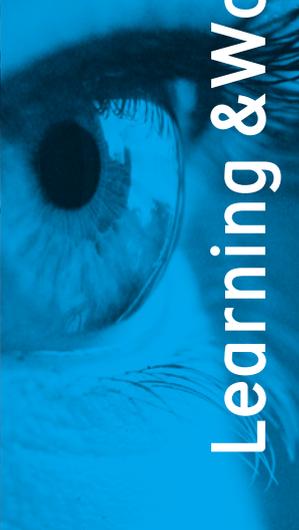


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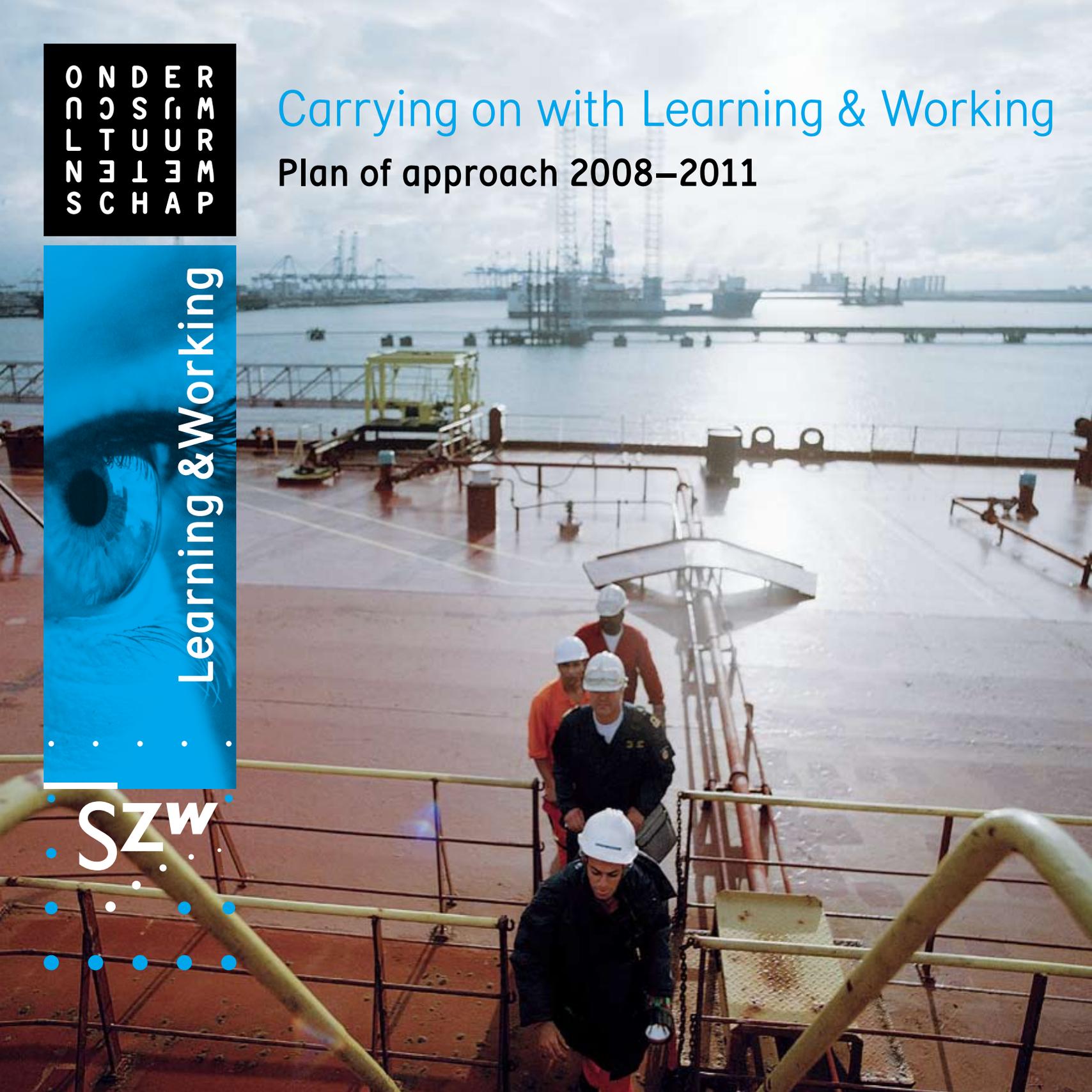
# Carrying on with Learning & Working

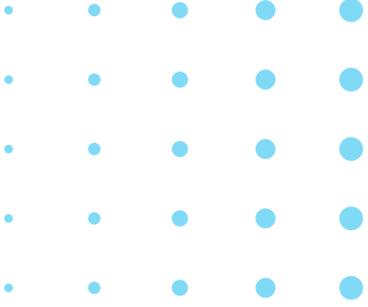
Plan of approach 2008–2011



Learning & Working

SZW





# Foreword

We were both born in the summer of 1961. Apart from that, the differences between us are great. In the Netherlands, every child automatically goes to school. In Morocco it was an exception. For one of us the school was in the neighbourhood, the other had to walk seven kilometres each day. Down the mountain in the morning, up the mountain in the evening.

As we got older, our careers started to look more similar. We both followed our professional education in the Netherlands, practically-oriented programmes in care and technology. A world opened up for us. That is why it surprises us that there is in fact a shortage of well-trained workers in these two inspiring sectors. We did not learn only in the classroom of course. It was during our internships, jobs on the side and in volunteer work that we learned about life. That is where we became aware of the value and quality of education. Both of us moved to public administration at a certain point. Practical experience proved invaluable there as well.

That is why we are glad that this kind of experience now also counts as a step towards a

diploma via an APL procedure. A diploma that is becoming increasingly essential in these times in order to find, as well as hold on to, a job.

We are pleased with what Learning & Working has achieved in two years. The unorthodox approach works and the cooperation between our ministries has a clear added value in the region and sector.

That is why we will continue our activities for *life-long learning* in the coming three years. We want to further reinforce the existing partnerships, because the active involvement of social partners is sorely needed. We hope we can count on their support in the years to come as well.

*State Secretary M. van Bijsterveldt-Vliegenthart*  
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

*State Secretary A. Aboutaleb*  
Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment



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## Summary

Two years ago, the project directorate Learning & Working started efforts to advance *lifelong learning*. The knowledge economy demands that people continue to learn and work throughout their lives and that these two activities support each other. Employers, employees, job seekers, the government, Centres for Work and Income (CWI) and education institutions in 44 regions have demonstrated over the past two years that much can be achieved with cooperation and ambition. For the government, this is a reason to continue to invest in *lifelong learning* in the coming three years, with even more ambitious goals. This plan of approach starts with a brief glance at the period that has passed and then outlines the activities planned to achieve these goals during the coming government term.

### Two years of learning by working

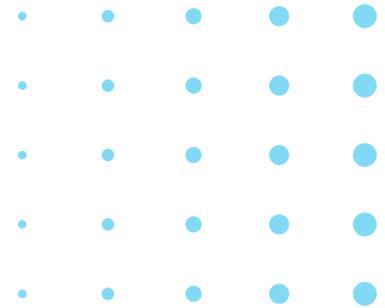
The target number of work-based trajectories was easily surpassed. In terms of network, infrastructure and innovation, much more was achieved than anticipated. Only APL lagged behind, though the number of trajectories completed tripled in comparison to the years before 2005. The project directorate is a

valued partner in the field and within the government. The sense of urgency among employers and the public is below par however and it has emerged that public institutions are not adequately able to give *lifelong learning* a permanent place in their organisation. In its programme entitled 'Everyone takes part', the government expresses its ambition to achieve a significant increase in labour participation, for which education is an important tool. Alongside this the Council for Work and Income (RWI) reports there is a danger of a shortage of highly educated workers. All reasons to really invest in *lifelong learning* during this government term.

