

The background of the cover is a photograph of a modern interior space. The wall is a vibrant yellow with horizontal lines. Several large, dark, curved frames are mounted on the wall, resembling stylized arches or doorways. In the foreground, a person in a dark suit is blurred, moving quickly across the frame. To the left, another person is also blurred, walking away. The floor is light-colored with a grid pattern.

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# Transitions on the labor market

*A study of job-to-job  
transitions policies  
and programs*

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CELSUS  
JURIDISCHE UITGEVERIJ

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## List of abbreviations used

AWVN	General Employers' Association of the Netherlands ( <i>Algemene Werkgeversvereniging Nederland</i> )
CLA	Collective Labour Agreement ( <i>Collectieve arbeidsovereenkomst, CAO</i> )
HR	Human Resources
OC&W	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science ( <i>Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap</i> )
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SCP	Institute for Social Research ( <i>Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau</i> )
SER	Social and Economic Council ( <i>Sociaal-Economische Raad</i> )
SZW	Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment ( <i>Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid</i> )
UWV	Employee Insurance Agency, Public Employment Service ( <i>Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen</i> )
FJTJ	From job to job
WRR	Scientific Council for Government Policy ( <i>Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid</i> )
WW	Unemployment Insurance Act ( <i>werkloosheidswet</i> )



# Foreword

We do not know what the world will look like in twenty years' time. At the moment, however, we are seeing a number of large, interlinked transitions that partly determine how citizens, employees, labor organizations, and governments will make their choices in the coming period. Technologization brings about rapid innovations in many areas. Ecological developments are forcing us to say goodbye to fossil fuels. There is also an ageing population and ongoing globalization. All these transitions have a major impact on the design of organizations, people's skills, and the way we work, learn, and live together.

These developments undeniably offer great opportunities for doing things better and smarter tomorrow compared to today: faster service provision, a sustainable energy supply, better care, more control over one's own life. But the increased dynamics also put the adaptability of people and companies to the test. Some of them have difficulty keeping track of all the changes. It is worrying that, despite economic growth, a large group of people remain on the sidelines for a long time.

Employees and jobseekers notice these dynamics of reduced job security and increasing pressure on mobility and continual skills development. A job for life is becoming scarcer, a diploma may be outdated tomorrow, and participation and self-reliance are not always self-evident in an increasingly complex society. Those who change jobs in the event of imminent dismissal often have to settle for less salary and security. Companies are noticing the dynamics of a faster shifting need for personnel, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Continuous innovation and rapid absorption of new technology have become even more important for survival.

Despite a relatively good starting position, the Netherlands cannot afford to sit back, according to the OECD.<sup>1</sup> If everyone is to benefit from (technological) progress, citizens, employees, and employers need to develop continuously. It is also important that students are taught the right skills to participate or continue to participate in the labor market and in society.

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1 OESO (2017) OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Netherlands.

Companies, employees, educational institutions, and governments have every interest in jointly investing in a strong learning culture. This includes a learning infrastructure that is accessible to everyone across the borders of companies and sectors. However, the latter is not easy: part of learning is, in fact, organized *within* these borders. There is also often a lack of good labor market information, career policy, good development paths, and sufficient security to make the transition.<sup>2</sup>

This publication shows once again how important it is to guide people to another job in a good and timely way, and how difficult it still is to organize this mobility properly. What this publication mainly shows is the essential role that schooling and development play in this. If you participate in a course or training when you are about to be dismissed or shortly afterwards, you are, on average, unemployed for six months less. *SER* considers regional collaboration necessary to help employees in their orientation regarding suitable training and career opportunities.<sup>3</sup> This support must be personal and benefit all groups of jobseekers.<sup>4</sup>

In short, mobility and development are closely linked to each other. The researchers rightly suggest that the discussion about FJTJ is best conducted in the light of the broader discussion about lifelong development. *SER* is willing to do so as part of the driving role it will play in this wide-ranging field.<sup>5</sup> Good initiatives are already being taken in various places with regard to FJTJ training but by no means everywhere.<sup>6</sup> By bringing together regional and sectoral experiences and addressing obstacles nationally, *SER* intends to contribute, in the coming period, to a bottom-up movement in which continuously developing yourself is self-evident.

We do not know what the future will look like. Yet, we can prepare ourselves by working on the resilience of people and companies right now.

*Mariëtte Hamer*

*Chair Social Economic Council (SER)*

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2 SER (2011) *Werk maken van baan-baanmobiliteit*

3 SER (2017) *Leren en ontwikkelen tijdens de loopbaan, een richtinggevend advies*

4 SER (2016) *Mens en technologie: samen aan het werk. Verkenning en werkagenda digitalisering*

5 Letter to Parliament; *Een leven lang ontwikkelen*, 12 maart 2018. Ministers Koolmees (SZW) en Van Engelshoven (OCW). Kamerstuk 30 012, nr. 77.

6 SER (2015) *Werkloosheid voorkomen, beperken en goed verzekeren. Een toekomstbestendige arbeidsmarkt-infrastructuur en Werkloosheidswet.*

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Reason and Current Relevance

The value and importance of work for people and organizations is widely recognized, even in the age of advancing digitalization and robotization. Work not only leads to income security but is also still the royal route to social participation. It contributes to personal development, vitality, and social capital. For companies and organizations, labor is not only an economic production factor but also a source of innovation and creativity.

Companies and institutions have an enormous stake in having the right number of people with the right competences at the right time. This human capital is essential for their market position, competitiveness, and productivity.

A specific public interest, which affects society as well as people and organizations, concerns the costs of not working, unemployment, and inactivity. If a large group of people cannot perform paid work, this has major consequences at an individual level in terms of loss of income and the opposite effects of working such as decreasing health and well-being and exclusion or a sense of exclusion. Companies and institutions may not only be affected as far as their production and services are concerned, but they will also have to contribute to the costs of unemployment through higher premiums. For the economy and society, a high level of short- and long-term unemployment and inactivity is problematic in several respects because the affordability of services is at stake, especially in an ageing society. This concerns not only social security – the various types of benefits and reintegration costs on which billions are spent – but also the cost of healthcare. Social consequences not only occur in the form of a division in society – the haves and have-nots – that affects the future of children but they are also reflected in the loss of trust in government, politics, and public administration. There is also a relationship between unemployment and crime (Van Erp et al., 2011).

It is, therefore, of enormous importance that people obtain a job and keep their jobs. For some fifteen years now, this objective has been referred to as the pursuit of employment security. This concept is a key aspect of the European monetary flexicurity concept (Wilthagen & Tros, 2004). In the Netherlands, the scientific council for government policy, *WRR*, contributed to putting employment security on the agenda as a broader variant of the concept of job security (*WRR*, 2007). Employment security is not merely about the security of keeping a specific job with a particular employer in a particular sector but about the security of obtaining and keeping employment.

Earlier, in the second half of the 1990s, thinking about and conducting research into the labor market had already shifted to a transitional perspective. It was and is no longer just about the labor market status of people – working, not working, et cetera – but about analyzing the transitions people make to, on, and from the labor market. This view of the dynamics of the labor market is referred to as the transitional labor market (Schmid & Gazier, 2002). The policy consequence of the transitional labor market is that it must not only be aimed at facilitating and supporting ‘good’ transitions on the labor market, which contribute to job security through training, but to combining work and other important matters (care, private life) as well.

When thinking about good transitions, the step from one job to another one is one of the crucial transitions. For some time now, the Netherlands has been talking about from job-to-job transitions (FJTJ). FJTJ thinking and policy is still fairly recent. In a welfare state like the Netherlands, there was always interest and a stake in reducing unemployment. Especially after the labor market paradigm changed to becoming active and activating in character in the 1980s and 1990s, and unemployment and incapacity for work were no longer considered inevitable (a kind of natural phenomenon) and therefore acceptable. In recent decades, however, the need to prevent unemployment has also been mentioned (Evers, Wilthagen & Borghouts, 2004; Borghouts, 2016) in the light of the major consequences of short- and long-term unemployment for individuals, organizations, and society.

In the context of the recent economic crisis – The Great Recession – in 2008, FJTJ thinking and policy has gained momentum in the Netherlands and other countries. During this period, many reorganizations took place as a result of the economic crisis. In our country, the Public Employment

Service, *UWV*, introduced a mobility center, the first in Eindhoven. Public mobility centers were a novelty in the sense that they were temporarily named in this way, but in practice they did not add a completely new aspect of the task of employment services in supporting people that faced redundancy. In addition, many large companies and institutions already have and still have their own mobility centers, which focus on both the internal and external labor market. These mobility centers were created as a result of the introduction of the Eligibility for Permanent Incapacity Benefit (Restrictions) Act (*Wet Verbetering Poortwachter*) in 2002. Since then, employers have been obliged to continue to pay wages in the first two years of illness or incapacity of employees. At the time, many employers were not satisfied with the support provided by private market parties and the public employment service to reintegrate sick people. That is why employers, in a number of regions, joined forces and set up so-called *Poortwachterscentra* (centers supporting the business community in matters concerning sickness absence and occupational rehabilitation). These networks for and by employers aim to help each other in reintegrating sick and disabled workers. In response to the crisis, these centers are also committed to promoting smooth transitions from job to job for employees at risk of dismissal (Borghouts, 2012).

