

***Peer Review on 'Single mothers facing poverty:
Providing adequate financial, material and social
support for sustainable social integration'***

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The Belgian context

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POD MAATSCHAPPELIJKE INTEGRATIE
BETER SAMEN LEVEN

SPP INTÉGRATION SOCIALE
MIEUX VIVRE ENSEMBLE



In Belgium

Social Security

= insurance against social risks

- Pensions
- Unemployment benefits
- Insurance against accidents on the workplace
- Insurance against professional illnesses
- Family benefits
- Compulsory health insurance and compensation
- Annual vacation

Social protection

= last safety net

- Social integration rights in the form of social assistance and social integration revenue
- Income guarantee for the elderly
- Guaranteed family benefits
- Benefits for people with one or more disability

Social integration rights in the form of social assistance and social integration revenue

589 Public Social Welfare Centres
1 per municipality
Federal law <> local implementation



Social integration rights in the form of social assistance and social integration revenue

Mission: allow all to live a life in conformity with human dignity
How: a wide range of instruments including social integration revenue, employment, individualized social integration projects.



Minimum income revenue : 3 categories



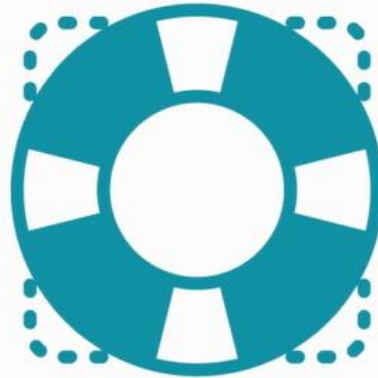
The numbers speak for themselves

Number of women for 100 men in ...	
General population	104
Population AROP	113
Population AROPE	115
Population 18-64 years	
Minimum income revenue	115
Minimum income revenue – Category 3: people with care responsibilities	400
Minimum income revenue – Category 3: people with care responsibilities – Single-parent family	800



MIRIAM

The movie





BETTER SUPPORT FOR SINGLE MOMS RECEIVING MINIMUM
INCOME REVENUE FROM A PUBLIC SOCIAL WELFARE CENTRE

Magda De Meyer

Chair Dutch-speaking Women's Council

MIRIAM

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KdG Karel de Grote
Hogeschool



5 operational partners 5 public social welfare centres in Belgium



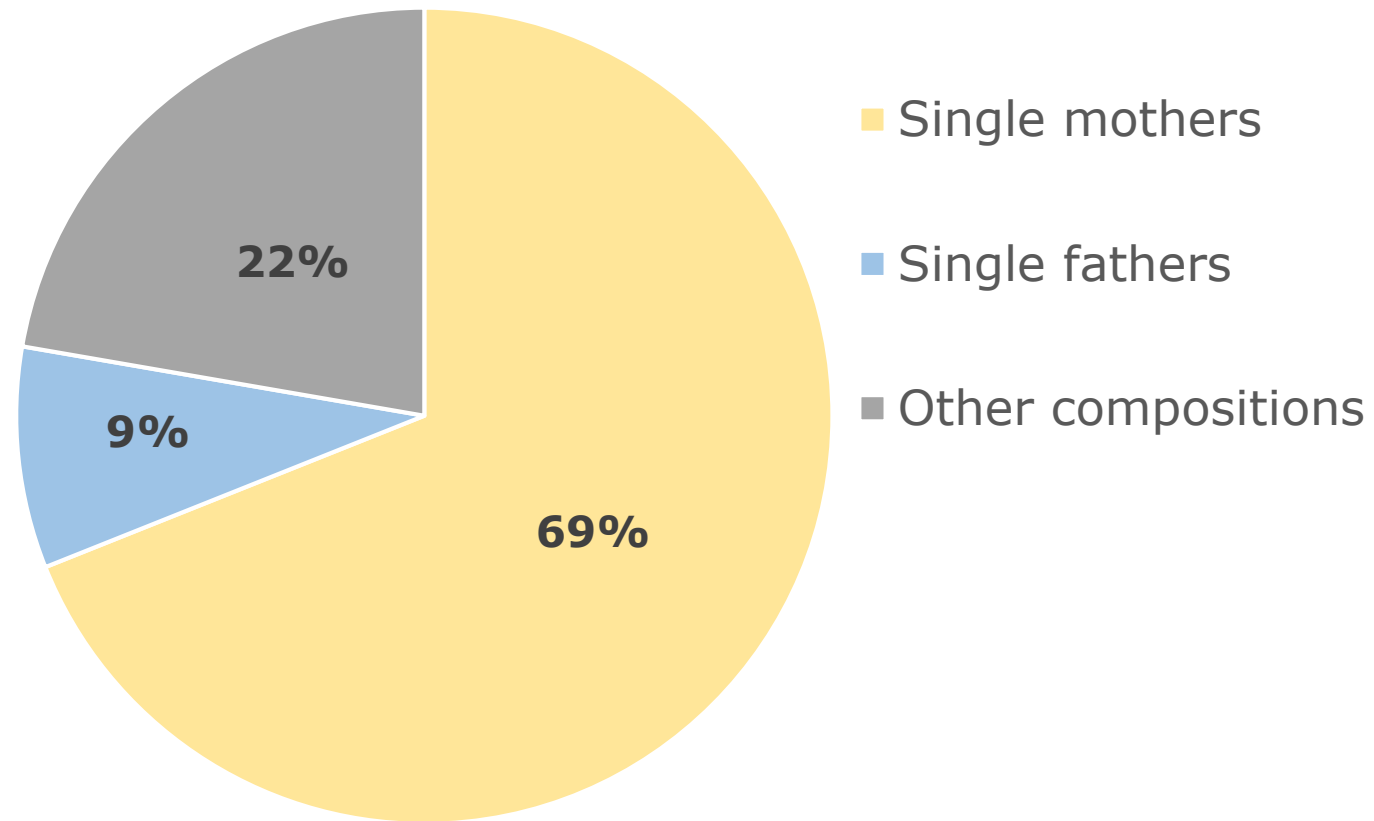
Why a project for single mums?