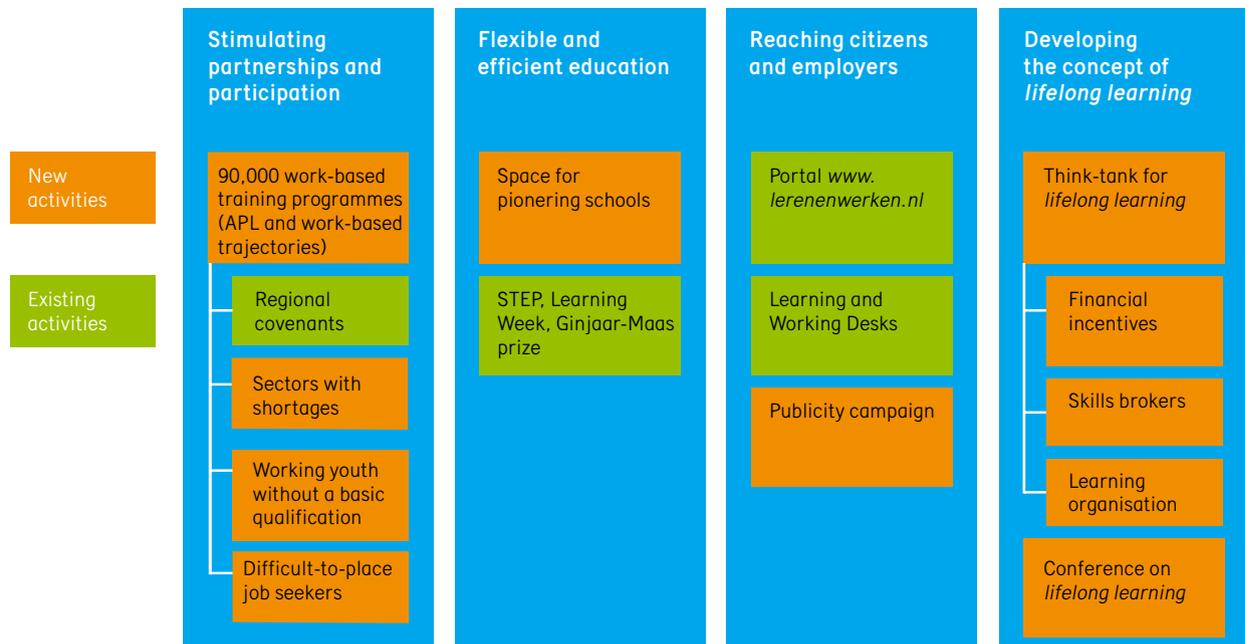
### Stimulating and facilitating partnerships and participation

In three years' time the government members at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW) and at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) would like to see another 90,000 people complete work-based training programmes. In order to achieve this, the infrastructure created over the past two years in the regions and sectors must be expanded. But the





## Activities 2008–2011.



number of trajectories completed each year must also be stepped up. Together with municipalities, Centres for Work and Income, the Social Security Agency (UWV), employers and educational institutions, efforts are being made to achieve *lifelong learning* in the region. In areas of the Netherlands where no partnerships have yet been developed, the project directorate

Learning & Working will seek partners who would like to take the lead in this. The ambition of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) is to achieve 10% of this.

The spearheads within the 90,000 work-based training programmes are the sectors in which personnel shortages will arise: care and techno-



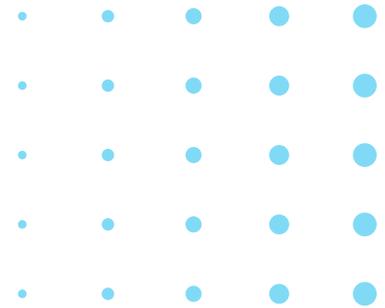
logy. The programmes are realised by, among other things, working together with care institutions and the Science and Technology Platform (Platform Bèta Techniek). The project directorate Learning & Working also uses focused actions to help people complete work-based training programmes in the Netherlands Antilles. Another spearhead of the government's Learning & Working policy is to give 30,000 difficult-to-place job seekers better chances on the labour market through training. Learning & Working will also contribute to 20,000 APL trajectories for working youth without a basic qualification for the labour market (a level 2 Secondary Vocational Education qualification – MBO 2). Together with the directorate Early School Leaving (VSV – Voortijdig Schoolverlaten) of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science we hope to achieve these goals in 2011 by providing learning career advice, APL and smart guidance.

### Flexible and efficient education

Adults must be able to combine learning with other activities, such as work, family care and free time. Flexible education is a prerequisite.

Unfortunately, public educational institutions are still inadequately equipped to organise customised programmes for adults. There is much to be gained here. The government wants to stimulate customised programmes for adults with the project 'Space for Pioneering Schools' (Ruimte voor Voorhoedescholen). The project directorate Learning & Working supports four Regional Training Centres (ROCs), two colleges of Higher Vocational Education (HBO) and an Agricultural Training Centre (AOC) in adapting their course offerings, working method and organisation. Experts are asked to give advice and examine the schools critically in terms of their operations and *lifelong learning*.

The government wants 10,000 more people between the ages of 27 and 40 to be following higher vocational education in four years' time. In this context the project directorate Learning & Working will work with the directorate Higher Education (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science) to draw more attention to the Associate Degree Programme and to bring about an accelerated introduction of the Associate Degree (AD) in 2008. This is a two-



year programme within the HBO Bachelor Degree Programme (Higher Vocational Education) that leads to a legally recognised degree: the Associate Degree. This makes the step towards further study easier for workers and people with an MBO (Secondary Vocational Education) diploma. Efforts will also be made to create customised programmes in higher education attuned to APL.

### Reaching citizens and employers

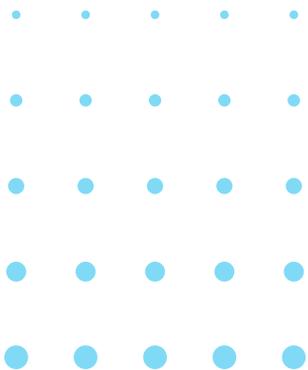
Citizens and employers are often not aware of training opportunities for adults. Nor is there enough of a sense of urgency about *lifelong learning*. Two years ago the project directorate Learning & Working started bundling the information and making the opportunities for work and training more transparent. In the coming three years there will be investment in the Click, Call & Face concept. Individuals can easily search for learning and working possibilities at [www.lerenenwerken.nl](http://www.lerenenwerken.nl) (click). Thanks to free telephone contact (call) with the help desk, questions can be asked and answered; and employers and citizens can go to the learning and working desks (face) for a personal talk. We are launching

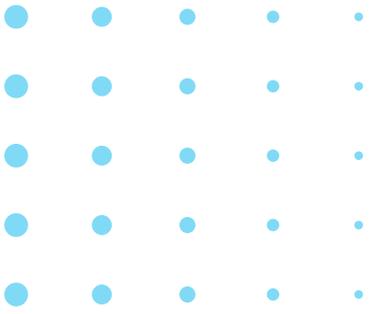
a publicity campaign in the hopes of increasing the sense of urgency for *lifelong learning* and improving awareness of the website and the learning and working desks.