The crisis and efforts to keep people employed and thus prevent unemployment have also stimulated FJTJ research. Nevertheless, to date, there has been little large-scale research into this theme. However, related studies have been carried out that focus on the question whether people suffer long-term consequences of mass or small-scale redundancies and short- and long-term unemployment (also from the “scarring” effect, possible permanent consequences – scars – of periods of unemployment). However, still relatively few studies very specifically focus on the motives and circumstances of employers to use certain (HR) policies and instruments regarding FJTJ and to determine the effects of this on the employees concerned in terms of job retention, salary levels, health, and so on.

In the meantime – after the crisis – the relevance of FJTJ policy has taken on a new dimension. Not only cyclical developments but also increased competition and technological innovations are – today and in the future – causing jobs to change or disappear. These changes within organizations, to some extent, lead to forced dismissals. Redundant employees will have to look for another job. In a flexible labor market, which characterizes the Netherlands par excellence, the chance of repeat unemployment is demonstrably greater. Protection and support during transitions is there-



fore of great importance: for the employment security of people and from the social security point of view.

The Dutch economy has caught up considerably in recent years. Like in the period before 2008, this led to a sharp increase in the number of vacancies and to considerable shortages in a number of sectors. In hindsight, it is inconceivable that, at the height of the crisis, healthcare had the largest inflow of employees into unemployment benefit, while the sector is now at its wit's end. In the construction industry, we see the same happening (Wilthagen, 2018). This scarcity is even hampering further growth in that sector. The economic upturn is paralleled by ageing and a decline in the number of young people. Despite the fact that, on average, people continue to work longer (the average retirement age has risen from 61 years to 65 in 18 years), and despite the strong increase in the inflow of foreign workers, many companies and institutions are having problems. Sectors such as construction, care, and education have lost many workers as a result of the crisis and budget cuts and cyclical HR and training policies, as well as loss of attractiveness to prospective students. They must, as it were, search again for the people they let go of or had to let go of earlier. The inadequate FJTJ policy is therefore taking its toll here. This has given a new impulse to the interest in FJTJ and research into this area.

This revaluation of FJTJ not only has a quantitative aspect, in the sense that there used to be too many people for the existing jobs and now too few for the existing vacancies. The insight has also grown that the labor market and human capital are the Achilles' heel of the economy. Well-trained professionals, who continue to develop and acquire new (21st century) skills, make the difference; also, as was said before, in the approaching robot era, at least as far as we can look ahead. This is the case not only for companies and institutions but also for labor market regions.

Slowly but surely, the conviction is emerging that we need to be much more careful with human capital. The best way to focus on lifelong development and employability is in a working environment. Certainly in a country, the Netherlands, which invests the least in training job-seekers compared to all neighboring countries and in which citizens have no direct claim to (post-initial) training resources, although the recently appointed Cabinet has put forward the idea of a learning account (Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 2018). The further development of human capital, which is essential for the further development of companies and institutions, therefore, benefits from helping and keeping

people in employment. And it does not benefit from – in football terms – putting people on the reserve bench for a long period of time and not allowing them to train together with others, which makes it predictable that a mismatch will arise with the changing requirements and needs of employers. And in the current times of scarcity, there is still an untapped labor potential of almost 1.2 million people.

Better mobility arrangements, job-to-job arrangements, also intersectoral, facilitated by timely investments in training are essential components of a “New Deal” for the labor market that may not yet be in the making nationally (newly proposed Labor Market in Balance Act) but certainly regionally (Amsterdam, Gelderland, Eindhoven, et cetera). Recently, the Brabant and Limburg labor market regions and provinces, united in the Brainport Network, formally closed a New Deal for the labor market because of the urgent situation on the labor market in the southeast of the Netherlands. It focuses on the employment security of people and the development of companies, as well as on continuous and countercyclical training. Time will have to tell whether and which parties will support this New Deal and how innovation with regard to FJTJ will work in practice.

The developments outlined above lead to the pressing question, both socially and scientifically: how can the FJTJ policy best be organized, with the greatest chance of effect and success, for people, employers, sectors, and society as a whole? Who can best shape this policy and is there sufficient support and perceived interest among all stakeholders? There is now a picture of what is happening in this area in the Netherlands and in other countries, whether or not “systematically” (Borghouts, 2012). Many employers have gained experience with this policy in practice. However, this picture also needs to be made clearer and more precise for the Netherlands in order to offer new perspectives for action.

In recent years, scientific research has been conducted into the extent to which employees whose jobs are terminated for economic reasons find a suitable job again (Scheele et al., 2008); FJTJ systems at home and abroad (Borghouts, 2012; Borghouts, 2015); the design and implementation of FJTJ experiments (Visser et al., 2012); and good unemployment prevention practices (Evers et al., 2004). There is also literature available about the results of the outplacement pathways on offer on the unemployment period and the quality of the next job in the event of mass redundancies (Deelen, Graaf-Zijl en Berge v.d., 2014).

In this publication, the existing knowledge about FJTJ in the Netherlands is mapped out in a compact manner from a model-based perspective on transitions, inclusion, and HR policy. This publication is largely based on new and ongoing research initiated and funded by *Instituut Gak*, but it also contains the (preliminary) results of other research, such as that on FJTJ in the Province of Noord-Brabant, funded by this Province.

## 1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions are central to this study:

1. Do employers offer FJTJ support? And if so, what and why?
2. Are the FJTJ programs used? And if so, what are the outcomes/results?
3. Which impeding and promoting factors play a role in the FJTJ process?

## 1.3 Data Collection

Because we want to gain an in-depth understanding of the considerations, circumstances, and choices that are made at the organizational level and, in addition, explore which impeding and stimulating factors play a role in the outcomes of FJTJ programs (in the field of reintegration and with regard to the mental well-being and skills of the redundant employees), the data collection consisted of a *mixed method* approach. Qualitative (interviews at an organizational level) and quantitative research methods (digital questionnaires among redundant employees and employers in the Province of Noord-Brabant) were used. Appendix 1 contains an overview of the data collection and a response account.

## 1.4 Reader's Guide

In *Chapter 2*, we discuss unemployment prevention and the supply of FJTJ programs in more detail. In this context, we will briefly focus on specific measures that employers can take prior to the implementation of the FJTJ policy. The Chapter further focuses on the question: do employers offer FJTJ support and if so, what and why? This Chapter is based on literature research, quantitative data collection among organizations with more than twenty employees in the Province of Noord-Brabant, and on fourteen interviews with organizations that had to deal with forced dismissals. In total, more than 1,000 branches in the Province of Noord-Brabant completed a questionnaire (see Appendix 1 for a response account). In addition, twelve interviews were conducted with those responsible for HR-related matters within the Province of Noord-Brabant.

*Chapter 3* discusses the use, usefulness, and effects of the FJTJ programs. To this effect, we look for differences in age, educational level, region, and gender. The sustainability and characteristics of the new job will also be discussed. Are the characteristics of the new job comparable to the previous job? In *Chapter 3*, we also consider possible health effects. This Chapter is based on online questionnaires among 2,258 redundant employees.

In *Chapter 4*, we discuss the impeding and promoting factors for a successful FJTJ policy. The information in this Chapter is based on both the quantitative and qualitative data collected from both redundant employees and employers. In this Chapter, we will formulate a number of points for improvement regarding the FJTJ transitions.

Finally, in *Chapter 5*, we present the conclusions and give an outlook, together with a number of recommendations.

## TRANSITIONS ON THE LABOR MARKET

## 2 Unemployment Prevention and the Supply of FJTJ Programs

The responsibility and importance of preventing unemployment lies with several actors, such as the employees themselves and the government, but also the employers (Van Vianen & Tijs, 2014). In this Chapter we will discuss the role of employers in preventing unemployment in the form of offering FJTJ in the event of dismissal. Which employers offer FJTJ support? What are the motives behind this, and how do organizations implement FJTJ programs? In Section 2.1, we first look at the number of organizations that have had to deal with dismissals, describing the context in which FJTJ can take place. In Section 2.2, we demonstrate that, prior to the implementation of the FJTJ, employers may also take other measures for employees who are or may be dismissed in order to contribute to unemployment prevention at an earlier stage. In Section 2.3, we discuss the motives of employers for using FJTJ as part of unemployment prevention. Finally, in Section 2.4, we go into how employers implement FJTJ support.

