

Netherlands Scientific Council for  
Government Policy

# **An Active Labour Market Policy**

Summary of the  
Thirty-third Report to the Government

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report is concerned with the type of labour market policy which, given the potential for economic growth, is required in the Netherlands in order to engage as large a part of the working population in the labour process. An important starting-point for this report is that conclusion reached in an earlier WRR report, *Scope for Growth* (May 1987), that the technical and economical structure of the Dutch economy does not preclude the possibility that unemployment could be eliminated and the growing supply of labour deployed over the next ten years<sup>1</sup>.

The achievement of these objectives is, however, dependent on a number of conditions. Among the most important factors noted in *Scope for Growth* are a certain level of investment and exports and an effectively operating labour market. Labour market policy can contribute significantly to the last of these factors. Seen in this light an active labour market policy is a necessary but not sufficient condition to arrive at a situation of sustained economic recovery and full employment. Not sufficient in the sense that it is just one of the growth-promoting factors; necessary in that a return to full employment can be achieved only on the basis of a properly functioning labour market.

Two developments in the labour market provide particular reasons for formulating an active labour market policy. In the first place, the phenomenon of long-term unemployment is at present the major problem in the labour market. For the purposes of this report, long-term unemployment has been taken as including the unregistered unemployment of women who wish to return to the labour market. Such unemployment hardly appears in the official unemployment statistics. Secondly, there is the problem of hard-to-fill vacancies. Although not on any great scale, the existence of this problem at a time of high unemployment does point to imperfections in the labour market.

During the 1980s, unemployment in the Netherlands reached and stayed at a level that would barely have been thought possible a decade earlier. The sharp growth in the labour force in the 1970s and 1980s was coupled with a sluggish growth in or at times even falling level of employment. The level of employment did not begin to pick up again until after 1984. With the increase in the number of part-time jobs, this rise has been large enough to keep pace with the growth of the labour force, but has so far been on too small a scale to make any inroads into the numbers of long-term unemployed or to attract the many people potentially seeking work back into the labour market. Unemployment has been concentrated among school-leavers (especially early school-leavers), those with few if any skills (a large proportion of whom are drawn from the ethnic minorities) and women who would ideally like to return to the labour market. In this respect it is becoming increasingly evident that the persistence of unemployment in itself acts as a barrier to re-entry into the labour market.

The Council regards the level and largely long-term nature of unemployment as unacceptable. This applies all the more since unemployment hits the weakest groups in Dutch society disproportionately hard. The major inequality in Dutch society today is that between those in work, or with prospects of finding employment, and those who have found themselves permanently excluded from the labour system. This inequality is not just inherently unacceptable but also constitutes a threat to social stability in the medium to long term.

Employment will unquestionably remain a factor of fundamental importance for individual self-development and for determining individuals' place in society. Although many people manage to lead a

satisfying existence outside the labour system at certain stages of their lives, the labour system does constitute the major source of prosperity in present-day society. In addition a position in the labour system generates respect of and for others and a sense of self-respect. It is in the labour system that people are able to discover and develop their potential; it is no accident that access to the labour system has been an important precondition for the emancipation of women.

Since 1983 there has once again been a rise in the number of vacancies. Following the low point touched in October 1982 of 17,000 vacancies, the number of vacancies is now estimated at over 70,000 (the number of jobs is about 4.7 million). The proportion of hard-to-fill vacancies has risen in recent years and now amounts to 48% of the total. On the basis of various surveys conducted in this field, the problem would appear to be at its most pronounced in relation to jobs for which vocational training is required. A significant proportion of the hard-to-fill vacancies – some 30% – relates to jobs calling for higher training (i.e. skilled craftsmen).

The background to the phenomenon of long-term vacancies at a time of high unemployment is provided by two types of factors: recruitment factors and qualitative discrepancies in the labour market.

'Recruitment factors' is a catch-all phrase covering lack of familiarity with or ability to exploit the labour market. This can result in incorrect or inadequate signals being issued by the labour market, so that supply and demand fail to match up, or only with some delay. 'Qualitative discrepancies' in the labour market refer to imbalances between demand and supply. This may derive from skill shortages, lack of experience, the popular image of a particular company or industry, the conditions of employment and the degree of mobility on the part of employees and employers.

While the current scale of long-term vacancies does not as yet point to a serious problem, it is important to note that hard-to-fill vacancies conceal a considerable body of potential employment that will become activated as vacancies are filled more adequately. Eliminating the causes of hard-to-fill vacancies can make a structural contribution towards combatting unemployment.

## 2. CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICY

The proposed active labour market policy may be outlined in terms of four features. In the first place the policy sets out in various ways to promote labour mobility. Secondly, it aims at an active orientation (or reorientation) on the part of the unemployed towards their labour market prospects. Thirdly it is characterized by tripartite responsibility for organization, financing and the substance of labour market policy. A fourth feature is a simple and effective set of instruments that does justice to the diversity of the labour system.

The need to promote *labour mobility* arises from the dynamism of the market economy, technological developments and socio-cultural changes, as well as the growing participation of women in the labour market. The report indicates that shifts in the sectoral pattern of employment will take place in both an expanding and a stagnating economy. These shifts can be accommodated not just by entry to and departure from the labour force (e.g. school-leavers, re-entrants and those reaching retirement age) but also demand mobility on the part of those in and out of work. Technological developments cause certain professions and jobs to disappear while generating others. This again demands labour mobility. Finally, socio-cultural processes of change such as individualization and the increasing participation of women in the labour system generate a demand for different patterns of labour from those in the past. This will have a greater chance of succeeding the more mobile the labour force.

Labour mobility may be of a functional, sectoral, geographical or contractual kind. Those in work can switch to different professions, industries or locations, or can negotiate a different employment contract or become self-employed. Financial incentives, status factors and (anticipated) job satisfaction are significant motives for labour mobility.

The promotion of labour mobility is, moreover, necessary in order to keep the fragmentation of the labour system within acceptable bounds and to prevent potential manpower from being excluded from employment in the long term. Full employment will not in the future necessarily be a situation with enough permanent jobs (full-time and part-time) to go round. The segmentation of the labour market, which has become particularly evident in recent years, will probably continue, at least for the time being. Apart from the traditional, regular labour market for 'permanent jobs', a secondary labour market has arisen characterized by flexible contractual relationships (especially temporary employment or staff provided by temping agencies). This circuit has grown considerably in recent years, an increase deriving essentially from the high level of unemployment, which has weakened employees' position in the labour market. In addition the technical and organizational demands imposed by competition (including international competition) have played a role. The growth of the secondary labour market is also related in part to the preferences of certain categories of employees.

Finally a third sector of the labour market may be identified in which training forms a major part of the employment relationship. A growth in this type of participation in the labour market would appear not only probable for young people and older workers in the future but also desirable. A certain degree of segmentation of the labour system need not necessarily be socially undesirable, provided there is sufficient interchange between the various segments. In these circumstances, participation in the secondary and tertiary labour markets can remain limited in duration. Analytically, it is important to draw a distinction between *jobs* in the various segments from the *people* holding down those jobs. The required mobility relates to people, whereas flexibility is a characteristic of jobs.