### Developing the concept of *lifelong learning*

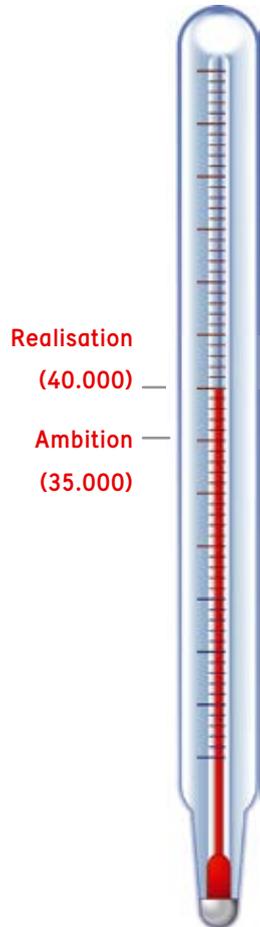
In addition to active efforts for *lifelong learning*, the government also wants to call attention to a great many questions surrounding *lifelong learning*. Why is adult education slow to take off? What do we know of the effectiveness of the instruments? Who plays what role? For these kind of key questions a think-tank is being set up. In dialogue with the government the think-tank will focus on creative concepts to get more adults learning. Specific topics that will be investigated are financial incentives, literacy, application of the concept of the learning organisation and the role that skills brokers can play.

In June 2008, this government wants to organise a conference on *lifelong learning*. The conference will focus on the discussion on fundamental issues surrounding *lifelong learning* and on learning from inspiring examples from other countries.





# 1. Two years of learning by working: results



The Learning & Working project directorate was started in 2005. We set ambitious goals for ourselves at the time, in concrete numbers. Now after two years we are taking stock:

- ⋮ There are 44 regional and sectoral covenants.
- ⋮ In total 26,000 people started work-based trajectories and more than 13,000 started APL trajectories. Agreements were made for 51,000 people to follow work-based training programmes (APL and work-based trajectories together).

## 1.1 Working with quantitative ambitions

### Work-based trajectories

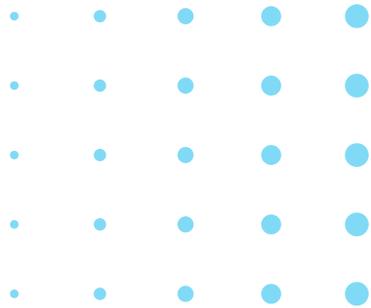
Work-based learning is working and learning at the same time, with learning taking place in the workplace as much as possible. The aim was to start 15,000 work-based trajectories. This objective was exceeded. The trajectories mainly involved achieving an MBO (Secondary Vocational Education) diploma (mostly MBO level 2, assistant level) and sector certificates. Trajectories for HBO (Higher Vocational Education) are in the minority.

### APL

Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) entails that adults can cash in their experiences from work and free time for a diploma. APL has been the subject of study for years, but was only applied to a limited degree until 2005. Yet APL can mean much gain in learning and time for adults. That is why the target was ambitious, with 20,000 APL trajectories. That goal was not reached. Currently just over 13,000 trajectories have been completed. That is disappointing, but still a threefold increase compared to the period before 2005. The reason is probably because people, both providers and users, are hesitant about something with which they are unfamiliar.

### Partnerships

The aim was to realise at least 10 partnerships. These not only had to achieve concrete goals, but also ensure structurally better cooperation. The target of 10 partnerships was far exceeded: there are now 44 partnerships. Not much can be said about the durability of these networks after just two years of course. Many networks did indicate during the qualitative



monitoring round that they saw it as a great benefit that they were working together effectively. It does take time before parties really know how to connect. We can say at this point that the foundation for the infrastructure for *lifelong learning* has been laid.

### Spotting and re-potting

Five innovation projects were planned. This became eleven. The formula of 'spotting and re-potting' worked well here. This means that innovation projects that worked well in certain regions or sectors are 'replanted' at other locations. By doing so, good results are achieved with relatively little subsidy and regulation.

## 1.2 Building an infrastructure for *lifelong learning*

### Learning and working desks

16 regional learning and working desks were set up over the past two years to inform employers, unemployed and employees about APL and work-based learning. That is a considerable acceleration compared to the modest approach



contained in the plan of 2005, which involved experimenting in four regions.

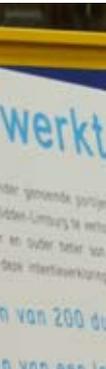
The partnerships arose in the region (bottom-up), without a blueprint from the government in The Hague. The great advantage of this is that every region can focus the learning and working desks on what is going on in the region. The disadvantage is the great diversity, which makes it difficult to present a clear, recognisable product.

### Quality code for APL

A quality code for APL was signed in 2006 by the whole professional education sector, employers and employees. The quality code is an important step towards guaranteeing quality, garnering support and granting insight into the supply of APL. About 130 APL providers are currently entered and can be found in the 'Register for Recognised APL providers' (Register voor Erkende EVC-aanbieders).

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

A website was developed to reach the public and employers digitally as well: [www.lerenenwerken.nl](http://www.lerenenwerken.nl). The intention was not to create new information, but rather link existing information





(Association of Centres of Expertise on Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market [COLO], Centre for Work and Income [CWI], APL Register, ROC.nl). On the site citizens and employers can find virtually all the information available on learning and working.

### Associate Degree

An important development within the HBO (Higher Vocational Education) is the introduction of the Associate Degree programmes. An Associate Degree programme is a two-year programme within the HBO Bachelor programme that leads to a new legally recognised degree: the Associate Degree (AD). This education programme is intended for workers and students entering from MBO (Secondary Vocational Education). The association of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Netherlands urged strongly for the introduction of these kinds of programmes. Over the past period 57 pilots of AD programmes have been started. About 1,400 students are currently pursuing an Associate Degree.

### Financial instruments

Financial instruments to encourage *lifelong learning* are available. Not enough use is made of these instruments because they are not very well-known. Folders and websites are being used to call attention to these – mostly tax-related - possibilities. An extra tax facility has been created for APL (300 euros per procedure for employers and via the income tax for individuals).

Research has been done into the effectiveness of the training instruments. This yielded two important outcomes: generic measures, including tax measures, are not very effective and individual guidance to and during a work-based training programme is important for less educated workers.

### 1.3 Unorthodox approach

When the project directorate Learning & Working was set up, it was decided that an unorthodox and dynamic approach was needed to achieve progress with *lifelong learning*. It emerges that this approach works. Talks with external parties and internal leadership indicate that



they are satisfied. Learning & Working has been encouraged to continue in the same manner.

### In the region

We did not want to impose a blueprint from The Hague, but rather enter into dialogue with the region and reach clear agreements and results. The project plans submitted are assessed critically. Learning & Working plays various roles in the implementation of plans:

- ⋮ Steering
- ⋮ Support and learning
- ⋮ Feedback and evaluation

A government that shows interest and contributes ideas is appreciated in the region.

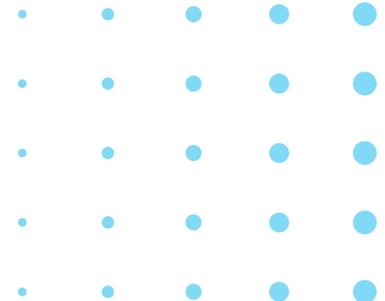
### Within the central government

Interdepartmental work has added value within the project directorate Learning & Working. The contribution of employees from five different organisations results in added value in network, knowledge and in a different perspective on things.

### 1.4 Evaluation of the results

Partnerships with quantitative ambitions, building the infrastructure and the unorthodox approach help achieve progress in *lifelong learning*. The government wants to continue with this, primarily to prevent there being too much talk and not enough action with regard to *lifelong learning*. We wanted to be open to signals from the region. Consequently we heard





that impediments were also encountered in the region. Citizens do not always adequately see the need for *lifelong learning*. This is also the case for small and medium-sized enterprise (SME), but added to this is the fact that learning costs time and money. In addition, we noticed in the projects that public institutions find it difficult to give *lifelong learning* a permanent place in the organisation. That puts a brake on the growth of the number of adults seeking education.

