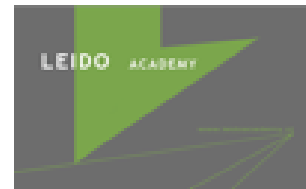


STATE OF PLAY

LIFELONG LEARNING IN THE NETHERLANDS



Autumn 2015

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THIS DOCUMENT: STATE OF PLAY IN THE NETHERLANDS AND 'LLL-HUB'

This report with information about the situation in the Netherlands on 'lifelong learning' is a 'key-document' in the international project LLL-HUB. It can be seen as an overview of what is happening at a national level about LLL: strategy, initiatives, 'renovations' of the education system, combinations of formal, non-formal and informal learning, using old and new instruments... and the role of the government and LLL-networks...

The outcomes and recommendations of the first Dutch LLL-Forum is an interesting part of the report, knowing that we need the experts who participated in this event, for the exploitation of the project. One of the main issues for Leido as partner in the project is to set up a national platform for LLL, in cooperation with other organizations in the Netherlands. The report can be very helpful with that.

Of course this report has to be a 'dynamic' one. The state of play concerning lifelong learning has to be actualized every six months. At the moment Europe is facing a 'package' of challenging developments, with the next phase of the consequences of the economic crisis, the growing rates of youth-unemployment and the high numbers of refugees coming to Europe, with a lot of consequences for education of people – at all levels and for all ages.

1.2 Information about the project

In general

Lifelong Learning Programme / Key Activity 1 – Policy cooperation and innovation – Networks

Project number: 543527-LLP-1-2013-1-BE-KA1NW

Duration: December 2013 – March 2016

Partners

1. The European Civil Society Platform on Lifelong Learning (EUCIS-LLL), Belgium
2. European Regions Foundation for Research in Education and Training (FREREF), France
3. Cáceres Chamber of Commerce and Industry (COCCIC), designated by the Education and Culture Council of the Extremadura region Governorship, Spain
4. LEIDO, national thematic network on LLL, the Netherlands
5. Portuguese Association of People Management (APG), Portugal
6. Mardin Province Social Studies and Project Management (Mardin PSSPM) designated by the Mardin Province Governorship, Turkey
7. Institute for training of personnel in international organisations (ITPIO), Bulgaria
8. Blagoevgrad Regional Inspectorate of Education (RIE), Bulgaria
9. CVO Antwerpen (CVO), designated by the Public Education of the Flemish Community, Belgium
10. WUP, Małopolska Partnership for Continuing Education, Poland

Vision for the LLL-HUB

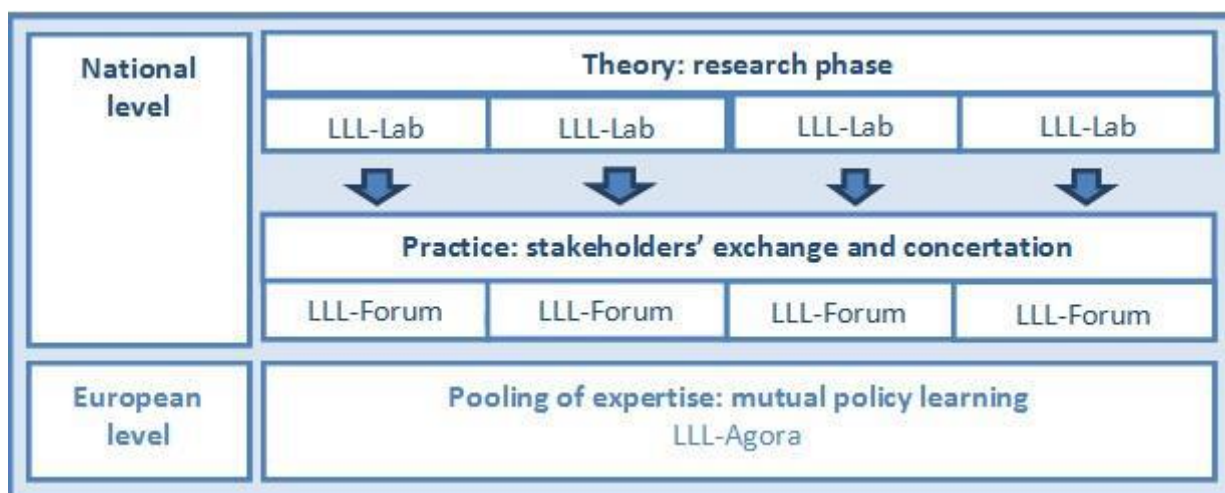
Through a multilateral network, the LLL-HUB aims to create a feeling of *shared responsibility* and ownership among relevant stakeholders on EU lifelong learning strategies (Europe 2020 headline targets, ET2020, European Semester Country-Specific Recommendations). This will be achieved by fostering *national and transnational public spaces for debates and mutual policy learning*, involving the grassroots level in a genuine reflection with decision-makers on the design and implementation of coherent and comprehensive lifelong learning strategies.

The design and implementation of LLL strategies will be enriched by valuable peer learning between actors from different sectors and decision-levels on *4 key challenges* of the EU policy agenda.

Each partner country will establish a regional/national state of play on the implementation of those different EU strategies (*LLL-Labs*). Then partners will organise a regional/national seminar (*LLL-Forums*).

The last phase of the project consists in a transnational pooling of expertise (European conference: *LLL-Agora*) to make a comparative analysis of critical factors, identify common challenges and elaborate Policy Recommendations.

The project is also meant to reach the following 3 *transversal objectives*: foster a shared meaning of lifelong learning; enable a cross-sectoral, multi-stakeholders cooperation; structure the first transnational policy learning based on a genuine research and dialogue at regional/national level on EU LLL strategies.



1.3 OUR REPORT...

This report is about the 'state of play' looking at what is happening at this moment in the Netherlands around 'lifelong learning'. LLL has a lot of dimensions, making a national strategy very complicated, serving all target groups. There are also many stakeholders and several organisations involved, having all their opinions what is necessary for the Dutch society to give everyone in as many as possible situations a real opportunity to use 'education' for welfare and a good life as a human being – also 'new citizens'. But all research, meetings, workshop sessions and discussions in small group have showed us that there is not just ONE strategy and approach of LLL, to make it comfortable for everyone. And at the other side, not every individual is starting from the same situation, to use education in his of hers favour. The chances are different, not always better or worse, and are not always to be influenced. It will be always difficult, also for the policy makers and those who has decide about 'something' at the end of the line...

That is why we as Leido have chosen for our own 'strategy', as network for most of the time involved in formal education and training. This means that we use our expertise and experiences with the Dutch National Qualifications Framework (NLQF) as a useful starting point, knowing that is not necessary to fight a battle that can't be won, against the overall idea that the LLL focus will be for the years to come on employability. So, if we can't beat them, we will join them. And meaning 'them', we are thinking of those people who are hoping that getting another qualification using education, better and/or at a higher level, to be recognized in looking for the best place 'in society'. In the first place they are thinking of all those formal diplomas and degrees, as part of the NLQF – we can't deny that this is more and more the case... - but we are hoping that in a few years we have a full register of non-formal qualifications, to be trusted in one way or another by everyone in the economy. The next step is that we can set up a real flexible education system,

with the full use of validation of informal learning, leading to a fully recognized non-formal or formal certificate or diploma.

In this report we will give an overview of what the most recent developments are in the national field of LLL, after some years of silence from the side of the government. There was an idea that all key players in formal education - and after having funded a lot of initiatives for setting up regional networks (informal and non-formal oriented) – the ‘free market for education’ could do its work. But without support ‘from above’ in making effective and tailor-made arrangements possible, based on transparent criteria and regulations – it is still very difficult to bring all stakeholders at the right table: employers, employers, providers of public financed and private education, RPL providers, quality assurance agencies and networks for informal, non-formal and formal education and training, name it.

We are using the four themes of the project, with most of the documents, ideas and issues for number 1 and 3 – being the closest to our network activities. At the end of each theme there will be a number of statements, as input for the LLL-Forum on the 28th of May. Based on that we will complete this report, as the ‘real state of play’ for thinking about LLL in the Netherlands.

This document is based on a process what has been called the LLL-LAB. The first phase was the ‘relay’, the ‘switch’ from gathering information using desk-research to a document about the actual situation...

Then we had meetings in small groups with experts is the second phase, to be seen as the ‘observatory’ For this document we have used the outcomes and recommendations of those small events and other activities

Of course we have visited a lot of events organized by other organisations directly or indirectly involved in Lifelong Learning, national and international – to learn about what are recent developments to take care of for our document.

And finally we have discussed an early draft with our project group, and in some of the meetings we had with experts, in our thematic working groups. This has been the ‘think-tank’-phase...

1.4 LIFELONG LEARNING IN THE NETHERLANDS

Lifelong Learning is becoming a more and more important issue for the Netherlands. We need more higher skilled people, there are enough vacancies in certain sectors of the labour market but asking for requirements that most of the unemployed people (youngsters and adults) don’t have (yet), employers are aware of the fact that investing in education for their employees can be very profitable and ‘everyone’ is telling that having more entrepreneurial skills is a must for the labour force (and courses with the focus on those specific competences have to be part of most programmes in formal education. This means – by a lot of stakeholders and opinion leaders – that the government needs to take the lead for that, to stimulate this kind of developments.

But in practice can be seen that LLL is a private market, with non-formal education – knowing that formal programme take too much time to complete, and that the dynamic in the labour market is very strong and can’t always be ‘translated’ in more tailor-made programmes with all new competences for the ‘new’ jobs. This means that LLL is a matter of the private, not state-funded institutions – knowing that in most sectors of ‘the world of work’ is still enough budget. But then the providers have to be flexible, ready for more work-based learning and having the possibility to integrate practical experiences into the programmes.

So, we have a lot of learners in the Netherlands, in non-formal education and training. The idea is to have them also in the formal education, knowing that people like to have a formal diploma as proof of their capability to get such a degree.

That is the challenge the Netherlands, the Dutch government, is facing. But just political colored plans and ideas are not enough. That is why a national LLL-platform, as a sparring partner of the responsible ministries, is a must...

1.5 STATISTICS ON LLL IN THE NETHERLANDS

In 2014 a committee, asked for advising the government about a new strategy on adult education, published a report with the most recent statistical data. This report is an annex to this State of Play, but it can also be downloaded from:

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2014/03/12/flexibel-hoger-onderwijs-voor-volwassenen>.

The figures (schemes, tables...) can be found in the section from page 32 till page 41.

2 PART A

In this part we will present our findings for the three themes... and our recommendations for improving LLL in our country...

Theme 1: Lifelong Learning frameworks

National Frameworks for lifelong learning: towards flexible pathways and comprehensive education and training systems

Theme 2: LLL actors

Lifelong learning actors: taking the jump towards learner-centred systems

Theme 3: LLL Communities

Lifelong learning communities: partnerships and shared responsibility

Theme 4: Policy recommendations: improving implementation of LLL

Theme 1: Lifelong Learning frameworks

National Frameworks for lifelong learning: towards flexible pathways and comprehensive education and training systems

Local (National/Regional) current strategies and culture of LLL.

1 INTRODUCTION IN GENERAL... WHAT IS GOING ON...

This is a very broad, but to be welcomed theme here. We have the EQF and in our country a NLQF, since 2010. But this one has been built on all formal qualifications after a few years of discussions, having 15, 10 or 8 levels. The result is the latter one, but with a Dutch twist for levels 4 and 5, bringing 4+ for the highest diploma in general education (called 'vwo' - mind you, it is not level 4,5..., so the importance is the signal that is higher than 4....).

The next step has to be the linking of all existing non-formal qualifications to the NLQF. But is the labour market willing to accept the situation that every diploma and certificate has a 'stamp', a 'mark' mentioning the level? Not at the moment... Is every provider of a diploma or certificate as crown on a relevant qualification willing to pay money for the process leading to a judgment about the level and a position in the NLQF-register? That is also not the case having at the moment 13 of them there in place...

Knowing that most of labour-market focused qualifications are based on knowledge and skills, and not on 'learning outcomes' as needed for a link to the NLQF, it will be more than difficult to use recognition of prior learning. Knowing that the underlying procedures can be expensive and taking a lot of time it will be not a favorable activity for a lot of employees (individuals)... And we have noticed that RPL (EVC in Dutch) has become in formal education just 'a sport to get exemptions', to be delivered on an individual basis and not validated by all providers in the same way and extension.

So, what will be the driver behind a better way of using the NLQF, the instrument of 'learning outcomes' and more personal flexible learning pathways? How to promote the use of procedures for linking qualifications to levels of the NLQF and after that the use of more RPL (Validation)?

As Leido we are strongly involved in what is happening at level 5 of the framework, first of all for the formal degree (Associate). But we have also taken the initiative to develop more qualifications at this level, non-formal, and stronger related to the labour market than the Associate degree. This can be an important step for having more overlap between the use of non-formal and formal qualifications, using also in-company trainings, small courses and work-force development for RPL-procedures to get a qualification linked to the NLQF or in a similar register.

Important is also the strategy of the Dutch government to start pilots and experiments for providers of formal degrees in higher education, with the possibility to use just learning outcomes for the underlying programmes, so the learning pathways are not relevant for getting a degree... The discussion about the way how to do that will start this year, and we know for sure that the meetings for arranging those pilots and experiments, having all stakeholders on board, will be very tough.

The experiments will be done in the field of adult education, for part-time programmes in higher education. That's why we as Leido will use 2015 – including the discussions as part of LLL-HUB – for promoting pilots with Associate degree-programmes, offered for employees in certain sectors for the world of work. In 2016 we can try to start the discussion on using the whole range of possibilities:

- Pilots with formal Associate degrees, based on learning outcomes
- Using RPL for them
- Having more non-formal qualifications at level 5

- Including 'small courses' with the focus on 'training on the job' in RPL-procedures, to get a non-formal diploma at level 5 (the Higher Professional Diploma...)
- Using agreements between providers of non-formal and formal qualifications for transfer between those kinds of programmes.

In this part of the report we will use (also) parts of the most recent publications and information about the issues we think that are relevant for the discussions during the LLL-Forum. Most of them are in Dutch.. (but in the final report we will translate the most important parts into English). At the end of each part we will give statements as input for those discussions.

2 LLL STRATEGY IN THE NETHERLANDS

In the years after 2010 the focus in the Netherlands was mostly on formal education, on young people facing the possibility of not getting a job – leading to growing numbers for unemployed graduates between 23 and 27 years old. Of course the crisis had (and has) to do with that. After a few years the government realized that the economy needs also a boost by having more opportunities for adult learners to take a next step in their career – making space (where possible) for those young people to enter the labour market on a steady basis. That's why in 2014 a first action plan was published by the government (ministries for education and for social affairs) to get LLL back on the agenda, with a strong agenda.

So, the Netherlands has to make a new start for LLL. In 2016 experiments and pilots will start in adult education, mostly in higher education – but some of them also will be situated in vocational education and training. This report, or State of Play, can be used... where we can have a voice... and that is why we are focusing on bringing all stakeholders together, in a National LLL-Platform, as a 'sparring-partner' of the government.

We think that the government make a good choice to make the national framework part of the law and the regulations for the whole range of formal education, having the opportunity for private institutions to link their non-formal qualifications to one of the levels of the NLQF. This is also an important element of the Dutch 'renewed' strategy on LLL.

Here in this part of the report a broad look on the developments according to the frameworks and the possibilities to use them for LLL.

3 FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

In this part a range of interesting publications, articles etc. about the national qualifications framework and what can be seen as relevant for the further use of them.

3.1 Our NLQF

(source: www.nlqf.nl)

Here the introduction about the Dutch National Qualifications Framework (NLQF), with information about the aims of it.

Dutch Qualification Framework (NLQF)

Whether you are:

- an individual who wishes to follow an education or training programme
- an employer who wishes to recruit people or
- a provider who offers education or training programmes

This website will make it easier for you to understand the NLQF and its added value for you.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands commissioned the development of the Dutch Qualifications Framework (NLQF) which was constructed in close cooperation with experts and stakeholders in the field of education and training. The National Coordination

Point NLQF (NCP) is an independent body which is responsible for the development and implementation of the NLQF.

The Dutch Qualifications Framework (NLQF) is a new way of describing Dutch qualification levels. It is a systematic organisation of all existing qualification levels in The Netherlands, from Level 1 basic education to the Master's degree at level 7 and a Doctorate's degree at level 8. Qualifications are classified in NLQF levels and are given a level indication. The framework consists of an Entry Level followed by 8 levels, Level 1 being the least complex and Level 8 the most complex.

The NLQF aims to facilitate students and labour market mobility by providing an insight into the levels of all qualifications recorded by the National Coordination Point NLQF in the NCP register. The NLQF provides transparency in that it facilitates a comparison of qualification levels nationally and internationally, thus, labour market mobility.