### 2.1 Dismissals and Reason for Dismissal

Figures from the labor demand panel of the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (*SCP*) 2015/2016 show that 39 percent of the organizations surveyed dismissed one or more employees in the past year. Poor functioning of the employee is number one as a main motive (61 percent). For 9 percent of the organizations, it concerned *collective* redundancies and, for almost 25 percent, it concerned *individual* redundancies for economic reasons.

*Table 2.1*

Share of organizations with dismissals and reason for dismissal

	Total
Organizations with dismissals	39,2%
Reason for dismissal	
Poor functioning	61,3%
Collective economic reason	9,0%
Individual economic reason	24,6%
Other reason	21,7%

Source: SCP (AVP '15/'16)

Published: October 24, 2017

The survey among employers in the Province of Noord-Brabant shows that within medium-sized (50 to 200 employees) and large (more than 200 employees) organizational branches, redundancies are more frequently reported than within small (up to 50 employees) organizational branches. Among the small branches, 47% say they have given notice of dismissal, among the medium-sized branches, this is 54%, and among the large branches 70%. The fact that larger branches are more likely to give notice of dismissal can be explained by the fact that larger branches are more likely to be confronted with changes in the organizational structure than smaller branches (28, 43, and 64 percent of small, medium and large branches respectively). An employer may offer FJTJ programs to redundant employees with a view to an unemployment-free transition to another job. Employers can, however, take measures, even before notice is given, for employees who are threatened with redundancy. In the next section, we discuss the various measures.

## 2.2 Unemployment Prevention

Prior to giving notice of dismissal and the implementation of FJTJ programs for redundant personnel, employers can take precautionary measures to prevent redundancies and contribute to unemployment prevention in earlier stages. The measures employers can take are related to different situations in which the organization and its employees may find themselves (Evers, Wilthagen & Borghouts, 2004; Borghouts 2012; Borghouts, 2016; Verschoor & Borghouts, 2018). Evers et al. (2004) distinguish between primary, secondary, and tertiary unemployment prevention.

### *Primary prevention*

*Primary prevention* is about preventing unemployment before there is a real threat of dismissal in the short term. In this situation, organizations and employees can invest in the “employability” and “sustainable employability” of employees (Van Vuuren, Caniëls & Semeijn, 2011), so that employees are agile and resilient on the labor market in the event of possible future changes (see Phase A in Figure 1).

“Until eighteen months ago, the supervision of redundant employees within our organization was carried out by an external mobility agency. This has now been insourced and we have a department called *In Beweging*, consisting of five career coaches, a supporter, and a manager. The *In Beweging* program consists of three tracks: Talent Development Program, Sustainable Employability, and Mobility. The first two are voluntary, but not without obligations, and are started at the initiative of the employee him/herself. The third track, Mobility, is in case of a reorganization when there are forced redundancies. A new redundancy plan came into force on January 1, 2017. This plan encourages employees to make a move themselves. Guidance can be obtained in three phases. The sooner you start making a move, the higher the transition allowance.” (Head of HR development, financial organization)

In the literature, considerable attention is paid to employability and sustainable employability (De Lange, 2017; Forrier & Sels, 2003; Van der Heijde & Van der Heijden, 2006; Van Vuuren, Caniëls & Semeijn, 2011). The term “employability” is frequently studied in different scientific disciplines and at different levels (society, the company, and the individual), resulting in different definitions, such as “the ability to obtain and keep employment or to find employment if required” (Fugate et al., 2004; Hillage & Pollard, 1998) from an individual perspective and “the ability of individual employees to maintain employment on the internal or external labor market” (Thijssen et al., 2008) from a social or organizational perspective. Investments by employers in the sustainable deployability and employability of employees make it easier for employees to stay at work or find other employment, within or outside the organizational boundaries (Becker, 2002; Campbell et al., 2012; Fugate et al., 2004; Hillage & Pollard, 1998). At an early stage, the employer can, therefore, already invest in the sustainable employability of employees who do not run the a risk of forced dismissal in the short term.

The survey among employers within the Province of Noord-Brabant shows that mainly the public and semi-public sector and larger organizations are



focusing on policy on sustainable employability and on offering training and/or courses for the development of general (transferable) skills. For example, 61 percent of the branches in the public sector have a policy on sustainable employability compared to 50 percent of the branches in the private sector. In addition, 49 percent of the small branches, 54 percent of the medium-sized branches, and almost 70 percent of the large branches have a sustainable employability policy. It is striking that having a policy on sustainable employability coincides with the occurrence of premature resignations within the organization. For example, it appears that there is a greater chance of premature resignations (both voluntary and forced) in branches with a policy of sustainable employability compared to branches without a policy of sustainable employability.

The percentages for providing training and/or courses for the development of general (transferable) skills are in line with having a policy on sustainable employability even though the vast majority of branches are committed to this: 86 percent among small branches, 95 percent among medium-sized branches, and even 99 percent among large branches.

In Berenschot's HR trend survey of more than 900 HR professionals in the Netherlands, we see that the theme of sustainable employability scores high on the HR policy agendas. In 2017, sustainable employability came first in the ranking of important HR themes; in 2018, it came fourth and is expected to end in third place in 2019 (Spek and Sylva, 2018).

### *Secondary prevention*

*Secondary prevention* is considered if there is a real threat of dismissal in the short term. In this situation, various preventive measures can be taken, such as reorganizing the work (phase B), encouraging voluntary resignation or facilitating internal FJTJ programs (phase C), and facilitating external FJTJ programs (phase D). When the organization is reorganizing, it enters phase B. Within phase B, no premature resignations have taken place yet (employees who leave their jobs before the end of the contract). Then, as soon as the organization has to proceed to premature resignation, it enters phase C. Within phase C, it is known that premature resignations are necessary, but no dismissals have yet been announced. The difference between phase B, phase C, and phase D, all falling within secondary prevention, is the extent to which employees experience a risk of dismissal and unemployment. For example, employees in phase B may experience changes in their jobs; employees may lose their jobs in phase C; and employees will definitively lose their jobs in phase D. The risk of unemployment among employees thus increases as the organization

reaches the next phase. Below, we will discuss the measures that can be taken within phase B, phase C, and phase D.

*Phase B: reorganization of work*

Adjusting the volume of labor and/or labor costs are examples that fall under the reorganization of work (Evers et al., 2004). For example, the employer may decide not to replace the staff or to post a hiring freeze in the event of natural attrition. Reducing overtime or cutting back on working conditions are other ways to reduce labor volume and labor costs. By reorganizing the work, the employer can reach the new organizational structure and accompanying workforce without having to give notice of dismissal.

Changes in the organizational structure, for example by means of reorganizations, do not appear to occur more frequently in public sector organizational branches than in private sector organizational branches. Nor has any difference been found between the public and private sectors in the extent to which organizational branches make use of a hiring freeze, non-replacement by natural attrition, the reduction of overtime, or the cutback of employment conditions. Private branches indicate, however, that they are more likely to hire fewer external personnel than public branches.

“In the last round of reorganization, which involved the disappearance of 200 FTEs at one of our organizational branches, we made use of three schemes:

1. a resignation-incentive scheme (about 120–130 employees);
2. redeployment, where individuals are declared redundant (both inside and outside the organization) (about twenty employees);
3. job categories that had to be reduced (about forty-fifty employees). With mobility and FJTJ activities, these are linked to specific vacancies. They are seconded from our organization and remain employed by us.

Scheme 1 is purely financial. This does not include FJTJ activities. This scheme is mainly used by people at the end of their career who have taken early retirement within this scheme...”

“The resignation of the people who made use of scheme 1 was voluntary. People who wanted to take early retirement were waiting for an opportunity like that to leave earlier. There was also a group who was already considering a new step in their careers, and there was a group who saw that their jobs might disappear based on developments in the market. This is not entirely voluntary, but rather a matter of taking an initiative before there is a possibility of redundancy.” (HR director, electronics company)

In terms of the size of the branch, large and medium-sized branches indicate that they are more often confronted with changes in the organizational structure compared to small branches.

Unfortunately, there are not enough branches within each of the three size classes to analyze whether there is a difference in the size of the branch in relation to the extent to which a hiring freeze, non-replacement by natural attrition, the reduction of overtime or the cutback of working conditions, and a reduction in the hiring of external personnel is used.

When the measures to reorganize work in phase B are not taken or are not sufficient, an employer may be forced to encourage premature resignation and the organization will reach phase C.

*Phase C: premature resignation*

In this phase, the employer communicates that he/she will have to cut the workforce, but it is not yet known which employees it concerns. Voluntary resignation can then be encouraged. Encouraging voluntary resignation can prevent forced redundancies (Phase D).