### 1.5 Why are we continuing to 2011?

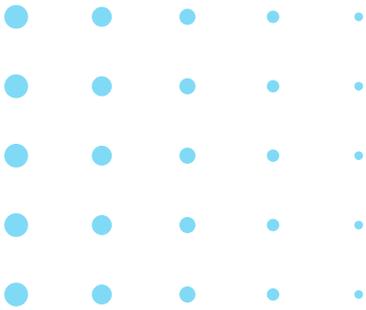
There are a number of clear reasons to continue investing in *lifelong learning*:

- ⌘ The Lisbon objectives will not achieve themselves. In particular the ambitions with regard to course participation and the share of highly educated people in the working population demand significant efforts in the coming years.
- ⌘ There is a danger of a shortage of highly educated workers.
- ⌘ The government has the ambition of having an additional 200,000 people participate on the labour market. Training is an important means of achieving this objective.

- ⌘ Signals from the region show that despite broad social support for *lifelong learning*, individual citizens and employers are insufficiently appreciative of the importance of this.
- ⌘ Public institutions prove still inadequately equipped to organise flexible customised trajectories for adults.

All of these are reasons for this government to undertake efforts to increase the sense of urgency for *lifelong learning* by starting a publicity campaign in 2008. In addition, the government wants to focus on making public institutions more flexible when it comes to *lifelong learning*, with the Pioneering Schools project and in cooperation with CWI/UWV and municipalities.





## Lisbon objectives

The activities of the Learning & Working project directorate are closely connected to the following Lisbon objectives:

- ⋮ 80% of the Dutch working population should have a basic qualification (mbo 2) in 2010. In 2000, that figure was 74.4% and in 2007 77.7%.
- ⋮ 20% of the Dutch between the ages of 25 and 64 should be following a course or educational programme in 2010. In 2000, that figure was 15.5%, in 2003 16.4% and in 2006 15.6%
- ⋮ 50% of the working population should be highly educated in 2020.

## Knowledge shortage

Besides the lagging progress on the Lisbon objectives, there are clear signals of a 'knowledge shortage' of highly educated workers:

- ⋮ The Council for Work and Income (RWI) wrote in the publication 'Kennistekort in Nederland' (Knowledge shortage in the Netherlands) (2006) that the shortage of highly educated workers will rise to 75,000 in 2010.
- ⋮ The RWI wrote in the same report that, compared to other countries, the Dutch share of highly educated workers has decreased. We fell from fourth place to ninth place on the OECD ranking. The share of highly educated workers in the Netherlands is rising slower than in two-thirds of the OECD countries. Moreover, on the basis of trend analysis in Dutch education no growth is to be expected and the Dutch position will become even worse.
- ⋮ The Education Council (Onderwijsraad) wrote in its recommendation 'De helft van Nederland hoger opgeleid' (Half of the Netherlands highly educated) (2005) that the shortage of highly educated workers will reach 100,000 people in 2012.

The government therefore wants more people in higher education. This will require investment in *lifelong learning* in higher education. The objective from the Strategic Agenda for Higher Education and Science (Strategische Agenda Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschap) is that 10,000 more people between the ages of 27 and 40 be enrolled in higher vocational education, including funded higher education, in 2011.

### Everyone takes part

In the action programme 'Everyone takes part', the government described the aim to work with social partners (employers' organisations and labour unions), municipalities and other parties to get an additional 200,000 people participating on the labour market and in a social context. Training plays an important role in promoting labour participation and solving the mismatch on the labour market. The 30,000 extra work-based training programmes and APL trajectories for difficult-to-place job seekers and the Pioneering Schools project (see chapter 3) are important for the objective of having 200,000 additional people participating in society.





## 2. Stimulating and facilitating cooperation

New activities	Continue with
90,000 APL and Work-based trajectories Focus on sectors with shortages Working youth without a basic qualification Difficult-to-place job seekers	Regional approach

### 2.1 Where are we now?

These are the first yields of two years' work on *lifelong learning*:

- ⋮ 44 regional and sectoral covenants on *lifelong learning*.
- ⋮ 26,000 work-based training programmes and more than 13,000 APL trajectories. Agreements for 51,000 work based training programmes.

At least as important as the quantitative yields is that a foundation has been laid in the regions for lasting cooperation between employers, employees, job seekers, schools, benefits agencies and Centres of Expertise on Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market [KBB's]. It is really a foundation. The partnerships must be further expanded so that they can ultimately function independently.

### Vision on regional cooperation

Regional cooperation between governments, CWI and UWV, educational institutions, employers and employees is vital for *lifelong learning*. The cooperation has taken off well, but must be expanded. The project directorate Learning & Working therefore faces two challenges in the 2008-2011 period:

- ⋮ Reinforcing regional cooperation;
- ⋮ Stimulating cooperation in the regions where it is still lacking.

### 2.2 What are we going to do?

We believe that combining learning and working is an important key to tackling a number of important issues, including the acute shortages of personnel and the mismatch between supply and demand on the labour market.





APL and work-based trajectories have proven a formula for success for regional and sector-based cooperation. We will therefore continue with those. In the Monitor 2007 (available at the beginning of 2008) we will look at:

- ⋮ The steering power of the project and the partnership
- ⋮ The durability of the partnership
- ⋮ The connection between the project ambitions and the national ambitions of Learning & Working.

The data from the Monitor 2007 will be utilised to start actions in the regions and sectors.

### 90,000 APL and work-based trajectories in the region and sector

In the coming years we will be raising the bar. Each year on average 30,000 work-based training programmes must be completed. That is twice as many as our aim from two years ago. In order to achieve the goal, we will be calling on the partnerships that arose from the temporary incentive scheme. The regions or sectors will adopt their part of the general objective and will be supported by the project directorate Learning & Working.

### ⋮ Acceleration

We believe that the doubled objective is feasible for the following reasons:

- ⋮ Two years ago there was no good infrastructure for *lifelong learning*. In the past years a great deal of energy has been invested in bringing together parties in the region. The partnerships have been established, which means a rapid new start can be made. It will be some time before the fruits of these lasting partnerships are reaped.
- ⋮ There is now more insight into the supply of APL. Thanks to the successful introduction of the APL Quality Code there is a better view on the quality of procedures. The recognised providers are included in the APL Register, which clearly indicates to citizens and employers where they can go for a customised procedure. The Centres of Expertise on Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market [KBB's] have also simplified the use of the national APL standards and made them more accessible.





- ⌘ A publicity campaign will create more awareness in the coming years for learning and working desks, combinations of learning and working, the internet portal and the need for *lifelong learning*.

- ⌘ **Large cities as leading examples**

The projects in the large cities deserve our special attention. The scale and complexity of the problems and organisations in these cities pose an additional challenge. If they succeed in organising solutions, many people will profit and these solutions can inspire other cities. In the coming three years we therefore want to showcase the examples and solutions from these projects.

- ⌘ **Focus on sectors with shortages**

In order to meet the personnel needs of the labour market, Learning & Working will focus extra activities on sectors with acute personnel shortages. These are mainly the care and technology sectors. Combining learning and working can reduce the

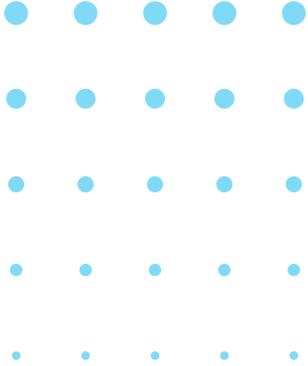


shortages in these sectors. Learning & Working encourages the lasting regional cooperation between parties as much as possible. The project directorate Learning & Working will work with the directorate Teachers (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science) to investigate whether and if so, which additional actions are possible to counter shortages in education.

