

## 6th Conference on lifelong Career guidance

### Leren en Werken



The power of cooperation  
in the regions  
**servicecenters on  
education and work**

Marianne Zoetmulder Programmamanager Leerwerkloketten  
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6th conference on lifelong guidance policy

I am afraid I caused some misunderstanding about the translation of the word Leerwerkloketten.

Some are calling them service centers on learning and work and some are calling them centers on education and work.

Well.... I don't mind but I do hope you all can pronounce Leerwerkloketten at the end of my speech.



Before I start my presentation I have a question to you. A simple one.

Do you know what this is? It's watch.

And do you know what it is made of?

It is made of Tyvek. Does anyone know what Tyvek is?

It is paper. Tear proof and water-resistant paper.

Who produces these watches? Is it Dupont, in one of its chemical plants? Or is it a small designers' company? So do we need process operators to do the job? Do we need people who want to work in a clean room or do we need designers? What job opportunities are created by this product and what kind of skills are required?

[www.i-like-paper.com](http://www.i-like-paper.com) (Berlin) You can design your own print and order it.

This is a shoe. I think that everyone recognises the object? But it is made of cork. The upper material is cork.

So what statement do I want to make.

I don't want to promote Dutch Industry and you are not in the wrong room.

What I want to make clear to you is that our daily used products are changing rapidly and so are the skills required.

What are the consequences of these rapid changes?

**First:** Up to date career guidance is essential if we want to cope with a rapidly changing economy and its products.

**Secondly:** if we want to offer adequate and up to date advice we have to have partners. We can't do it alone. Combining expertise is essential. Pick your partners. School advisers, labour market professionals, employers and employees and their representatives (chambers of commerce and unions for example).

**And three:** It is necessary that career guidance is available for all. Everyone has to cope with rapidly changing knowledge and skills required. Whether they are well skilled or not, well trained or not. Having an unemployment benefit or not. People have to adjust their skills and competences to the rapidly changing requirements of the knowledge economy and its industries. Our daily used products are changing already.

**And four:** career guidance has to be embedded in an independent and multi disciplinary structure.

I like to emphasize that the points, I mentioned, are my personal opinions. At the end of my speech I gladly invite you to discuss with me about the relevance of these points.

**So this was my plea. Now back to reality, back to business.**

And what is my business.

The title of my speech is “The power of cooperation in the regions”, and I hope I can make you understand why it is important to create a national partnership on lifelong guidance and why it is important to facilitate collaboration in the regions between partners and why it is important not to force them into partnerships.

Why it is important to link budgets.

Why it is important to link knowledge on education, labour market and life long career guidance together on a regional scale.

And how to make it work on a tactical and on an operational level. It sounds like a lot to do and that what it is, but I also think we can make it work if we keep it simple and join hands.

I have seen and heard very good practices and examples from other countries. Perhaps we can join hands on an international level.

I hope to make clear to you why active partnership is essential when you want to get things done in a flexible and an up to date manner. Up to date because economy is changing rapidly and so are vacancies. Funding possibilities are disappearing or are being created.

Schooling and training institutions are changing and so are the required capacities and competences of people.

What did we organise in the Netherlands to cope with a few of these challenges.



## Service centers on education and work

Have originated from:

- Lisbon: LifeLong Learning agenda
- Struggle for cohesion between education – labour market
- Regional approach of regional and economic issues
- Economic necessity
  - Labour market getting more flexible
  - Knowledge based economy
  - Skills requirements are changing rapidly

The service centers on education and work have originated from the Lisbon Lifelong Learning agenda

The goals of the Lisbon agenda are the promotion of active citizenship and the promotion of vocational skills.

And these were also the goals of the Leerwerkloketten when we started in 2010. So now we have been in action for 6 years. And both aims are still relevant for our LEERWERKLOKETTEN although there have been some change of focus due to the credit crunch and economic crisis.

The emphasize came on self regulation of the individual as opposed to facilitating people with training and accreditation

Struggle for cohesion between the educational pillar and the labour market pillar

We also originated from the struggle for cohesion between the educational pillar and the labour market pillar. Why I am calling this a struggle? I think every professional in one of the two pillars, labour market or education - has a strong urge to use the

possibilities from the other pillar. Yet it is very difficult to get cohesion between education policy and the labour market policy. Policymakers try to match legislation. But nevertheless, legislation is often a hurdle. Sometimes: agenda's differ in time and in place. Funding possibilities differ.

