

Labour Market Participation and Support for Migrants Entrepreneurship”

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The city district of South East in Amsterdam has around 6100 persons registered as living on social security benefits. This means that about 9.7% of our occupational population are unemployed. Of these, around 65% are made up of women, mostly above the age of 35 and having at least 2 children. Furthermore, around 70% of them have an ethnic minority background.

The reasons for their employment are obvious as most of them have a little or no education or skills that are needed in the labour market, most do not have a working command of the Dutch language, have no experience with working in a modern labour market, and are faced with employers demanding skills that they do not have. The irony is that the district of south east has also the fastest growing job creation area in the region while quite a sizeable part of its population is without work.

The resultant mismatch in the labour market also form the basis of our labour policy. Therefore while we claim that anybody who wants to work can be given a job today, we also realise that we have to do something to make sure that those out of work gain the kinds of skills necessary to function in the present service centered labour market. We do this by encouraging young persons to stay in school till they have a diploma, by encouraging adult education for skills and trade, and working with employer organisations to train new workers and keep low skill workers in a life long training programmes.

Secondly we encourage those leaning towards entrepreneurship to start their own businesses and take advantages of the new opportunities that changes in the economy, family structures and work bring. In this regard we have developed two instruments – Women at work and the house for entrepreneurs, to help starters.

Lastly, we are using contract compliance as a means of supporting starters in the labour market.