No quantitative standards can be laid down for the degree of labour mobility required from an economic viewpoint. The more dynamic an economy, the greater the required degree of mobility. Conversely the economy will also be more dynamic the more that employees are prepared to move in order to find work and the more that employers are prepared to consider applicants having qualifications with which they are not entirely familiar.

Labour mobility entails both costs and benefits. Costs take the form of various adjustment expenses (e.g. the settling-in period, further training and removal costs). Benefits occur in a general sense in the form of greater opportunities in the labour market for the unemployed (including the long-term unemployed) and women re-entering the labour market, and also in the sense of helping to prevent hard-to-fill vacancies.

An active labour market policy also involves facilitating an *active orientation (or reorientation) on the part of the unemployed towards their prospects in the labour market*. In the absence of job prospects, participation in training or job-experience schemes (a specifically Dutch proposal) should form an automatic means of obtaining initial or new qualifications for the labour market.

Provided there are sufficient facilities for labour market orientation/reorientation, these can then be complemented in three ways by means of sanctions within the social security system. In the first place the criterion of 'suitable employment' can be supplemented by the criteria of 'suitable training' and 'suitable job experience'. There can be no place in a dynamic economy for simply 'writing off' inadequate or out-of-date vocational qualifications by means of a by international standards high unemployment benefit. Persons unwilling to choose between the various opportunities for labour market reorientation would have to accept a substantial cut in their benefit payments. The second element consists of a further increase in the permitted percentage cut in benefits. This might amount to around 25% of the net benefit, although there would be a case for exempting persons without genuine prospects of obtaining employment. Thirdly, the policy of sanctions would require proper participation on the part of benefit agencies. When unemployment took off in 1980, the requirement that the benefit recipient should be actively looking for work rapidly became a mere formality since there were insufficient 'suitable' jobs. In the case of an active labour market policy in which sufficient 'suitable labour market alternatives' were offered in the form of training and job-experience places, the benefit agencies would once again be able to exercise effective supervision and control over those who qualified for benefits.

The selective and actual implementation of sanctions has the advantage that it would provide similar incentives towards an orientation towards regular work as a general reduction in benefit levels, without however in any way derogating from the principles of fairness built into the present system of social security. From a social viewpoint substantial cuts are not objectionable if those concerned have a genuine alternative – either in the form of a regular job or in the form of a training or job-experience place – to earn an income at least as high as the uncut benefit.

The proposed active labour market policy takes as its starting point the *reorganization of manpower services on a tripartite basis*. In 1988, the government intends making the Directorate-General for Manpower and the regional manpower services – which currently come under the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment – autonomous and providing them with a tripartite administration. This implies that manpower services will no longer be the sole responsibility of the central government but will be shared by it with local government and the social partners. A tripartite Central Manpower Services Board is to be established, with an independent chairman, presiding over a central manpower office and regional manpower offices. The main focus under the new structure would be on the regional administrations and offices. Within the – often financial – frameworks laid down centrally, the regional administrations

will conduct their own policies, for implementation by the regional offices.

In principle, tripartite administration should enable both the sectoral and the regional approaches towards labour market policy to come more into their own. This will not, however, succeed, if tripartism means merely that the present Advisory Boards, consisting of union and employer representatives, are called tripartite administrative bodies. The aim of tripartism must be an active input on the part of the social partners. This input must be given expression organizationally as well as by means of the substance and financing of labour market policy.

Organizationally tripartism is important because it will have the effect of greatly decentralizing job placement. As a result it may be expected that much closer account will be taken of regional labour market situations. Local government participation in the administration of the manpower agencies moreover provides points of departure for coordinating municipal and regional employment policies with the policies of local employment offices.

As regards the substance of labour market policy, tripartism is important because it is conducive to the mutual coordination of labour market policy and collective bargaining. These two fields are strongly complementary. If labour market problems, for example in the field of training, job-experience places or greater employment flexibility, are not solved as part of the negotiations about conditions of employment, they will only recur among the same actors within the boards of the manpower agencies. Similarly excessive wage rises will confront the social partners with problems in the field of labour market policy. In a buoyant labour market, a system of tripartite responsibility acts as a much greater incentive to exploit part of the room for wage increases to generate employment instead.

In order to fund the tripartite manpower service the government has foreshadowed the allocation of a 'dowry' of 1.2 billion guilders a year over a five-year period<sup>2</sup>.

On the basis of present expenditure and the current scope of labour market instruments, this allocation would be insufficient to reach the various target groups. The additional funds required for an active labour market policy could be obtained from the government, the social security funds, the margin for wage increases and employers' contributions. An example of the way in which funds could be made available by the social partners is provided in section 3.3, where it is proposed that a certain number of job-experience places could be agreed as part of the collective bargaining process. The costs would be partly charged to the employing organization, in addition to which there would be a wage-cost subsidy. At the same time a compensation payment is proposed in the event that no job-experience places are created by a company, the proceeds from which could be allocated to the manpower service. The creation of job-experience places may be regarded as the indirect provision of funds for job placement. Direct financial contributions by industry to the manpower service (of which the above is just one possible example) should for preference be earmarked for specific purposes.

The financing of specific placement services by industry - whether or not on the basis of collective labour agreements<sup>3</sup> - in combination with financing by the government can help give expression to the collective responsibility for labour market policy. It also has two further clear advantages:

1. he who pays the piper calls the tune (i.e. the services or facilities would be selected in terms of their relevance to the labour market);
2. direct industry contributions would encourage the efficient management of the facilities and help ensure they were oriented towards the labour market.

Finally an active labour market policy must be characterized by a *straightforward and effective set of instruments* based on a consistent approach towards labour market policy. The report notes that, as it

stands, labour market policy covers an excessive number of instruments, and that these instruments are not always properly coordinated. In essence the future set of instruments could consist of a single framework regulation for job-experience places, a single framework for training and retraining, supplemented by a single facility for educational and careers counselling, a facility for setting up new businesses, facilities for direct and indirect job placement and a wage supplement regulation. To this may be added the proposals to increase the flexibility of the labour market. The effectiveness of the various instruments will need to be regularly evaluated, and the instruments themselves adjusted where necessary. The necessary flexibility of labour market policy can be promoted by the introduction of market and bargaining principles. If for example the public employment offices were no longer to act as a supplier but just as a source of demand in the training market, they would then find themselves in the position of applying labour market considerations only with respect to the procurement (i.e. subsidization) of specific training places for the target group. Now the Dutch manpower services include Centres for vocational training. In a system of job-experience places based on negotiations between employers' associations and trade unions the number of places can be regularly adjusted in line with the room afforded by the labour market.

