

Agreement on Jobs for the disabled in the Netherlands

In 2015 a law was passed that aims at creating 125,000 additional jobs for people with occupational disabilities by 2025. A total of 100,000 jobs in the private sector and 25,000 in the public sector. All employers, are supposed to provide these additional jobs. If this voluntary agreement between government and employers does not result in the required number of new jobs, a quota system will be activated.

The target group for these jobs includes people with an occupational disability who can not earn minimum wage. There is a national authority that ascertains whether a person is able to carry out a so-called threshold function. That is to say if this person is capable of taking on a light work-load, in spite of his disability. If this is not the case, he is therefore not able to earn the minimum wage and is thus eligible: included in the target-group. So in fact there are two criteria: threshold function & minimum wage. And they are related.

The Ministry of Social Affairs monitors periodically how many people in the target group have been given a job. This monitoring is done independently for the private and public sectors. When in a given year, the number of additional jobs has not been achieved in a sector, a quota can be activated, which means that the sector or the individual companies may have to pay an extra taxation for not having achieved their target. This is not considered a fine.

Up to now we lag significantly behind expectations.

There are many opportunities for employers to take advantage of the talents of disabled people in the labour market. Now more than 35,000 people are employed through 'social work companies' in regular companies. Sometimes adjustments are necessary to help people with disabilities get started successfully.