The NCP records Government-regulated qualifications (The qualifications of the Ministries of Education Culture and Sciences; and Economic Affairs; Food and Natural and Living Environment) in the National Coordination Point (NCP) Register of qualifications. All other qualifications are first assessed and level-determined by the NCP and then recorded in the Register.

The Dutch Qualifications Framework offers providers of qualifications which are not regulated by the Government the possibility of having such training programmes and qualifications classified at a level of the NLQF. Procedures and criteria for this process are in place.

The NLQF is referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). EQF aims to enable qualifications from different countries within Europe to be compared by means of a single reference framework to which they are all referenced. Thus, EQF will contribute to greater transparency in the education systems of EU countries, thereby increasing the international mobility of individuals. Currently 36 European countries are contributing to the implementation of the EQF by linking their own national qualifications frameworks to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

However, there are many things the NLQF does *NOT* do. NLQF is not a revision of the Dutch education system. An NLQF level indicator does not give an entitlement to a title or a degree. The right to enter and transfer to education sectors is not regulated by NLQF.

NLQF for the employer

What is the value of NLQF for an employer?

NLQF provides employers with a tool that enables them to:

- clarify the NLQF level required to fill job vacancies in terms of learning outcomes, thus facilitating staff recruitment;
- establish staff training programmes and track the occupational and personal development of individual staff;
- get an insight into current qualifications levels and their relationship, nationally and internationally, thus facilitating labour mobility.

In effect an employer can use NLQF to compare the level of qualifications or training in the Netherlands. But NLQF offers more. Because NLQF is referenced to the EQF (European Qualifications Framework) it enables employers to establish the equivalent qualification level in The Netherlands of a foreign or European qualification.

NLQF for the education and training provider

What is the value of NLQF for you as an education and training provider?

NLQF provides education and training providers with a tool that enables them to:

- compare levels of qualifications in terms of learning outcomes
- think in terms of learning outcomes as building blocks for qualifications
- communicate more easily with the labour market and create a better match between education and training programmes and labour market needs.

Providers offering Government-regulated qualifications* can request a review of the level at which they were generically classified at the outset when the NLQF was established. Currently, review requests are only possible for Vocational Education and Training (VET) Level 4. Providers of qualifications which are not Government-regulated may request a classification into one of the levels of the NLQF and, thus, be also referenced to an EQF level.

NLQF for the employee

What is the value of NLQF for an employee? NLQF is the Dutch Qualifications Framework which shows the value of Dutch qualifications and education and training programmes compared to one another and, through its being referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), compared to those elsewhere in Europe. It was not possible to make these comparisons before the emergence of NLQF, national qualifications frameworks in other countries and the EQF.

Using these tools employees are now able to:

- identify what training programmes are available at what levels throughout Europe
- compare an education or training programme you may be following with other such programmes in The Netherlands and / or in other European countries
- compare the levels of education and training programmes offered by, for example, a VET college, a University of Applied Science or a University in The Netherlands and / or abroad
- make a more informed choice of an education or training programme in The Netherlands or in another European country
- decrease the investment in education and training.

NLQF for the student

What is the value for students? NLQF provides students with a tool that enables them to:

- get a clear picture of your current position in terms of education and training levels you have achieved thus far
- compare the levels of Dutch qualifications more easily
- make a more informed choice as a result of this insight
- plan your further education and training more easily.

3.2 Learning Outcomes **(source: www.nlqf.nl)**

A publication about 'learning outcomes', based on the descriptors for the levels of the NLQF...

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) has described the socially accepted levels in constant consultation with the education, in a matrix in terms of learning outcomes. This matrix is after the second consultation published in the present document 'Descriptions of Learning outcomes for regulated qualifications'.

For the conceptual framework it has been looked at the terms as are used in different sectors in education and at concepts as used in the EQF and in foreign qualifications frameworks. Ultimately, the existing diploma levels are described in the following descriptors and elements:

- Context,
- Knowledge,
- Skills and
- Independence and responsibility.

Within the skills these skills can be distinguished:

- Applying knowledge,
 - Problem solving skills,
 - Learning and development skills,
 - Information skills and communication skills.
-

3.3 Contribution Consultation “European Area of Skills and Qualifications” (source: NCP-NLQF – 2014)

In 2014 the European Commission has held a consultation, related to the European Area of Skills and Qualifications. The Dutch National Coordination Point of the NLQF, part of the ‘Partnership Lifelong Learning’ made a contribution...

The Dutch Partnership LLL (where the National Coordination NLQF is housed) wants to use this position paper to contribute to the public consultation and further development of an ‘Area of Skills and Qualifications’.

- *Experiences in the most recent period*

From 2011 has been worked on the implementation of the Dutch qualifications framework by the National coordination NLQF. Since January 1, 2014 the National Coordination NLQF (NCP NLQF) is part of the Dutch Partnership for Lifelong Learning (LLL NP).

Validation of non-formal and informal learning (APL) and the pilots ECVET for lifelong learning are also part of this Partnership.

Experiences:

- The development of the three EU instruments EQF, ECVET and Validation in relation to each other provides added value because all three validation tools are based on learning outcomes.
- The results of validation procedures can make an enhanced contribution to labor mobility. The EQF / NLQF shows what level a qualification has. APL and other validation tools show what people have learned in an informal way and ECVET shows the value of a part of a qualification.
- Learning outcomes are a prerequisite to measure and determine the EQF / NLQF level. The recognition for employers, employees and training is there-through increasing. This has meant that we are emphatically committed to use them as labor market instruments. Obviously the quality of the use of these tools is crucial to get them recognized. The necessary criteria and mechanisms have been developed. Quality assurance should be appropriate to the situation and the instrument and the entire chain. It must remain recognizable and usable for employers and employees.
- The labor market has rapid changes in the demand for knowledge and skills (half-life-time of competences). Offering only whole qualifications is often not appropriate: short and efficient pathways are increasingly necessary. In addition, it is the case that education does not take sufficient account of the adult participant who has other needs when it comes to the organization of education. There is more flexibility needed. We are now working on developing a system for developing adult education and training based on ECVET units in some pilots.
- We face the Complexity of the terms and abbreviations that are difficult to understand for employers. Now, it often remains a matter of (technical) experts.

- *Challenges we are facing for the future*

- One of the main challenges is to simplify the descriptions of the instruments (language and abbreviations), necessary for acceptance in society. It is still being examined and described from primary education, while the labor market should be positioned much better. This requires clear and simple language, and it is really necessary.
- There is no need to develop new instruments, but it is about the connection, improvement, simplification and acceptance of existing instruments and focus on identification and awareness - as a start.
- This can be stimulated by the development of a credit system for formal, non-formal and informal learning for validation. Not only for the higher levels, but also for the lower ones.

- The EQF is important to develop an approach in the short term in order to give the international sectoral qualifications a place in the EQF. If not, chances are that the EQF will not support its further development. The EQF can't be shaped only along national lines. There must be international developments. Therefore it is good that a working group of international sectoral qualifications has started recently.

3.4 Council for Education (Onderwijsraad): More resilience for more flexible education

(source: Advice Report – 10 December 2014 – www.onderwijsraad.nl).

Onderwijsraad: Meer veerkracht maakt flexibeler onderwijs

The independent Dutch Council for Education is advising the Ministry of Education about a lot of topics. In the recent two years the focus is on flexibility, giving more chances to individuals to find their way to get a diploma without unnecessary barriers... And there are still a lot of them...

The resilience of the education system needs to be improved. With more variety education can change better being managed. Social changes are not everywhere done the same way or at the same pace. Schools need space to be alert to respond to local educational needs: they need programs and pathways that can adapt and innovations. A greater variety of schools that promotes the system step-wise (and without major risks) can be adapted looking at changing demands from society.

This enables the Board of Education in the report 'An education system with resilience presented today to Minister Bussemaker and State Secretary Dekker (for education).

In a rapidly changing society also change the demands on education. Increasing individualization, automation, innovation and internationalization give high demands on the citizens of tomorrow, and their training now. The pressure on the education system is increasing. Adjustments in the system do occur, but only in parts. Since the publication of the report of the committee Dijsselbloem policymakers and politicians are reluctant to talk about the system as a whole, even though this must, according to the Education Council.

The council, however, does not choose for large system changes based on a design of "best system". What is best is highly uncertain. It makes more sense to the resilience of the system - the ability to adapt - to improve.

The Board noted in its opinion also some persistent bottlenecks in the Dutch education: the early selection of students for school types, the strong separation between general and vocational education, and inadequate pre- and post-initial offer. Innovative initiatives that the sectors of education and columns transcend can help solve these problems. Because these initiatives will not be created automatically, the Education Council advises the Minister and Secretary of State to encourage them active and focused. At the same time it is the duty of the government to monitor the boundaries of innovation: all schools should offer good education and all pupils should be given opportunities.

Encourage new initiatives

The government should raise awareness of existing possibilities for innovation and broaden the legislation. The Board also recommends to encourage targeted sectors and support transnational initiatives.

These are: the formation of heterogeneous groups of pupils in the transition from primary to secondary education; the establishment of programs that combine general and vocational education; and organizing educational services for young children and adults going over the limits of the (educational) system.

Solid benchmarks

The government must ensure at the same time encouraging a variety of milestones in the system. This creates balance between innovating and maintaining quality. The government should monitor the value of diplomas, as well as the professionalism of the teaching staff and the availability of sufficient public funds.

3.5 HOGER BEDRIJFSDIPLOMA (HBd) – Higher Professional Diploma – non-formal (related to level 5)

(source: www.leidoacademy.nl and www.hogerbedrijfsdiploma.nl)

Leido has taken the initiative for introducing a non-formal type of qualification, using the NLQF level 5. The register is open from January 2015 on, and it will be one of the topics during the LLL-Forum, as it can be a breakthrough for having more flexible learning pathways from level 4 to level 6.

Characteristics of the HBD

The main features of the HBD are:

1. The underlying program of HBD has a strong labor market relevance and developed in consultation with the relevant professional field, matched to jobs and professions within a particular sector. The HBD is, where possible, be positioned at level 5 of the Dutch Qualifications Framework for education (NLQF), on which the Associate Degree (AD) within the higher education is located.
 2. The study of HBD program has a substantial size, thereby distinguishing itself from short, targeted corporate training.
 3. The courses provide an HBD, stand with their providers grouped by sector of the field mentioned in the national HBD-register.
 4. Each group has a so-called HBD Sectoral Dialogue Committee, with experts from the field and the providers, who each year under the independent management by the Leido Academy judges whether a HBD program still meets the criteria.
 5. The HBD is provided in the private sector and therefore there is no opportunity for a government funding, but may therefore be offered more flexible than an Ad programme.
-

3.6 The Government will take the lead in ‘lifelong learning’ (Kabinet grijpt in bij Leven lang Leren)

(Nieuwsbericht | 31-10-2014)

After a long period of ‘silence’ the government had decided to take the lead for having more possibilities in adult education for the composition of flexible learning pathways. This is based on an advice of a commission, installed by the Ministry of Education in 2013, to start with pilots and experiments. We have good hope to have this issue on the agenda of the LLL-Forum.

News Flash... of the Ministry about this initiative:

(source: www.rijksoverheid.nl)

With a comprehensive and coherent package of measures, the government will encourage adults to continue learning, even if they already have a job. College part-time students in care, welfare and technique receive vouchers enabling them to buy (part of a) study, training will provide more tailored for their part-time students, it becomes easier to gain knowledge and skills to recognize an employee has already officially and in VET (MBO) is it possible to retrieve certificates for part

of the training. The Cabinet approved this proposal by the ministers Bussemaker of Education, Culture and Science and Asscher of Social Affairs and Employment.

The government is thus making an end to the impasse which the theme Lifelong Learning held for years in its grip, while the participation of adults in part-time higher education declined steadily. The turnaround is badly needed because the labor market is changing rapidly. Jobs disappear and there will be new jobs. Young people are trained for jobs that we do not know they will still exist. But workers must keep learning, to keep up with changes in their jobs or to transfer in time to another job.

The current model of Lifelong Learning is no longer adequate. Adults follow particular courses that focus on the current position and work or they are forced into the straitjacket of a full-time student. The measures in the government letter LLP, which closely follow the advice of the commission Rinnooy Kan, will change this.

3.7 Social-Economic Council: Higher Professional Education and LLL **Mariette Hamer's speech during New Year's meeting Dutch Association for HEIs**

Close cooperation between schools for better transitions between different school types... giving a complete picture of the labor market for students... and guidance and tailored support for young people in their orientation (continued) studies and careers... With these words SER (Social-Economic Council) chairman Mariette Hamer pleaded during the New Year's meeting of the Dutch Association of HEIs (Vereniging Hogescholen) for ambition and momentum in higher education. The SER focuses in the future with full force on education and knowledge. After all, they are drivers of growth, innovation and employment, emphasized Hamer.

Developments and their implications

In her speech, Hammer spoke about the fast-changing world. In this context, she mentioned a number of developments that are specific to higher education very important. For example, the future labor market where jobs are at the top and the bottom will increase while jobs disappear by mid-technology applications. Hamer also pointed out that the speed of development is increasing exponentially. "The education prepares children for jobs that do not yet exist, they will use technology that was not invented yet, in order to solve problems that are unknown now." Finally Hamer called the use of co-creation. Blurs the distinction between institution and individual in our society because individuals themselves are carriers of institutions. Co-creation is a form of organizing and innovation, having as basis that sharing knowledge leads to multiplication. The complex world of the 21st century, after all, requires solutions which closed organizations can't offer.

"All these developments bring uncertainties and entail risks for society, the economy, the labor market, for you and for me," Hammer stated. "Working people will have to invest a lot in themselves and are willing to develop continuously." She also pointed out the increasing differences in the position of high and low-skilled. Hammer: "They are undermining social cohesion in our society."

Importance of education

"The uncertainties and risks underline for me once more the importance of education, and so on higher professional education, for our society, our prosperity and our children," emphasized Hamer. "Good education, at all stages of life for everyone and aims to bring up to the flowering of each individual, each talent." One task for education but also for the SER.

The SER has now started exploring learning in the future, in which one looks at the way in which education and the labor market parties can respond by 'real' life-long learning and better cooperation. Thus, the SER anticipates various issues raised by the government which he wants the council to ask for advice in the course of 2015.

Challenges

The future prospects outlined by Hamer are in accordance with her challenges. "Not in the least

challenges to colleges as trainers of a substantial and important part of our future workforce. The higher knowledge intensity of many professions leads to an increasing demand for higher education. That kind of education gets more to do with influx of adults who are already working and want the school themselves, using training and retraining. Higher Professional Education will have to develop tailored to this target education."

Another and one of the most complex challenges facing higher education, according to Hammer demand to train for a labor market and a professional whose higher education really only few can know. Therefore, it is important that educational institutions collaborate structurally with businesses linked to industries and close to the area where the institution is located.

As a final challenge called the SER chairman to students smoothly by guiding their education phase and a good preparation to give the labor market. "This requires that young people learn who they are, what their strengths and weaknesses are and where they lead you on."

3.8 DUTCH EDUCATION COUNCIL ABOUT LIFELONG LEARNING - ADVICE

In January 2015 the Dutch Education Council published an advice for the government about LLL. Here the most important recommendations

To be prepared for a future in which a person performs multiple functions in the labor market, citizens must be well trained and continue to develop their knowledge and skills. The Education Board wants to encourage learning at all stages of life.

The board has four basic functions to 'lifelong learning':

- Repair: who has no training course at an early age, must be able to catch up later;
- Change in career: who later in life discovers that he wants to do something else or discovered abilities, should be able to receive training to make a switch;
- Keep up to date and progress in society: adults should be updating their knowledge and skills in order to keep their labor market position intact and work to improve their position;
- socio-cultural and personal job: teaching people not only for their working lives, but also to continue to develop in a general sense.

To achieve these basic functions optimally, the Board made a number of recommendations.

1. One strengthen supply;
2. Allows stakeholders to invest in post-initial education;
3. Make higher education attractive to workers;
4. Redeem knowledge and skills learned outside school; and formulate a vision of the future for adult education; and
5. Requires teachers to continuing training to shape their professionalism.

3.9 Strategic Agenda for Higher Education – and LLL (June 2015)

In June 2015 the Ministry for Education published the new Strategic Agenda for the Higher Education Area in the Netherlands, for the next decade. In this document there is also a chapter about the plans for having a more flexible structure, offering LLL possibilities for adult learners.

The further implementation of the Associate degree in HE is also mentioned as a key element for this.

Here this chapter. In the coming months there will be meetings and discussions about the national strategy on LLL, as mentioned earlier here.

3.8. Flexible system for Lifelong Learning

Education does not lead to a job for life, but for a career in an increasingly dynamic labor market. The rate of change jobs and professions, disappear and emerge, is increasing, with more mobility - increasingly also between different sectors - as a result. While demand continues to grow for higher education.