The employer can encourage voluntary resignation among employees at risk of losing their jobs, with schemes such as early retirement (Appelbaum, Patton & Shapiro, 2003; Cascio, 2010). Here too, the sector and size of the branch appear to determine the presence of policy on encouraging voluntary resignation from the current position. Not only do branches in the public and semi-public sector and medium-sized to large businesses more frequently have a policy on this, branches that follow a collective bargaining agreement and are members of an employers' organization also more frequently have a policy on encouraging voluntary resignations.

For employees who, in any case, have to leave their jobs and possibly the organization forcibly, the employer can offer direct guidance and support in finding other work by facilitating FJTJ transitions (Alewell & Hauff, 2013; Borghouts-van de Pas, 2012). For employees who lose their jobs but do not (yet) have to leave the organization definitively (notice of dismissal has not yet been given), FJTJ support can be deployed both internally (redeployment within the current organization) and externally (to other work outside the current organization). When the employer decides to give notice of dismissal and forced dismissals are inevitable, the organization reaches phase D.

*Phase D: notice of dismissal*

Within phase D, curative FJTJ measures can be taken to prevent unemployment. As soon as the employee has been given notice of dismissal and the employee is forced to leave the organization, the employer can only facilitate external FJTJ transitions (Borghouts, 2012; 2015).

“...we just want to keep him at work. It does not make anyone happy to sit at home; at least that is the basic principle. It is also important for the economy that as many people as possible are employed and if not here, then somewhere else. So we think it is very important to have the responsibility to keep people employed. Of course, there is also an economic reason to it. We are responsible ourselves, as own-risk bearers. So if someone goes into unemployment benefit, we still have to pay a lot. So then the reason to keep someone employed is actually just bigger than to let him be unemployed. So there are quite a few reasons to get someone back to work as soon as possible.” (HR director, educational institution)

In the remainder of this report, we focus mainly on facilitating external FJTJ transitions by employers as part of phase D and secondary unemployment prevention. We focus on the effect of these investments on finding new employment and on the welfare of redundant employees (see Chapter 3).

“In a previous reorganization round, our company did actually lay off people, and then, after winning an assignment, had to hire people again shortly afterwards. At the time, this was disastrous for the motivation in the company...”

“On an ad-hoc basis, we lend out personnel and there are consultations with large companies within the region. What we want is a more structural consultation with high-tech companies in the region with a pool of staff.” (HR director, electronics company)

*Tertiary prevention*

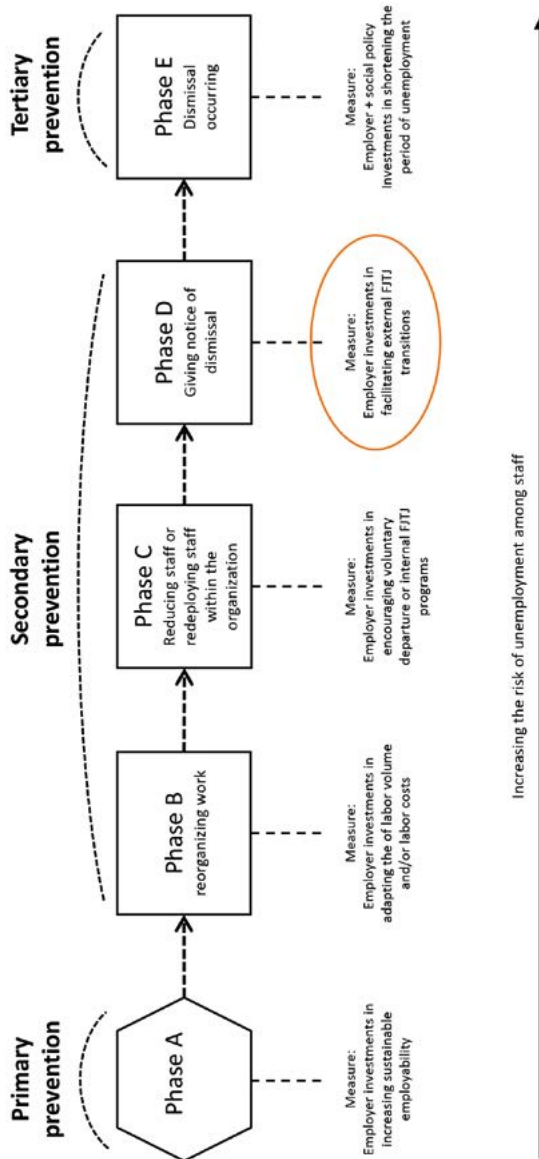
Finally, once the dismissal of redundant employees has taken place, employers and public authorities can, as *tertiary* prevention, make investments in helping to shorten the employee’s unemployment period (phase E).

### **2.3 Motives of Employers and Types of Organizations Providing FJTJ Support**

In this section, we first discuss employers’ motives for offering FJTJ support, after which we describe which employers offer FJTJ support.

Figure 1

An overview of the various measures that an employer can take to prevent staff becoming unemployed, derived from the schematic overview of measures in the article by Verschoor & Borghouts (2018).



### *Why do employers offer FJTJ support?*

From a strategic HRM perspective, when organizations are looking to achieve (desired) outcomes at the organizational, individual, and social level (Beer, Boselie & Brewster, 2015), various motives to offer FJTJ support can be distinguished (Verschoor & Borghouts, 2018). The motives stem from the logic that employers, by using or not using FJTJ support, can achieve the (desired) results at the three levels.

The first main motive builds on *economic rationality* and focuses on outcomes at the organizational level. Cost efficiency, labor productivity, and profit maximization are examples of desired outcomes at the organizational level (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Boxall & Purcell, 2016). The decision of employers to provide FJTJ support so that no dismissal has to take place may be based on cost efficiency when the employer is so much cheaper off than on dismissal.

The second main motive focuses on the *well-being of employees* and on outcomes at an individual level. The provision of FJTJ support can prevent negative consequences of reorganizations, such as job insecurity and reduced involvement in the organization among employees (Galunic & Anderson, 2000; Sverke, Hellgren & Näswall, 2002). Employers may decide to offer FJTJ support, so that the involvement in the organization of the employees who remain in the organization is maintained as a result of which labor productivity may also be maintained, and, therefore, these FJTJ investments may indirectly be cost-efficient for the organization (Cropanzano & Wright, 2001; Galunic & Anderson, 2000).

Finally, the third main motive concerns the preservation of *social welfare and the reputation of the organization* and focuses on outcomes at the societal level. Maintaining the organizational reputation is seen as important, among other things, for attracting new staff and eliminating concerns among customers and shareholders (Cascio, 2010; Redman & Wilkinson, 2001). Despite the fact that radical changes for staff, such as forced resignations, often go hand in hand with unrest and dissatisfaction in society, focusing on FJTJ can ensure that employers maintain their reputation and counteract negative publicity (Alewell & Hauff, 2013).

The motive for an employer to take unemployment prevention measures will mainly depend on the organization's short- and longer-term vision (Verschoor & Borghouts, 2018). For a majority of the interviewed employers, cost efficiency is strongly decisive in whether or not to offer FJTJ

support, just as cost efficiency is often the very reason to reduce staff or to give notice of dismissal. In a phase of threatened redundancies (the five to midnight scenario) when the organization is forced to shrink in order to “survive,” the organization will have different priorities than if the organization “opts” for staff reduction as part of a longer-term strategy. The motive to provide FJTJ support so that the welfare of employees and social legitimacy can be maintained or can grow only seems to play a role when the organization has the scope and resources for a long-term strategy. It is to be expected that organizations with a great need or urgency to reduce personnel in order to survive or small organizational branches that do not have the (financial) resources will often only provide FJTJ support if this is more cost-efficient than the costs associated with dismissal.

#### *Which employers offer FJTJ support?*

A large majority (78 percent) of employers believe that employers who have to lay off employees should help the employees concerned to find another suitable job or function (SCP, 2017). In practice, one in five employers has drawn up an FJTJ policy. There is a clear difference between large and small organizations. Large organizations have more often drawn up policies and applied FJTJ programs in practice compared to small companies.

*Table 2.2*

Responsibility, FJTJ policy and FJTJ application by organization size

	Total	Less than 20 employees	20-100 employees	100 or more employees
finds FJTJ the employer responsibility	77.7	75.4	82.1	88.1
has a policy for FJTJ	20.1	15.0	29.7	47.0
has applied the FJTJ program (internally or externally)	20.7	11.7	37.2	70.0

Source: SCP (ASF '15/'16); Echtelt, P. van, and Voogd-Hamelink, M. de (2017). From job-to-job activities. In: *Arbeidsmarkt in kaart*.