The Ministries of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS), Social Affairs and Employment (SZW) and Education, Culture and Science (OCW) started seven regional pilots in the care sector in 2007, concentrated on:

- ⌘ Leading people on benefits and those not eligible for benefits to jobs in care.
- ⌘ Advancement of workers to the care sector via further training.
- ⌘ Social participation, with the possibility of advancing to regular work in the care sector

Parties in the region give these pilots shape, while the care institution takes the initiative, as employer. Other partners in cooperation are municipalities, CWI/UWV, Centres of Expertise



on Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market [KBB's] and educational institutions. In 2008 we will also deploy activities in the technology sector. This will take place in close cooperation with the Science and Technology Platform (Platform Bèta Techniek). Alongside

this approach we will continue of course to ask the existing partnerships in the regions and sectors themselves to investigate the needs of the regional labour market and focus policy and actions on these.

### Minister Verburg – Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (LNV) - Learning & Working in Green Areas



“It is a well-known fact that knowledge is the basis for the competitive strength of the agricultural cluster (all businesses involved in the primary production, processing and sale of agricultural products, horticulture and agriculture). In order to keep knowledge in the agricultural sector up to date, LNV will continue to advocate *lifelong learning*. The infrastructure that the project directorate Learning & Working is setting up for regional work-based training programmes (APL and work-based trajectories) will be supported and utilised by LNV for strengthening and increasing labour potential in the agricultural cluster. The sector has a relatively high number of small companies and a large number of less educated workers. LNV will put an emphasis on combating personnel shortages and achieving a basic qualification. The ambition is to realise 10% of the project directorate’s objective in the agricultural sector. This means that the Ministry commits itself to working with the education and business sectors in the coming three years to realise 3,000 trajectories each year!”



#### ⌘ APL for working youth (VSV)

The government's ambition is to support 20,000 working youth and activate them to get a basic qualification. This concerns working youth between the ages of 18 and 23 who have no basic qualification (a level 2 Secondary Vocational Education qualification) and are not currently working to obtain one. In 2006, some 90,000 young people fell into this category. Since we want to

raise the educational level of the Dutch population, we desperately need this group. Moreover, they will be the first to lose their jobs if unemployment should rise and will have difficulty finding another job. We therefore want more young people to get this basic qualification. This requires a flexible and varied educational offering that matches the work experience and career wishes of the youth.

### Inner City Council Rotterdam - 't Centrum pakt! – Under construction

Most businesses in the Rotterdam inner city are having more and more trouble finding suitable personnel. Most of the activity in the inner city is involved in retail, service provision, the hotel and restaurant industry / tourism. Considering the economic situation, the demand for personnel will only rise in the coming three years. In addition, the inner city still has a lot of ground to win when it comes to the purchasing power of its residents. The inner city is developing into a driving force for jobs in the city of Rotterdam.

One of the city's wishes is to set up the Inner City Council. The Inner City Council is a district oriented cooperation between businesses, education and education-related institutes and the government. The aim is to organise a pool where the business sector of the inner city (mainly retail, service provision, hotel and restaurant industry and tourism) can offer traineeships and apprenticeships. The Inner City Council lists the needs of the business sector and attunes the education programme accordingly. Along with this, attention is devoted to the young people's personalities, competencies and the drive, in particular the group of working youth without a basic qualification.



With the directorates of Vocational and Adult Education (BVE – Beroepsonderwijs en Volwasseneneducatie) and Early School Leaving (VSV – Voortijdig Schoolverlaten) of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the following will be undertaken to have this group of young people achieve a basic qualification, where necessary with the use APL.

- ⌘ Together with the directorate Early School Leaving (VSV) ensure that this target group is given a place in covenants to be agreed with municipalities.
- ⌘ Further elaboration of the 'learning career advice', in cooperation with the directorate Vocational and Adult Education (BVE) and in consultation with the relevant parties (municipalities, Regional Reporting and Coordination Centre [RMC], Centres of Expertise on Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market [KBB's], educational institutions and businesses).
- ⌘ Via the existing Learning & Working projects help realise APL trajectories for 20,000 working young people without a basic qualification.

#### ⌘ [Work-based training programmes in the Netherlands Antilles](#)

The labour market in the Netherlands Antilles is unbalanced. There are shortages of qualified workers for the hotel sector and the construction sector. At the same time, there is very high youth unemployment. Having unemployed youth follow a work-based training programme that suits them can address this problem. The project directorate Learning & Working wants to actively support the Netherlands Antilles in the coming years. In addition to financial support, targeted energy will be devoted to jointly addressing this problem through investment in good infrastructure in the area of matching and profiling and agreements with employers and the education sector.

#### ⌘ [Work-based training programmes for difficult-to-place job seekers](#)

There are 1 million registered job seekers in the Netherlands. There are another half million unregistered job seekers. The monitor from directors of the social services



(Divosa) 2007, the interim reports evaluating the Employment and Social Assistance Act (WWB – Wet Werk en Bijstand) and the effect of the macro-budget indicate, among other things, the following:

- ⋮ There have never been so few people on welfare. At the same time, about 25% return to welfare again. Training and qualifications are essential to keeping people employed.
- ⋮ Guidance for job seekers with good chances of finding a job is working adequately. The efforts for job seekers with fewer prospects are still lagging too far behind however.
- ⋮ The working method for reintegration is still not focused enough on businesses. This is changing slowly, but is still too fragmented.

That is why we are undertaking the following actions.

- ⋮ In the existing and new regions, 30,000 extra work-based training programmes (work-based and APL) will be implemented for job seekers.

- ⋮ On the initiative of the Chain Consultation Committee (AKO), in which the CWI, UWV and municipalities are represented, a pilot has been concluded concerning 'Locations for Work and Income'. This pilot delivered integrated services to the employer and the job seeker, in which the barriers between the social security administration agencies were removed and the client was provided with customised assistance. Learning and working desks will have to link well to the service provision from the 'Locations for Work and Income'.
- ⋮ The project directorate Learning & Working's pilots in the public private cooperation between UWV, BoaBorea (sector organisation for reintegration agencies), CWI and municipalities are successful project that can be expanded upon in a larger setting. A plan will be developed with these partners to transfer the working method to other areas and make performance agreements on



- the number of work-based and APL trajectories for job seekers.
- ⌘ The government is aiming to have the Participation Fund come into operation on 1 January 2009. From the point of view of training, built-up expertise, the network and the regional Learning & Working infrastructure, an active contribution is being made to optimally prepare municipalities for the introduction and effective functioning of the Participation Fund.
  - ⌘ The region was and still is key to the working method of the project directorate Learning & Working. Other policy areas and directorates are also opting for the region as the point of address to carry out policy. At the participation summit, agreements were made regarding the wider interest of strengthened

regional cooperation to benefit the whole regional labour market and participation policy. We will use our experience to search for effective coalitions, while ensuring that the regions themselves are not called upon to re-invent the wheel.