Reliable unemployment data are essential for effective policies. The utilization of just one indicator of unemployment fails to do justice to the heterogeneity of participation and non-participation in the labour system. At least three different indicators are needed to describe the scale of unemployment adequately. The lower limit is represented by the number of people drawing unemployment benefit. The data for this figure need to be supplied by the industrial insurance boards, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Department of Social Services. The Central Bureau of Statistics' 'Survey of the Working Population' is useful for establishing what proportion of the working population is immediately available for work. In this respect the following definition may be used: a person is unemployed if he or she is out of work and has taken steps in the past four weeks to find work and is in a position to accept a job within a fortnight. A third figure of relevance, which may again be derived from the CBS survey, concerns the number of people who are partially unemployed. These we may define as people with jobs that take up less time than they would like (subject to an upper limit of the standard working hours for a full-time job) who have taken steps in the previous four weeks to find work and are in a position to accept a new job within two months.



### 3. CONTENT OF AN ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICY

The report makes proposals in relation to four elements of labour market policy which, taken together, form the essence of the proposed active labour market policy. This chapter summarizes the main recommendations in the fields of placement, training, job-experience places and employment flexibility.

#### 3.1 Placement services

A diversified system of placement services is of major importance for the optimal allocation of labour and hence for exploiting the inherent growth potential of the economy. In practice placement services are a broader concept than that understood by the Employment Services Act 1930, which is solely concerned with two-way placement services directed towards the negotiation of a contract of employment in the sense of Section 1637a of the Civil Code or of civil service appointments under the Central Government Personnel Act 1929. In these narrowly defined fields, public placement services enjoy a monopoly; commercial initiative is not permitted. One-sided job placement and/or placement services not directed towards contracts of employment according to the Civil Code or appointments to the civil service fall outside the scope of the Act. Placement through temping agencies is covered by a separate act. Apart from direct job placement there is also indirect job placement, where those seeking work are helped to find training or job-experience places.

The early authorization by the government of commercial placement services in addition to the public placement services would help improve the allocation of labour. Commercial enterprise can play an effective part, provided there are guarantees to protect those seeking work against abuses. Such guarantees could be provided by a licensing system. In all probability commercial activity in the field of placement would focus on jobs and occupations where the supply of labour was limited. These specialized placement services could make a direct contribution towards cutting down the number of hard-to-fill vacancies and hence also make an indirect contribution towards combatting unemployment. The spirit of the ILO Treaty 1949/16 does not prevent the authorization of commercial placement services in advance of the ratification of the second variant in this treaty, as will be done in the 1990s.

Under a mixed system, the public employment services would play a somewhat different role. The basis would of course remain that the Netherlands remained obliged under its international treaty obligations to maintain public and free placement services. As regards the direct placement services, the present demand-side approach can be continued with. To a much greater extent than at present, the public employment services would be required to demonstrate and strengthen their position in the placement market by consolidating their contacts with companies and institutions, by introducing innovations such as vacancy and application banks and job centres and by effective marketing. The potential competition from commercial enterprise will need to be treated as a challenge. The public employment offices will also need to exploit their strongest weapon: the scope for indirect job placement, or the application of manpower measures. An active labour market policy would place heavy demands on the public employment offices for the placement of the unemployed, including re-entrants, or those threatened with unemployment in training and job-experience places. In this way the public employment services can form a separate 'culture', on which basis they can improve their currently indifferent image in the field of direct placement services.

A significant precondition for the effective operation of the public employment services is the abolition of the registration requirement for persons drawing unemployment benefit. This would then lead to a reduction in the number of pro forma registrations on the part of those not in fact available for employment and those to whom the public employment office has nothing to offer or who could be better served by commercial agencies. The decision is then up to the person seeking work and the benefit agency. At the same time industrial insurance boards and the Municipal Departments for social assistance would then be wholly responsible themselves for supervising entitlement to unemployment benefit.

For reasons of efficiency, it is important that the public employment offices will be the only bodies *within the public service* to perform direct or indirect job placement. Direct placement by public employment offices, municipal departments for social assistance, Women and Work Offices<sup>4</sup> and the socio-cultural services is not just inefficient but is at the expense of the consistency of labour market policy and makes it confusing for the consumers to find their way about in the system. The public employment services will, however, need to take steps to deal with the problems with which special groups in the labour market are confronted.

There is one exception to these arrangements, namely that of industrial insurance boards<sup>5</sup> that so desired should be granted a licence for *direct* placement services, on the grounds that the boards maintain regular contact with both companies and organizations and benefit recipients. Through their visits to companies and organizations, industrial insurance board inspectors inevitably pick up information on vacancies and job opportunities. Not infrequently they are asked if they know of suitable candidates. Conversely unemployed persons frequently ask industrial insurance board officials if they know of placement opportunities. It would be desirable for the industrial insurance boards – initially by way of experiment – to be allowed to link up the two sources of information. On the basis of evaluation research it can then be assessed whether direct placement by industrial insurance boards does nevertheless entail drawbacks. Placement services in the broad sense – i.e. referral to training and work-experience places – should, in so far as they concern the public sector, be the exclusive responsibility of the public employment services. Industrial insurance boards should not get involved in this field.

An active labour market policy must create ample opportunities for those out of or seeking work to orient (or re-orient) themselves in the labour market, especially in the form of training and job-experience places. This imposes demands in terms not just of the availability of placement opportunities but also of the placement capacity of the public employment services. The latter will need to receive sufficient funding to appoint an adequate number of properly qualified placement staff. This is at least as important as the development of an accessible and flexible, market-oriented system of off-the-job education and a comprehensive system of job-experience places, for the latter need not just to be built up but to be exploited.

### **3.2 Training**

Training can make a significant contribution to the effective coordination of demand and supply in both a curative and a preventive sense. The existing system of off-the-job training facilities does not measure up to the requirements. Technological and economic developments cause the qualifications obtained by employees through initial vocational training to get out of date rapidly. Together with the emergence of demand for new kinds of jobs, this creates a requirement for continued training opportunities for those in and seeking work, to which off-the-job training facilities may provide an answer. On account of the continuing uncertainties surrounding the qualitative and

quantitative needs of the labour market, a system of off-the-job training facilities is also important in order to match up vocational training with the labour market. As it stands, the central education planning which is designed to gear the capacity and content of vocational training to the demand for labour does not achieve the desired object. More could be achieved by means of effective interaction between vocational training and regional industry, with the training being geared to regional requirements.

Off-the-job training activities may be divided into three main streams. In the first place there are the (internal) training courses provided at industry level. These are mainly concerned with improving the professional expertise of existing employees. In addition the training courses play a role in preparing people for their first job or for a change in duties or occupation. Although there is a wide variety of training courses, two different types may be distinguished: an external, relatively lengthy and more general vocational or industrial qualification carrying with it a generally recognized diploma or certificate and a form of internal, comparatively brief and more specialized, company- or job-related qualification for which no recognized diplomas or certificates are issued.

