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The Hague : October 18, 2017

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Regarding : Final report on the framework of actions on youth employment

To the European Social Partners,

The Dutch Labour Foundation, a private consultative and cooperative body incorporating the main employers' federations (VNO-NCW, MKB-Nederland and LTO Nederland) and federations of trade unions (FNV, CNV and VCP), is pleased to send you the final report on the framework of actions on youth employment, as you requested in your letter.

The Labour Foundation apologizes for the delay in sending this report.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Labour Foundation.

Yours sincerely,
LABOUR FOUNDATION

Jannie Mooren
General Secretary

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT ON THE FRAMEWORK OF ACTIONS ON YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

TEMPLATE

**JOINT NATIONAL FACT-SHEET TO BE SENT BY 26 MAY 2017
to trade unions and employers secretariats:**

For trade unions: rbertoli@etuc.org and for employers: e.denis@businessseurope.eu
+ Please also add the secretariat of UEAPME (a.deboer@ueapme.com) and of CEEP
(guillaume.afellat@ceep.eu) in cc

Maximum: 4 pages

Language: in English (preferably) or in French

1) Country:

The Netherlands

2) Organisations and contact details:

Employers' organisations

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LTO Nederland

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3) Evaluation of the actions taken by social partners on the four priorities of the framework of actions

Introductory remarks

In 2013 youth unemployment in the Netherlands was an urgent problem. That is why the Dutch government appointed an ambassador, Mirjam Sterk (former member of the Dutch parlement), who stimulated actions on fighting youth unemployment. At the beginning of 2014 the unemployment rate of young people (15-25 years) was 13.6 percent (ILO-definition). Every year the rate dropped and at the beginning of 2017 it was 9.7 percent.

The Dutch government launched in 2013 a national action plan on youth unemployment. From spring 2013 until spring 2015 the government, local governments, social partners, education providers and young people themselves undertook several measures to ensure work or further education for young people. These measures include several actions on regional level, in

which the social partners have been involved. In addition 'working agreements' have been made with employers, including some employers in the public sector. As a result 23.000 young people attained a job, internship or apprenticeship and 9.000 have been rendered ready for further education or work. In 2016 and 2017 the youth action plan was continued by the government with a focus on closing the skills gap between education and the labour market and pay special attention to certain vulnerable groups, such as young people without a degree, dependent on social benefits or with a migrant background.

In the Netherlands, the issue of youth unemployment is being tackled primarily at regional and local level. This is because the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW) decided to route the financial and other support for these activities via the country's municipalities. This approach, which is still in effect, is supported at national level by SZW and the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) via the Aanpak Jeugdwerkloosheid [Tackle Youth Unemployment] programme. The activities are regularly reported in a digital newsletter.

Social partners and government work together constructively. Till 2016 they met in the Labour Foundation the ministry of SZW once or twice a year to discuss the progress and results of the Aanpak Jeugdwerkloosheid programme. Because this programme is carried out at regional level, the Foundation has not created a role for itself to organise additional activities relating to this programme. Both the central and decentral members of the Foundation, in particular the youth branches of the trade unions, are extremely active in combating youth unemployment in a dozen fields.

Most of the extra activities that the members of the Labour Foundation have undertaken to combat unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular, are performed pursuant to the Social Agreement [Sociaal Akkoord] which the Labour Foundation and the government entered into on 11 April 2013. Over the last four years, social partners at decentral level have used a new instrument, 'sector plans', to make joint investments in measures that contribute to strengthening sectoral frameworks and a 'job-to-job' programme. SZW developed a co-financing scheme to carry out this programme, as a result of which more than EUR 1 billion was made available for that purpose. Of that amount, some EUR 450 million was provided by the government; the remainder was contributed by the social partners (primarily using sectoral education and training funds) and the regions. A large portion of these activities – approximately 40 percent – benefits young people under the age of 27. The activities for young people are primarily aimed at the opportunity to offer them work-based training or allow them to participate in programmes through which an intermediary assists them with finding a job.

- a) What are the main features and what is the impact on companies and workers of social partners' actions taken from 2013 to 2017 to address the **LEARNING** dimension of youth employment?

In the Labour Foundation the employers' organisations and trade unions consult each other regularly regarding several national themes relating to vocational education.

These themes are:

- Harmonising secondary education with vocational education, and, at post-secondary level, harmonising intermediate vocational education with advanced vocational education;
- Reducing school drop-out rates;
- Training young people who lack a starting qualification;
- Providing information on study programmes and the various results of those programmes.

Any points that are identified at these meetings as requiring attention are put on the agenda.

Furthermore, in the organisation SBB [Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven], social partners and secondary vocational education discuss the themes, which are related to this form of education on the job, with the management responsible for vocational training. Social partners also try to influence schools to propose the programmes employers in the different regions need.