### 2.3 What do we want to achieve?

In the coming three years, 90,000 new work-based training programmes (APL and work-based trajectories) will be set up. The emphasis is on the following points:

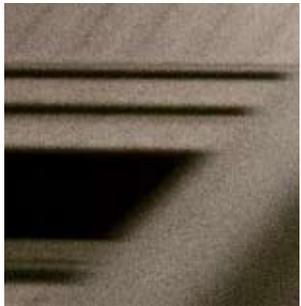
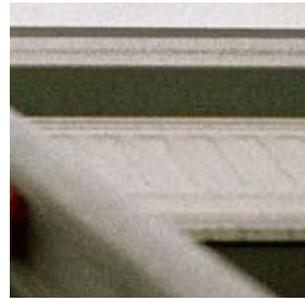
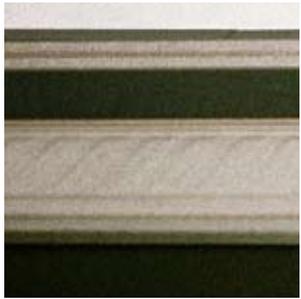
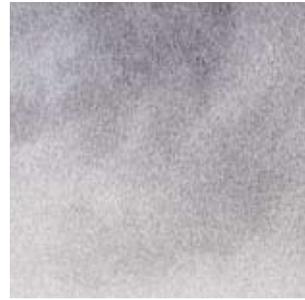
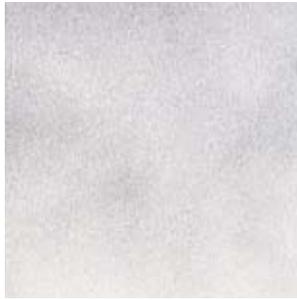
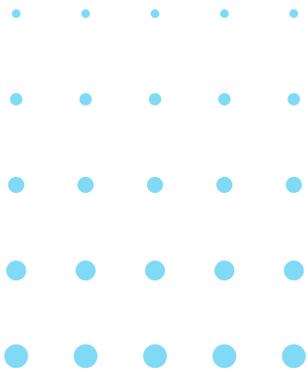
- ⌘ Utilising and expanding the existing infrastructure for *lifelong learning* in the region and in the sector. An acceleration of trajectories should be considered here. Regions and sectors adopt a part of the national objective and are supported in the realisation by the project directorate Learning & Working.

- ⌘ Seven pilots with care institutions focused on combining working and learning.
- ⌘ In the technology sector, which is facing shortages, the Science and Technology Platform (Platform Bèta Techniek) will work with the project directorate Learning & Working to launch concrete actions.
- ⌘ In cooperation with CWI/UWV and the partners in the region, 30,000 difficult-to-place job seekers will receive extra guidance via a work-based training programme.
- ⌘ Together with the directorates BVE and VSV of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 20,000 working youth will be stimulated to achieve a basic qualification. The possibilities of the learning career advice, followed by an APL trajectory, will be considered for this.

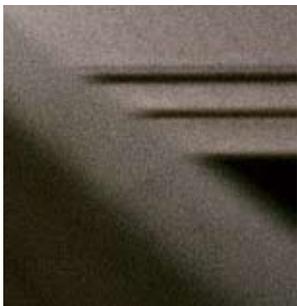
Budget (in millions of euro)

Stimulating and facilitating cooperation	2008	2009	2010	2011
90,000 work-based training programmes (APL and work-based trajectories)	12	11,5	11,5	4
<i>Youth without a basic qualification job seekers</i>				
<i>Sectors with shortages (care and technology)</i>				
APL and customised programmes in Higher Education <sup>1</sup>	5			
Work-based training programmes in the Netherlands Antilles	0,6	1,3	1,5	
Knowledge Centre APL	1	1	1	1

<sup>1</sup> Further agreements on this will be made with the HBO council in spring 2008.



## 3. Flexible and efficient education



### New activities

Pioneering schools

### Continue with

Associate Degree (AD)  
Stimulating Effective Projects (STEP)  
Learning Week  
Ginjaar-Maas Prize

### 3.1 Where are we now?

Publicly funded institutions are unable to cope with the growing number of adults who want to pursue some kind of education. There is much room for improvement in adult education on the MBO (Secondary Vocational Education) and HBO (Higher Vocational Education) level. In the past period it emerged that ROCs and colleges of higher vocational education are important for smart combinations of learning and working in the region. The schools are already trusted partners of businesses and municipalities in training activities for 'regular' students. The schools can improve their service provision to adults much more. The Open University has a successful example of this in the project 'Open Educational Resources', which makes lesson material available on the internet free of charge.

### 3.2 What are we going to do?

Schools have difficulty offering customised service. After all they already have many regular students following a great number of vocational training programmes. Moreover, the funding and supervisory regulations are attuned to regular students, but sometimes stand in the way of customised service to adults. Although many schools find creative solutions to improve parts of their adult education, there is still a great deal of improvement needed.

#### Pioneering schools

That is why a pioneering schools project was started. Four ROCs, two colleges of higher vocational education and one agricultural training centre are sticking their necks out to realise a rapid breakthrough in changes needed at schools



to get more adults learning. The schools will start working together to bring about drastic changes in their offerings, working methods and organisation. They are making agreements on the results that should be achieved at the end of the project. It is taken into consideration that the experiences must also be useful to other schools.

The project was kicked off in September 2007. Autumn 2007 was characterised by the development of a change plan at each school. In 2008, a conference will be organised to share the results with other schools and chart out a course for the future.

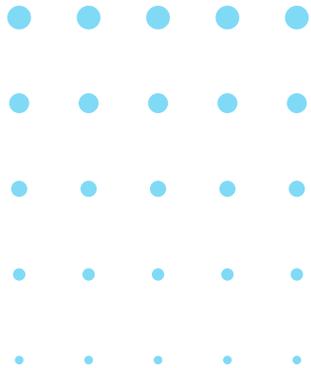
### E-learning

In order to solve the shortage of highly educated workers, more workers will have to follow diploma based training programmes. E-learning can make education for workers and job seekers more flexible. Both publicly and privately funded schools are active in the area of adult learning and are currently developing suitable and accessible offerings. The government has noticed this

and will keep its finger on the pulse in the coming years to monitor developments.

### Higher education

The OECD made critical comments on the participation of people aged over 30 in Dutch higher education. This participation must be increased. That is why the government has the ambition of having 10,000 more 27 to 40-year-olds participating in higher education, including funded higher education, in 2011 than in 2007. The most important assignment for the coming three years is to realise customised programmes for workers. With the scheme 'APL and customised HBO trajectories for learning while working' the project directorate Learning & Working wants to help realise this ambition in the coming year. In consultation with relevant parties, it will be decided how customised trajectories can best be realised. For university education, the plan is to conduct pilots with customised projects for adults in sectors where there is a shortage of university-educated workers.



### Associate Degree

The pilots with the Associate Degree can also contribute to increasing participation. If the interim evaluation in 2008 indicates that the pilots are a success (among other things in reaching the target groups of workers and advancing MBO students), it can be decided to introduce the AD in 2008 already and not wait until 2011. An important assignment for the coming years is increasing the familiarity with the AD among potential students and employers. The project directorate Learning & Working will be making active efforts in this area together with the directorate Higher Education (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science).

### Stimulating Effective Projects (STEP)

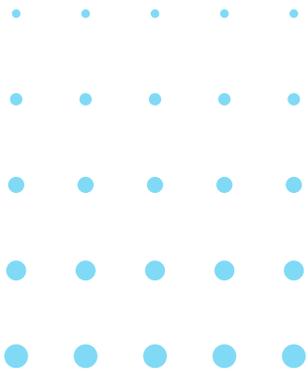
The temporary subsidy scheme STEP (Stimulans Toepassing Effectieve Projecten - Stimulus for the Application of Effective Projects) invites businesses, education providers and other organisations to seek out successful projects and apply these in their own region or sector. This involves projects in which education and the business sector work together on *lifelong learning*. Last year, eleven STEP projects were star-

ted, in the rail transport sector, the hotel and restaurant industry and the hospital sector, as well as in the regions Flevoland and Rivierenland. These projects showed positive and concrete results. STEP has proven a good instrument to stimulate the so-called 'spotting and re-potting' of top projects and to make a start on an educational infrastructure for workers and job seekers in the region or sector. The STEP scheme will once again be opened up because of this success.

### APL for volunteers at youth organisations

A volunteer develops many competencies, such as giving guidance, organising activities, keeping records, meeting, working with children and so on and so forth. Many volunteers have difficulties getting their experience valued by educational institutions or employers however.

The National Youth Council and APL expert Steunpunt Scouting Gelderland (Support point for Scouting in Gelderland province) are therefore starting a project for APL within volunteer work. We are supporting this project along with the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS).