To remain durable and flexible, it is therefore essential that people continue to develop. It is more important than ever to gain constantly new knowledge and skills, above existing skills levels. To this end, there are plenty of opportunities for lifelong learning and it is important that people actually use these capabilities, even at the stage that they already have a job. Workers learn in their workplace, for example by working together with colleagues and by the occasional task or function to change. In addition, here for is higher education an important social mission, both for the private institutions as well as for public funded education.

Education should be flexible and demand-oriented, so that it meets the needs and requirements of different target groups in higher education, the adults already working are a target with an increasing proportion. For this group it is even more important that education fits in well with the knowledge and skills they have acquired earlier, and that no time is wasted learning things that they actually have already mastered. There is a need for training programs that are designed to measure, connect the potential-present and needs in the workplace and to use the opportunities to learn online. Also, there is a need to participate in phased (modules) courses. This allows people to tune their study activities more to peaks and troughs in crowds, in work life balance and by stacking modules to graduate.

Therefore, the cabinet in October, on the advice of the commission Rinnooy Kan announced a number of measures designed to maintain the flexibility and responsiveness of the part-time higher education. Aim is that teaching for full-adults is attractive, so adult participation in education in higher education rises. With these measures, the trend of declining inflows adults must be reversed in higher education.

Taking over by the commission Rinnooy Kan the advised measures are also in line with the wishes of the NRTO, as expressed in their position paper 'Learning Worthwhile'. The main action in this context pilots flexibility and experimentation question financing, which together far-reaching impact in the flexibility of the system of higher education and the realization of a culture of lifelong learning. These are aimed at both the government-funded, if the non-funded institutions, both major parties in the supply of part-time higher education. The experiments are extensively monitored. If interim effect measurements warrant it, the Minister may decide to extend the experiments or limited expansion of the experiments to other programs.

Important for Lifelong Learning is also that the supply of Associate degrees and professional masters is extended, as I have already mentioned. In the experiments demand funding, which will begin in September 2016, the existing funding system will be changed in financing through vouchers and institutions have more opportunities to work modularly and care at various locations education. It allows a more level playing field that is created between the funded and non-funded institutions.

Within the experiments will continue working closely with employers. This creates an offering that is flexible and demand-driven. The experiments with demand funding will initially be implemented in the areas of Engineering, Health and Social Services, because there the need for employee training and gaining higher education qualifications is greatest.

The pilots need more flexible institutions no longer work laid out in advance and offer described in the form of units, but can describe issues also in this way instead in the form of units of learning outcomes. The coupling between study-points and the number of hours of study load is released. The pilot is in control of its output; it's about what people need to know in the end and can not to where, how, when, and how much time they learn it.

THEME 1: STATEMENTS FOR THE LLL-FORUMS

Here a short list of statements, related to theme 1:

1. We need more support from the world of work for the NLQF for LLL.
 2. We need more cooperation between the organisations involved in formal, non-formal and informal learning, to share experiences and good practices.
 3. A national platform for LLL (including these organisations) can be an interesting partner for the government, looking at adult education.
 4. We need pilots for flexible learning pathways in adult learning, combining formal, non-formal and informal learning, having this platform for feedback.
 5. The permeability between VET and SCHE needs more attention using experiments for ECVET.
 6. We have to promote the Ad as an instrument for specific target groups.
 7. A national platform for LLL needs good contacts with the VNG, the organization for Dutch municipalities.
-

Theme 2: LLL actors

Lifelong learning actors: taking the jump towards learner-centred systems

This theme is for us as Leido linked to the following interesting and trending topics:

1. Having specific departments of an institution for higher professional education ('hogeschool' in Dutch) for offering Associate degree-programmes in a regional setting, in cooperation with regional providers of vocational education and training – called: Regional Associate College (RAC).
2. Flexibility in VET (Vocational Education and Training), looking at more LLL-opportunities for adult learners – and at the possibilities for transfer from VET to HE, using electives for students in a programme at level 4.
3. Opportunities for more flexible pathways in VET in the coming years? If so, can this situation be a good practice for Higher Professional Education?
4. More initiatives by organisations, public and non-public, for having LLL on the agenda

1 REGIONALE ASSOCIATE COLLEGES

One of the key elements of our LLL-strategy as Leido is the way institutions for higher (professional education ('hogescholen') and VET-providers ('mbo-instellingen') can use the Associate degree programs at level 5 of the NLQF for more flexible and also more 'tailor-made' learning pathways from VET to HE. This can be the case for youngsters have a degree at level 4 and for employees having work-experience at that level or even higher. That's why it is important that those institutions are cooperating in a very practical setting, using each other strengths.

One of the 'solutions' for this it to operate under the name of a 'Regional Associate College'. This is the brand of a department of the HEI involved in this, having an institutional strategy and approach for all programmes leading to the Associate degree.

Leido is supporting this development, having a national working group, bringing representatives of HEIs together.

(Source: Leido Academy – working group on RACs) – and LeiDocument 46 (April 2015)

REGIONAAL ASSOCIATE COLLEGE (RAC)

1 Introduction

Following the introduction in 2006 of the Associate degree, from now on we have the 'username': HBO Associate (or simply: Ad, when it comes to the acronym), is constantly looking for ways to improve the connection MBO HBO. At some point the so-called B format was introduced, the first year of the Ad may be given on the basis of a formal cooperation in a MBO location.

However, the pilots thus appeared to not really work for all sorts of different reasons, and thereby disappears more or less this format out of the picture. Under the current law, the possibility is still there, but at this point it appears that the cooperation agreement in a totally different way should be rearranged. Recommendations will be made for it, as the evaluation of the pilots will be completed in 2016. Also on the part of Leido Academy we will make a contribution to this discussion.

Meanwhile, it appears that other forms of cooperation MBO HBO are working best. The Rotterdam model, made possible by the fact that the college and vocational schools are located in the same town (so there are no legal obstacles), is no more successful. Other colleges and

vocational institutions have subsequently wondered whether acquisition of this model - or something like it - is interesting for their own regional cooperation. Developments such as decline in efficiency, the introduction of feudalism and the rapid changes in the labor market (and therefore a growth in demand for shorter programs) compel HBO institutions also to ascertain where the Ad can be deployed. Furthermore, the government seems to see the Ad as well as a tool to use when implementing the new Strategic Agenda for Higher Education. As an extension of the RAC concept is so interesting that indicated the government to more colleges can best put it to work and can go.

In November 2014, seven colleges received these signals at an early stage and led by the Hogeschool Rotterdam and the Association of Colleges they consider how to respond to all of this. Therefore, from Leido side, since September last year, we are working on an own-RAC working group to indicate what might to be involved in a Regional Associate College included in discussions.

2 ELECTIVES IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES AT LEVEL 4

From 2016 on students in VET can take electives as part of a programme at level 5, to prepare them for the start in higher education. Leido has taken the initiative in 2013 to have a national working group to discuss the possibilities for national electives, also with the focus on the Associate degree, where offered by HEIs.

Here the text of a document with information about the current situation.

(source: www.leidoacademy.nl)

In general

In the qualification structure is room for training at the level 4 of VET to include electives for students willing to be prepared for HBO. The name of an elective is KVH. In the past eighteen months on several fronts at how to achieve such KVH's next formal meeting of the knowledge centers. Based on the commitment to the transfer from MBO to HBO and the design of continual learning is thereby a so-called. Broad national consultative Group (BLOCK) established, with experts from LICA (National expertise and information center for enrollment in HBO) and LEIDO (national network for lifelong learning incl. the Associate Degree).

The BLOCK is joined by experts from a number of centers of excellence for which the flow is an important point, given the numbers of MBO students who opt for HBO. BLOCK has consulted regularly with a view to making specific proposals for the establishment of the connection with MBO college, with optimum use of the opportunity to use KVH's.

Results

All of this has resulted in a generally worn process in order to arrive at a three types of KVH's:

- KVH-I, a general MBO HBO wide choice of 240 study hours, focusing on general issues that may increase the likelihood of students being successful in college.
- KVH-II, a sector wide choice of well 240 SBUs, with components that can optimize a start in college for the sector and the likelihood of achieving the first year is greater.
- KVH-III, a choice of 240 SBU's which is very specifically with a focus on one or two vocational qualifications can be linked as immediately apparent that by far the largest part of the MBO population continues to HBO (considering things like efficiency and employment, nationwide or regional).

3 MINISTER: MORE ATTENTION FOR WORKBASED LEARNING IN VET (June 2015)

In her vision letter 'A responsive VET for high-quality craftsmanship,' which Jet Bussemaker as Dutch minister for education on September 14 sent to the Chamber, she endorses the space that the revised qualifications have for innovation. This also applies to the choice to share and to have

regional cooperation. The increasing dynamics of the labor market demands it. The Minister again gives support to the opinions of education and business.

This year will be introduced the vocational 'elective module'. This gives the latest developments from now the possibility for having quickly a place in vocational education. Often these are in the sharing of knowledge between occupations. United in the SBB (Foundation for VET and Labour Market) she will invest in education and business in this way, in future-proof balance between craftsmanship and innovation. For example, GPS information, quickly rising in ICT occupations, but also in construction, gaming and management of public spaces. This requires the optional part Geo-ICT developed.

Public-private partnerships and tailored education

The minister encourages in her letter the public-private partnership for practical education to size. The private sector participates among others with knowledge, leading edge technologies and practical instructors. Learning in practice is a model of cooperation in the training of vocational students. In the area schools and businesses have been intensive forms of cooperation in line with the wishes of students and training companies. E.g. through vocational training and organizing education in one location, as with De Vries Makkum BV Ship Building, also the Best Learning Company 2014 and ROC Friese Poort. The students are 40 hours a week at the shipyard, where they have two educational sessions for teachers of the ROC.

Strengthening work-based learning ('bbl')

In consultation with businesses in the region a proportion of schools already vary in teaching by teachers and learning in practice. Thus sought within existing pathways to the optimal balance between teaching and learning in the practice of the profession. Education and social partners within SBB are joining forces to further decline in the job pathway (bbl). BBL pathways offer many young people and workers the best chance of a good vocational training. In countries like Germany, Austria and Switzerland is BBL an asset and a key success factor for low youth unemployment. Government support is needed in this endeavor.

4 FLEXIBILITY IN VET: IDEAS... ALSO FOR HIGHER EDUCATION?

In the governmental letter about 'lifelong learning'(October 2014) a range of ideas about getting more flexibility in Vocational Education and Training is mentioned. Some of them are similar to what has been proposed for Higher Education but the most interesting point of view is looking for individuals to make the most of doing a study. It is not about what can't be done (sorry, 90% is OK but no diploma...), but on what is important in a personal way and for opening new opportunities on the labour market (what is OK... giving certificates).

In this way the student (and for sure employees, people looking for a job...) can put more in the centre of a learning pathway, to take decisions about getting a full degree at a moment that the effort for completing the programme is relevant. It is in that way also a positive approach for youngsters who are not able to complete a study programme for all kinds of reasons, dropping out (a negative experience...), but being aware of the option – being some years older and living in different circumstances – to go back to school...

5 USE OF RPL (Validation)

Dutch Knowledge Centre for RPL (EVC) and HvA
(sources: www.kenniscentrumevc.nl and www.hva.nl)

RPL (Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning – VNFIL) is an interesting instrument, but after a good start a few years ago the public financed Higher Education Institutions are using it most of the time for giving exemptions for formal programmes and for shortening the learning pathways (which is in practice difficult). In VET the RPL-procedures are more possible, having national standards for the qualifications, which is not the case in HE...

Leido will start a discussion for using the Associate degree more for RPL (VNFIL), but not a stand-alone activity. It has to be embedded in human resources management, in cooperation with

a strategy by HEIs for their alumni. For the LLL-Forum a proposal will be put on the table, with some of these elements, to get an Associate degree (two year programme):

- A HEI starts talking with the employer and the employee about getting a degree... 10 months before the start for the study year...
- Having a RPL-procedure about what can be skipped in the programme and what has to be done of the first study year... clear at 6 month for the start...
- Having a personal 'repair programme' in one semester of the academic year... having modules (school, e-learning, self-study) to complete the first year programme, and maybe to get some exemptions for the final, second study year... ending in June or December before the start of the 'full study'...
- So...the final year to complete the Associate degree does not have a 'Swiss Cheese Schedule'... and not 60 ects spread over two years... compact...

6 ADVOCATING FOR A LLL-CENTRE IN A BIG CITY (EINDHOVEN)

The role of a municipality in helping people, not having a job, not making a living. But the council of the city is also involved in formal education, but... it is not easy to do it in a structural way. In VET and HE institutions are very autonomous, and of course they need a helping hand (money, contacts, networks...), but some influence, never.

Ad Vermeulen, living in Eindhoven (a very big city in the south) and a former member of the council, has an opinion about it. He is also a former member of the Steering Group of Leido, for the Associate degree, so 'he knows where he is talking about'.

He is advocating for a Lifelong Learning Centre, supported by the Municipality of Eindhoven – in the local paper. Here his ideas...

Eindhovens Dagblad, 15 april 2015

Author: Ad Vermeulen

A Center for 'permanent education' in the Netherlands is nowhere better in place than in Eindhoven. That is what subsequent opinion article by Ad Vermeulen, former councilor for D66 in Eindhoven, and he has worked in various positions at Fontys Hogescholen.

Learning is what you do your whole life long. There are very few people who at the end of their active working life are doing the same work as when they started their career. When I left secondary school in 1966 I started working at Galvano (wholesale plumbing). After a few years, I knew that my future was not there. That was the start of a lifelong learning that has not yet ended now in my 65th year (at least I hope).

Only a few 'hands and feet' for this idea...

I think many people will recognize this. That many people here would like to recognize themselves in this but by certain circumstances or ignorance afterwards they regret that they have not fully exploited their talent. With a little help, they would probably have got more opportunities. That would not only help them, but it would also have been good for society. Think of the truants or those who are jaded after years of having done the same work. Lifelong learning has called the attention of the government, but they have, in spite of the necessary investment in such projects, done not so much till now.

Recently, our Education Minister Jet Bussemaker will boost it by setting up a voucher system, making it possible to make a claim for long periods on study law.

In the countries where we like to look at, is lifelong learning further addressed. Germany invests in business together with the government in centers for lifelong learning, Denmark and Sweden herein anticipate and several years ago I noticed in Lille (France) the Institut Lillois Education Permanente.

Innovation attached to knowledge

If somewhere in the Netherlands is a city that a Centre for Lifelong Learning deserves, it is Eindhoven. We are a city where innovation linked to knowledge has a central place. Let us become the first city in the Netherlands with a Center for Lifelong Learning! This fits perfectly with our Brainport reputation. An environment in which increasingly is asked for new knowledge, knowledge sharing and securing of this knowledge.

Of course in Eindhoven activities take place that may be associated with a life-long learning. Our educational and commercial institutions are active with training and retraining for those who want to develop their careers or simply want to enrich their knowledge. There is a service institute for learning and work, where less qualified people often making use of, but nowhere is a center where all training opportunities are bundled.

In collaboration with industry and educational institutions, the municipality may take the full initiative to let flourish all the potential talent in Eindhoven. Investments in design, we have already done enough, now let we have talent development in a central position.

Nice addition to structured learning routes

Furthermore it fits perfectly in the current developments in the educational field. The principle of 'individual learning pathways' is increasingly in the spotlight. See for the just officially opened Democratic School in Eindhoven and the recent statements of Paul Rosenmöller in his role as chairman of the Secondary Education Council, which advocates a differentiated graduation profile for a high school student. A Center of Lifelong Learning is a nice addition to the structured educational tracks set up before someone is 22 years old. Then you have often to find out yourself what is possible

Does this mean that such a center should offer trainings? No, for that we have enough available providers. But where are all the possibilities for study, training and courses can be found? Should, where appropriate (especially concerning the newer, and for many unfamiliar knowledge in our Brainport), the C-LLL also can take the lead. Knowledge sharing in our own Talent Valley! I wonder whether we could give 'hands and feet' in Eindhoven on Lifelong Learning. Who picks up the gauntlet?

7 UNEMPLOYED AND STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS – ALSO AS AN ADULT

Lifelong learning is of all ages... of course. But a specific situation is not having a job, looking for opportunities and there a no paid jobs... What to do? Starting your own business is an option, but who to write the script for the start-up? Leido has started in 2014 a project to help those people, offering them a course to discover the right personal competences, with the title 'Life Management'.

Recently a group of municipalities has decided to open up the opportunities for starting an own business, keeping the social assistance.

8 HARD TO FIND WORK? START YOURSELF A BUSINESS

In 2014 ventured 3500 people over 50 the leap into entrepreneurship. An increase of 40 percent over the previous year. Sometimes forced, as a 'normal' regular job is often difficult to find. Sometimes deliberately because the market demands it; companies nowadays prefer to hire an independent with a lot of experience.

Some advantage

Men are more entrepreneurial than women. 'Only' 30 percent of entrepreneurs are women, so learn the numbers from the Chamber of Commerce. These figures also indicate that not everyone survives. After one year, 86 percent of the companies are still standing. After three years it is 64 percent.