In 2013, parties such as employers organisations, trade unions, the national education system and regional government bodies signed the Technology Pact 2020 (<http://www.techniekpact.nl/>). The pact follows three lines of action: encouraging young people to choose a technical education, providing them with a good-quality technical education and enabling them to find a good job in a technical field. Nowadays we need a lot of youngsters who have studied technical programmes. There aren't enough of them. We are at the brink of renewing the Technology pact and convincing parents and their children to choose for a technical study because there will be a job for them and good wages, is more important than ever.

- b) What are the main features and what is the impact on companies and workers of social partners' actions taken from 2013 to 2017 **to address the TRANSITION dimension of youth employment**?

The Ministry of Social Affairs and employment, municipalities, unemployment benefits institution developed 'matching on the job'. For 'matching on the job' is needed a preselection of candidates and a personal introduction to an employer or organising face to face meetings between young people and employers. By doing this in a stage before the formal job application, prejudices can be taken away. Furthermore, selection takes place on the basis of competences instead of vague impressions.

The goal of 'Matching on the job' is to get 23.000 young people employed from 2015 till 2017. The plan was a success from the first year on that the goal was raised with an additional number of 5.500 young people to 28.500 young people.

- c) What are the main features and what is the impact on companies and workers of social partners' actions taken from 2013 to 2017 **to address the EMPLOYMENT dimension of youth employment**?

Social partners dealt with the employment of young people via:

- The agreement made in the Social Agreement of 11 April 2013 – to provide a total of EUR 600 million in co-financing for the years 2014 and 2015 to sectors who promote sustainable employability in their sector via the Sectoral Plan Co-financing Scheme [Regeling cofinanciering sectorplannen] – is important to promoting opportunities to find sustainable work. The sectors and regions that submit a sectoral plan must finance at least the same amount. The grant is conditioned on at least one third of it being used for activities to benefit young people. This condition has been met in the plans approved up to now.
- The sectoral plans make frequent mention of mentoring projects in which older employees are allowed to devote some of their working hours to provide practical training to young people in their field. One example of this is the construction sector plan, which commits to arranging 2,500 mentorships (see www.stvda.nl).
- The aforementioned activities undertaken by SBB, the investments in the quality of education and the Technology Pact 2020 all promote opportunities for sustainable jobs.

In order to get a successful performance of 'matching on the job', much attention was given to build a network of employers who have appropriate vacancies. The networks

were built in co-operation with associations of employers in the various regions of the Netherlands. These associations have close contacts with their members.

In certain labour market regions employers got vouchers to make it attractive for employers to offer a job or apprenticeships for young people.

Also the service to young people has been improved: custom made solutions, empowerment, creating perspective in which young people are in the driving seat.

To get in touch with young people, the right communication is very important. Young people are not sensitive to planning and structuring to find a job. By showing them intermediate results and treating them with a positive attitude helps them to regain trust and self-confidence. Also role-models are used.

City Deals were made in 2016 and 2017 in five cities (Amsterdam, Den Haag, Eindhoven, Leeuwarden, Zaanstad) in order to prepare young people, still at school, on a job on the labour market. City Deals arrangements were with a focus on young people with a migration background, because they have a higher chance of being unemployed and ask therefore for suitable measures.

Youth unemployment in the Netherlands has been – also in comparison with other EU-Member States – very low. Attention has been given to drop outs (young people without qualifications) to prevent division on the labour market and create chances to find a job.

Despite recent economic growth, young employees are still finding it difficult to find (long-term) employment. While flexible or temporary contracts are offered more easily, some young groups are still finding it hard to find a job at all. 10% of the unemployed youth aged 15-25 remains unemployed for a longer period of time, mainly consisting of young people on benefits, young people without a basic educational qualification and migrant youth. Especially those who left school without the basic 'starting qualification', necessary to compete within the current labour market, pose a challenge. Their unemployment rate is double that of the youth unemployment rate. When they acquire a job it is often flexible or temporary employment and they will also find it harder to gain and remain in employment in the future. Also the relatively high enrolment in studies for which the current economy has little vacancies poses a challenge, this can be seen at all educational levels. Another worrisome group is those who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) and have withdrawn themselves from actively looking for a job, they are not represented in the current unemployment statistics. This group, without the skills to improve their economic situation and with an income below the poverty-line, are at risk of becoming socially excluded.

- d) What are the main features and what is the impact on companies and workers of social partners' actions taken from 2013 to 2017 to address the **ENTREPRENEURSHIP dimension of youth employment**?

The Labour Foundation consults regularly with vocational education providers regarding the importance of including entrepreneurial skills in the programmes they offer.

There have also been specific projects established in tandem with the social partners. For example, with their nation - wide Hot Peppers [Hete Pepers] project, the youth trade unions - FNV Jong and CNV Jongeren – and the National Youth Council [Nationale Jeugdraad] are supporting young job seekers in utilising their potential and bolstering their position on the labour market.