### Learning Week

Learning gives people the chance to develop themselves personally, socially and professionally. But for many people the threshold to continue learning is high. They have had negative experiences or lack self confidence. The annual Learning Week is intended for these people. It primarily concentrates on informal courses or training sessions, but often it gives people a taste for it and they go for a diploma. The government encourages regional parties to organise learning activities during Learning Week.

### Ginjaar-Maas Prize

Two years ago the project directorate Learning & Working started the Ginjaar-Maas prize. The prize is intended for projects and initiatives that stimulate adult workers or job seekers to (continue) learning. The prize is aimed at increasing awareness of these projects, thus possibly encouraging other organisations to take part as well. This prize will be continued through 2011.

### 3.3 What do we want to achieve?

In order to stimulate flexible and efficient education for adults, the project directorate Learning & Working wants to have achieved the following by 2011:

- ⋮ 4 Regional Training Centres (ROCs),  
1 Agricultural Training Centre (AOC) and  
2 Colleges of Higher Vocational Education (HBO) are the pioneers in adult education. Experts look at the operations of the schools so that they are optimally organised. The results and learning experiences demonstrate to the whole education sector what is possible.
- ⋮ More customised service in higher vocational education and pilots in university education.
- ⋮ Raised awareness of the Associate Degree programme.
- ⋮ Exchange and introduction of practical knowledge from top projects is stimulated by renewal of the STEP subsidy.
- ⋮ Learning Week and the Ginjaar-Maas Prize continue in the coming three years.

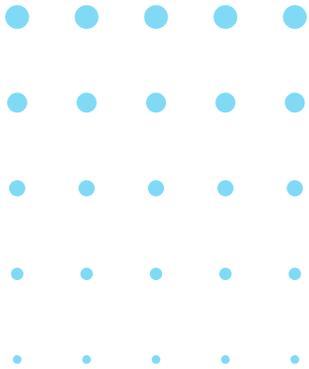
Budget (in millions of euro)

Flexible and efficient education	2008	2009	2010	2011
Pioneering schools	0,5	0,5		
Stimulus for Effective Projects	0,3			





## 4. Reaching citizens and employers



### New activities

Publicity campaign

### Continue with

[www.lerenenwerken.nl](http://www.lerenenwerken.nl)  
Telephone help desk for Learning & Working  
Learning and working desks, expand to 40

#### 4.1 Where are we now?

Over the past two years an infrastructure for *lifelong learning* has been built. The click, call, face concept is still in its infancy, but is a good start that offers many possibilities. The website **[www.lerenenwerken.nl](http://www.lerenenwerken.nl)** contains information about educational programmes, professional information and job vacancies, traineeships, tests and employer information. The site is designed to bundle all information on possibilities for *lifelong learning* for employers, employees and job seekers. The free telephone help desk (0800-1618) for Learning & Working has also been opened. The website now draws a respectable number of visitors. This is not the case for the telephone help desk. There are now 16 learning and working desks in the region

where people can turn with questions about learning and working.

#### 4.2 What are we going to do?

##### Publicity campaign

With the publicity campaign we want to convince employers, employees and job seekers of the need to continue learning. Employers play a double role in this objective. The campaign must persuade them of the value of training employees and encourage them to stimulate their employees to get involved in learning. The possibilities of work-based or APL trajectories are often not well-known. The communication campaign should change this and will start at the beginning of 2008.



#### Improve website with all possibilities for learning and working (Click)

There is a great deal of information on the site, but it is sometimes difficult to find. The new site will therefore be provided with entry portals for each target group (employer, employee, student, professional and job seeker) in order to improve accessibility.

#### Telephone help desk (Call)

The number of calls coming in to the help desk is disappointing. The telephone help desk 0800-1618 will therefore be reassessed in 2008. On the basis of this a decision will be made as to whether further investment will be put into the help desk or if there is insufficient demand to keep it operating.

#### Learning and working desks in the region (Face)

The learning and working desks continue to be necessary to set up a structure for *lifelong learning* in the region. That is why we, along with the other parties, primarily the CWI, are forming a national network of learning and working desks. There will be at least 40, perhaps more, learning and working desks. The exact

number depends, for instance, on the number of regional networks created for *lifelong learning*.

In autumn 2007 and spring 2008 it will be investigated what the experiences of the existing 16 learning and working desks have been. On the basis of this, the policy will be adjusted or reinforced where necessary in the first half of 2008. In any event the coordination of the regional learning and working desks with the portal [www.lerenenwerken.nl](http://www.lerenenwerken.nl) and the telephone help desk 0800-1618 will be actively continued. It is the intention that in 2008 already there will be one clear brand for *lifelong learning*, which is expressed in an identical look and feel for the learning and working desks, the portal and the help desk.





### 4.3 What do we want to achieve and how?

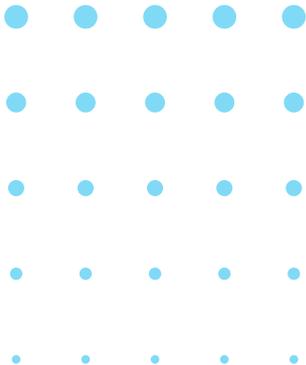
In 2011, the project directorate Learning & Working wants to have achieved that citizens and employers know where they can go with questions about training and APL for adults. To this end, the project directorate Learning & Working is investing in:

- ⋮ A publicity campaign to inform citizens and employers about the need for and possibilities of *lifelong learning*.

- ⋮ Coordinating the national and regional websites in form and content.
- ⋮ The telephone help desk 0800-1618, where individual and business questions about training can be asked. The project directorate Learning & Working is investigating the demand for this facility.
- ⋮ Streamlining the learning and working desks, so that the public knows what is available at a learning and working desks.
- ⋮ Expansion of the number of learning and working desks. The ambition is to have at least 40 learning and working desks by 2011.

Budget (in millions of euro)

Reaching citizens and employers	2008	2009	2010	2011
Publicity campaign	2	2	2	1
Portal lerenenwerken.nl	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4
Telephone help desk	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,2
Support to learning and working desks	0,1			





## 5. Developing the concept of *lifelong learning*

### New activities

Development of concept  
Think-tank for *lifelong learning*  
Conference on *lifelong learning*

The further development of the concept behind *lifelong learning* requires an answer to the following important questions:

- ⋮ Why is *lifelong learning* for adults having such a slow start?
- ⋮ What do we know of the effectiveness of the instruments for *lifelong learning*?
- ⋮ Who plays what role in *lifelong learning*?

### 5.1 Think-tank for *lifelong learning*

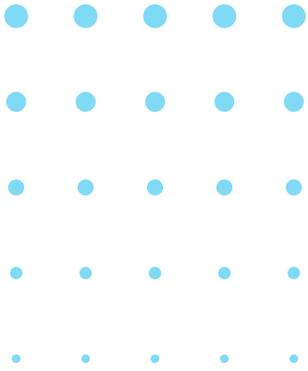
In order to find an answer to the key questions above, a 'Think-tank for *lifelong learning*' will be formed. The think-tank will focus on linking research and current policy questions. In dialogue with the government members at the Ministries of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) and Social Affairs and Employment (SZW), the think-tank formulates an assignment, works it out and advises on it. It makes use of

national and international research and can also commission research. The project directorate Learning & Working provides the secretariat for the think-tank. The topics on which the think-tank will concentrate include:

#### ⋮ Research into financial incentive measures

Learning & Working has devoted little attention to the individual. The idea behind stimulating the individual is that people take on their own responsibility to continue their development. The think-tank will concentrate on investigating the desirability and effectiveness of, among other things:

- ⋮ An Individual Learning Account (ILR), voucher, which makes continued learning financially feasible
- ⋮ Including certain rights in collective agreements, such as the right to training, right to APL, right to educational leave
- ⋮ Compulsory training
- ⋮ The possibilities of using the life-course saving scheme to finance educational costs, in addition to the other costs for which it may currently be used.