"Who will take over an existing business, has the best chance of success," Ivo de Jong knows as spokesman. "And someone with a lot of experience, good contacts and enough savings for not having to go to a bank for a loan, starting up a business, also has more chance."

Despite the greater chance of success in taking over an existing business, most entrepreneurs start as a freelancer or self-employed (zzp'er, in Dutch). That is also a company by law and one has to register with the Chamber of Commerce and to choose for a legal form. Usually that is a 'sole proprietorship'. To start a business someone does not need diplomas but for certain professions professional requirements apply.

Starting from the unemployment benefit (WW)

The benefits agency UWV offers such unemployed people an arrangement to start a business. That sounds attractive, but there are a number of strict conditions. The arrangement provides 26 weeks to start the business. During this half year, the benefit is reduced by 26 percent. In return the obligation to apply for a job is not relevant.

All the money you earn with the company, you can keep. You are not allowed for the first 26 weeks to work for the old employer under penalty of a fine.

After six months in the arrangement for starters, there is not anymore a right to have a benefit because of unemployment. If you don't make enough money for a living, then you are entitled to get assistance. Who owns a house, has according to the UWV no right to that and has to find a job as quickly as possible.

Not everyone with a benefit because of unemployment is eligible for this arrangement: it is only possible in consultation with the UWV. That organisation is mainly looking at the feasibility of the business plans.

Source: www.plusonline.nl – August 2015

THEME 2: STATEMENTS FOR THE LLL-FORUMS

Here a list of statements, related to theme 2:

8. The identity of a RAC has to be an official one in 2018.
9. The electives in the VET4 programmes have to be based on a combination of work and study, if they are focusing on transfer to an Associate degree programme.
10. The HBd is a missink link in the Dutch system.
11. Developments in VET and HE have to be coordinated, if relevant for the transfer from VET to HE.

Theme 3: LLL communities

Lifelong learning communities: partnerships and shared responsibility

1 NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

For us as Leido the aim of the project to have at the end a national platform for LLL is crucial. The Netherlands is a small country, so it must not so difficult to bring all stakeholders together, to talk about shared targets, ideas, strategies... and with our government about its role in helping them to do their work...

The network that is managed by Leido since 1999 shows that it will be possible in this way. There is a need for such a community based on common interests and working with a low budget, knowing that all the people involved are using their time and energy as part of their job (and mostly paid by their employer). The contacts with decision makers, ministries, non-governmental institutions and national associations are pleased to join meeting, to learn more about what is happening... and the hear all sorts of opinions that can be used for new plans, regulations and agendas... So, with mutual respects for the responsibilities...

We will start with the partner organisations that already has been participated in the pilot 'DUCIS-LLL', the Dutch Civil Society on LLL, in 2012 and 2013. We have learned a lot of this experiment. The experiences will be used in this project.

The 'pillars' of the National Platform LLL can be these organisations:

- Leido (levels 4, 5 and 6 – formal and non-formal education)
- Learning for Life (informal education)
- Partnership on LLL (VET, RPL, ECVET)
- NL3H (higher education)
- NRTO.

But we will provide also information about European initiatives for having LLL (and VET, SCHE and level 5) on the agenda of the policy-makers. If there will be good and effective progression in that international field, it can be helpful for what is happening in the Netherlands.

1 PARTNERSHIP ON LLL (source: www.nplll.nl)

A number of labor market instruments in 2014 commissioned by the Ministry of Education under-hosted by the Partnership for Lifelong Learning.

It's about:

1. NLQF - Dutch Qualifications Framework
2. APL and other validation tools
3. ECVET pilots - European Credit System of Vocational Education and Training

Connection NLQF ECVET and EVC

NLQF, ECVET and APL are tools for validating a person's education level. The aim is to promote labor mobility.

The NLQF validates the level of qualification, ECVET at the level of parts of a qualification and APL and other validation tools set the value at the level of the individual.

Within the Partnership LLP is in pilots working concretely link between these instruments. In addition, shaping it continues to separate from the tools of interest.

2 LEARNING FOR LIFE

(source: www.platformlearnforlife.nl)

LEARN FOR LIFE is a network of local, regional and national organizations active in the broad field of non-formal education and a platform for exchange and far greater depth of experiences on adult learning from the perspective of the European policy on lifelong learning.

Adult Education in times of crisis - the Dutch case Crisis in NL

Article published in 2012 on the website: www.platformlearnforlife.nl

The worldwide credit crisis of 2008 hit the Netherlands hard. Since the Netherlands has an open economy with a small domestic market and a large foreign market, the crisis affected the Dutch economy seriously. In 2009 and 2010, the government earmarked a total of almost €6 billion to stimulate the economy. A further €1.5 billion was provided by the provinces and municipalities. The measures were intended to promote a sustainable economy: reviving and maintaining employment, supporting business, and accelerating investment in construction, infrastructure and housing. To cushion the heaviest blows of the crisis, the government invested extra in keeping people working and businesses running. As a result, public spending grew considerably while public revenue (from taxes etc.) shrank. This is because businesses were making less profit, and people were earning less. If the government fails to take radical measures, Dutch public finances will be unsustainable. To tackle the budget deficit and reduce public spending, the government has proposed a package of measures aimed at saving €18 billion.

Adult education and crisis

Does the crisis affect adult education in the Netherlands? Yes and no. Yes, because less money is available than in other countries. No, because even before the crisis, the government policy was not focused on investments and increasing the budgets for education. In this sense, the crisis is not a breaking point. Here Netherlands differs from other countries where this is clearly the case.

The policy of the Dutch government is focused on creating a wider stakeholdership for innovation in the knowledge society and declining governmental influence and budgets. In particular the funds for non-formal education in the Netherlands is severely limited since 2000. The joint collaboration between the Ministry for Education and the Ministry for Social Affairs has been terminated, lifelong learning has been reduced to an one-way labour market oriented approach. Learning and working is changing in learning is working and working is learning.

The business sector is stimulated to contribute strongly from own resources, the social sector has been forced to be more market oriented, the central government places the responsibility more and more at local communities and citizens are obliged to take their own responsibility in terms of employability and for social participation and integration as well. The outcomes nowadays: migrants have to pay their own integration in society, students have to pay their own study and citizens have to take over the reduced social-cultural provisions in the neighborhoods.

In fact the adult education sector supports this policy by its ideology of active citizenship, participation and lifelong learning. National umbrella organisations have disappeared already for a while now. Providers of non-formal education are depending strongly on a mix of local government, fundraising and orientation on the market. EU-grants are more and more complementary for investments in innovation

Adult learning as domain of professionals

Old and traditional organisations and institutes are disappearing, new alliances and partnerships are developing. However, the adult education field in the Netherlands is and will stay mainly a

professional domain. Learning of adults is mainly entrusted or one could say left to professionals (rarely volunteers) in the capacity of teachers, trainers, coaches, or in some cases, counselors or therapists. These specialists organize and guide the learning of adults, often focusing on individuals in collectives and are faced with the question of who decides what, how, where, when, why and especially WHO teaches there. The majority of the system around Lifelong Learning is actually based on what a small group of policy makers and decision makers find of value to others. And those who need skills or citizenship get deservedly rid of policymakers and political structures. Lifelong Learning is far too often still seen as "putting knowledge into empty vessels". Should we be surprised then that the results of numerous learning activities (for several billion annually) are often disappointing or even 'untraceable'? Or that people call they won't no education? This makes it very important but also very difficult to identify the professionalism of teachers, trainers, coaches, etc. Who are the (NEW?) Professionals in adult learning (3.0?) And for whom do they exist? Unfortunately, the how, what, why and when of the 'adult learning' is not crystallized adequately in any scientific theory). Therefore the question remains: what is the professionalism of adult learning?

Open Space

On the other hand the retiring government creates a lot of space in which new initiatives can be developed, new plans can be made and new projects can be started. One can say adult education professionals are placed in a new and different role: they have to take the initiatives, there is no longer a government that will do it for them. Three success factors are crucial here: entrepreneurship, collaboration instead of competition and ongoing professionalization. Connection with existing initiatives is important: focusing on what is still available, not on what once was. Anticipating on new developments is important as well. For the medium long term it is good to look at the demographic structure of the Netherlands. A large part of the population will soon retire. In about five years it is likely that labor shortages will emerge in many sectors, despite the crisis. This will create new demands for cooperation between the economic sector and adult education.

Adult education should primarily focus on the demands of the learner, not on the opportunities of supply. A strict separation of vocational and adult education is not necessary. For adults, this separation just does not exist. It is clear and proved that non-formal pathways may be important success factors in combination with vocational training for learners from vulnerable groups. It's all about the purpose and the best way to achieve it. Adult education 3.0 needs to be learner oriented. Simultaneously it has to create benefits for national economy and society. Adult education is not separated from other social organisations, it works only when it is embedded and integrated in other policies and measures. Adult education is no longer located in institutions, adult education 3.0 can take place everywhere. Also here it is about purpose and the best way to achieve it. That is the complexity of the current and future of adult education. In this complex field increasing cooperation between professionals and providers is crucial to survive. Therefore the field should launch initiatives together and in order to be heard as one voice.

Evidence based

As a political question the financing of adult education has to be based on reliable data and statistics on the outcomes of adult education, however the empirical evidence for costs and benefits of adult education was often hard to quantify. Nowadays more than ever, that evidence for the output of adult education is available. Adult educators are developing key indicators as well as identifying success factors instead of re-inventing the wheels. Standards are developed to change the mindset from "problems" to "potential" and there is more focus on social return on investment. Important scientific research yields have come into the limelight.

Conclusion

It is an illusion to think that adult education can ensure that nobody is left behind in the current economic crisis. Adult education can only provide alternative pathways that substantially may and can improve the conditions of many excluded people. In the field of Lifelong Learning, the responsibility for adult learning professional defending the perspective of the learner, who has in a responsible manner the right to apply theory on its own case.

Professionals need to adhere to their professional craftsmanship based on scientific findings and theory. For such professionals, it is important that there is a platform with space for exchange between professionals, academics, policy and adult learners, a place for reflection on existing practices and theories, a place where bottom-up initiatives stature can get and where professional discussions related to the art can take place. In the Netherlands Learn for Life is playing this role, in Europe EAEA should take this role: being a network of professionals rather than an umbrella organisation of national organisations.

Dennis Wacht / Member of the Board LEARN FOR LIFE -

3 NL3H – Higher Education

NL3H is the result of the project, funded by the Dutch government during three years at the end of the last decade. It was meant for seven HEIs for professional higher education, to look for new effective strategies on lifelong learning.

We give the summary of the monitoring report, still showing a lot of interesting conclusions.

Summary NL3H project on LLL

(source: Ministry of Education)

Parts of the Summary

Anchoring lifelong learning policy and administration

There is before, during and after the project period by all colleges explicit attention to the anchoring of both substantive vision of lifelong learning as well as the resulting organizational and financial consequences. This has been through a multi-year project and vision documents and action plans consistently translated into agreements between the Executive Board and decentralized operating directors (including directors of support functions).

At most colleges these agreements have been explicitly included in the management contracts and are therefore part of the progress meetings between the Executive Board and directors.

Adjusting the organization on lifelong learning

The colleges have all made a big battle in adapting the internal organization. The impact from the seriously committed to lifelong learning, internal management should not be underestimated. Because of the breadth and scale of the program came during the process at the colleges itself to be more pressure on the internal organization. The development capacity in the local sections, co-creation, conferences and custom questions from companies that made questions about registrations, scheduling, communications, and logistics cost increases.

It became clear that LLL processes as separate product 'should also be handled by the various staff services as such. The 'there' organizing made in addition to the core business of full-time students is not feasible and effective. The organization of the logistics of lifelong learning and the actual creation of the prerequisites listed by the Executive Board of the colleges is an increasingly crucial factor.

The projects within the colleges that had to do with the internal and logistical aspects have often improved the program and strengthening and broadening the (staff) services are much more involved in the widespread introduction of lifelong learning in the institutions.

Knowledge sharing and collaboration

To have as colleges internal (employees) and external (market and other colleges) contacts is considered a critical success factor for the success of the program. Namely in view of the ambition to develop into comprehensive knowledge centers for lifelong learning quickly who know the market, which thus stand in interaction and thereby also getting better, can deliver faster and customized.

Therefore, the colleges have opted for a systematic implementation of an internal learning culture programs for translation in the TBO development (Future Sustainability Education) and for locking by embedding in the PDCA (plan-do-check-act).

4 NRTO

An important partner for us is the NRTO, the Dutch Council of Training and Education. This organization is the umbrella for private institutions, offer all kinds of education, mostly if a non-formal setting but also formal (recognized by the government). For the 'National Platform on LLL' we will cooperate with NRTO, as we have done some years ago when we did a pilot for such a platform under the name 'DUCIS-LLL'. Here some information about NRTO.

(Source: www.nrto.nl)

The NRTO

The NRTO, Dutch Council of Training and Education, is the umbrella trade association of all private training and education agencies in The Netherlands. The NRTO promotes the interests of private providers of training and education. Companies as well as other trade associations can join the NRTO.

At present the NRTO represents nearly 200 members with a combined turnover of around € 800 million and over 615.000 students and participants per annum.

The NRTO has an important role in promoting private training and education in the Netherlands and is the natural interlocutor for political parties, ministries, associations for state-funded education, NGO's and the media.

The NRTO stimulates accredited and recognized high-quality, flexible and diverse education and training courses based on equal and open competition with other providers.

The NRTO is a member of the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (known as VNONCW), the largest employers' organization in The Netherlands.

5 CHAIN5

In Europe one of the issues high on the agenda for education (VET and HE) is the role of level 5 of the EQF. That's why Leido took in 2013 the initiative to start CHAIN5, as an international community of practice for every organization, network, association and institution involved in level 5 programmes.

(source: www.chain5.net)

IN SHORT...

CHAIN5 is the new community for those who are involved in the developments concerning level 5 of the European Qualifications Framework. Members are (and you can be also one of them):

- national and international associations, networks... for VET, HE, SCHE, HVET... and other qualifications on level 5...
- employers' organisations...
- students' organisations...
- Universities, Colleges, Universities of Applied Sciences, Institutions for VET... private and public financed...
- Business Academies...
- experts...
- researchers...
- consultancy agencies...

MISSION

- the exchange of good practices in education,

- the diversity of the implementation of such links internationally and mostly in Europe,
- the relation and relevance of Level 5 in the Bologna process,
- the relation and relevance of Level 5 to the labour market: having an independent, non-political meeting place for best practices concerning qualifications at level 5, having the specific position of them in different countries in mind, emphasising the things we have in common – to be discussed with our relevant stakeholders with an open mind in a trustful setting.

6 VET4EU2

In August 2014 the four European Associations for VET, EURASHE and EUCEN decided to work together, where relevant of course, under the name VET4EU2. This 'network' is an interesting partner for Leido and LLL-HUB.

(source: www.chain5.net)



The Barcelona Declaration - September 2014

On the 10th of July 2014, in Barcelona (Spain), the European networks EfVET, EUCEN, EUpro-VET, EURASHE, EVBB and EVTA (VET4EU2) have voiced the intention to continue and to intensify their cooperation. This intention has been ratified by the boards of all the associations and confirmed in a joint meeting September 23rd in Brussels.

In their 'Bruges Joint Declaration' from December 7, 2010 these European networks made clear that they are willing to support the European Commission by actively contributing to the realization of the Bruges communique and the goals of the EU2020-strategy for a 'smart, sustainable and inclusive growth'.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is crucial to achieve the 2020 Strategy goals, based on knowledge and innovation, to create an inclusive society with employment for all and to reach a real competitive and sustainable economy.

Hence they will coordinate and combine their activities for the coming years:

- to contribute to the development of an all-embracing strategy for lifelong learning, including advancement from and permeability between Vocational Education and Training and Higher (Professional and Academic) Education;
- to improve cooperation between companies, social partners, vocational training providers, and public institutions in VET and HE;
- to enhance the use of the best VET educational practices across European countries with the realization of considerable country to country differences;
- to develop VET as a core educational and practical tool to encourage social participation and social cohesion;
- to foster transnational and national mobility;
- to ensure Europe-wide standards for Quality Assurance in VET using EFQM and EQAVET approaches;
- to advice on the more practical implementation and stronger integration of European instruments for VET like Europass, EQF, ECVET, EQAVET to improve and or supplement national educational instruments in order to facilitate educational and employment mobility across countries. Also to extend these instruments where relevant, for qualifications at level 5 of the EQF, like Higher Vocational Education and Training (HVET) and Short Cycle Higher Education (SCHE);

- to foster flexibility in provision of VET and Higher (Professional) Education, and in transfer between those sectors, using procedures for recognition of prior learning in continuous and adult education;
- to promote the use of modular training and independently usable educational units in VET education in order to integrate initial and continued VET programs and to implement them in educational institutions;
- to promote the use of learning outcomes in validating and recognizing educational levels of achievement;
- to cooperate in developing work-based learning for young adults;
- to promote cross-country cooperation between leaders and management of VET institutions thus enhancing awareness of the importance of these developments at school and institutional level, and also in a regional setting.