A second main stream is the apprenticeship system, which concentrates especially on school-leavers (i.e. junior vocational education and intermediate general secondary education) seeking vocational training. A characteristic feature of apprenticeship training is the combination of learning and working (i.e. theory and practice combined). The emphasis of these courses is on the practical side of the occupation. In addition to the apprenticeship system, the short senior secondary vocational education course also results in an initial vocational qualification the final level of which must correspond with the initial stage of the apprenticeship system. Strictly speaking, the short course forms part of regular vocational education. It was introduced in the late 1970s in order to provide school-leavers who had entered the labour market without any vocational qualifications with the opportunity to train in skilled trades. The practical component consists of intramural practical training and extramural trainee attachments.

The third main stream consists of the training activities provided by the Directorate-General for Manpower, a part of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. In contrast to vocational training, these facilities are particularly geared to the unemployed or those threatened with redundancy.

Everyone desiring retraining, further training or refresher training should be given the opportunity of doing so. Care should, however, be taken to avoid the perpetuation of two separate circuits, one geared to those in work and one to the unemployed and re-entrants.

In order to arrive at a coherent set of facilities, an administrative/organizational structure is required which facilitates the coordination of effort. Of particular importance in this respect is the proposed decentralization and tripartite organization of the manpower services. In this respect market forces are recommended as an important coordinating mechanism.

A further streamlining of the system of off-the-job training can be achieved along the following lines. Training organized on an industry basis is of major importance for companies unable to organize the necessary training themselves. In the case of companies with internal training facilities, training at industry level can act as a valuable supplement, since companies tend to be selective in relation to both participants and the content of on-the-job training. Financing could come from the training funds administered by the social partners. The resources for the fund should in the first place come from employers, but, since their position in the labour market will be improved by the training, employees may also be expected to make a contribution. Part of the scope for wage increases could be set aside for this purpose in the

collective bargaining process. Government contributions could remain limited to the initial stage and focus on the development costs of courses and direct training costs.

The way in which training is organized will depend heavily on the nature of the industry. A choice can be made between an integrated approach, in which the industry-based facilities comprise refresher training, retraining and further training as well as an initial vocational training course, or a coordinating approach, consisting for example of a catalogue of further-training courses in companies and institutions, with agreements on certificates and industry diplomas. In the case of training organized on an industry basis, stronger links with the apprenticeship system would be an obvious course of action.

The apprenticeship system and the short senior secondary vocational education course both provide vocational qualifications for school-leavers. The growth in the short vocational course is primarily attributable to the marked decline in the apprenticeship system in the early 1980s. For many companies, the deterioration in the economic situation provided grounds for cutting back their (internal) training facilities. Even so, the growth in the short course was not able to prevent large numbers of school-leavers from entering the labour market without vocational qualifications. The apprenticeship system received an important boost from the Advisory Committee on Industrial Policy (the Wagner Committee). The aim of doubling the intake of apprentices over a number of years to 50,000 was realized in 1987.

The side-by-side existence of these two training systems does, however, call for a proper division of tasks. Care must be taken to prevent the public education system and the private training provided by industry from following two different paths. A division of tasks between the two systems renders a more appropriate selection of places possible. Depending on the aim (i.e. basic training or specialization), the nature of the profession (lathe-operator or clerical/secretarial), target group and the possibilities at school or at the workplace, the most appropriate course can be selected for obtaining the professional requirements in question. Expanding the short vocational course as an alternative to the apprenticeship system does not fit into this approach. A division of responsibilities between the two systems, on the other hand, can result in the short course being recognized by industry as a valid form of vocational training since the contribution the course makes towards preparing school-leavers (including early leavers) for the labour market would be clear. In these circumstances both parties would be more readily able to reach agreement on the requirements to be met by vocational training. The development of an effective system of on-the-job learning can moreover be of great significance for the refresher training, retraining and further training of the active labour force.

The regional labour market is a significant point of application for labour market policy. An important institutional change in this respect is the proposed tripartite and decentralized structure of the manpower services. The new structure will create greater freedom to make arrangements tailored to the needs of the situation in question. The regional boards can play a central role in the coordination of training facilities and in gearing these to regional demand. A significant precondition is the effective provision of information on the demand and supply side of the labour market.

Public employment offices must occupy a central place for those seeking work and to re-orient themselves in the labour market. For many people, training will be the most effective means of strengthening their position in the labour market. For the more disadvantaged groups, orientation and conversion courses can in certain cases provide an effective start. On account of the fact that public employment offices are able wholly or partially to reimburse the costs of participation under a single framework regulation covering training, they in principle enjoy a strong position on the demand side of the regional training market. As

such the public employment services will need to exploit this subsidy scheme to open up certain forms of occupational and industrial training to the unemployed and re-entrants where this contributes towards an improvement in labour market prospects. In expanding the range of training facilities it is not enough to rely on official subsidies; agreements need also to be reached in the frame of collective bargaining.

In terms of the effective functioning of the regional training market it is important for public employment offices to have freedom to select the types of training facilities they wish to subsidize. Given the regular evaluation of training facilities in terms of their relevance in the labour market, such freedom helps ensure the necessary flexibility. The providers of training facilities, including private institutes, would be continually encouraged to adapt their activities to the needs of the regional labour market. The proposal to place the Centres for Vocational Training on an independent footing also fits in with this strategy. Public employment offices would, as a result, end up solely concerned with the demand side in the regional training market.

### **3.3 Job-experience places**

For long-term unemployed persons or women seeking to re-enter the labour market, the lack of work experience – often combined with a lack of training or skills for which there is little demand – acts as a major obstacle to entering the regular labour market. At times of high unemployment the lack of these skills can form an insuperable and self-reinforcing problem. For most applicants, relevant job experience – meaning in practice recent work experience – is an important criterion. Candidates with previous experience inevitably have an advantage over those who do not, with the result that those already at a disadvantage are unable to close the gap and any work experience they have becomes less and less relevant. The provision of possibilities for acquiring relevant work experience forms a necessary part of any labour market policy setting out seriously to tackle unemployment in a curative and preventive sense.

A characteristic feature of job-experience places is ‘learning by doing’, in which respect the learning can be an explicit element of the job but also a more implicit one, in the sense that participants are provided with opportunities to practise skills considered necessary for certain occupations or functions.

Job-experience places provide a means for various groups to enter or re-enter the labour market. For some long-term unemployed persons, training is not a means, or the main means, of improving their occupational skills. Many early school-leavers and older unemployed people have little interest in training if it does not lead directly to a job. In addition, there are some for whom training is not the appropriate means. In such cases, a more suitable entry to the labour market may consist of qualifications in the form of ‘learning by doing’ in which not just cognitive and instrumental skills are acquired but familiarization takes place within the rhythm of a regular job. A job-experience place and follow-up job will encourage some people to seek training to improve their qualifications at a later stage. A job-experience place is therefore no more than a stage in the process of qualification for or reorientation towards the labour market.