The service centers on education and work are operating on a strategic, tactical and operational level to overcome the hurdles and to create effective links. I'll come back to you on this later.

### **Regional approach of regional and economic issues**

Working together on labour market issues in the regions is imposed by legislation. Municipalities and UWV have to work together in prescribed labour market regions to fill vacancies and solve labour market dilemmas. Our educational partners are not. So often the labour market partners forget to invite educational partners to discuss and solve problems of rapidly changing skills demands. But in the Leerwerkloketten the educational partners have to be invited by the labour market partners to get the budget. So I must admit we do force them a little bit. But when there is no partnership, there is no agenda and when there is no agenda the professionals can't do their work properly.

But the main reason for working together on a regional level is the fact that problems can differ. We have economic strong regions like Eindhoven and Rotterdam, but we also have regions like Friesland where more people than in other regions are illiterate and under skilled. This is also the reason why partners are not forced into partnerships. They have to be able to answer to the specific needs of their regions. We are facilitating them.

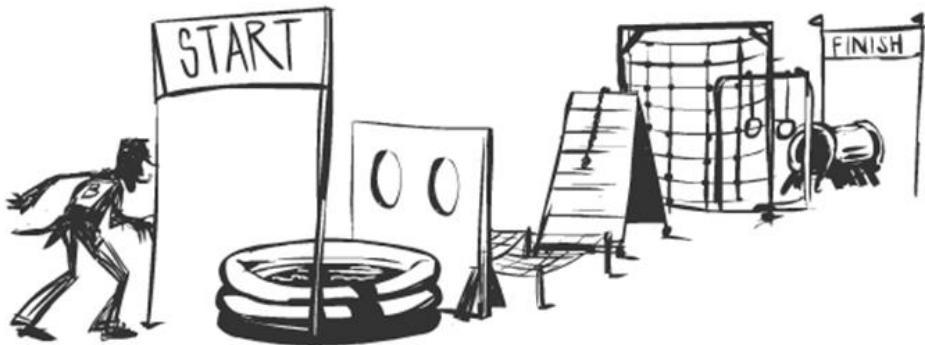
And there is another reason. People are not always willing to travel hours for their jobs and we can't get industries from one part of the country to the other. Our national government did try, but it is difficult. So how can we facilitate those different regions to cope with their own questions about skills and competences needed?

## **Economic necessity and knowledge economy**

In order to allow full participation in social and economic life and to respond to the demands of the new knowledge based society we have to support our working force to get the education they need. I think that is simple. And we have to stimulate mobility and adaptation of employees to new skills. And we have to stimulate our employers to invest in people within or outside their own company.

Which brings me to the next slide.

## Life Long Learning



So here he is. Our man. He has worked almost 25 years in a good job. But now he is 42 years old. He still has to go on working for another 25 years. But: he became under skilled for the job he was in and was made redundant. And he hasn't a clue what the opportunities are to get another job. So what can we do to help him to overcome his hurdles? And I think this question that it is all about. The reason of the existence of the Leerwerkloketten. How can we analyse his capacities and competences to apply to a vacancy in another sector, or in the same sector? What does he want to invest himself, what can we advice him? What are his skills, what are his competences? Is initial schooling relevant? What instruments are there available? Is there a regional VET college which is offering relevant education? Does he meet the admission requirements? Who is paying? Is there an employer who wants to support him with training on the job? Is there a budget to retrain him? Is there a career counsellor who knows an answer to all of his questions?

What did we organise in the Netherlands to answer his questions?

## What is a servicecenter on education and work?

- It offers **information on and access to** the process of **life-long learning** to employers, employees and the unemployed, which includes those who have finished or are about to finish school.
- It has a **regional infrastructure**, running parallel to the 35 labor market regions in The Netherlands
- There are **33 regional centers on education and work**
- Partners: **municipalities, educational and training institutions, PES\***, employers

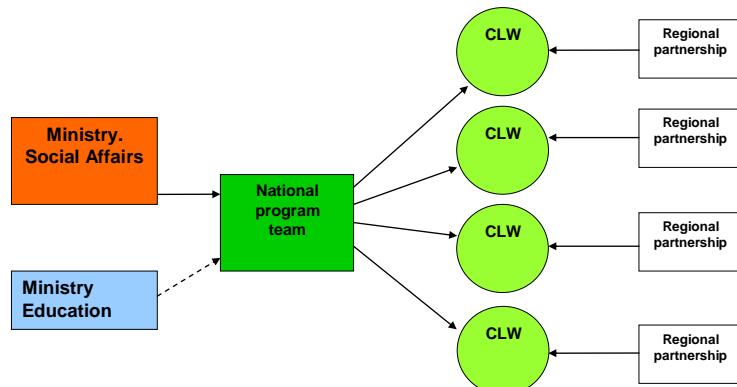
\* PES: Public Employment Service

We now have Leerwerkloketten in almost every region.