Thus these European networks convene to foster their cooperation, which grew in the last four years, in order to achieve common European goals concerning VET and HE improvements in Europe.

The European networks contribute their competences and experiences to these European objectives and they present themselves as competent partners for the European Commission and other European institutions, networks and associations in the field of VET, HE and employment.

The networks commit themselves to regular semi-annual meetings and to objectives of a work program to realize consequently the Bruges Joint Declaration and the European goals for VET ET2020. They are going to contribute to the development of the policy goals for the next period, to be seen as input for the RIGA declaration. They will disseminate policy relevant information to their members.

The abbreviation VET4EU2 refers to the 4 networks that are mainly working in secondary VET and the two networks that work primarily in Higher Professional Education.

VET4EU2 could be heard as “VET for you too”, thus indicating that VET is an honorable educational route for all. It also refers to the route from VET to Higher Education, which should be considered as an equal option compared to the route through General (secondary) Education. Using this abbreviation is also an indication of the strong will to work together on the issues above.

MEMO

FLEXIBILITY IN VOCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION – LEVEL 4 AND HIGHER

Policy contribution

The Associations of VET providers combined In VET4EU2 want to contribute to the policy development in VET that is underway in evaluating and revising the Bruges communique. An important issue is the flexibility and connection between VET and higher (vocational) education. We recommend the following points as ingredients for shaping more flexible learning pathways, connecting VET and HE (as part of a ‘column for professional education’).

1. There is a need for more possibilities for people (regardless of age) after completing a level 4 program (the minimum entry requirement to higher education Institutions) to get a degree at levels 5 and higher.
2. In general there is a need to investigate routes that will allow youngsters having a level 4 VET qualification to enter HE with as less as possible thresholds, directly or after taking bridging courses (no more than 1 year). This means that a VET program should have specific modules to prepare students for HE - and that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) must be aware of these students as possible ‘clients’. HEIs delivering professional higher education can offer those bridging courses - in collaboration with and support from VET institutions. A flexible first semester or year can facilitate the transition from level 4 VET to HE.
3. Good practices within the EU and third countries of flexible learning pathways for VET students transferring to HE could be exploited and adapted to the needs of individual Member States.

It should be proposed to the DG EAC for VET/AE to make this the main subject of a VET Business Forum, having in mind that employers are involved in VET programs. Also the success of 'practical instruments' like apprenticeships, internships, projects as part of those programs are depending of the input of 'players' on the labor market.

As input for the Forum, the Associations are offering to prepare a draft document, with concrete ideas for 'The Column of Professional Education in 2020'.

4. Closer cooperation between institutions offering Higher Vocational Education and Training (HVET) and Short Cycle Higher Education (SCHE) is imperative according to the outcomes of the CEDEFOP study on the role of level 5 in countries having a NQF. This means that transfer from HVET to SCHE and from HVET or SCHE to Bachelor's programs (or other qualifications at level 6 of the EQF) can be more and more effective and attractive if a clear and coherent credit transfer system is in place.
5. The Associations can work together to bring together all parties involved to reach a mutually agreed on methodology and the instruments to be used towards accomplishing this very important task.
6. An impetus must be given for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning. All Members States have agreed to have at National level by January 2018, a mechanism for the recognition and transferring of Learning Outcomes acquired via non-formal and informal learning routes. The collaboration of all parties involved in HE, VET, HVET and SCHE, is imperative to facilitate successful and timely implementation of the mechanism for the recognition and transferring of LOs via informal and formal education. Quality Assurance issues, level of the LOs, Certification, Validation of providers are some of the key elements to address and agree on. The necessary instruments and tools are already available, (NQF, EQF, ECTS, ECVET, QA, etcetera) so there is no need to reinvent the wheel just to find ways to implement them and putting them into use.
7. A flexible learning pathway can provide the opportunity to the learner at any time and moments to decide about the next step, when, how and why.
8. The use of online resources (open, free, MOOCs) can contribute effectively and efficiently to develop the flexible learning pathways. Facilitation, mentoring, guidance and mentoring will be needed to exploit the potential gains of these resources.
9. Flexibility is also a need for achievement of level 4 programs. For this the European member states shall accept recognition of prior learning and cumulative learning pathways i.e. with help of ECVET as possible pathways without any restrictions. This does not only give a benefit to the target groups but also for enterprises and society in total by acting against 'dropping out of the system', by producing qualified workforce and opening new pathways for an inclusive future.

Platform for VET providers & DG Employment (European Commission)

In February 2015 DG Employment of the European Commission decided to recognize and to have funds for VET4EU2 as an international platform for VET providers, with the possibility for other organizations to join them in the future. This can be an opportunity for CHAIN5.

THEME 3: STATEMENTS FOR THE LLL-FORUM

Here a list of statements, related to theme 3:

12. The national platform for LLL has to be a member of an European network for this kind of platforms.
13. The government has to support the platform, using it also in an international context.
14. We have to realise that youth unemployment is a serious problem and that this will be the case in the coming years. After graduation students need support for following courses, non-formal and to be combined with having work-experience. The platform can advise the government.
15. LLL need more attention by HEIs.

Theme 4: Policy recommendations

Improving implementation of LLL: in general, looking at policy makers...

Here a list of recommendations – most of them also based on the outcomes of the Forum, as part of the project:

1. The government must consider whether such a Platform fits into the policy of consultation of 'the field'. Obviously the Platform composition must be representative, and not having an overlap with other groups which the government has to deal with.
2. Many of the opportunities for training in all kinds of groups are linked to the policy of municipalities. Therefore, the VNG also would be an interesting partner - and that is also the case for the government.
3. The government can look at how UWV, Divosa and other organizations and bodies could be used for a kind of consultation with a platform.
4. The national government should be advised to look at what is happening economically in the region - and to link this to the consultation with the LLL Platform
5. Key point: The region should be facilitated in order to get an overview of the regional training needs. In addition, individuals will be encouraged to seize the opportunities that are there in the region.
6. The government has a wider duty in looking at LLL than just in taking care for work.
7. The demand by employers is leading
8. The importance of the individual is the central issues in the policies of the parties and organizations.
9. LLL should focus on a long-term employability of the individual.
10. The importance of an employee is embedded in the way the business is trying to be a learning organization, where the person at some point belongs to.

And all the statements mentioned for the three overall themes:

1. We need more support from the world of work for the NLQF for LLL.
2. We need more cooperation between the organisations involved in formal, non-formal and informal learning, to share experiences and good practices.
3. A national platform for LLL (including these organisations) can be an interesting partner for the government, looking at adult education.
4. We need pilots for flexible learning pathways in adult learning, combining formal, non-formal and informal learning, having this platform for feedback.
5. The permeability between VET and SCHE needs more attention using experiments for ECVET.
6. We have to promote the Ad as an instrument for specific target groups.
7. A national platform for LLL needs good contacts with the VNG, the organization for Dutch municipalities.
8. The identity of a RAC has to be an official one in 2018.
9. The electives in the VET4 programmes have to be based on a combination of work and study, if they are focusing on transfer to an Associate degree programme.
10. The HbD is a missink link in the Dutch system.
11. Developments in VET and HE have to be coordinated, if relevant for the transfer from VET to HE.
12. The national platform for LLL has to be a member of an European network for this kind of platforms.
13. The government has to support the platform, using it also in an international context.
14. We have to realise that youth unemployment is a serious problem and that this will be the case in the coming years. After graduation students need support for following courses, non-formal and to be combined with having work-experience. The platform can advise the government.
15. LLL need more attention by HEIs.

Transversal objectives for the project

- Foster a shared meaning of lifelong learning: the project primarily seeks to create a transnational LLL community of understanding and values through comparative research and common spaces for dialogue. To encourage a mutual recognition of LLL peers is the first step to promote fruitful exchanges, better commitment and cooperation.
- Enable a cross-sectorial, multi-stakeholders cooperation: to build efficient synergies and see the big picture would be cost-effective in as much as complementarity between initiatives identified during the research phase will permit to avoid duplication thanks to a better knowledge and dissemination of European tools.
- Structure the first transnational policy learning based on a genuine research and dialogue at regional/-national level on EU LLL strategies: the eve of the EU Year of Citizens 2013 is the opportunity to rethink stakeholders' adherence to European LLL strategies. The first step for their greater involvement is to give a voice to regional and national relevant stakeholders and empower them so that they can propose effective solutions and to convince policy-makers that their input is crucial.

3 PART B

Life stories, experts' opinions and good practices

Besides our desk research and the LLL-Forum as a high level event we have also used for the themes in part A the outcomes of the following activities as part of the LLL-LAB:

1. Life stories... interviews with people in the Netherlands, about their plans to be more entrepreneurial, to improve their situation. In most cases they have already experience with learning, as a youngster but also at an older age – and now they are looking for opportunities to have better and/or higher competences.
 2. Experts' opinions about the Dutch developments we can see here in relation to the further implementation of the Short Cycle in higher education, the Associate degree. This qualification is one of the new and important instruments for having more flexible learning pathways, part of the LLL strategy of the Dutch government. The experts are working in all kind of positions in higher education institutions, involved in the Associate degree – also in combination with more attention for permeability between VET and HE.
The questions were about LLL, adult learning, Associate degree, flexibility and the Dutch strategy on all this issues.
 3. Case studies – good practices, as we think that they are relevant for the project and the aims for Leido to have in 2016 the first meeting of the renewed Dutch Platform LLL...
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1 Interviews with people about their 'lifelong learning' ideas and plans...



INTERVIEWS LIFELONG LEARNING

LEIDO

Our target group is existing of Dutch people involved in a more critical situation: poverty, social exclusion, facing such a situation or having a high risk being a 'non-member' of the society – and we are asking for their plans for having extra education – mostly with a focus to start an own business, to be self-employed.

We have asked them about their background, the education they already have finished and what kind of extra education they have in mind, and their thoughts about the near future.

Our aim is to get a better idea about a vulnerable group in our society is using a specific kind of education to have a better position in the near future.

1

My background	<p>Yes, in short then... I am 27 years old. I studied at the University of Twente. So in Enschede. I did the Bachelor of Medical Engineering, and I also completed it. Then I was going to do the Master, but because I had an accident – Then I fell down the stairs, causing a back that broke in four places - I could not finish it.</p> <p>Yes, actually I'm handicapped, but I fall just outside every regulation... when it comes my 'box'. That's why I'm on welfare, with social assistance as only income. I am living alone, no children so.</p>
Education needed?	<p>Yes, what I have learned and done, that gives me a clear certainty when it comes to doing things that I would like to do. Well, apart from the handicap. I can use what I know now when we are trying to set up our horse business - so that young people can leave their horse with us for care.</p> <p>Of course I do want to learn more, taking courses. And if I could just go to school, why not. Incidentally, I must now do a course, to show formally that I can provide the leadership for that company, if it goes well.</p> <p>As I said, I do not care what type it is, basically.</p>
My future?	<p>Well, you can't really say. It could be better... But I do not complain, because I can manage...</p> <p>Yes, six years ago, before the accident, it was all perfectly arranged. I studied and was a member of the board of a national student organization. That's all gone.</p> <p>The future ... yes, I have good hope, in a few years, it's going better. I do my best ...</p> <p>And I hope they will give me the opportunity to continue with the company, and that it is doing well, and physically better. I go forward, but it is also a spiritual matter, so that you should feel good. And if that will happen to me ...</p>

My background	<p>Yes, I am 53 years old again... And that is old if you are looking for work... I have done in the past the LEAO (administrative work) and then vocational education at level 2 for traffic management. Then I have always worked until two years ago.</p> <p>I am a taxi driver, but for physical reasons I can only drive with an automatic transmission, when it comes to operate the taxi. And then there came a reorganization, and yes, the new owner has only cars with manual transmission, so you are out... I'm also a bit older and that also played, although I can't prove it, a role. But formally, I am not handicapped.</p>
Education needed?	<p>I think my training is not always enough, I do not mind to do more, then: how? The employment office has jobs, but you do not come 'in the picture'. And if there is a course that would be offered, why not join it. I'll wait ...</p> <p>I would also like to do something with ICT. No job training, no such thing has any sense - not for me. There is plenty to find on the Internet, as it deals with that...</p>
My future?	<p>No I am not happy. But I take it as it is. You can't do otherwise. I stay positive and hope that soon it will be better again. I talk to people and I am so busy in my network to make something of it. I keep looking and if something comes on my way. I'll grab it. Just work, which suits me. That would make my life better.</p>

My background?	<p>Yes, I am 35 years old, born in Curacao, so in the Antilles. I've done an VET-4 training in the Netherlands, for pharmacy. Then I have worked, even during the study. But I ended up on sick leave at any given time.</p> <p>I live alone, and that's difficult. Because many of the schemes are there for families, people with children or something. On your own you have to save yourself... Tricky so. However, my situation is not distressing, certainly not. I also do volunteer work, at a church. So I can save myself ...</p>
Education needed?	<p>I have done a good VET College. And experience and insight, I have them too. I know that and I notice it because I work as a volunteer at an organization and I do arrange all sorts of logistical issues, that kind of things. It just goes well, so I can do other things with it, I think. I got an advice and an opinion from the management there, to do a training for career counseling and coaching. But it still remains to be seen whether it can be done – and who should pay...</p>
My future?	<p>No, it is just different from the past and it can be better. Not so satisfied. There's just not so much money. Too bad. The past was not always good. The future has to be better, I think. If I get some opportunities, if institutions will help me...</p> <p>However, I will give a wake-up call to the municipality for the care of elderly people - and they are responsible for that. Do something about it, to the people who are in very difficult situations. Don't let them down...</p>

4

My background?	<p>I will try to do that as well as possible. I am now 37 years old – my birthday today ... - married, and two children aged 15 and 18. But our living conditions are not good, and looking at their conditions, they are not living at home.</p> <p>Yes, I have previously done the LEAO, lower administrative education, and tried to finish short-VET around the administration business, but that did not happen, unfortunately. I then tried, with my mental problems, to do all kinds of jobs, mostly through an agency. But in the end I have been disapproved. And I am now in the Wajong. My wife moreover. So we live on two social benefits...</p>
Education needed?	<p>So I have only a low level of education. And all I can do, must have a clear structure. I must accept it ... And that's tricky. I do want to take a course. Short, though, to make it not be complicated.</p>
My future?	<p>Yes, difficult. But it could be better. Although, working for a boss is very difficult, in our situation. That would be a problem, as it has no structure. We hope that things get better over time, as the economy is improving and there will be opportunities for me. It's now just thinking in the long term... but there is a horizon.</p> <p>Perhaps having some training, combined with a financially independent situation...</p>

5

My background?	<p>I am still a student, so yes, I'm still doing a study, in higher professional education. I have my own apartment, a small rooms. Alone. And oh yes, I'm 20. And I have some small side jobs ...</p>
Education needed?	<p>First I'll finish the Bachelor. Then I'm going to do a Masters in Law. I think that after having done that there are still course to be followed. I do just them, if necessary. So yes, it is hard work, but it suits me.</p>
My future?	<p>Yeah, sure. It was and is best to do so. I see no addictions around me, but hey, I live in a village.</p> <p>Later I will move to somewhere all, perhaps. A boyfriend... you will never know what can happen...</p>

6

My background?	<p>Thanks for your invitation. Because it's good to be able to tell my story, as a client at the food bank, but that you do not lose your dignity. That is something else for others, as I see around me, there... I can tell stories about that.</p> <p>I am 54 years old. Formerly I have done the 'domestic education, the LHNO'. I have had small jobs, and then I became a mother. That is also a kind of job, as you can say.</p> <p>Worked until 2012, with temporary jobs. Then ended up on sick because of my arthritis, which I had for a long time, but then it was not possible anymore to work.</p> <p>I am married, in 2008, with a 16 years younger Moroccan. But he can't come to the Netherlands, because of the rules that govern them. I see that the others do succeed ... but not us. There is much to tell that... I have two children, and they have left already for a long time out...</p>
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Education needed?	So I have little education, but a lot of experience ... and that also at a decent level. So tomorrow we will start a shop for second hand goods, as a project. I can contribute to it for a few hours, on a voluntary basis. And so I can use my experience. But still having courses myself, I do not know, with my illness. If it would help...
My future?	Yes, despite everything. I keep thinking positive, why would it not be better in the future? It used to be better, sometimes much better. I hope it goes well with the marriage and that a solution can be found for that, knowing that it does not go well with him. We would be able to live together, so...