The life-course saving scheme will also be involved in this research.

⚡ **Research into the possible role of skills brokers and learning organisations**

Less educated workers and SMEs are still inadequately reached with the measures for adult education. Almost a quarter of the Dutch working population still has no basic qualification, while the number of jobs for less educated workers continues to decrease. It also emerges that in our society, 1.5 million people are standing on the sidelines to some degree because they have difficulty reading and writing.

Less educated workers do want to learn, but need encouragement and guidance from their work environment. Entrepreneurs certainly want their personnel to receive further training, as long as the employers get good advice and learning can take place as much as possible at the workplace. SMEs should be supported to strengthen the learning climate in their company, so that a learning organisation is created. This could mean something

different for every business, but what is important is that it fits with the work processes and operations.

Skills brokers in the Netherlands could concentrate on:

- ⚡ Stimulating SME entrepreneurs (with less than 50 employees) to train their personnel;
- ⚡ Facilitating and providing guidance to less educated workers in order for them to achieve a basic qualification.

This concept has already been successfully tested in the UK. The think-tank is being asked to look at what the concept of the learning organisation and the skills brokers could contribute to *lifelong learning*. Specifically what will be looked into is the role that literacy plays in this. The government asked the Social and Economic Council (SER) to publish a recommendation in 2008 on how *lifelong learning* can be stimulated in businesses. The activities of the think-tank and the SER will be attuned to each other.



### Conference on Lifelong learning

In June 2008, a conference will be organised in which ideas will actively be contributed on the more fundamental questions surrounding the issue of *lifelong learning*. At the same time, a range of good examples in the area of *lifelong learning* will be presented. In addition to examples from the Netherlands, examples from other countries will also be discussed. The discussion will centre on questions like: what do

you have to do, who do you need for that, what does it cost, what are successful ways of support, what experiences have been gained with this?

### Budget (in millions of euro)

Funds have been reserved in 2010 and 2011 for new incentive measures. This way has been created to undertake action on the basis of the concept development.

	2008	2009	2010	2011
New incentive measures			5,5	10,0
Research and monitoring	0,6	0,8	0,1	0,1

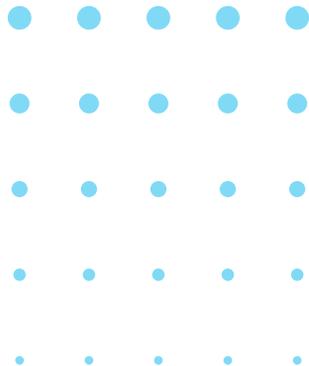




## 6. Afterword



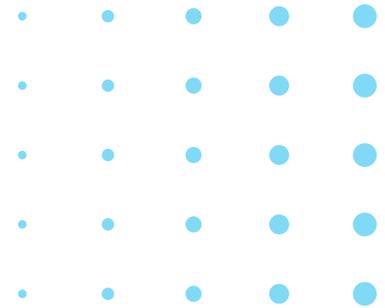
The foundation for *lifelong learning* has been laid and this government wants to further invest in this. In the coming three years we must take the step from 'good projects' to a larger scale. In order to achieve this growth we will have to take important steps in education and the Implementation Structure for Work and Income (SUWI) chain, especially where adults and education are concerned. Citizens and businesses must realise that *lifelong learning* is not noncommittal or something that 'other people do', but a necessary means to achieve and retain added value. Towards a philosophy of 'Learning is your best insurance for work!'



# Appendices

## Budget for 2008-2011 (in millions of euro)

	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Stimulate and facilitate cooperation</b>				
90,000 work-based training programmes (APL and work-based trajectories)	12	11,5	11,5	4
<i>Youth without a basic qualification</i>				
<i>Job seekers</i>				
<i>Sectors with shortages (care and technology)</i>				
EAPL and customised services in Higher Education <sup>1</sup>	5			
Work-based training programmes in the Netherlands Antilles	0,6	1,3	1,5	
Knowledge Centre APL	1	1	1	1
<b>Flexible and efficient education</b>				
Pioneering schools	0,5	0,5		
STEP	0,3			
<b>Reaching citizens and employers</b>				
Publicity campaign	2	2	2	1
Portal <i>lerenenwerken.nl</i>	0,4	0,4	0,4	0,4
Telephone help desk	0,2	0,2	0,2	0,2
Support to learning and working desks	0,1			
<b>New incentive measures</b>			5,5	10,0
<b>General</b>				
Research and monitoring	0,6	0,8	0,1	0,1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,7</b>	<b>17,7</b>	<b>22,2</b>	<b>16,7</b>



## Composition of available budget 2008–2011

	2008	2009	2010	2011
FES (Economic Structure Enhancing Fund) claim Vocational Education in operation <sup>2</sup>	9,0	7,5	7,5	
Envelope resources OCW <sup>3</sup>	1,5	3,0	8,0	10,0
Envelope resources SZW <sup>3</sup>	5,0	5,0	5,0	5,0
Budget <i>Lifelong Learning</i> BVE (Vocational and Adult Education)	1,7	1,7	1,7	1,7
Contribution Science and Technology Platform pioneering schools	0,5	0,5		
Resources of HO sector APL + work-based	5,0			
<b>Subtotal programme resources</b>	<b>22,7</b>	<b>17,7</b>	<b>22,2</b>	<b>16,7</b>
<b>Operating costs of the project directorate Learning &amp; Working</b>	<b>1,5</b>	<b>1,5</b>	<b>1,5</b>	<b>1,5</b>

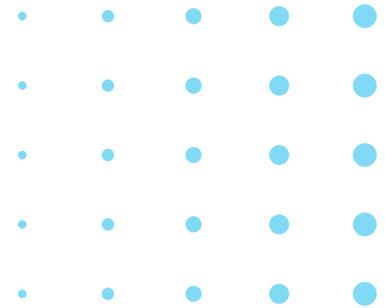
<sup>1</sup> Further agreements on this will be made with the HBO council in spring 2008.

<sup>2</sup> The FES resources of the 2nd round will only become available after a positive evaluation of the 1st round. It is assumed that the FES resources can be spread over several years.

<sup>3</sup> The envelope resources for 2009 and beyond are indicative, decision making on the rounds takes place annually in the Spring Memorandum (*Voorjaarsnota*).

# List of abbreviations

AD Associate Degree	EZ Ministry of Economic Affairs	LNV Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality	PLW Project directorate Learning & Working
AKO Chain Consultation Committee	HBO Higher Vocational Education	MBO Secondary Vocational Education	RMC Regional Reporting and Coordination Centre
AOC Agricultural Training Centre	HO Higher Education	O&O funds Training and Development Funds	ROC Regional Training Centre
APL Accreditation of Prior Learning	ILR Individual Learning Account	OCW Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	RWI Council for Work and Income
BVE Vocational and Adult Education	KBB Centre of Expertise on Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market	OECD Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development	SER Social and Economic Council
CINOP Centre on Innovation and Training	LLL Lifelong learning	OU Open University	SME Small and Medium- sized Enterprise
CWI Centre for Work and Income			



SUWI  
Implementation  
Structure for Work  
and Income

SZW  
Ministry of Social  
Affairs and  
Employment

UWV  
Social Security  
Agency

VNG  
Association of Dutch  
Municipalities

VNO-NCW  
The Confederation  
of Netherlands  
Industry and  
Employers

VSV  
Early School Leavers

VWO  
Pre-university edu-  
cation

WO  
University Education

WWB  
Employment and  
Social Assistance  
Act

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L T U U R  
N E T E M  
S C H A P



Ministerie van Sociale Zaken  
en Werkgelegenheid