This picture is also reflected in the survey among employers in the Province of Noord-Brabant. Most branches still have no policy on offering FJTJ support. In total, more than half of the respondents from participating organizational branches indicated that there was no policy (58 percent), compared to 39 percent of the respondents from participating branches that do have a policy and 5 percent that did not know about it. This main-

ly concerns small branches with less than fifty employees in the private sector for which there is no redundancy plan and which have no policy on the provision of FJTJ support. Within large, public or semi-public organizational branches and branches with a collective labor agreement and membership of an employers' organization, there is a greater chance that there is a policy on the provision of FJTJ support.

If branches have a policy for keeping personnel employable on a sustainable basis, it is striking that policy on the provision of FJTJ support has also been drawn up more often. The same applies to branches that have a policy to encourage voluntary resignation. Within these branches there is also a greater chance that there is a policy in place for the provision of FJTJ support. Once branches consciously focus on one of the measures such as sustainable employability and voluntary resignation, there is a greater chance that they will also focus on the other measures that can be taken to prevent unemployment or dismissal.

*Table 2.3*

Responsibility, FJTJ policy and FJTJ application by sector

	total	industry and agriculture	construction and processing industry	trade, catering, repair	transportation	services industry	care and welfare	other services	Government	education
finds FJTJ the employer's responsibility	77.7	75.6	73.9	73.8	81.7	78.3	80.8	75.4	95.6	89.7
has a policy for FJTJ	20.1	14.2	13.1	12.0	13.0	16.3	31.2	25.6	66.9	54.6
has applied the FJTJ program (internally or externally)	20.7	18.8	13.6	12.9	23.9	19.5	29.7	20.9	69.7	40.3

Source: SCP (ASF '15/'16)

When it comes to offering and applying FJTJ, it is mainly the large, public or semi-public organizations that lead the way. The government and education sectors have drawn up FJTJ policies and applied FJTJ



programs more often than other sectors. This is reflected in the *SCP* figures (see Tables 2.2 and 2.3) but also in the survey conducted among employers in the Province of Noord-Brabant. Of the 223 branches in Noord-Brabant for which forced job losses were an issue in 2015–2016, 60 percent (134 branches) indicated that FJTJ support was offered, 34 percent (75 branches) that no FJTJ support was offered, and 6 percent (14 branches) did not know whether or not FJTJ support was offered. The fact that organizations in the public or semi-public sector have more often drawn up FJTJ policies and applied FJTJ programs, regardless of the way in which they have done so (internally or externally), can possibly be explained by the fact that these organizations are the own-risk bearers for the unemployment benefit. Another explanation could be that these public or semi-public branches have more scope and resources for FJTJ programs because they are larger. Branches in the public or semi-public sector are more often medium-sized or large.

The fact that branches in public or semi-public sectors are more inclined to offer *internal* FJTJ support cannot be related to the size of the branch. Analyses among employers in Brabant show that the proportion of branches where FJTJ support was offered internally is not significantly different with regards to the size of the branches. The fact that branches within public or semi-public organizations are more inclined to offer *internal* FJTJ support (which can prevent dismissals) than private organizations has a different cause, therefore (perhaps own-risk bearer status), than the fact that it may be a larger branch.

Finally, the results of the survey among employers in the Province of Noord-Brabant show that branches with a redundancy plan are more likely to offer FJTJ support than branches without a redundancy plan. Of the more than 400 branches that had to deal with premature resignation for economic reasons, either forced or stimulated to leave voluntarily, almost two thirds of them had no redundancy plan (259 branches), almost one third had a redundancy plan (128 branches), and the respondents from the other branches did not know what the situation was (29 branches).

### **2.4 The Provision of Support for FJTJ**

In the previous section, employer motives, organizational characteristics, and various internal circumstances were discussed in relation to the provision of FJTJ support. In this section we discuss the way in which employers implement FJTJ support.

*The commitment to internal and external FJTJ transitions*

As indicated earlier, the FJTJ activities may be aimed at finding other work within the current organization (internally) or outside the current organization (externally) for employees who are not (yet) forcibly dismissed (no notices of dismissal have yet been given), but will certainly lose their jobs.

The research within the Province of Noord-Brabant shows that the FJTJ support in most branches is mainly aimed at finding work outside the organization itself (67 branches). In 41 branches, FJTJ support is aimed at finding other work, approximately as often inside as outside the organization. Twenty-two branches indicate that FJTJ support is mainly focused on finding other work within their own organizational boundaries. Respondents from four branches did not know this. Public and semi-public organizations are more inclined to offer FJTJ support aimed at finding other work within the current organization. This means that the FJTJ support within public or semi-public organizations is mainly offered to employees who are not (yet) forcibly dismissed (no notices of dismissal have yet been given) because for the latter employees only external FJTJ transitions are possible. Because public and semi-public organizations mainly focus on internal FJTJ transitions, it can be expected that the proportion of dismissals in the public and semi-public sector is smaller than in the private sector. Unfortunately, this cannot be confirmed because the number of dismissals (dismissal from the job and the organization) was not taken into account, but forced job losses (forced job loss within the organization, but the person does not necessarily have to leave the organization yet).

*How is FJTJ support offered?*

Employers can offer FJTJ support themselves in two ways. On the one hand, FJTJ support can be offered via internal mobility officers or an internal mobility center. On the other hand, the employer can also offer FJTJ support by making use of an external mobility center and/or a partnership with other organizations. An external (outplacement) agency can also be called in to provide FJTJ support.

Of the branches in the study in the Province of Noord-Brabant that offer FJTJ support, most employers call in an external outplacement agency (42 percent). In addition, 35 percent of FJTJ support was organized internally via an internal mobility center and/or internal mobility officer, and one in five employers makes use of an external mobility center and/or a partnership with other organizations. The rest (3 percent) indicated that they did not know how FJTJ support was offered.

Branches where FJTJ support is offered via an external mobility center or where use is made of an external (outplacement) agency appear to have less policy on the provision of FJTJ support. The research conducted within the Province of Noord-Brabant also shows that having a policy on offering FJTJ support goes hand in hand with the presence of an internal mobility center or internal mobility officers.

One of the HR managers interviewed indicated that the organization has become much more active with regard to sustainable employability, and that the organization has not only drawn up a policy but has also set up a whole new department, and that the activities they had carried out for years via an outplacement agency have been insourced again. We see a difference in results by actively encouraging sustainable employability. People who were already in motion (i.e., are already participating in training sessions or workshops at the internal office) have shorter mediation periods and are more likely to find a job in the event of redundancy.

Another interviewee from a large financial organization indicated that, for the past two years, support from the internal mobility center had been transferred to an external private party. "I do see differences: First, 80 percent transferred from one job to a new job within nine months, now that's 64 percent. I think that's because of a somewhat colder and more distant support."

No relationship was found for the size of the branch with the way in which employers offer FJTJ support. This means that no more branches of a certain size (e.g., small branches) more often choose a specific way compared to branches of a different size (e.g., medium-sized or large branches). In line with the finding that public or semi-public branches focus their FJTJ support more on finding other work internally, it also appears that public or semi-public branches offer FJTJ support internally rather than making use of an external mobility center, partnership, or outplacement agency.

The establishment of a mobility center is low on the prioritization list of HR policy themes. In 2017 this theme was number 22 in the ranking; in 2018 number 25; and the expectation for 2019 is that this theme will end in 24th place (Spek and Sylva, 2018).

#### *What is offered regarding FJTJ activities?*

In this report, FJTJ activities are understood to mean the instruments and programs offered to redundant employees. As described earlier, it concerns activities aimed at people who are forced to leave the organization (phase D).

Table 2.4 provides an overview of the broad range of support and facilities that various providers offer to redundant employees specifically in phase D via the employer. In Chapter 3, we will discuss the use of these instruments and participation in these activities.

*Table 2.4*

FJTJ support and facilities offered in the notice of dismissal phase

	Type of activity
1	Individual coaching and guidance
2	Job application training/workshops
3	Intake interview
4	Drawing up an FJTJ plan
5	Tests/assessments
6	Group training/guidance
7	Online career portal
8	Training and schooling (or budget for training and schooling)
9	Network meetings/conversations
10	Job search, job marketing, and job hunting
11	Assistance with doing interviews/central information center
12	Relocation
13	Financial advice
14	Thematic meetings
15	Possibility to come and work at the office or mobility center
16	Internship at another company
17	Guidance to become a self-employed worker without employees ( <i>ZZP-schap</i> )
18	Aftercare
19	Guidance for elderly people with their pension in sight

### *Transition payment*

With the introduction of the Work and Security Act in 2015, employees who have been employed by the employer for two years or longer will receive financial compensation in the event of involuntary dismissal.<sup>7</sup> The legislator makes it explicitly clear that the transition payment is intended as compensation for dismissal and as an incentive to facilitate

<sup>7</sup> The coalition agreement *Vertrouwen in de toekomst, Regeerakkoord 2017-2021*, presented on October 10, 2017, states that the government intends to give employees the right to a transition payment from the start of their employment contract instead of after two years.

the transition to another job. This payment can but does not need to be used, according to the legislator, for training or guidance to another job. However, the employer may deduct the costs associated with training and guidance from the transition payment payable by him (Drongelen & Borghouts-van de Pas, 2016).