In order to make a real dent in long-term unemployment, a substantial broadening of the kinds of employment available is required, not just in the non-profit sector but also in the private sector. One way of doing so is to create a system of job-experience places. Under an active labour market policy, this will form one of the most important means of providing specific employment opportunities to those involuntarily excluded from the labour system.

An important feature of the proposed job-experience places is that they do not have to be by way of superfluous jobs. The distinctive feature is that selection criteria would be laid down for the participants.

Implementation of the policy would be decentralized. Employing organizations would be responsible for generating the required places and also for the job description and the recruitment and placement of the target group. The delimitation of the target group would need to be agreed centrally; it might for example include persons who had been unemployed for over a year, women re-entering the work-force and early school-leavers.

The most promising way of building up a system of job-experience places would be through collective bargaining based on a nationally agreed commitment of central employers and employees associations. This national undertaking could then find concrete expression in separate collective labour agreements with reference to:

- the number of job-experience places to be created (e.g. 1% of the total number of employees);
- the time-frame within which the system was to be introduced, and the way in which normal wastage should be taken advantage of;
- exceptions (e.g. small businesses and organizations);
- pay/terms of employment;
- alternatives (e.g. participation in a labour pool of unemployed persons and re-entrants);
- provision for some form of compensatory payment to be made where job-experience places are not instituted (e.g. payments to manpower agencies).

Small firms will not always be able to meet the requirement to create a job-experience place. In these cases the Vermeend/Moor Act, which seeks to get the very long-term unemployed back to work, would be relevant. The Act covers persons aged over 21 who have been unemployed for more than three years. Under the Act employers can be exempted from the payment of employers' social security contributions for a period of up to four years provided they are prepared to sign a contract of employment for at least six months. An employer prepared to sign a contract of employment for an indefinite period even qualifies for a grant of f 4,000 for training and counselling, as specified in a specially drawn-up counselling plan.

Given the actual impact this measure has in the world of small businesses, an extension of the target group under the Act to persons unemployed for more than one (rather than three) years would be highly desirable.

The creation of a system of job-experience places and an extension of the target group covered by the Vermeend/Moor Act would enable a radical simplification of the present set of instruments for job creation and placement. These changes would open the way for a single framework regulation covering job-experience places, consisting of a financial facility in the form of exemption from the payment of employers' social security contributions and a financial facility for an in-work programme. Other existing instruments could be incorporated in suitably amended form under the framework regulation.

### **3.4 Greater employment flexibility**

Greater employment flexibility is the fourth major element in the proposed active labour market policy. Greater flexibility will, it is argued, create job openings for the long-term unemployed and re-entrants and will help prevent hard-to-fill vacancies.

Greater employment flexibility can relate to the more flexible engagement of labour both in the labour process and in terms of people's private lives. The two aspects may well (although not necessarily) be in mutual conflict. Apart from a reduction in working hours, which makes it easier for people to fit employment into their private lives, while also facilitating job-sharing, four main types of flexible employment may be distinguished.

The first of these, *numerical flexibility*, concerns changes in staffing levels in response to sales variations. Temporary staff or employees with employment contracts affording little security of tenure are generally the first to go. *Functional flexibility* - the second main category - relates principally to 'core workers'. It concerns enlarging the versatility of employees by such means as the widening of duties, job rotation, overtime and the provision of training facilities. Apart from increasing staff versatility, functional flexibility can also have an impact on quality, in the sense of boosting staff productivity. The third category, *contracting out work*, consists of 'exporting' fluctuations in the quantity of work to other companies - which can in turn resort to flexible arrangements - and/or freelancers. *Flexible remuneration* is a fourth form of flexible employment. Under this system, pay is made more or less dependent on relative scarcities, performance or profits, which in turn provides incentives towards participation in the three other main categories of flexible employment referred to above.

On the basis of these analytical distinctions, a number of recommendations have been made with a view to arriving at a socially acceptable system of flexible employment. On the point of numerical flexibility, it is proposed that the official scope for temporary employment be widened. In particular, it is proposed that it be made possible for a temporary contract of employment to be extended twice without the employee in question obtaining a right to protection against dismissal. This relaxation of the regulations could be expected to have a positive effect on employment, with particular benefit to the unemployed and re-entrants. This proposal would also be socially acceptable since empirical research has shown that a high proportion of temporary appointments are converted into permanent positions. In reviewing legal protection against dismissal, allowance will have to be made for the fact that the existence of 'casual', often temporary jobs is important in operational terms and for mobility in the labour market. When it comes to redundancies, these posts and individuals should not necessarily be the first to go.

A relaxation of the official regulations governing working hours is another important 'framework' measure for increasing employees' functional flexibility. As soon as the new, more flexible licensing regulations come into force, it is important to ensure that they are effectively publicized within industry. The subsidization of feasibility studies into more flexible operating and working hours is also important, on account of the example this can set.

Promoting the mobility of labour is a key element in the proposed active labour market policy. To this end the allocative function of wages needs to be strengthened. In policy terms this can be done by increasing the gap between the statutory minimum wage and the modal wage. This could be achieved by a temporary extension of the freeze on the minimum wage or by allowing the rise in the minimum wage to lag behind that of the modal wage by a certain percentage. In both these ways greater wage differentiation would be opened up, thereby enabling relative skill scarcities to find expression. A second means of strengthening the allocative function of wages is to make employees' pay partly dependent on company results. This would have to be done within the frame of collective bargaining. In addition it should be noted that if persons qualifying for unemployment benefit are given adequate opportunities to re-orient and re-establish themselves in the labour market, the requirements for payment of benefit could then be tightened. Once again, the incentive to accept regular employment could be strengthened.

Redistribution of labour can also help towards tackling the problem of unemployment in the coming years. The scope for shorter working hours and part-time work would by no means appear to have been exhausted. While many employing organizations have discovered the advantages in terms of efficiency and flexibility of part-time work, they have not exploited them to the full. The increasing participation of women,

together with a possible increase in part-time work among men and unmarried women, will result in a comparatively large supply of part-time workers. Feasibility studies into the possibility of engaging part-time workers could help to keep up the momentum in widening this form of participation in the labour market.

With respect to the collective reduction in working hours, a certain stagnation has set in. Given the uncertainties surrounding the way in which the level of employment is likely to develop, it would not be advisable to treat the collective reduction in working hours as something belonging to the past. The process could obtain a new and meaningful impulse if it were to be brought into relation with (i) the increasing demand for various kinds of nursing leave, and (ii) the identified need for greater training for those in work. Collective reductions in working hours could, for example, take the form of training days. This would achieve various objectives at once: a modest increase in employment, improvements in labour productivity resulting from the training, and enhanced internal and external labour mobility.