Everyone, the ones with an unemployment benefit, or a welfare benefit, employees, employers, everyone with a question on career guidance, schooling, training, learning on the job is our customer. The question is relevant, not the benefit. Actually anyone who has a career development question or is in need for training on the job can go to a Leerwerkloket in its own region for career guidance.

To be able to answer the large amount of possible questions and the rapidly changing questions we have brought partners together in every region. If they wanted to get a budget for a leerwerkloket, they had to sign an agreement, they had to have a strategic plan to cope with their labour market and also their educational issues and career guidance questions. They had to have a tactical agenda on a yearly base and they had to create a team with a project leader and career advisers on an operational level. The members of that team had to come from the participating organisations to bring expertise together in a simple manner.

## Structure of CLW's



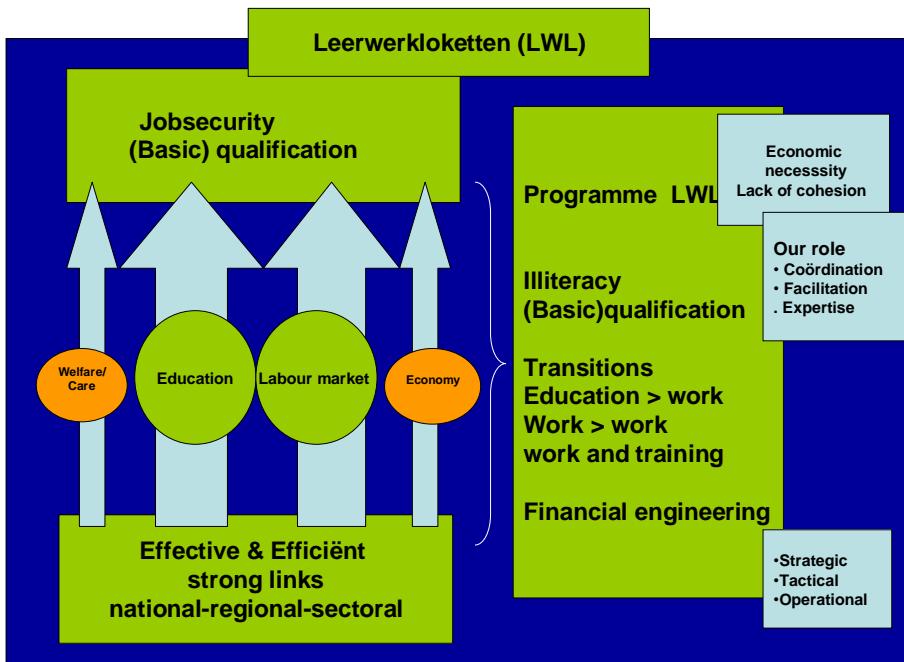
*Focus in the regions, facilitated national*

We asked the partners to bring their policies together, to link the budgets to make schooling packages possible, to make processes easier and most off all to create schooling and training initiatives for those who need it.

In our structure career guidance isn't a stand alone service and it is not a completely embedded service. It is supported by the knowledge of the partners but it is independent of their institutional objectives and goals. And hopefully by doing so our career advice is up to date and adequate.

The ministry of Social Affairs is still responsible for the budget of the leerwerkloketten and the ministry of Education, Culture and Science is an important partner.

There is a national team with a programme manager to create partnership on a national level and to support partnership in the regions. The partners in the regions set their own priorities on labour market and educational issues. So it is a kind of matrix.  
**(Scheme)**



We have a budget of 4,5 million euro's a year. That is a lot of money, but it means one to two professionals per region to do the job. And no training budgets or budgets on career guidance! If we want to train people, unemployed or not, we have to find extra money, if we want to give career advice we have to have career advisors. We always have to work together with partners to achieve results. In 2015 we had a budget available of 8 million (cofinance) instead of 3,5 million for career advisors. For training and schooling activities in the regions we had almost the same amount.

We believe that there is a lot of money to do the job. But to get it on the right time on the right place for the man or woman who needs it on the moment that there is a job available you have to have strong links between the national and the regional partners, between the sectors and the regional partners. We are constantly trying to connect the expertise, the funding possibilities and the demands from one pillar to the other (welfare and care, educational, labour market and economic pillar) on a strategic, tactical and operational level. Just to answer to the questions!