The vast majority (83 percent) of the redundant employees who participated in the survey receive transition or severance payment. A quarter of the people who receive a transition payment indicate that they use or will use it for FJTJ activities. It can be seen in Table 2.6 that the payment is mainly used to save and/or to pay fixed charges.

*Table 2.6*

What have you used or will you use the received transition payment for? (multiple answers possible)

To save	45.9%
To pay fixed charges	45.8%
For from job-to-job activities	26.0%
To do something nice/to buy a (luxury) product	19.2%
I don't know yet	9.7%
	N=1,868

## 2.5 Conclusion

We conclude that employers can take measures to prevent unemployment at different moments in the reorganization process. For example, prior to the implementation of FJTJ policy for redundant employees (to promote external FJTJ transitions), employers can, among other things, encourage voluntary resignation among employees at risk of losing their jobs or support employees who lose their jobs in finding alternative employment within the organization (the so-called internal FJTJ transitions). When we look at the extent to which employers offer FJTJ support to redundant employees, it is mainly public or semi-public and large organizations that are active. Three quarters of the small organizations (fewer than twenty employees) consider FJTJ to be the employer's responsibility, but a very small proportion have drawn up an FJTJ policy and applied FJTJ programs. Other institutional factors, such as membership of an employers' organization and adherence to a collective labor agreement, have a positive effect on the deployment of FJTJ support.

The motives for employers' efforts at FJTJ vary from an economic stake to maintaining the organization's good reputation and the feeling responsibility for keeping individual employees at work. What motive organizations have for whether or not to focus on facilitating FJTJ transitions is related to the short- and longer-term vision that organizations have. Organizations that have to "survive" are mainly concerned with acting as cost-efficiently as possible in the short term, whilst organizations with a focus on a longer-term strategy in their decision-making on FJTJ also consider the consequences for the welfare of their staff, the reputation of the organization, and social effects.

It is striking that the way in which employers offer FJTJ support differs between public or semi-public and private organizations. For example, public or semi-public organizations are more likely to offer internal FJTJ through internal mobility officers, and FJTJ support is more likely to be aimed at finding other work within the organization. On the basis of this finding, it can be concluded that public or semi-public organizations tend to accompany employees to other work at an earlier stage, before they are given notice of dismissal and before they become redundant. It appears that branches within the public or semi-public sector are more often medium-sized or large. However, the fact that branches within public or semi-public sectors are more inclined to offer internal FJTJ support is not related to the size of the branch. The proportion of branches in which FJTJ is offered internally does not differ for large or small organizations. Other factors may play a role, such as the own-risk bearer status for the employment benefit. Financial incentives can induce employers to invest in the employment security of staff at an earlier stage.

## TRANSITIONS ON THE LABOR MARKET

# 3 Use, Usefulness, and Effects of FJTJ Activities

In this Chapter we will discuss sub question 2: are the FJTJ programs used, and what are the results of these programs? We look at the effect of, among other things, the number of activities in which people have participated, the type of activity, and the perceived usefulness of these activities within a group that has been offered this support. It is not possible to compare the effect of FJTJ programs in relation to doing nothing. The group that is not offered support is very difficult to identify and has not been included in this study. The data in this Chapter are taken from questionnaires collected from 2,258 redundant people (see also Appendix 1). The redundant people in this study were interviewed twice, with a period of six months between measurement 1 and measurement 2. Measurement 1 was used as the starting position (such as old job and desired job transition). For the outcomes (such as whether a new job has been found), we proceeded from measurement 2.

## 3.1 Use of FJTJ Activities

The various suppliers of FJTJ activities that took part in this study offer the redundant employees a wide range of support activities. This diversity can be summarized in nineteen different types of activities (see Table 3.1). This Table also shows which activities have been used the most. The activities that are used the most by far fall under the headings intake interview and making an individual plan; individual guidance; workshops and training; and doing assessments. What is striking is that, of the 19 different types of activities, only half are actually used by more than 10% of redundant employees. This is partly because not all activities are offered by every supplier, but this is certainly not the case for all these activities. Activities such as training and workshops, individual coaching, an e-portal, the possibility of training and schooling, and tests and assessments are offered by most providers, but other activities such as internships or orientation days by just a few.



If we look at differences between groups with regard to the use of the FJTJ activities available, a number of striking differences can be seen. For example, lower-educated people (13 percent) make far less use of the opportunity to participate in training or schooling than the middle- and higher-educated ones (23 percent and 25 percent respectively). Age also has an influence on this: redundant employees under 55 make much more use of this possibility than those of 55 and over (26 percent vs. 13 percent). The sector in which people have become redundant also influences the use of the type of FJTJ activities available: those in business and financial services (35 percent) choose to participate in training and schooling much more often than those in education (6 percent) and the hotel and catering industry (7 percent). The use of an e-portal is much less popular among lower-educated people (10 percent) than among middle- (20 percent) and higher-educated ones (32 percent). Finally, network meetings and network conversations are much more popular among redundant staff from business and financial services (34 percent) than from education (13 percent) and industry (8 percent). Educational level also plays a role here: highly educated people (27 percent) make more use of this than low-educated ones (14 percent). In addition, these meetings are slightly more popular among women (24 percent) than among men (17 percent). Women (35 percent) also use group-training sessions more often than men (25 percent) do. While using tests and assessments is relatively popular among middle- and higher-educated people (42 percent and 44 percent); lower-educated people make much less use of these (27 percent).

On average, redundant employees use about 4.6 FJTJ activities. Here too, striking differences can be seen. For example, lower-educated people use fewer FJTJ activities (3.6) than middle- and higher-educated people (4.7 and 5). Furthermore, redundant employees younger than 55 use more (on average almost 5) FJTJ activities compared to older ones (4). In the 3 largest sectors, it is striking that the redundant employees from the business and financial services sector make use of almost 6 activities on average while the redundant employees from the care sector (upwards of 4) and from the industry (upwards of 3.5) use a lot less. There is no difference between male and female redundant staff.

*Table 3.1*

Availability, use, and appreciation of FJTJ activities

FJTJ activities	Offered to	Used by <sup>1</sup>	% (very) useful <sup>2</sup>
Individual coaching and guidance	2258 (100%)	66% (66%)	78%
Job application training/workshops	2258 (100%)	63% (66%)	81%
Intake interview	1618 (72%)	55% (73%)	83%
Drawing up of an FJTJ plan	1467 (65%)	42% (65%)	79%
Tests/assessments	1889 (84%)	38% (46%)	80%
Group training/guidance	1817 (81%)	30% (37%)	69%
Online career portal	1906 (84%)	23% (27%)	64%
Training and schooling (or budget for training and schooling)	1814 (80%)	21% (26%)	94%
Network meetings/conversations	1510 (67%)	21% (31%)	76%
Job search, job marketing, and job hunting	1682 (75%)	14% (18%)	69%
assistance with doing Interviews/central information center	300 (13%)	3% (23%)	77%
Relocation	199 (9%)	2% (19%)	82%
Financial advice	145 (6%)	1% (21%)	84%
Thematic meetings	212 (9%)	<1% (10%)	57%
Possibility to come and work at the office or mobility center	357 (16%)	<1% (5%)	83%
Internship at another company	84 (4%)	<1% (10%)	100%
Guidance to become a self-employed worker without employees ( <i>ZZZP-schap</i> )	350 (16%)	<1% (2%)	75%
Aftercare	25 (1%)	<1% (12%)	67%
Guidance for elderly people with their pension in sight	15 (1%)	0% (0%)	N/A

1 This percentage relates to the whole group of redundant employees, including those who were not offered this activity. The percentage in brackets refers to the use of only those who have also been offered this activity.

2 This percentage applies only to those who participated in this activity.

### 3.2 Perceived Usefulness of FJTJ Activities

In addition to the question of whether a certain activity has been used, redundant employees were also asked to what extent they found the activities they participated in useful. On average, three out of five redun-

dant employees indicate that they find the activities they have taken part in useful to very useful. Only a small group (less than 6 percent) does not find the FJTJ activities in which they have participated useful at all. There are no major differences between the redundant employees in the different age categories or with a different level of education. The groups from the different sectors also differ little from each other.