#### 4. COMBATTING LONG-TERM UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE PREVENTION OF HARD-TO-FILL VACANCIES

The large number of *long-term unemployed persons*, including women who would like to return to the labour force, is at the heart of the problem of unemployment. The proposed active labour market policy is designed to provide job opportunities for the long-term unemployed and re-entrants by the creation of a system of job-experience places and improved training facilities. More flexible employment arrangements can also help widen the scope for participation. These improvements should be accompanied by intensive placement efforts designed to channel the unemployed either into jobs or into training/job-experience places.

Research has revealed that the long-term unemployed fall into a number of well-defined categories. This diversity calls for manpower services tailored to specific group requirements.

For many young long-term unemployed persons, the main barrier is inadequate or uncompleted training coupled with lack of job experience. This group's position can be improved by participation in short senior secondary vocational education, the apprenticeship system or vocationally-oriented courses with a view to obtaining additional qualifications, or alternatively they can participate in a job-experience place, possibly combined with a short training course.

In addition to these barriers, the young women in this category may suffer from the fact that their particular qualifications are not entirely suitable. In the non-profit sector, for example, the limited job prospects have made job re-orientation and re-training widely necessary. Given the age of those concerned and their previous training this is certainly feasible, but intensive placement assistance will often be required, since many young long-term unemployed persons do not know their way around the labour market properly.

A second large-scale group of long-term unemployed consist of older employees. Although many have extensive work experience, their qualifications are often too tightly tied to a particular company or job to enable them to move elsewhere. Apart from training opportunities or the provision of job-experience places, this group is particularly dependent on the creation of more jobs. This is not just a matter of economic growth but also of mobility in the labour market. In addition flexible contractual relationships can offer an alternative to long-term non-participation. Here again intensive direct or indirect official placement services are required.

Long-term unemployment among ethnic minorities is also to a significant extent attributable to training and job-experience factors, and facilities in these areas could help improve their prospects. Account will, however, have to be taken of certain specific disadvantages, such as lack of proficiency in Dutch. At the government's request, the Council will be issuing a report later this year on government policy towards minorities.

Women seeking to return to the labour market after a gap are in a comparable position to the long-term unemployed, except that generally they are not registered as such. Many re-entrants are in a weak position because their expertise has become dated or because they lack recent job experience. Once again training and job-experience places are necessary, and intensive direct and indirect placement services are required. The report argues that this is better handled by public employment offices rather than by Women's and Work Offices. Public employment offices will, however, need to receive the necessary funding. Flexible contractual relationships can provide re-entrants with the means to return to the labour system, either because employment can then be fitted in with their

private lives or because a less attractive form of employment can then provide opportunities for participation that would otherwise be absent. Apart from flexible contractual arrangements, part-time work can also broaden their opportunities.

Finally a substantial proportion (approximately 30%) of the registered long-term unemployed consists of people who for reasons of health, personal problems and similar factors have difficulty in participating in the labour market. On the one hand these factors often constitute a reason for rejection by employers, while on the other they mean that this category goes about looking for work less actively than other unemployed persons. In their case, placement services will be a help only to some.

The number of *hard-to-fill vacancies* is not very great at present. The Central Bureau of Statistics put the number of vacancies at the end of January 1987 at around 70,000, of which some 33,000 (47.5%) were hard-to-fill. The existence of hard-to-fill vacancies is a matter partly of imperfect recruitment processes and partly of skill shortages. The low level of hard-to-fill vacancies is to a significant extent due to the high level of unemployment. If unemployment were to come down, it is probable this figure would rise appreciably.

The prevention of hard-to-fill vacancies is an important element of the proposed active labour market policy. Measures to prevent such vacancies help ensure that economic growth is not held back: directly, because vacancies would then be filled, and indirectly because other, readily-filled jobs are often dependent on filling hard-to-fill vacancies.

In general it is fair to say that the promotion of labour mobility is the most important remedy for hard-to-fill vacancies, in that a mobile working population is more likely to produce the right person in the right place than a less mobile work-force.

The report also makes a number of other proposals for helping prevent hard-to-fill vacancies. In so far as such vacancies stem from imperfect recruitment processes, a diversified set of placement services will be a help. Specialized commercial placement services, direct job placement by industrial insurance boards and demand-oriented placement services by public employment offices can contribute towards greater transparency of supply and demand in the labour market. In so far as hard-to-fill vacancies derive from training discrepancies, the proposals in the field of off-the-job training have an important part to play. In a large number of cases, hard-to-fill vacancies are traceable to a lack of skilled labour with appropriate job experience. In these cases the proposed system of job-experience places can make an active contribution. If combined with training, the scheme can make a particularly effective contribution towards providing qualified workers for jobs for which there would otherwise be few applicants. Finally, job-experience places are important in relation to persons who are hard to place in employment and for whom training is not the main essential for improving their job prospects. It is important for this group to be given the opportunity of preparing themselves for jobs that are likely to come free, since society could otherwise be faced with a situation in which unskilled or semi-skilled jobs turned into hard-to-fill vacancies.

## 5. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

The proposed active labour market policy does not in the first place demand extra financial resources but, rather, a change in the organization of labour market policy, amendments to the regulations and working practices and a genuine commitment on the part of all concerned with the functioning of the labour market. Most of the proposals do not have major financial implications. Some do, however, entail additional expenditure in relation to present policies but not all of these would necessarily be to the government's account; alternative means of financing are also possible, which would moreover have advantages in terms of the effectiveness of labour market policy.

The proposals with negligible financial implications include the following: ending (as quickly as possible) the monopoly of the public placement services; the abolition of the requirement for unemployment benefit recipients to register with a public employment office; deciding on a division of duties between the apprenticeship system and the short senior secondary vocational training; enabling public employment offices to act on the demand-side in (regional) training markets; placing the (Administrative) Training Centres for adults on an independent footing; the formulation of a simple general regulation governing job-experience places; the relaxation of certain institutional rules for incorporating workers into the labour process; enlarging the gap between the minimum and modal wages; and tightening the conditions for obtaining social security benefits. (The last two proposals could, of course, have financial consequences for benefit recipients.)

The proposals that do have financial consequences will in a number of instances bear directly on the (publicly funded) manpower services agency but can in certain cases also be charged to the industry in question and to the non-profit sector, individual employing organizations and social security funds.