And we chose on a national level the priorities we need to add to the regions (as you can see at the right part of the scheme). We organise network sessions, we facilitate with expertise, with a website, ICT, sometimes with research, with sharing best practices or funding methods etc etc.

We chose the priorities because of lack of collaboration or cohesion. Or more positive the urge for collaboration on these themes. And economic necessity.

We focused on transfers, school to work, work to work and benefit to work, we focused on illiteracy and we focused on funding. I explain the funding issue.

### Financial Engineering

When we started in 2010 the partners like the municipalities and UWV had budgets for career advice, accreditation and training. But due to the credit crunch and the economic crises, the funds for schooling and training were reduced. Unemployment increased and employers had less money for training on the job. The emphasize came on self regulation of the individual as opposed to facilitating people with guidance, training and accreditation. So if we wanted to achieve our goals we had to be a sustainable and flexible organization ourselves, capable of getting funding or rather funding methods due to the economic crises. We had two simple methods: linking budgets as much as possible for groups (we designed a digital budget scan to offer up to date information to our professionals on funding).

And secondly: we used Social Return on Investment. If a company is granted an order from a municipality it must use 5 percent of the amount of the assignment to appoint unemployed in his company.

We had to take into account that we were a small initiative. We had to have a dynamic response to the changing economy and changing goals.

## What do we do?



### What do we do?

- Offer up to date knowledge (labour market and education)
- Knowledge on regulations and budgets
- Independent (career-) advice
- Designing and creating (educational) arrangements
- Database of potential employees
- Accreditation of training companies
- Support in finding a on-the-job-training

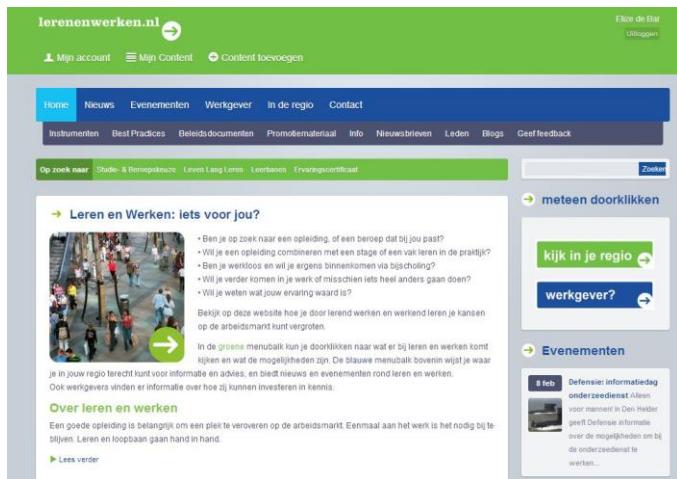
We had an evaluation in 2015, initiated by the ministry of social affairs. And it was very positive. Instead of a project we now have a structural budget.

One of our partners is SBB. It is the public organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (SBB). One of their tasks is accreditation of training companies. But because we are working together very closely, we can respond to an employers demand for accreditation.

In the Netherlands we have two routes for a diploma: a work based route (4 days work, one day work) and school based route (4 days school, one day work).

## What did we organise on a operational level (website)

[www.lerenenwerken.nl](http://www.lerenenwerken.nl)



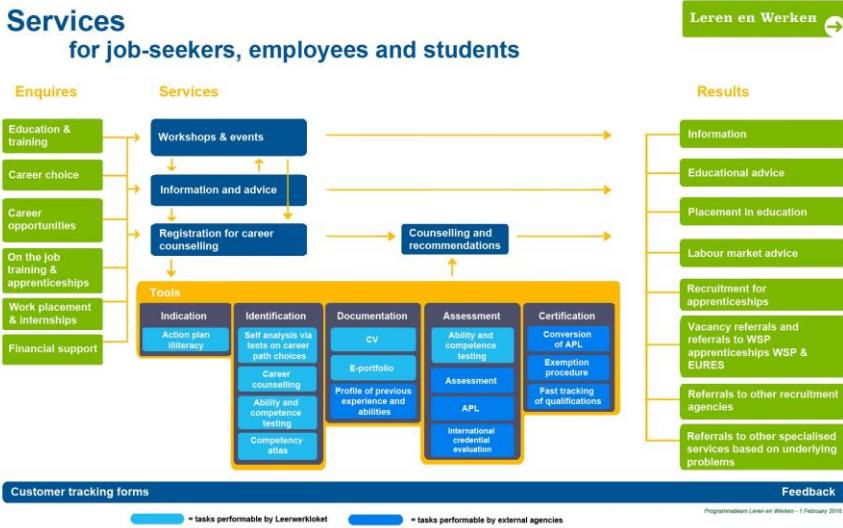
What did we arrange on a operational level.  
A website: [lerenenwerken.nl](http://lerenenwerken.nl)