If we look at how useful different types of activities are assessed, then training and schooling (or budget for it) and internships at another company are particularly striking. For example, 94 percent found training and schooling useful or very useful; for internships this was even 100 percent. It should be noted that only eight redundant employees have made use of this last possibility. In a negative sense, thematic meetings and the use of an e-portal are particularly noteworthy. A large proportion of those who used it did not find it useful (43 percent and 36 percent respectively).

### 3.3 Effects

When discussing the results of FJTJ programs, it is important to realize that the results of this study only concern those who have participated in an FJTJ program. It is, therefore, impossible to make firm statements about the net effectiveness of these projects. It is possible, for example, that people would have found work just as quickly without these programs. This would require a comparison with redundant employees who have not received support. In order to get a picture of the gross effect of FJTJ activities, we look at the difference in (work) outcomes – within the group of redundant employees who participated in an FJTJ program – of participating in specific FJTJ activities, the total number of FJTJ activities in which they participated, and the perceived usefulness of these activities.

For this report, the effects of character traits of redundant employees and of different aspects of FJTJ activities on work outcomes have been examined on a bivariate level; no corrections were made for the influence of other variables.

#### *Desired transition*

When assessing the outcomes of FJTJ programs, it is important to take into account the preferences of the redundant employees. After all, not all redundant employees want to find a paid job again after dismissal. Some of them want to work as a self-employed person or want to take early retirement. By far the majority of the redundant employees want a paid job again after their dismissal (for measurement 1, this was 82 percent,

and, for measurement 2, it was 78 percent). This does not change much over time: of those who participated in both measurements, the vast majority (87 percent) sticks to this (desired) transition. Only a small part wants to start his or her own business after dismissal (about 5 percent for both measurements). It is striking, however, that more than a third of this group no longer wishes to be an entrepreneur six months later. There is a small increase in the number of redundant employees who want to take early retirement (3 percent versus 7 percent). This increase consists mainly of redundant employees who still wanted a paid job at measurement 1. Redundant employees with a low level of education want a paid job a little less often (76 percent) than the middle- and higher-educated (85 percent and 82 percent). In fact, they want to take early retirement a little more often (7 percent vs. 3 percent and 2 percent). These same differences can also be seen in redundant employees of 55 years and older compared to younger ones. Striking differences by sector can be seen in the construction industry where almost everyone (96 percent) wants a paid job again. Furthermore, the government and education sectors stand out with a large number of redundant employees who want to start their own businesses (both 10 percent). It is also striking that a large proportion of the redundant employees from agriculture and industry want to take early retirement (17 percent and 10 percent respectively). Finally, women are slightly more likely to want a paid job again (85 percent vs. 80 percent), and men are more likely to want early retirement (6 percent vs. 1 percent).

#### *Degree of success in finding work*

If we concentrate on the group that wants to do paid work again (see table 3.2), it can be seen that the vast majority has succeeded: 78 percent have found work. Higher-educated people (84 percent) and those younger than 55 (84 percent) have been particularly successful in this. Men and women hardly differ from each other. Although there is no fully unambiguous line to be drawn, those with a more highly educated position are more likely to return to work in their old jobs. How many years of work experience people had in the previous position makes no difference. How useful people consider the participated in FJTJ activities does not play a role either. There is also no difference between those who found work and those who failed in terms of the average number of FJTJ activities in which they participated. If we look at participation in specific FJTJ activities, no single activity makes a positive difference; participation in FJTJ activities is not related to finding work or not.

*Duration of unemployment*

The average unemployment duration was ten months. The lower-educated employees were on average unemployed for longer (12.6 months) than the middle-educated (10.6 months) and the higher-educated ones (8.2 months). There is a large difference in unemployment duration between those under 55 (7 months) and those over 55 (14.2 months). It is striking

*Table 3.2*

Characteristics of redeployed/reemployed and unemployed redundant employees

Characteristics of redeployed/reemployed and unemployed redundant employees		Found work (78%)	Found no work yet (22%)
Educational level			
	Lower	71%	29%
	Medium	76%	24%
	Higher	84%	16%
Age group			
	Younger than 55	84%	16%
	55 and older	71%	29%
Gender			
	Woman	77%	23%
	Man	79%	21%
Function Type			
	High level intellectual profession	89%	11%
	Higher management profession	79%	21%
	Medium level intellectual profession	80%	21%
	Middle management profession	78%	22%
	Other main labor	75%	25%
	Skilled and managerial manual labor	86%	14%
	Semi-skilled manual labor	73%	27%
	Practiced manual work	0%	100%
Average usefulness FJT activities		3	2,9

that men are, on average, unemployed for much longer (11.3 months) than women are (8.7 months). Job type and work experience do not play a role in the duration of the unemployment. Again, the perceived usefulness of FJTJ activities had no effect.

However, if we look at the effect of participating in specific FJTJ activities, a different picture emerges; some do seem to make a difference. For example, the average unemployment duration is lower among those who participated in an intake interview; drawing up an FJTJ plan; job application training and workshops; individual coaching and guidance (budget for) schooling and training; online career portal; group training; job search; tests/assessments and network conversations.

Most (81 percent) of those who are unemployed (on measurement 2) have not yet had a job after dismissal. Here, too, training plays a role: 91% of the unemployed with a low level of education have not had a job since being laid off. For the other levels of education, this is around 80 percent. Currently unemployed (measurement 2) redundant employees younger than 55 have had a job in the period between measurement 1 and measurement 2 more often than not since dismissal compared to those older than 55 (26 percent vs. 15 percent).

### *Quality of new job*

As regards the quality of the new job, almost half of the redundant employees who found a new job (44 per cent) on average lost out in terms of job characteristics (have a job that, when comparing its characteristics such as salary, working hours, or secondary employment conditions, on average, scores less well than the job before dismissal). Redundant employees of 55 and older (49 percent) are more likely to be effected by this than younger redundant employees (41 percent). Gender, educational level, level of the previous position, and professional experience do not make any difference. There are also no major differences between the various sectors. Finally, neither the perceived usefulness of FJTJ, the total number of FJTJ activities followed, nor participation in specific FJTJ activities have any influence on the quality of the new job. The differences are very large regarding the individual characteristics of the new job (see Table 3.3). If we look at the differences between the younger and older redundant employees, it appears that these are limited to career opportunities (30 percent of those under 55 vs. 43 percent among those 55 and over have decreased career opportunities) and salary (54 percent vs. 62 percent).

*Table 3.3*  
Quality of new job

Quality new job	Job quality lower	Job quality at least comparable
Total		
Relationship with managers	12%	88%
Distance from house	35%	65%
Working hours	21%	79%
Work pressure	19%	81%
Collaboration with colleagues	13%	87%
Salary	56%	44%
Ability to use skills in function	22%	78%
Possibility to learn	23%	77%
Job security	27%	73%
Type of work	21%	79%
Working conditions	21%	79%
Secondary employment conditions	44%	56%
Career opportunities	34%	66%

### *Sustainability redeployment*

The redundant employees who found a new job at measurement 2 are more likely to have a temporary contract/fixed term contract (60 percent), an on-call contract, or temporary employment contract via an agency (7 percent) than a permanent contract (33 percent) in the new job (see Table 3.4). Before dismissal, almost everyone (97 percent) had a permanent contract. How useful one finds the FJTJ activities followed and the number of FJTJ activities followed have no effect on the type of contract. The lower-educated employees (23 percent) are less likely to have a permanent contract than the middle-educated (32 percent) or higher-educated ones (41 percent) in the new job. In fact, they are more likely to have an on-call or temporary employment contract (13 percent) than middle- (32 percent) and higher-educated people (41 percent). Men (38 percent) also have a permanent contract more often compared to women (28 percent).

Whether the new job is actually less sustainable will only become clear over time. In order to get an indication of this, we looked at whether people changed jobs between measurement 1 and 2 or became unemployed again. Of those who had a job at measurement 1, almost everyone (95

percent) still has a job at measurement 2. For four out of five, it concerns a job with the same employer. Another indication of the sustainability of the work is how many different jobs people have had since dismissal. In the second measurement, just over half (56 percent) indicated that the current job is also the first job since the first dismissal. There are also no major differences between the different age groups or educational levels. Due to too small numbers, no distinction is made here according to sector or job level.

Table 3.4

Type of contract new job broken down by background characteristics age, education, and gender

Type of contract		On-call or temporary contract	Temporary contract	Permanent contract
<b>Age</b>				
	Younger than 55	6%	62%	32%
	55 and older	10%	56%	34%
<b>Education</b>				
	Lower	13%	65%	23%
	Medium	9%	60%	32%
	Higher	2%	57%	41%
<b>Gender</b>				
	Woman	8%	64%	28%
	Man	6%	57%	38%

*Role of schooling and training*

As mentioned earlier, one of the possible FJTJ activities that some of the redundant employees have made use of is participating in a course or training program or budget to do this. One out of five redundant employees has made use of this (see Table 3.5). In addition to a course or training program as part of an FJTJ program, the redundant employees were asked whether they have participated in a course or training program in the past two years. Because this was not specifically asked in relation to the FJTJ programs followed, these can be either part of this program or separate from it. Some overlap is possible here.