The main proposals that would require extra public funding are:

- the recruitment of a sufficient number of qualified placement officers (in the broad sense of the word) for public employment offices. This will require extra funds. Public funding will be essential if the public employment offices are to offer all their clients a thorough and personal service; it will not be enough for funding to be reallocated, even if this were to be broadly interpreted by incorporating the establishments of the Women's and Work Clubs and that of the Municipal Social Services;
- The (future) Manpower Services Organization will need to make an extra contribution in order to make industry-related training available to the unemployed and those threatened with unemployment. The costs will vary from course to course. Public funding is the most obvious solution;
- in order to promote industry-based training and new apprenticeship schemes - where possible by making use of the capacity of regular education - a budget will be needed at least to subsidize the starting-up costs. This would best be funded by the industry itself, e.g. on the basis of collective labour agreements. In some instances it may be desirable for public funding to be provided as well, for example if the importance of the training facilities goes beyond that of the individual industry. The big advantage of industry financing over public funding is that the industry will in this way have a much greater incentive towards active involvement and to bear responsibility for the training facilities. This will in turn benefit the matching of demand and supply in the labour market;

- the costs associated with job-experience places will largely bear on the employing organizations. These costs will vary according to the benefit that these organizations obtain from the work performed in these places. It is proposed that financial support will be provided by broadening the Vermeend/Moor Act, which could then become part of a single, uniform regulation covering job-experience places. The costs of widening the definition would be chargeable to the social security funds;
- subsidies for feasibility studies in employing organizations into flexibilizing operating and working hours or into the scope for the (further) introduction of part-time work will need to be provided by the Manpower Services Organization;
- any further collective reduction in working hours will need to be financed out of the margin for wage increases.

It may be seen from this summary that the costs of the proposals will bear on various bodies and parties. In some case, such as the job-experience places, the costs are difficult to quantify. The costs will vary from organization to organization; in some cases the net result may even be a saving. The costs of the proposed expansion of training facilities will vary according to the number and nature of the new courses on the one hand and the number of applicants on the other. Finally, the most important of the proposals - training and job-experience places - will need to be worked out in more detail in collective negotiations between employers and employees, in which respect the cost aspect will play an important part.

## 6. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The active labour market policy proposed in this report will have consequences for the division of labour. Given the present high level of unemployment, the provision of job-experience places and training and the introduction of flexible contractual arrangements forming part of an active labour market policy will in the first place increase the availability of suitable labour without, however, raising the number of jobs to the required level. It would, however, mean that the burden of the lack of jobs did not devolve solely onto the shoulders of a single category, namely the long-term unemployed. A greater number of people would be confronted with unemployment, if for shorter periods. Needless to say this 'rotation' of unemployment would steadily shrink as unemployment began to decline.

Another possible short-term effect of an active labour market policy is that the introduction of job-experience places and temporary jobs could to some extent displace fixed jobs. On the other hand, flexible employment arrangements and training could contribute towards an expansion of the existing level of employment.

Implicitly, the Council's proposals rely heavily on commitment and a sense of responsibility on the part of employers and employees for the functioning of the labour market. That commitment and sense of responsibility will need to manifest itself in a willingness to set aside funds or bear part of the costs. As noted earlier, putting the manpower services system on a successful tripartite basis is more than just a matter of changing the administrative guard. It also calls for the coordination of negotiated conditions of employment with labour market policy. The financial participation of companies and organizations in aspects of labour market policy will moreover provide an incentive for the resources to be used in such a way as to maximize the labour market relevance of the facilities.

Finally the Council would note that a tripartite responsibility for labour market policy is not without its risks. The possibility of success – and hence also of failure – will depend on the extent to which those concerned are able to reach agreement. There would, however, be no alternative to fall back on. A labour market policy can be effective only to the extent that it is carried by the actors in the labour market. The Council is working on the assumption that the proposed active labour market policy is consistent with that carrying capacity.

## NOTES

- (<sup>1</sup>) *Scope for Growth; threats to and opportunities for the Dutch economy over the next ten years*; Report to the Government no.29, The Hague, Staatsuitgeverij, 1987.
- (<sup>2</sup>) The net national income of the Netherlands in 1987 was 380 billion guilders.
- (<sup>3</sup>) Provided certain conditions are met, it is possible in the Netherlands for collective labour agreements (CAOs) to be declared binding on all enterprises within a particular industry by the Minister of Social Affairs and Employment. This is indeed generally the case.
- (<sup>4</sup>) 'Vrouw en Werkwinkels' (Women and Work Offices) is a recent government initiative. The aim of these job offices is to inform women about possibilities in the labour market, to advise and support them in their orientation towards education and work, and to encourage vocational training, with special emphasis on women from cultural minorities.
- (<sup>5</sup>) The implementation of certain social security acts, the Unemployment Insurance Act and the Sickness Benefits Act is handled in the Netherlands by the industrial insurance boards. These are administered by employers' associations and trade unions.

## The Council has published the following Preliminary and Background Studies (in Dutch)

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- V56 C. de Klein, J. Collaris: Sociale ziektekostenverzekeringen in Europees perspectief (*National Health Insurance in a European Perspective*) (1987)
- V57 R.M.A. Jansweijer: Private leefvormen, publieke gevolgen (*Private Households, Public Consequences*) (1987)
- V58 De ongelijke verdeling van gezondheid (*The Unequal Distribution of Health*) Verslag van een conferentie op 16-17 maart 1987 (1987)
- V59 W.G.M. Salet: Ordening en sturing in het volkshuisvestingsbeleid (*Regulation and Management of Housing Policy*) (1987)
- V60 H.G. Eijgenhuijsen, J. Koelewijn, H. Visser: Investerings en de financiële infrastructuur (*Investments and the Financial Infrastructure*) (1987)
- V61 H. van der Sluijs: Ordening en sturing in de ouderenzorg (*Regulation and Management of Care for the Eldery*) (1980)
- V62 Report on the Third Term of Office 1983-1987\*

\* Also available in English.

**The Council commissioned a number of experts to carry out preliminary studies for the report 'A Coherent Media Policy'. The following studies were published in a separate series entitled 'Media Policy Background and Preliminary Studies' (in Dutch):**

