules, taxes);
- ▶ Marketing and acquisition;
- ▶ Communication and presentation;
- ▶ Empowerment;
- ▶ Networking;
- ▶ Time management;
- ▶ Price negotiations;
- ▶ Administrative organisation.

Each year, the intake of participants takes place around the same time so that the participants meet and become a mini-network and a source of information and support for one another.

Project advisors guide the participant and meet with other advisors on a monthly basis to share ideas/good practices.

Several meetings between the advisor and participant take place post start-up and there are annual 'alumni days'.

<p>What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?</p>	<p>The project team has been integrated in the municipal services and is ideally composed of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Seven full-time equivalent (FTE) project advisors; ▶ One team leader; ▶ One secretary. <p>The size of the team allows for support to approximately 300 participants annually. Every applicant who is screened and becomes a participant is offered a voucher for three days of advice from an external professional organisation specialised in self-employment. This may entail an extra check on the financial planning or advice for networking opportunities, etc.</p> <p>Initially, a steering committee consisting of representatives from the PES (activation and benefits side) and economic affairs and municipal social services met multiple times a year to decide the best set-up and continuation of the project.</p>
<p>Source(s) of funding</p>	<p>Local/municipal budget (tax revenue)</p>
<p>What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?</p>	<p>People reached: In 2006 to 2012, 1 500 participants were enrolled into the practice, of which 70% had started their own business.</p> <p>Products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Useful template tools for business start-up (business plan, standard presentations, etc.) ▶ Database of important and relevant documents
<p>What outcomes have been identified?</p>	<p>Two and half years after the participants started during 2006 to 2008 (306 participants), 80% had either set up their own business, were part-time self-employed, or had found regular employment.</p>
<p>What are the lessons learnt and success factors?</p>	<p>An assessment was conducted on the sustainability of the programme amongst the first 22 groups. From these 22 groups, 306 participants had started their business. After at least two and a half years ('at least' because not all participants started their self-employment at the same time) 80% of these participants remained financially self-sufficient, moving on from unemployment benefits either to self-employment, regular employment or other. At least 56% of the 306 participants maintained their financial sufficiency through self-employment throughout the two and half years.</p> <p>On average, the cost from start to finish is EUR 2 500 per participant. An analysis was conducted of similar programmes, which highlighted that 'Eigen Werk' was the most efficient approach providing similar or better results. These other programmes were implemented by private organisations, which the PES contracted to provide self-employment pathways for unemployed people.</p>
<p>More information on the practice</p>	<p>http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/empl_portal/weesp/NL-7.pdf</p>



Contact details for further information

Name: HEESSELS, Frans

Email: Frans.Heessels@dwi.amsterdam.nl

Telephone: +31 (0)20 346 4794

Website: <http://www.amsterdam.nl/gemeente/organisatie-diensten/eigenwerk/eigenwerk>