For every man

- receiving minimum income revenue
 - with care responsibilities
- ... there are 8 women in the same situation



Minimum income revenue beneficiaries with care responsibilities and single parenting, Belgium, 2015



Profile women versus men

Less favourable 😞

- demographic
- socio-economical
- professional
- qualification
- network

Consequences for women

More difficulties 😞

- the search for a job
- child care facilities
- accommodation
- mobility
- health care

Goal MIRIAM project?

- Empowerment
- A sustainable social and professional integration

Wat does the project offer?

Individual and collective gender sensitive support

- introducing new synergies
- reinforcing self-esteem
- orientation in institutional landscape
- inform the single moms on their rights and make sure that they fully use them
- improvement of their participation in society
- break their social isolation

Evaluation and control

Individual versus regular support

Four series of questions

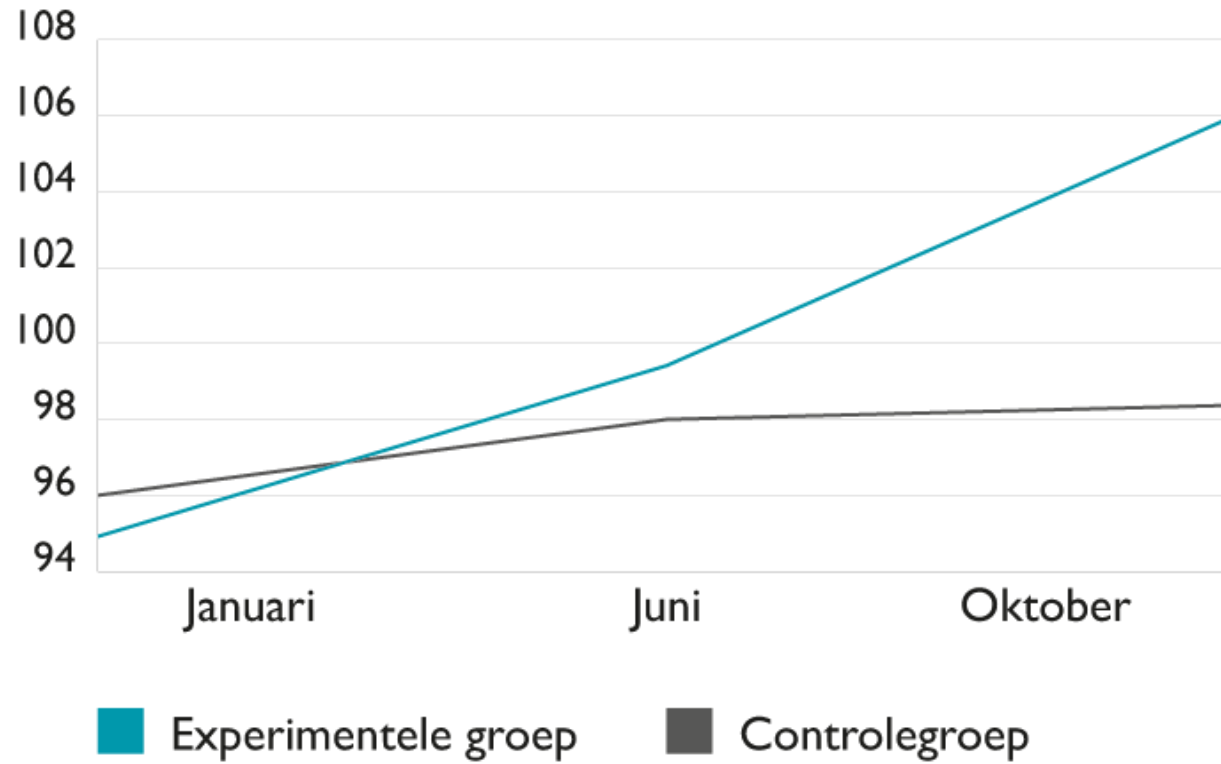
- psychological empowerment
- social connection
- objective changes in different fields of life
- satisfaction in these fields