7

My background?	I'm already 43 years old, so then you already have a picture of the opportunities that are there for me. I live alone, have one child at home, aged 12. That is the situation. And yes, separated. I did a course in health care, and then a lot of voluntary work. I have had a paid job, but I have long been incapacitated since 1991. That is not a good situation, that's clear. I have to do it with that...
Education needed?	Yes, I think I have the right skills, but, well, then I'm a particular situation and yes, that does not help much. I would not mind studying more, if it is offered, but how...? Should it happen or if come across, I will see.
My future?	Yes, given the circumstances... I have a house, I can help myself in this situation. Of course many things can be done better. I need to discuss a lot with the administrator, for the restructuring of the debts. I look at the future, step by step. If I can continue to pay the rent and my health remains as it is now... then I have confidence. I'm doing my best ... and further, I have to wait.

8

My background?	My age ... I'm only 30 years ... Two children, and I have been divorced for a year, as a Muslim woman. No, not handicapped or so. I did a course in the administrative sector, VET, and then I have been working in the world of the elderly care. Because of all the circumstances I am now depending of social assistance, having a benefit. But I do also two days a week voluntary work, but I get no money for it.
Education needed?	No, I have not had sufficient training, and that should be better. I want to have some schooling, but yes, where is the money for that? I might be more able to improve my situation, and then I could get started. So let them make me an offer... I'll join...
My future?	Yes, I feel pretty lucky. It used to be a bit better. But I do not look at others, it is just about what I can do myself. I look positively to the future, for sure... And I am frugal. No smoking, drinking... and so not doing things that are not really needed. Thus I save it that way. I hope my family can continue to assist me. And that perhaps I could do something in the hospitality industry, start a business... Yeah, wait ...

9

My background?	Well, to make it not too complicated... I am now 62 years old. I have studied at a Gymnasium, then I did a post-college education in history, later in my life. And then I ended up in education as a teacher. Then... no more work to do... and now I am in voluntary work, working as a pastor - and I do some business at a conference resort. That it is. Oh yes, we still have a child of 13 years, who still lives at home.
Education needed?	So I have a pretty good education, but there is simply no job for me at my age. So that knowledge I can't use anymore... that's a fact. But I can put people at ease, so if there is a job in the social sector... Or, acting, that I find a funny activity. I try to find something in it, but that is also difficult. Having incidentally some training... it seems to have no sense for me, so no.
My future?	So, how should I formulate that.... I think we can make it, all together, to do it right. I mean, I can be happy, even when I look back. We take it as it is. But if we stay healthy in the coming time, remembering our child of course. And if we can continue to pay everything, then it will not be better or worse ...

10

My background?	I am 55 years old, so yes, you know what it is, if you want to do something in this economy. Anyway... I have previously done the secondary school, plus training in health care, first of all on level 2, but to reach level 3... it could not happen. But I've had work in the administrative sector, banks and similar institutions. That's what I did in Flanders, in Belgium. And yes, when the divorce came and I had to go back to the Netherlands: there was nothing to do... so I went on welfare, but now I have a job. I am happy. I got it very recently. I live alone, my two daughters are already living on their own.
Education needed?	I've done a study for health care, and that is enough to save myself, after a tedious period. I think it will remain so - they need me, simple like that. Additional training seems unnecessary now. But if it should help, why not...
My future?	Yes, certainly, as an independent worker, having good work. I take my own responsibilities in the future. The institution where I work, will probably continue to exist - as a private organization, also through all cuts. I'm sure of my life, on character...

11

My background?	Unmarried, single, 46 years, VWO, University: sociology and social environmental studies (not completed). During my pre-university study I was a volunteer at a recycling company, and during my University study I worked 1.5 - 2 years as a factory worker. Then I arched, getting a social benefit, the WAO. Many therapy has been done. Now as a volunteer I write for a small local paper.
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Education needed?	Adobe certificate, knowledge of In-Design, Photoshop, illustrator. Yes, they are very useful.
My future?	No. to be single is not fine. I'm surviving... not living... Luxury for me, as an example, is to buy a DVD. Life was better in the past? Yup. In my youth, despite abuse in the family. Now I am more satisfied, because the newspaper is made by me. My future? I hope to get married... and having opportunities to work, a good job..

12

My background?	I am, do not worry, all 64 years. Married, but my wife lives in the Philippines. So we do not live together, here. She may come because she is over 60, and then you do not need a residence permit. No children together, my wife has two children from a previous marriage, married to a police officer who was killed. The children live abroad, Kuwait and Qatar.
Education needed?	I have been an international chef cook. I have over 25 years work-experience abroad, thus including in the Philippines. In addition, I had to live in the hotel and later I moved in with my wife. So I am now disabled by diabetes- and its consequences, and I do not think it even could and should go better. I want to learn, but... never mind... I can be a lot more creative with the food from the food bank ... which turns out to be an advantage, having my experiences ...
My future?	You would not say that, after all I've been told, but I'm finally satisfied with my present life. But .. if I had known that it would be this way in the Netherlands, I would probably have stayed in the Philippines. The climate is better there and I had more friends there. I accept it...

13

My background?	In two weeks I will be 34 years old... I am single without children. I studied MBO SPW4, in the direction 'Teaching Assistant'. Just this month I completed the training for 'Medical Secretary'. I work in child care. There I would like to work full-time, but that's two days a week at the moment. This will take just another few weeks... and then I am available full time for another job.
Education needed?	I did SPW4 and a training for medical secretary. I have 14 years of experience in childcare. For this work, I have had various trainings and courses as part of the work. It is questionable whether my experience in child care will lead to a new job, I have no experience as a medical management assistant. Even for a job as saleswoman in a baker's shop, I was rejected for lack of experience! I do not know how I can improve my skills.
My future?	I am satisfied with my life. Of course I am not happy with the situation that I have now only part-time work - and no work in the near future. Life is better when you have no worries about money.

	I hope for a future job. And that this future will arrive soon. And there are no addictions in my immediate vicinity. So yeah, that's it.
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14

My background?	<p>I'm 37 years old, already... After high school I did an in-service training in a health care institution, and that I have done for 20 years, so working in healthcare. And I am still there...</p> <p>Divorced, my husband also, so then it is clear what is going on - knowing that there are all kinds of remaining debts - especially if the ex-wife of my husband is always going to court...</p> <p>We have 3.5 kids... I have two, and my husband two, one of which every week will be a few days with us.</p>
Education needed?	I have an adequate training, and I have work experience. I am not a manager, so for that I have to follow any additional courses. I do it with what I have in me...
My future?	No, not that. Look at the confusing situation we're in. If BKR and the debt is settled, I hope it gets better. It looks pretty promising. No problems, not anymore. My ex-husband has addicted to liquor, and he died. That I would not be seeing again to be happen.

15

My background?	<p>I live alone, am 59 years old, so that shows where all problems can be...</p> <p>I did an administrative training at VET-level. I am rejected for a part, so 'handicapped', but that's not because of what you should take as a formal disability. It is my health that has left me down...</p> <p>I also work at the railway police, at the administrative department.</p>
Education needed?	I have work and I like it. I can handle it and do not require any training. Well, as it should, but I do not see that happen...
My future?	Yes, no problem as it is now. It can always be better, and more secure. So I hope the economy gets better, and I am optimistic. The health is of a big interest, and it is stable. Keep it that way...

2 Answers and questions... by experts in higher education

We have interviewed experts in our network about four important, relevant and interesting issues... for the Netherlands. Here the results.



Questions and answers – LLL and other topics

The people giving the answers are working for higher education institutions (private or public funded). They are involved in the implementation of the Associate degree in the Dutch higher education area – and all kind of issues related to that.

Question 1

Is LLL (adult education) a spearhead of institutions for higher professional education?
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Answers

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Adult education is an important educational focus but not the focus at Stenden university.2 LLL is a theme as so many other themes.3 Or it could choose to be a spearhead for the University. Also depends on regional labor market demand.4 No spearhead5 No6 That should be it ... but it is not yet.7 When the HAN wants...8 No, I'm not impressed. Part-time education exists as long as it can baste. APL is stopped when it turned out nothing to deliver.9 No not really.10 The report of the commission Rinnooy-Kan would open up a stand there. It remains to be seen what turns up in practice (in terms of policy and implementation at the various colleges)11 No, the spearhead is too heavy, but it is an important item.12 No, it is not currently.13 No opinion14 No15 No, not for NHTV16 Not now, but that it should be so, in the sense that it should be given much more attention, so that informed choices can be made in this field and an adequate supply can be realized.17 Yes18 No spearhead a point for attention19 Yes20 Unfortunately not. In our university, unfortunately, too little attention21 Not for our training in the art, may be adequate for teacher training22 Yes23 Yes24 For us though, as a private university, we focus primarily on the adult student who wants to improve their career opportunities. In government-funded education, I have not yet observed that this is a priority, of course, there are some initiatives here and there. Does not seem like something for government-funded education, more for private education. |
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Question 2

Is it important and crucial to use for all programmes Learning Outcomes?

Answers

- 1 This system is slowly introduced university wide.
- 2 Important. But also quite difficult. Basic allows less well post it.
- 3 No
- 4 Yes
- 5 I become increasingly wary of all kinds of goals that mainly try the uncontrollability of learning to manageable (so NVAO it also understands).
- 6 Definitely
- 7 In any form though. I myself think of education transcending definition of competencies and context areas, type of matrix structure (eg, analyze marketing context. That includes tools to as SWOT).
- 8 Yes, in the philosophy of LLL is the learning outcome, the only thing that matters.
- 9 The road to the learning outcome is entirely irrelevant
- 10 Yes, as always the final level should be reviewed.
- 11 Yes, that provides transparency and supports curriculum development.
- 12 No
- 13 Yes, that means the education developer sharp
- 14 Yes
- 15 I understand it is, but knows there is still too little.
- 16 Difficult to say now. I still have no clear definition of learning outcomes. It turned out also to be tricky.
- 17 It is a great desire, which is not yet possible in the current legislation in order to capitalize on these outcomes regardless of ECTS etc.
- 18 Yes
- 19 Yes, but also competencies and professional products. It's a training
- 20 No, our education can not.
- 21 No
- 22 No comments
- 23 Yeah, makes sense
- 24 Yes, if we now put the college transition in order to describe our programs in terms of learning outcomes. Seems OK

Question 3

Can the national framework for the Dutch qualifications play a role in the design of LLL in our country?

Answers

- 1 I have no opinion on this.
- 2 I do not know. Have inadequate picture of the possibilities. Perhaps as part of qualification of learning outcomes.
- 3 ?
- 4 ?
- 5 Absolutely.
- 6 ?
- 7 I think so.
- 8 Yes, as well as industry training is qualified
- 9 Yes

- 10 Yes
- 11 Yes
- 12 Do not know
- 13 Certainly, in terms of structure
- 14 That seems to me, as a framework.
- 15 Difficult, because it sits on a high level of abstraction
- 16 Yes
- 17 Yes
- 18 Yes
- 19 ?
- 20 Yes
- 21 partially
- 22 Not mandatory, most advice
- 23 Yes, the need for the interpretation of level for the validation of education is very important. Value of the Dutch qualifications on the international market therefore get a better interpretation and that is important for both students and labor.
- 24 Yes

Question 4

What do we need to do with RPL (VFNIL) – EVC - in our professional higher education?

Answers

- 1 EVC is already being replaced by a time request waivers for substantive program components.
- 2 Maintain EVC. But under implementation bring / leave to independent
- 3 Organizations / branche organizations and not related to educational organizations conflicts of interest.
- 4 No longer operational at the university. If it is proved then submit it to ex.com and provide exemptions.
- 5 ?
- 6 Difficult to concretise and quantify this in credits. Of course there must be something done with.
- 7 Going to be on the agenda and run
- 8 Such a structure as mentioned just makes that the interchangeability is larger. If it is what needs to be paid for then it must also be better. It is not an attractive financial product, especially compared to all the activities you need to organize responsibility for such recognition.
- 9 EVC is broken arranged for HBO. What remains is to continue to use the tools developed for APL as intake assessment
- 10 EVC is inextricably bound to lead to individual learning paths. That is oriented in classroom education is often not always possible.
- 11 Provided properly secured, retained.
- 12 International right and make interchangeable.
- 13 Include in the demonstration of skills by the student
- 14 No longer a priority at NHTV
- 15 As much as possible recognize / identify, provided substantiated.
- 16 I am and remain skeptical, it's bad measurable and fairly broadly. We must be careful about ten years again lead the discussion about the quality
- 17 Convert to learning outcomes
- 18 It should be handled with caution
- 19 Well, we can not do much with it and do nothing with it there. " EVC done through examining board, after enrollment in the form of reasoned request for exemption for certain items.
- 20 In art education work with entrance exams and we're not dealing with EVC.
- 21 Assessment decrease based on evidence obtained competencies

22 EVC must be done right and well by independent institutions with the appropriate expertise. Not by Colleges and not by commercial agencies that connect to e promises of short routes. Maintain and make part of colleges

23 It should be placed in a broader perspective and government better facilitated and supported. Especially adults who want to continue to come each with its own base of knowledge, skills and qualifications already obtained at the gate with a new program.

24 Is really different: different approach to coaching and teaching / more customization and more flexible

3 GOOD PRACTICES – LLL – THE NETHERLANDS

We present here our 10 good practices, having LLL in mind – and relevant for the project.



INTERESTING SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

LEIDO

In this project-document we provide a number of ‘good practices’, related to Lifelong Learning (LLL). The descriptions are short, just to sketch a picture of what we as Leido think why it can be seen as an interesting example of ‘how to deal with your life, career, society and the future’ – and also successful.

At the end of each general description we mention the organisation or person involved (and responsible) in the good practice, to be recommended for our LLL contest.

Themes:

1/ National Frameworks for lifelong learning: towards flexible pathways and comprehensive education and training systems

Desk research about the local (National/Regional) current strategies and culture of LLL.

2/ Lifelong learning actors: taking the jump towards learner-centered systems

Field Research presenting practices, stories, etc. for the different categories of actors involved.

3/ Lifelong learning communities: partnerships and shared responsibility

Field Research presenting practices, stories, etc. on how to build partnership, raise awareness and develop funding schemes.

Title	
Creative Employability	
Description	
<p>As result of a project we have asked the University of Applied Sciences in The Hague (the Netherlands) to organise every year in May a seminar for students in their third year of the study ‘Business Accounting’. That is about their future – and to give information about the current situation on the Labour Market, national and international. The aim is to motivate them to look in the final (fourth) year for creative solutions to enter the labour market – to make an own living, maybe not directly but for sure after a few years.</p> <p>There are contributions by experts from the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany. Besides them we as Leido are asking representatives of organisations in our network to talk about recent developments in the world economy and about the consequences of them for the youth-(un)-employment.</p> <p>The seminar is now part of the study programme. Leido is co-organisier of this event.</p> <p>Recommended: The Hague University of Applied Sciences (formal higher education)</p>	
Impact	The impact is important for students, entering the labour market – to have them prepared for an uncertain situation. There are ideas for developing an elective, based on this activity.
Theme	2

Keywords	Students, employability, flexibility
Target group	Students in HE / professors in this field
More information	www.leidoacademy.nl / available by sending an e-mail to info@leido.nl

2

Title	
Intergenerational Learning	
Description	
<p>From 2011 till 2013 Leido have been a partner in a project about intergenerational learning, with organisations from Greece, Romania, Poland and the UK. After ending this project Leido has published a small report about the outcomes of the project, including some recommendations. Based on this document in 2014 Leido was one of the nominated organisations for the price for the best international project, an initiative of Learning For Life in the Netherlands (because it was recommended by the Dutch National Agency, also mentioned to the European Commission as a best practice). The project did not win, but there was an award, given to Leido by Agnes Jonge-rius, member of parliament for the Netherlands.</p> <p>Recommended: Learning for Learning (organisation for informal learning)</p>	
Theme	3
Keywords	Adults and youngsters, intergenerational learning, project
Impact	There is more awareness in The Netherlands for intergenerational learning. This is still a difficult subject, especially in formal education. In future projects and activities it will be put on the agenda, thinking of LLL arrangements
Target group	Students: youngsters and adults
More information	www.learningforlife.nl / www.leidoacademy.nl

3

Title	
Associate degree in the Netherlands	
Description	
<p>After the start of the Bologna Process in Europe there was no official position for Short Cycle Higher Education anymore. In 2000 Leido took the initiative for a re-introduction of this kind of qualification in the Netherlands. This has been done by setting up a network with experts and people interested in this issue – supporting Leido in all kind of ways. The result was that in 2006 the Associate degree has been introduced, as SCHE, in the Dutch Higher Professional Area. Now in 2015 it is clear that this qualification will be crucial for a lot of students and employees with a VET degree, knowing that there is a need for higher skilled people, youngster and adults – and having in mind that a significant number of qualifications at lower levels will disappear in the near future . During the last 15 years it was possible to set up this process with the big support of the Ministry of Education. That is very remarkable, such a cooperation between an organisation like Leido (non-profit, private, non-subsidised) and a Ministry. It shows that the government in the Netherlands, and in specific the department for Higher Education, is willing to have a strategy with effect on the way LLL can be possible.</p> <p>Recommended: Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (department for HE)</p>	
Theme	1
Keywords	Short Cycle, permeability VET-HE, strategy
Impact	The impact on LLL, flexible learning pathways is immense, looking at the way SCHE will find a place in the system. In the strategy for HE and LLL the SCHE is one of the key issues.