- M 1 J.M. de Meij: Overheid en uitingsvrijheid (*The Government and Freedom of Speech*) (1982)
- M 2 E.H. Hollander: Kleinschalige massacommunicatie; lokale omroepvormen in West-Europa (*Small-scale Mass Communications: Local Broadcasting Forms in Western Europe*) (1982)
- M 3 L.J. Heinsman/Nederlandse Omroep Stichting: De culturele betekenis van de instroom van buitenlandse televisieprogramma's in Nederland – Een literatuurstudie (*The Cultural Significance of the Inflow of Foreign Television Programmes in the Netherlands – A Survey of the Literature*) (1982)
- M 4 L.P.H. Schoonderwoerd, W.P. Knulst/Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau: Mediagebruik bij verruiming van het aanbod (*Media Use and a Wider Media Range*) (1982)
- M 5 N. Boerma, J.J. van Cuilenburg, E. Diemer, J.J. Oostenbrink, J. van Putten: De omroep: wet en beleid; een juridisch-politicologische evaluatie van de Omroepwet (*Broadcasting – Legislation and Government Policy: A Legal and Political Evaluation of the Broadcasting Act*) (1982)
- M 6 Intomart B.V.: Etherpiraten in Nederland (*Radio Pirates in the Netherlands*) (1982)
- M 7 P.J. Kalf/Instituut voor Grafische Techniek TNO: Nieuwe technieken voor productie en distributie van dagbladen en tijdschriften (*New Techniques for the Production and Distribution of Newspapers and Magazines*) (1982)
- M 8 J.J. van Cuilenburg, D. McQuail: Media en pluriformiteit; een beoordeling van de stand van zaken (*The Media and Diversity: An Assessment of the State of Affairs*) (1982)
- M 9 K.J. Alsem, M.A. Boorman, G.J. van Helden, J.C. Hoekstra, P.S.H. Leeftang, H.H.M. Visser: De aanbodsstructuur van de periodiek verschijnende pers in Nederland (*The Supply Structure of Regular Press Publications in the Netherlands*) (1982)
- M10 W.P. Knulst/Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau: Mediabeleid en cultuurbeleid; Een studie over de samenhang tussen de twee beleidsvelden (*Media Policy and Cultural Policy: A Study of the Interrelationship between the two Fields of Policy*) (1982)
- M11 A.P. Bolle: Het gebruik van glasvezelkabel in lokale telecommunicatienetten (*The Use of Fibre Optic Cable in Local Telecommunications Networks*) (1982)
- M12 P. te Nuyl: Structuur en ontwikkeling van vraag en aanbod op de markt voor televisieproducties (*The Structure and Development of Demand and Supply in the Market for Television Productions*) (1982)
- M13 P.J.M. Wilms/Instituut voor Onderzoek van Overheidsuitgaven: Horen, zien en betalen; een inventariserende studie naar de toekomstige kosten en bekostigingen van de omroep (*Listening, Viewing and Paying: An Inventory Study of the Future Cost and Funding of Broadcasting*) (1982)
- M14 W.M. de Jong: Informatietechniek in beweging, consequenties en mogelijkheden voor Nederland (*Information Technology in Flux: Consequences and Possibilities for the Netherlands*) (1982)
- M15 J.C. van Ours: Mediaconsumptie; een analyse van het verleden, een verkenning van de toekomst (*Media Consumption: An Analysis of the Past and Survey of the Future*) (1982)
- M16 J.G. Stappers, A.D. Reijnders, W.A.J. Möller: De werking van massamedia; een overzicht van inzichten (*The operation of Mass Media: A Survey of the State of Understanding*) (1983)
- M17 F.J. Schrijver: De invoering van kabeltelevisie in Nederland (*The Introduction of Cable in the Netherlands*) (1983)

## The Council has published the following Reports to the Government

### First term of office

1. *Europese Unie* (European Union), 1974.
2. *Structuur van de Nederlandse economie* (Structure of the Netherlands Economy), 1974.
3. *Energiebeleid op langere termijn* (Long-term Energy Policy), 1974. Reports 1 to 3 are published in one volume.
4. *Milieubeleid* (Environment Policy), 1974.
5. *Bevolkingsprognoses* (Population Forecasis), 1974.
6. *De organisatie van het openbaar bestuur* (The Organization of Publics Administration), 1975.
7. *Buitenlandse invloeden op Nederland: Internationale migratie* (Foreign Influence on the Netherlands: International Migration), 1976.
8. *Buitenlandse invloeden op Nederland: Beschikbaarheid van wetenschappelijke en technische kennis* (Foreign Influence on the Netherlands: Availability of Scientific and Technical Knowledge), 1976.
9. *Commentaar op de Discussienota Sectorraden Wetenschapsbeleid* (Comments on the discussion Paper on Sectoral Council of Science Policy), 1976.
10. *Commentaar op de nota Contouren van een toekomstig onderwijsbestel* (Comments on the White Paper on the Contours of the Future Education System), 1976.
11. *Overzicht externe adviesorganen van de centrale overheid* (Survey of external Advisory Bodies of the Central Government), 1976.
12. *Externe adviesorganen van de centrale overheid, beschrijving, ontwikkelingen, aanbevelingen* (External Advisory Bodies of the Central Government: Description, Developments, Recommendations), 1977.
13. *'Maken wij er werk van?' Verkenningen omtrent de verhouding tussen actieven en niet-actieven* 'Do we make Work our Business?' An Exploratory Study of the Relations between Economically Active and Inactive Persons), 1977.
14. *Overzicht interne adviesorganen van de centrale overheid* (Survey of Internal Advisory Bodies of the Central Government), 1977.
15. *De Komende vijftientig jaar, een toekomstverkenning voor Nederland* (The Next Twenty-Five Years: a Survey of Future Developments in the Netherlands), 1977.
16. *Over sociale ongelijkheid, een beleidsgerichte probleemverkenning* (On Social Inequality: a Police-oriented Study), 1977.

### Second term of office

17. *Etnische minderheden – A. Rapport aan de regering; B. Naar een algemeen etnisch minderhedenbeleid?* (Ethnic minorities – A. Report to the Government; B. Towards an Overall Ethnic Minorities Policy?), 1979.
18. *Plaats en toekomst van de Nederlandse industrie* (Industry in the Netherlands: its Place and Future), 1980.
19. *Beleidsgerichte toekomstverkenning: deel 1. Een poging tot uitlokking* (A Policy-oriented Survey of the Future: Part 1. An Attempt to Challenge), 1980.
20. *Democratie en geweld – Probleemanalyse naar aanleiding van de gebeurtenissen in Amsterdam op 30 april 1980* (Democracy and Violence – an Analysis of Problems in Connection with the Events in Amsterdam on April 30, 1980), 1980.
21. *Vernieuwing in het arbeidsbestel* (Prospects for Reforming the Labour System), 1981.
22. *Herwaardering van welzijnsbeleid* (A Reappraisal of Welfare Policy), 1982.
23. *Onder invloed van Duitsland. Een onderzoek naar gevoeligheid en kwetsbaarheid in de betrekkingen tussen Nederland en de Bondsrepubliek* (The German Factor, A Survey of Sensitivity and Vulnerability in the Relationship between the Netherlands and the Federal Republic), 1982.
24. *Samenhangend mediabeleid* (A Coherent Media Policy), 1982.

### Third term of office

25. *Beleidsgerichte toekomstverkenning: deel 2; Een verruiming van perspectief* (A Policy-oriented Survey of the Future: Part 2: Towards a Broader Perspective), 1983.
26. *Waarborgen voor zekerheid; een nieuw stelsel van sociale zekerheid in hoofdlijnen* (Safeguarding Social Security), 1985.
27. *Basisvorming in het onderwijs* (Basic Education), 1986.
28. *De onvoltooide Europese integratie* (The Unfinished European Integration), 1986.
29. *Ruimte voor Groei* (Scope for Growth), 1987.
30. *Op maat van het midden- en kleinbedrijf* (Tailoring Policy to the Needs of the Small and Medium-sized Business), 1987.
31. *Cultuur zonder grenzen* (Culture and Diplomacy), 1987.
32. *Activerend arbeidsmarktbeleid* (An Active Labour Market Policy), 1987.

Reports nos. 13, 15, 17, 18, 28 and 31 have been translated into English; English summaries are available of Reports nos. 16, 18, 19, 20, 25, 26, 27, 29 and 32; Report no 23 has been translated into German.