We have designed a national website and websites for every region. And we have designed a Community for our professionals (career advisors). Whether they are working for the municipality, for UWV (PES) or a VET College they can get access to the Community. And get informed about processes, instruments, funding possibilities, new initiatives, best practices in regions etcetera.

Every region wanting to have a regional website is facilitated with the same format, with the same colours and lay out, but the content may differ. So what we are trying to achieve with this, is that there is nearby information for every professional, working in the labour market pillar or educational pillar. And in doing so, for every one who has a question about his OWN life long learning.

So this is one of our facilitating tasks.

We also provide the regions with expertise



What you see here is something we are very proud of.

We had the urgent need for a systematical way of advising in every region.

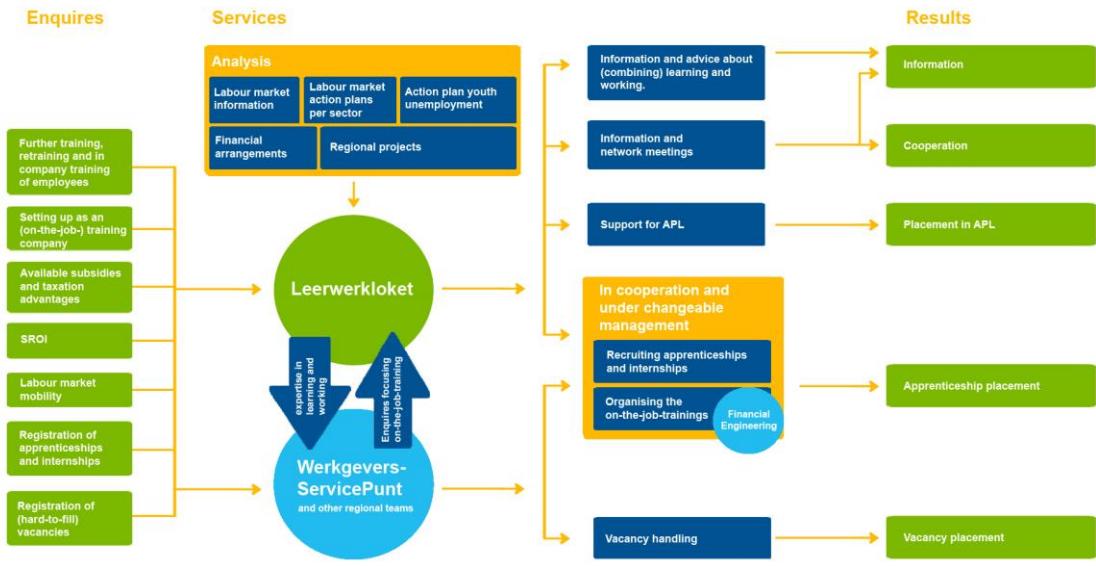
We wanted to make our services transparent for our professionals and for our customers.

We designed a career menu. It is completely digitalised. So our advisors use the same steps in their career advice. Whether having questions on Illiteracy, or about getting an assessment, about vocational training, about a career switch, the professional can always use the menu to find out what instruments are available. Behind every blue button is a list of instruments, and links to relevant information, relevant websites and best practices. The light blue services we do ourselves. The dark blue are services from our partners or external agencies.

So this is the way in which we facilitate the professionals/ our advisors in the regions. And it can be used for various questions from all various target groups. For jobseekers and career switchers, employees and unemployed, whether on a welfare benefit or an unemployment benefit.

## Services for employers

Leren en Werken 



Programmaitem Leren en Werken - 1 February 2016

And we have the same menu of services for employers.

Behind the blue buttons are also best practices from the regions. So everyone can be informed in an interactive way.

Our national team is moderating the information.

## Some questions

- Career guidance should be available to everyone at any time?
- It is possible to make career guidance available to everyone at any time?
- Lifelong guidance must be independent?

So this is what we do in the Netherlands on career guidance. And I promised you some questions.