Target group	Students, LLL learners, adult learners, institutions (VET and HE), private education, labour marker
More information	www.rijksoverheid.nl / www.leidoacademy.nl

4

Title	
Non-formal qualification at level 5 of the NLQF	
Description	
<p>The introduction of the NLQF (linked to the EQF) has been in 2011. Such a framework can be very important for the position of informal and non-formal qualifications in the shaping of flexible learning pathways, especially for employees and the way they want to be a 'lifelong learner'. But till now the employers' organisations are not supporting the idea that all relevant qualifications have to be linked to the NLQF to make this possible for their employees. HRM managers are more in favour of non-formal courses, training programmes and other short education. The government will try to advocate more the linking of them to an 'independent' framework, to have a better possibility for a national LLL strategy.</p> <p>We have been looking at providers of non-formal education, offering qualifications at level 5 for employees, to give them the opportunity to get a certificate at a higher level. The first one was Heering Consultancy. This organisation is also involved in the development of a new type of qualification besides SCHE in the Netherlands (the Associate degree). This means that Heering Consultancy is a serious partner in having more attention for LLL and adult learning.</p> <p>Recommended: Heering Consultancy (business studies, non-formal)</p>	
Theme	1
Keywords	Non-formal education, LLL strategy, adult learning
Impact	This development is important for the VET providers, to play a role in offering programs at level 5. The learning pathways for adult learning will be more flexible.
Target group	Businesses, employers, vet providers, private institutions
More information	www.hogerbedrijfsdiploma.nl / www.heeringconsultancy.nl

5

Title	
Rotterdam Academy (Regional Associate College)	
Description	
<p>Cooperation between VET providers and Higher Education Institutions is very important for youngsters willing to have a degree (and diploma) at a higher level. Drop-out rates in the four year bachelor programme are getting higher and higher, meaning that the percentage of VET students having a Bachelors' degree after 5 years has dropped in the last 15 years from 65 to 47 percent. One of the solutions will be more close cooperation between the providers in both sectors. That's why a few years ago the discussion has started for having a kind of 'community colleges' in The Netherlands, using SCHE programmes for that. The University of Applied Sciences in Rotterdam has been the first one to set up such a Regional Associate College. Starting in 2012 with 70 students, there are now more than 2000 of VET students in this 'Rotterdam Academy'. A big success.</p> <p>Recommended: The Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences</p>	
Theme	3
Keywords	Cooperation VET and HE, Associate College

Impact	The RAC is a good example of developing Community Colleges 'European Style'. The permeability between VET and HE will improve, giving youngster more opportunities to get a higher degree. A RAC is also a place for regional business, to have a good cooperation with institutions.
Target group	Students, providers, regional labour market
More information	www.hogeschoolrotterdam.nl / www.leidoacademy.nl

6

Title	
ISLA (cooperation with the USA)	
Description	
<p>A lot of Trans-Atlantic projects have been done in the period 2000-2010. Most of them were interesting, but after the ending of a project it is the case that for 99% of the projects the cooperation is really over. That's make the project that has been done between 2008 and 2010 by the University of Toledo and Leido very special. After the closing of the project files both partners decided to go on, offering exchange programmes for managers involved in SCHE and Community Colleges (Regional Associate Colleges).</p> <p>At the moment it is possible to have every year a study strip. This can be to Europe for a group of American PhD students (as an elective for this study), or to the USA for interested managers in Europe. These activities are very successful.</p> <p>Recommended: University of Toledo (ISLA)</p>	
Theme	3
Keywords	Cooperation Europe and USA, level 5
Impact	The impact has been that the discussion about the role of SCHE in LLL have started and is still alive, knowing that the group is also visiting European and American institutions.
Target group	Managers of SCHE institutions, PhD students
More information	www.leidoacademy.nl

7

Title	
Flexibility and Adult Learning	
Description	
<p>The LLL strategy for the Netherlands needs a real boost. Most of the programmes are given by the private sector, in a non-formal setting. The government is now trying to find new initiatives and opportunities for involving the providers of formal education in LLL (most of them in the professional higher education).</p> <p>We know that in spite of the relevance of this issue the ministry is lacking money for having full support of a lot of civil servants – due to the economy (cutting budgets). But there is one person full fighting for LLL, the last few years, never getting tired to talk with organisations about the 'how to have more lifelong learners'</p> <p>Recommended: Patrick Leushuis (Ministry of Education – LLL programme)</p>	
Theme	2
Keywords	Ministry of Education, strategy, adult learning, involvement employers
Impact	The Ministry opened the discussion about a new LLL strategy in the Netherlands, in 2013.

	Adult education will be more and more important, thanks to this action.
Target group	Providers of Adult Education
More information	www.rijksoverheid.nl ; www.leidoacademy.nl

8

Title	
Permeability between VET and HE	
Description	
<p>The permeability between VET and HE is one of hottest issues at the moment. The European economy needs more higher skilled people in the labour force. A high percentage of the people in a lot of countries is doing or has done a VET study, as a good preparation for the world of work. But in the next 10 years a lot of jobs require more competences at a higher level. In the Netherlands LICA is an network-organisation that is taking care of how the transfer from VET to HE can be improved, already from 1993 on. The members of LICA are staff members of HEIs for professional education.</p> <p>The chairs of LICA are doing a tremendous job, knowing that the government is not subsidising such a network, but the contribution to what the ministries has to do in this field (VET-HE) is very valuable. That's why it is necessary to support LICA, in one way or another.</p> <p>Recommended: LICA (Roel van Asselt / Pierre Poell)</p>	
Theme	3
Keywords	Enrolment, permeability, students, HEIs
Impact	Since 1993 LICA has been important for all options for a transfer into higher professional education. Even now LICA is involved in all kind of new activities, based on the national strategy for HE, having all dynamic developments in VET and other sectors in mind.
Target group	Managers of HE and VET providers involved in transfer from VET to HE
More information	www.lica.nl

9

Title	
Life Management	
Description	
<p>In this current economic situation lots of people have to deal with changing scenarios. They are forced to think about their future, knowing that not everything is as certain as 10 years ago. Choices have to be made, networking is more and more important and relying on other people and all kind of organisations is not always possible.</p> <p>Individuals have to change their attitude and need to be very active in taking chances, making their own wishes possible, where needed. Education is for sure part of making some career paths better and easier. But it is still the case that people have to know how to deal with unpredictable developments, Do they know what is possible for them? Can they manage their life, on a short term, but also having the long term in mind.</p> <p>The European organisation EBC*L has taken the initiative to develop an effective course (programme) for that, under the name Life Management.</p> <p>Recommended: EBC*L (Dutch part of this network)</p>	
Theme	2
Keywords	EBCL, youth-employment and prevention
Impact	The products of this European Network are important for people 'in business' or willing to improve their skills. One of the programmes is

	focussed on helping people in poverty and/or social inclusion. We think that this programme will be important for countries facing a higher percentage of people that need more support – and maybe starting an own business can help.
Target group	People in poverty and social inclusion / organisations supporting them
More information	www.ebcl.eu

10

Title	
Education and the regional labour market	
Description	
<p>A new town, close by Amsterdam, having a population with mostly VET as the highest level in education – that is Almere. In the last ten years there have been a lot of initiatives to have more higher education programmes available in the region, but most of them have failed. But the regional labour market is willing to invest in new businesses there, knowing that there are more higher skilled experts ready to fill in the vacancies.</p> <p>Almere had decided to support the 'Hogeschool Windesheim' in their plans for having a Regional Associate College, offering a lot of SCHE programmes. The employers' organisation is joining the municipality and their opinion is that this LLL strategy is important for all stakeholders.</p> <p>Recommended: Municipality of Almere</p>	
Theme	2
Keywords	Almere municipality, Short Cycle, upskilling people
Impact	This region has the highest percentage of unemployed people, combined with a lot of them having low education. The initiative of Almere to start the discussion about SCHE is important for those people.
Target group	Employers, institutions, municipality
More information	www.windesheimflevoland.nl

4 PART C

LLL-Forum in the Netherlands

This annex has two chapters.

- The first one is about the Newsletter, used for informing the participants in the Forum – including the programme and statements.
- The second one is the document with the outcomes and recommendations of the Forum.

1 NEWSLETTER BEFORE THE FORUM

LLL-FORUM

Donderdag 28 mei 2015

13.30 – 16.45 uur

ECABO – Disketteweg 6 – Amersfoort-Schothorst (zie www.ecabo.nl)

A NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR LLL?

INTRODUCTION

In the framework of the European project "LLL HUB (see www.lll-hub.eu) on May 28 a number of parties will exchange views on the current situation regarding lifelong learning (LLL) 'in general and examining the possibilities to establish a National Platform for organizations that focus on LLL, in particular. Within the project LLL HUB among other things we explored in a number of countries the 'state of play'; among them how the national government is shaping the strategy for boosting the LLL and how the forces around the informal, non-formal and formal education can be bundled. Part of the project and this research is in a national LLL Forum, the discussions to take matters in that regard and to consider what national priorities belong in a broad consultation.

Below the program is given for this meeting. You will be working with a number of plenary introductions and then in small groups in four sessions on the basis of propositions to a number of findings and recommendations can then be entered. At the end of the session then presents the state of affairs. Within a few weeks, appears a small report which is distributed among the participants.

Within the project it is envisaged that a maximum number of participants in this meeting, together with members of the focus group on "flexibility" of the Leido Academy, in February or March 2016 to participate in an international two days in Brussels, under the name LLL Agora. From the other partners (Poland, Portugal, Bulgaria, Turkey, Flanders, Spain) will also have a similar group there their findings, conclusions and recommendations contribute, to allow comparison between countries. Making a 'cross-discussion' could lead to recommendations on LLL and strategy at European level to perform, with respect for the national approach and capabilities.

It can therefore be thought of having national platforms for LLL, filled in as broad as possible, to position alongside the government has its own responsibility. At European level can be seen if a form of cooperation between the national platforms may lead to the periodic exchange of experiences, good practices and tools to encourage LLL. The national governments know well, including through 'Brussels', their own lines of communication. Over and over again with each sparring can then lead to a useful exchange of knowledge and knowledge increase.

PROGRAMME

13.00 – 13.30 uur

Ontvangst en registratie

13.30 – 13.40 uur	Opening en welkom + toelichting op de doelstellingen voor deze bijeenkomst
13.40 – 13.50 uur	Informatie over het project LLL-HUB, relevant voor dit LLL-Forum
13.50 – 14.05 uur	Inleiding over de belangrijkste bevindingen, met betrekking tot de 'State of Play' betreffende LLL in Nederland *
14.05 – 14.15 uur	Toelichting op werkwijze betreffende de vier sessies, in kleine groepen
14.15 – 14.40 uur	Sessie 1
14.40 – 15.05 uur	Sessie 2
15.05 – 15.20 uur	Pauze
15.20 – 15.45 uur	Sessie 3
15.45 – 16.10 uur	Sessie 4
16.10 – 16.30 uur	Inventarisatie van de belangrijkste uitkomsten per sessie (rapportage door de verslagleggers, vanuit Leido)
16.30 – 16.40 uur	Invullen individueel rapportage-formulier per deelnemer
16.40 – 16.45 uur	Afsluiting van dit LLL-Forum

Themes for the sessions

Sessie 1	How important is having a functioning National Framework for Qualifications (us NLQF) for enabling flexible learning paths, using informal, non-formal and formal education (education, education)? Makes having such NLQF an agreement between the organizations involved meaningful, relevant and advisable?
Sessie 2	The approach and strategy on LLL is aimed at the individual, to come to the facilitation of opportunities to make the most of themselves. Can a national platform for LLL, as described in the introduction, to promote this goal?
Sessie 3	How can a national platform can be completed and the objectives can be given to this body - and what instruments lend themselves to a common focus?
Sessie 4	What recommendations can be made to the national authorities regarding the streamlining of consultations with all concerned parties and organizations (training providers), and to what extent can this be considered a national platform that?

2 Outcomes of the Forum



THE DUTCH FORUM ON LIFELONG LEARNING **28 May, 2015** **Amersfoort-Schothorst**

HOW TO CREATE A DUTCH LIFELONG LEARNING PLATFORM

An overall impression...

1 Introduction

Leido is partnering in an interesting European project with funding under Erasmus+ (i.e. the European Commission), named LLL HUB. The main goal of our partnership is to consider under what conditions a national platform can be set - as the widest possible reflection of parties in The

Netherlands involved in 'lifelong learning'. Such a platform can function as a point of contact and interlocutor for the government for matters that go beyond the activities of each party, and which all parties find a regular contact can lead to a clear added value for the LLL strategy for our country.

Part of the project is that each partner in its country will have a meeting concerning the general objectives and issues that are seen as priority by the partner - under the name 'LLL Forum'. The Leido Forum took place on Thursday, May 28th, in the afternoon, in the venue of Ecabo in Amersfoort-Schothorst. In this paper we describe the main out-comings of these activities, the recommendations that emerged from the workshops and which will be used by us for follow-up meetings. The presentations are available on the Leido-website (www.leidoacademy.nl)

2 Content

1. Introduction
 2. Content
 3. General part of the Forum
 4. Outcomes of the sessions
 5. Recommendations for the LLL Platform
- Annex: Participants

3 General part of the Forum

The first part of the LLL Forum was devoted to a number of general introductions to inform the participants about the background of the project. It was also for discussing the target positions that we have set as Leido within the frameworks of the project, in order to do justice to the possibilities that exist for 'lifelong learning' around it, for further initiatives. This happened partly on the basis of the key findings about the Dutch strategy, as the government has determined, and the associated developments which are reflected by including the organizations that focus on LLL activities for certain target groups and audiences.

These findings are described in a project document, as the 'state of play' in the Netherlands. This paper was sent to all participants, to give them the opportunity to prepare themselves for the Forum and to feed the general discussion. Here are some issues listed, that were raised in this debate:

1. It is important for projects, even if they come from Erasmus+ which revolves around training and other things that are dealing therewith, to focus on the demand side. In other words, what is the need in the world of work in this - employers, employees and other groups such as the self-employed which are increasingly important to our economy and the society in general. Especially when it comes to part-time education programs education and training have to be based on the ability of a holder of a diploma or certificate to make some kind of progress. This also applies to LLL-HUB: look closely at what the job market needs now, short-term and over a number of years, for people with certain skills.
2. The state of affairs as it has been available, is now only an inventory of what is there, what is the case and what potentially can be of interest. There will be also have to be a search within this project for solutions for the near future. This can be for every target group, possibly linked to organizations that can serve a particular group when it comes to lifelong learning.
3. The circumstances for the project, at this stage, is that in particular training providers are at the table, either directly or indirectly. Some organizations in this case can be considered as 'supportive', but employers (the labor market) are not here at the table. That is a necessity if solutions are sought. It should thereby be noted that in our country the employers especially are active at national level and even then only in a limited number.
At the regional level, there is also sometimes a good cooperation with providers of education, but a 'meso-level' can't much to be found when it comes to involvement of organized employers in developments, strategy and implementation of good practices.
Also, as indicated, it is difficult to meet the demand side – i.e. employers - to provide such a structured consultation form which gives the opportunity to formulate the demand for training correctly. This is difficult, given the dynamism of the economy and the major differences

between apparently the same positions and functions, but such surveys do not come off the ground, and that is a pity.

4. One point that deserves attention is to ascertain what kind of things will be done within companies to LLL. However, LLL is mainly a political term, a way of shaping a career, which is used mainly on the side of education. Employers and HRM departments are talking about employability of people within their organization, to increase thereby their chances.

The personal interest is derived, when it comes to the way people looking for other jobs and employers. These various plug-in must be kept in mind.

As we speak for example in education over the 'vocational column', about permeability between VET and HE, while in the world of work all that is not so strict and well organized. People should be usable, coupled with professions and functions and there should any additional training being offered. A formal degree is an 'entry-proof, no more and no less.