MIRIAM: the most important results

- Empowerment
- Social activation and activation
- Full usage of rights and advantages

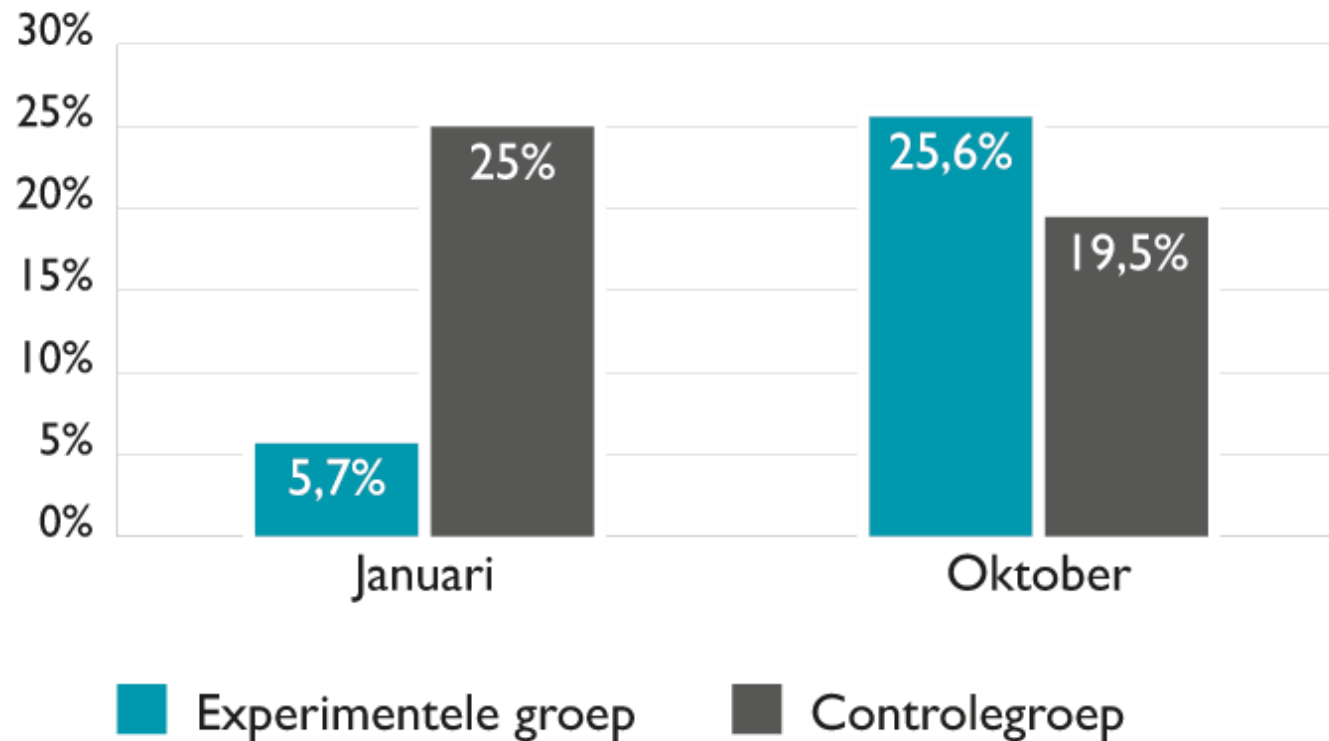
Empowerment

Empowerment scores



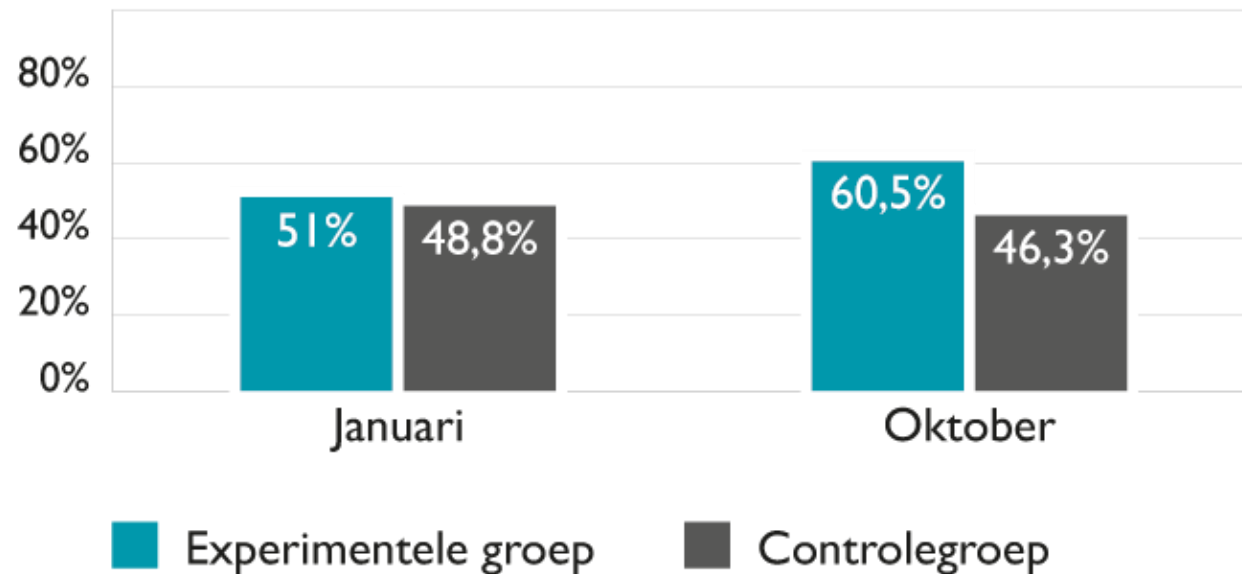
Social activation and activation

Are you currently in training?



Full usage of rights and advantages

Do you receive alimony for your children?



Role of the Dutch-speaking Council of Women (Vrouwenraad) in MIRIAM

Inclusion of the gender perspective in the project

- *Gender* is a socially and culturally constructed definition of women and men. It has nothing to do with the biological characteristics of women and men, called *sex*.
- Gender is determined by the conception of conventions, hierarchies, tasks, functions and roles attributed to both sexes in society and in public and private life.
- Traditional roles/patterns in household generate differences in income and a low(er) self-esteem.
- There is a clear connection between being a woman, a single mom and poverty.

MIRIAM: the most important recommendations

- Housing
- Child care
- Activation

Housing

Public Social Welfare Centre

- Pursue a real housing policy
- Active search for affordable and qualitative housing
- Take the lead when there is no social rental agency

Child care

PSWC

- Agreements with child care facilities and services for sick children and occasional relief

Government

- More flexible, affordable and accessible places for children

Activation

PSWC

- Better guidance after employment through art. 60
- Mobility initiatives
 - organize joint transportation
 - financial intervention in order to obtain one's driver's licence

« Project MIRIAM did for me what others hadn't managed to do so far : it gave me the strength to open up and now I have an objective, I have a motivation to move forward »

A mum who participated in project MIRIAM



Thank you for
your attention

MIRIAM