5. Nevertheless, we should aim in one way or another to get the employers (organizations) on board, and at the table. In the first phase Leido has selected to limit itself to the trainers but has asked by the government (OCW) and parties like the NCP-NLQF to listen and think. These parties have in a certain way contact with employers, but they cannot of course represent them.
6. It is recommended to ask for the next meeting representatives of SME-Netherlands, VNO-NCW, Unions, etcetera. In the coming period will be examined well who we can approach - thinking of CEDEO, the network of training officers, etc.
7. In line with this it is clear that the government can be an important partner and it should be. The government talks in Brussels about LLL and training, as well as Dutch organizations do it (consultation with the European policy organizations) or through their European networks. In this way, a lot of information is exchanged over developments, but then without knowing this from each other - and which may occur at opposing forces.
8. A further aspect that was put forward is to provide tailor-made education for people who work and thereby learn. A form in which training is offered, it is a modular way of having a program, with the ability to spread the training over time - and also to be able to grant exemptions. This requires an appropriate legal and regulatory framework. The government plans to designate the part-time education in this direction - but let's wait and see what can really be accomplished.
9. Another aspect is the different way of learning, especially on the workplace. The training that is linked to this, is growing. It also shows that there are many relevant skills to be gained on the workplace, and it can be used for RPL for a program to shorten or streamline it.
10. We propose, however, that there is a lot of LLL done in our country, but just not in formal education - part-time and for certain dual forms. And the government is responsible for this, directly and indirectly - given the assurance of quality, efficiency and funding, when it comes to public-funded institutions (for the private ones quality assurance is a link with the government). So the training within companies is relatively strong, and we must use that situation. We must see whether that training can be inserted through a certain way for larger projects, formal and non-formal (think of the Associate degree and the Higher Business Diploma, for example).
11. LLL is also a form of self-development through education, and that goes for those who have no job or decide to get started again. For them it can be useful to have targeted training or some form of assistance or retraining. These issues would be included in a more detailed manner on having the LLL Platform - possibly with certain organizations, directly or indirectly through the trade unions and education providers.
12. Finally, reference was made to a form that we did not see so much in LLL but in various sectors it can play a very decisive role: personal certification. This means that training is personal, needed for a specific function and every so often it needs to be updated in order to maintain the privileges. Aspects that can be included are as follows:
 - Being experienced and remain it
 - Search for a similar structure for teachers, especially if they work in practice
 - Strengthening the contacts between education and world of work
 - Recognition and assurance of competencies of lateral entrants.

4 Outcomes of the sessions

After the general part, the attendees were divided between three groups, led by members of the Leido project group. The most striking things that came up during the discussion in each group, and the created proposals are listed here. There were two rounds, each with four statements. It should be noted that group A for the sessions 3 and 4 was pulled up in group C, in view of the subjects and those who wanted to say some things about this.

Session 1: NLQF

How important is having a functioning National Framework for Qualifications (our NLQF) for enabling flexible learning paths, using informal, non-formal and formal education (education, training)? Makes having such a NLQF consultations between the organizations involved more meaningful, relevant and advisable?

Group A

- The question is whether employers attach importance to a framework, and a division of education pathways. It seems that employers seeking dissolution solutions to problems that arise in the workplace and in which additional specific training offers a solution. So it concerns new competencies for that job and then a link to a framework as the NLQF will be in this case totally unimportant. You know what needs to be learned, what takes place at various levels and then a clear linking of the whole program to a level is impossible. Perhaps it is possible for modules with own certificates, if the total program has a decent size. And of course the person himself, as employee, can have an interest in naming the level, even if only for pieces of a program.
- If you have the possibility to connect it with the way the world of work looks at training and LLL, you end up with concepts that have to do with HRM policy: career paths, career management, retention policies, the Cedeo education system, etc. So if you look at companies with training opportunities, ensure that the NLQF and a classification are serving them. Do not put it first, because you thereby putting too much pressure on learning pathways.
- A part of LLL - in addition to ensuring a career within a company or sector – is also provide training if there is any threat to reduction and loss of work. It concerns the so-called 'transition training'. This form of education is more focused on the person himself who must take the next step, not always in a logical direction. By the way, workers who are 'on the seesaw' themselves can examine what training in their own free time is wise to do to increase the chances of a next job.
- The system of personal certification - as already mentioned in the general part - can help many individuals to 'mark' their position. They update throughout their working lives their certifications every few years, as a form of LLL. For example, it is quite possible that VET teachers can certify themselves, even that a whole training program gets a mark. As an individual it is possible to acquire LLL accreditation points. An option, also in the context of LLL, is that alumni are linked to such kind of certification by offering them every few years modules with current developments in that program. These latest developments are based on the dynamics of the relevant world of work so that the curriculum will stay up-to-date.
- In short, the NLQF may be important, but it should be considered well how, when and for whom, in what situation.

Group B

- The layout of the framework is of great importance, but only as a basis. You can have a rigid schedule which describes eight levels, but LLL also have to deal with 'connections' and 'flow' between sectors and levels. It remains very important to consider when completing a training (qualification) how to put a step forward to the next level. How flexible can one do that, knowing which options there are? Who can take care of that and what kind of customization is possible? How much time is required, depending of the overlap between the courses at different levels.
- In itself, having the NLQF is a good tool. It is important to be able in addition to the formal trainings at a formal level, to indicate other, non-formal routes with their own qualifications.

- The question is whether you should work with small modules, as you can have problems with the program as a whole, being able to identify what exactly determines the final level - so you'll come up to a level or are you soon somewhere 'in between'... If the learning outcomes are clearly visible and are assessable at a level, then having the NLQF is a good thing. People who are facing a level should be aware that the measure can be 'coarse' namely in whole numbers ... A qualification 3,6 is not possible - it would be 4. Refer to the level indicator thus as a clue, especially for the receiving institution (in case anyone wants to study afterwards).
- The NLQF is about the level of the final learning outcomes, not on the content and not on the quality of the program. So it may well be that a holder of a diploma more benefits from a side step (widening) than a step to the next level (stepping up) - or for additional competences. It can thus also be the basis for a nice construction of job qualifications, in line with the functions in a particular industry. So, not always thinking linear and vertical, more watching for the structure around a sector of the working field. This creates all kind of training structures in line with functions within branches - which for someone who switches to another sector it is good to look at where there are overlaps between 'function houses' and how learning could play a role in that.
- A focus point is simply the translation that can be made of a personal port-folio as someone builds it up - often within a company - and of the general level assessment of it: where you are as a person, looking at what you all know...? It can also be used if someone is 'missing' competences, but also to continue with the current job as well, even in the short term after that. Also, such a port-folio can be used for RPL, that maybe can be therefore a tool for business and not for education - especially for the lower levels, when it comes to substantial training. At higher positions it would go more often about maintaining the existing job fulfillment.

Group C

- We're talking about educating people working in business - or having self-employed work. The training is based on certain qualifications, formulated by businesses for self-defined functions or fitting in 'function houses' for branches and professional organizations. These qualifications can be linked to the NLQF, as well as sub-parts of it, if they are expressly described in 'learning outcomes'.
- A good use of the NLQF can therefore lead to a form of modularization, with transparency per module. That can be used for the introduction of certificates of non-formal and formal education. Also, these modules can be included in a CV, especially interesting as they also have a link to the NLQF.
- The NLQF allows planning of qualifications, both in vertical and horizontal sense. Transfer can be made between courses, as the learning outcomes for the both of them are defined in a transparent way.
- This is a form of RPL: non-formal qualifications using for larger programs.
- So it can be concluded that the NLQF for LLL can play a clear role, with the ability to provide non-formal qualifications a place in the system.

Session 2: National LLL Platform

The approach and strategy on LLL is aimed at the individual, to come to the facilitation of opportunities to make the most of themselves. Can a national platform for LLL, as described in the introduction, to promote this goal?

Group A

- The formation of such a platform can certainly be useful, as a start with a limited number of parties. Then it will act as a promotional platform around LLL - and other organizations can join.
- A LLL Platform can also be seen as a place where good practices are collected. Thus, an experience such as the restart of NedCar having specific training agreements offered by VET institutions, can be used for other new cases. So, learning from each other.

- A national platform is useful for national policy and a comprehensive strategy, but it will also need connections, to be determined, with the regional resp. local approach around employment and training.
- Strategy around LLL should be seen as a quality boost, as a maintenance product e.g. for alumni and other practical matters - where a generic term such as 'sustainability' is important.

Group B

- It's important to be looking in a municipality or region for establishing a center for LLL. The problem is that the utility of it can be showed, but not the need. In practice, many people seem to know to find their way. So there will certainly be many people using a center, but it is necessary, so it cannot do without this approach? LLL is mainly focused on the benefits for the individual. Perhaps making a choice for a target group can be necessary, for example, at the lower levels. That needs to be sorted. In specific regions such as the Euregio which North-Limburg forms part, there is a great demand for interviews about training and retraining. Then, it's a region with the right target audience and its own issues.
- It is often argued that the world of work as such does not have so much attention for LLL when it comes to the demand side in training. But also at various 'hogescholen' LLL is not a priority. That must change - and perhaps the LLL Platform can generate more attention.
- An issue that also belongs to a platform, is looking at the role of the individual and the importance of LLL - without too much dependence on employers in view of the strong styling dynamism in the economy which 'one should know themselves'. Often the initiative has to be taken by the individual, where the consideration regarding what could be a next step, plays a major role. To cite an example of an interesting approach: A few years ago there was a project in which SMEs were having a 'flying coach' to watch what training is necessary for the employee.
- We are always talking about employers, but unions must also come into the picture. There are countries in which they formally are involved, to motivate employers to offer job-takers more opportunities.
- As stated, there must certainly be regional centers - even before a national center, which then can join them. But beware, it's good to look at what has already been done, regional - such as helpdesks? Perhaps using them, even if our Platform is focused on LLL, for training and 'progression in a career'. Support for the unemployed is a different ballgame...
- Such a LLL platform should be easily accessible, for the organizations involved. Then you could create regional meeting places with each other – how, that should be sorted out. An accessible physical place - library, gym, you name it. People get in motion, searching for possibilities and opportunities ...
And then of course you have the formal laws and regulations. Can the organized business community provide a counter, to keep that side also organized? Then the lines that should go to the regional meeting places, must be clear, and the LLL Platform must be able to refer to them in an effective way.
- Finally, it is established that LLL is not ingrained in many parties and stakeholders. We have to put the individual in the center - and so we must ensure that individuals are facing too late opportunities and possible consequences of wrong choices – or are too late to respond to future situations.

Group C

- Again, it can be said that the training covered by the branches, provides matters that may be discussed in the Platform on LLL, and with the government.
- Within the Platform can also be investigated whether there is cooperation possible with other partners - like ROA. Think of labor market forecasting, development around specific functions, specific training programs, etc.
- There may be discussions with educational institutions how LLL can be an issue in the institution plans.
- With branches we will look at how the interests of the employee may be matched with the way how an employer looks for investments in training.

- It is important that learning pathways, also in formal studies, are flexible. They could be discussed in the Platform. Certainly shorter routes, also thinking of the Associate degree, must include electives with modules that can be followed separately as well. This kind of training is attractive for all parties.
- We are dealing with individuals: employees, self-employed, people going back to work, etc. But you can also say that in SMEs a lot of people are on themselves when it comes to education - given the costs that are relatively high. How big is the individual interest? A platform should address the issue, that's obvious.
- Can we go to the Education Council (Onderwijsraad), to make proposals for the drafting of an advice for the ministry? And what can the SER do?
- So there are plenty of opportunities to involve the world of work in the Platform.
- And moreover, the changes in the labor market show the need to be engaged in LLL...

Session 3: Instruments LLL-Platform

In what way a national platform can be completed and the objectives can be given to this body - and what instruments lend themselves to a common focus?

Group A / C

- To start with the significance: "Long Life Learning = Long Life Earning". It should also be 'earning' in the sense of 'harvesting'. It can also be linked to terms as: long-term employability, earning capacity...
- Such a platform can to approach the 'O&O-funds' and thereby look for whether they need to be better joined when it comes to training, also for LLL. But there are more parties to be given a place in the network, such as STOOFF doing attempts around LLL at the 'bottom' of the labor market.
- If we look at the government, it is now much driven by regionalization. A Platform can be connected to this structure.
- Looking at the LLL Platform itself, it is good not to seek a situation having 'everyone' at the table. That is not possible anyway and beforehand bundling interests i.e. the search for common objectives, will therefore be impossible. So a strong core, having sub-groups to look at specific issues and appropriate developments.
- When it comes to 'focus' for LLL is an idea to approach HR managers and training officers in companies, perhaps well-known authors in the HRM field to associate the concept of LLL to sustainable HRM policy (books, articles, columns).
- A party that fits the platform when it comes to consultation, is the Education Committee of the employers' organizations. They can probably get a spot, but that have be discussed more closely.
- Cases that play a role now, are: top sectors, human capital agenda, R&D funds, commitment from EZ and SZW, etc. So the focus is wide to put down, but... there must be a limited number of objectives, not to 'get lost' in the LLL world...
- We can consider to link the platform to one or more research groups ('lectoraten') of 'hogescholen', for doing applied research.
- It is necessary for the 'hierarchical' thinking to break through that. It is definitely useful to see whether someone can graduate at a certain level, but it may not work on a rigid situation in attending a training.

Group B

- It is important to start in the regions. It is easier to connect certain regional networks and so you come to the person seeking help (where relevant for a national platform around LLL). It will be important to determine which parties based on that then qualify as regional or (also) regional working organizations. They can also be digitally operating institutions, using the internet.
- An LLL platform should generate attention to supply and demand of programs and training courses, etc. It should take care for having contacts with organizations that are in a situation

where a motivational approach is possible. Extra attention should be on the lower levels. Highly educated people will survive usually, but we have to keep an eye on them also.

- It is increasingly the case that, knowing at LLL it comes to personal advice, everyone is on the internet. What are the target groups and how we approach them? An 'offensive' strategy can be useful, being faster than a physical approach by other parties.
An instrument should be developed (website?) to raise the need for more employability of employees at the side of employers and HR departments. One issue is for example the role of the 'transition fees', charged to employers soon, with the expectation that companies will then pay more attention to LLL.
- It is noted that a stimulus is often missing for many workers to start a training. There's a lot to be examined at that point, but it's still the question of how we can get people moving. A possible research point for the LLL Platform ...
- When employers sit each year with their employees around the table to talk about training, it promotes awareness. May be areas to develop a type of protocol. This would cover standards for in-service training, to be included, given the frameworks, grants, support, etc.

Session 4: Government and LLL

What recommendations can be made to the national authorities regarding the streamlining of consultations with all concerned parties and organizations (training providers), and to what extent can this be considered as input for a national platform?

Groep A/C

1. The government must consider whether such a Platform fits into the policy of consultation of 'the field'. Obviously the Platform composition must be representative, and not having an overlap with other groups which the government has to deal with.
2. Many of the opportunities for training in all kinds of groups are linked to the policy of municipalities. Therefore, the VNG also would be an interesting partner - and that is also the case for the government.
3. The government can look at how UWV, Divosa and other organizations and bodies could be used for a kind of consultation with a platform.

Group B

- The national government should be advised to look at what is happening economically in the region - and to link this to the consultation with the LLL Platform
- Key point: The region should be facilitated in order to get an overview of the regional training needs. In addition, individuals will be encouraged to seize the opportunities that are there in the region.
- The government has a wider duty in looking at LLL than just in taking care for work.
- The demand by employers is leading.

5 Success factors for a LLL Platform

Since there is too little time available for further plenary discussion the chairs of the session groups are giving a brief summary of the results of the sessions - as mentioned here-above.

In general, it can be said that there are several critical remarks placed in the sessions at the need for a platform-LLL. It is sympathetic to the initiative, but then at one hand a broad basis is needed (all target groups should be represented), but on the other hand it must not 'bedlam' with as many interests as there are organizations in the platform. It will also have to go on topics that particularly play at a national level, or transferable to regions - and their needs to retrieve information. But each organization still retains its own responsibility.

The main features of the platform are, when it comes to the objectives:

1. The importance of the individual is the central issues in the policies of the parties and organizations.

2. LLL should focus on a long-term employability of the individual.
3. The importance of an employee is embedded in the way the business is trying to be a learning organization, where the person at some point belongs to.

Participants – LLL-FORUM – 28 MEI 2015

Naam	Sessie 1	Sessie 2	Sessie 3	Sessie 4
Beulen, Frank – ROC Leeuwenborgh	1	1	3	3
Boer, Aart den – Sponed	2	2	1	1
Daale, Hans – Leido	1	1	1	1
Dorremans, Jantina – Associatie	3	3	4	4
Hadders, Jantien – Hogeschool Rotterdam - NL3H	4	4	3	3
Hijink, Henk – Learn for Life	3	3	2	2
Paula Karsten – Hogeschool Stenden – NL3H	2	2	1	1
Kleingeld, Regina – NCP-NLQF (NPLLL)	1	1	3	3
Klooster, Ria van 't - NRTO	4	4	1	1
Leushuis, Patrick – Ministerie van OCW	1	1	2	2
Leyenhorst, Rein – Leido	2	2	2	2
Maretic, Alen – EUCIS-LLL	4	4	1	1
Markus, Marije – Hogeschool Rotterdam – Samara	3	3	4	4
Mulder, Jeroen – Ecabo	4	4	2	2
Nienhuis, Jan – SBB	3	3	3	3
Post, Kees – Hogeschool van Amsterdam	1	1	4	4
Snel, Ria – ExPlain	2	2	4	4
Vermeulen, Ad – oud-medewerker Fontys	3	3	1	1
Welter, Fredy – Hogeschool Zuyd	2	2	3	3
Wiersma, Martin – Explo	1	1	2	2
Wissink, Bert – EBCL	4	4	4	4