The majority (56 percent) did not take a course, training, or program, but a reasonable number of redundant employees (44 percent) did. A small proportion (5 percent) even participated in a program with a formal



diploma. Some (21 percent) of those who have indicated that they did not participate in any courses or training programs indicate that they did need it. Courses or training programs are more often attended by redundant employees younger than 55 (51 percent) than by redundant employees of 55 and older (36 percent). Participating in a course, training, or program is also done more by highly educated (51 percent) and middle-educated (41 percent) people than by low-educated people (31 percent). Women (47 percent) are slightly more likely to participate in a course or training program than men (42 percent).

If we look at the relationship between participating or not participating in a course or training program and work outcomes, there are no major differences in terms of finding work (81 percent and 78 percent respectively). Also, those who have participated in a course or training program are only slightly more likely (59 percent) to have a quality job (a job with the same or better characteristics than the old job) than those who have not participated in a course or training program (54 percent). There is little difference in the type of contract: 38% of those who have participated in a course or training program have a permanent contract, and 30% of those who have not participated in a course or training program have a permanent contract.

As with the FJTJ activities, participating in courses or training programs does have an effect on the duration of unemployment: there is a big difference between those who have participated in a course or training program or not as to how long they are unemployed after losing their job: in the former group this is about seven months, in the latter it is twelve. This emphasizes once again the importance of “lifelong learning”: participating in a course or training program increases the sustainable employability of workers, enabling them to make the transition from job to job more quickly. There is still room for improvement, especially in the fairly large group that has not participated in any courses or training programs in recent years, but does have the need for this.

Again, we have looked at differences between groups of redundant employees. For example, participating in a course or training program makes a greater difference for older redundant employees (11 vs. 16 months) than for younger ones (6 vs. 8 months). The level of education also makes a difference: the effect of participating in a course or training program is strongest for lower-educated people (9 vs. 14 months) and middle-educated ones (7 vs. 12 months), and less so for higher-educated people (7 vs. 10 months). The differences between men (9 vs. 13 months) and women (6 vs. 10 months) are the same.

Table 3.5

## Training and schooling

Training and schooling	% made use
Use of FJTJ facility for training and schooling <sup>1</sup>	20%
Participated in vocational training or course <sup>2</sup>	20%
Participated in organization-specific training or course <sup>3</sup>	8%
Participated in training or course focused on general skills <sup>4</sup>	12%
Participated in program leading to a formal school diploma <sup>5</sup>	5%
Participated in no training or schooling	56%

1 Concerns measurement 1.

2 Concerns measurement 2.

3 Concerns measurement 2.

4 Concerns measurement 2.

5 Concerns measurement 2.

### Role of the region

The redundant employees in this study come from all over the Netherlands. The regional labor market plays a role in the search for new employment. In order to take this into account, we have calculated the average unemployment rate per *COROP* region (*Coördinatiecommissie Regionaal Onderzoeksprogramma*) over the period 2016–2017. The impact of the regional unemployment rate seems modest. For example, the percentage is roughly the same for those who have found a job and those who are still unemployed (both over 5%). Nor does this percentage have any effect on how long people have been unemployed. It seems that the regional unemployment rate has little impact on the quality of the new job: the average rate varies little between those in less good jobs and those in equally good or better jobs than the job before dismissal. Of course, an average unemployment rate is but a very rough indication of the regional labor market, not taking into account sector or level of education. In addition, people are also likely to be looking for work in neighboring regions. The absence of an effect is not due to limited variation in unemployment figures: these vary from 4 percent to more than 7 percent, with no clustering around the same percentage.

### Transition of sector

Redundancy may be due to the fact that in a certain sector reorganization is taking place across the board. In recent years, there have been redundancies in the financial and healthcare sectors particularly. The question is

to what extent these people will continue to work in the same sector. This is particularly relevant in the healthcare sector, given the rapidly rising shortages. Table 3.6 shows the sectors in which the redundant employees are employed before dismissal, together with how many of them found new work in the same sector and in another sector. Of the redundant employees with new work as many as 60 percent indicate that they now work in a new sector. This strong shift is actually taking place in almost all sectors, with business and financial services, trade and repair, and construction leading the way, with a dropout rate of the sector of about 2 out of 3. In the care sector in particular, many redundant employees stay within the sector, and only about 1 in 4 go and work in another sector.

*Table 3.6*

Breakdown of redundant workers for dismissal by sector and the new job found within the same or a different sector.

Sector	Before dismissal	Of which new job in same sector	Of which new job in another sector
Business and financial services	40%	30%	70%
Industry	19%	54%	46%
Care and welfare	15%	75%	25%
Government	6%	63%	37%
Education	5%	54%	46%
Trade and repair	5%	32%	68%
Other services	5%	50%	50%
Transport	2%	38%	62%
Construction	2%	33%	67%
Agriculture	1%	50%	50%
Catering	1%	0%	100%

### *Psychological consequences*

In addition to the consequences in terms of work, a forced job transition can also have consequences for the mental well-being of those involved. In the case of the redundant employees, it was measured how much stress they experienced in the past month. Most of them (71 percent) had little or no stress. About 1 in 4 (24 percent) experienced a moderate amount of stress, and only a small part (3 percent) experienced a high level of stress. Those who are unemployed experience, on average, more stress than those in employment, but both groups have low average stress

levels. Also those with a job that scores equal to or less well than the old job in terms of working conditions or other characteristics have a higher average level of stress, but here too, on average, both groups experience only a low level of stress. It is striking that the unemployed group, when compared to only those with a job of lower quality than the old job, are slightly less likely to have a high stress level. The kind of contract people have seems to make no difference.

In addition, the mental health of the redundant employees has been measured. A low score is an indication of a possible mental disorder such as depression. This is about 1 in 4 (22 percent). The fact is that in the Netherlands between 5 and 10 percent of people suffer from depression every year. Moreover, this instrument did not specifically measure depression, but mental health in a general sense. Such a percentage does not necessarily mean that the redundant employees are very different from the average Dutch person. In an earlier survey conducted among the Dutch population, the percentage that scored low was 14 percent. If we compare those who are unemployed with those who have found a job again, a very clear difference can be seen here to the detriment of the unemployed group: about 1 in 3 (33 per cent) of those without work have low mental health while for those who are back in work this is less than 1 in 5 (17 percent) (see Table 3.7). Also those with a decreased job quality in their new jobs are very different from those who now have the same or better jobs than the old ones. In the first group, 1 out of 4 scores low (24 percent), in the second group only 1 out of 10 (11 percent). The type of contract, on the other hand, has no effect on mental health.

*Table 3.7*

Mental consequences broken down by the three groups:

1. still unemployed,
2. a new job of lower quality, and
3. a new job of at least comparable quality to the job before dismissal.

Mental consequences	Unemployed	Lower quality job	Job qualitatively at least comparable
Increased stress level	4%	5%	1%
Low mental well-being	33%	23%	11%

*From employee to having one's own company*

As mentioned above, only a small part (about 5 percent) of the redundant employees make the transition to self-employment. The largest part

of these have started or started setting up a company (84 percent). It is striking that those who have started or want to start their own businesses mainly come from the business and financial services (42 percent), the government (18 percent), or industry (13 percent). The companies themselves are very diverse (from consultancy in the field of supply chain management to visual arts) but in almost all cases (88 percent) not in the same sector as before the dismissal. Just over half of the entrepreneurs (61 percent) are under 55 years of age. Most of them are also highly educated (78 percent) or medium educated (20 percent). Redundant employees who have made the switch to having their own company are more often male (68 percent) than female (32 percent). Remarkably enough, only a handful (5 percent) of those who want to start their own businesses have made use of FJTJ activities specifically aimed at the transition to independent entrepreneurship.

### 3.4 Conclusion

More than three-quarters of the redundant employees who wish to resume paid work found new work after their dismissal. The average unemployment duration was ten months. “Lifelong learning” is also – and perhaps especially – important in the case of forced dismissal. Although the effect of many of the FJTJ activities offered is rather limited, participating in training or schooling (whether or not as part of an FJTJ program) does have an impact: those who participated in training or schooling in the period just before or after their redundancy are, on average, unemployed almost half a year less than those who did not do so. Age and educational level do make a difference here. Participating in training and schooling is most effective for redundant employees older than 55 years. The effect of participating in training and schooling is also strongest for lower- and middle-skilled redundant employees.

As far as the other support provided is concerned, the picture is less clear. It is clear from the replies of the redundant employees that although the supply of different types of FJTJ activities is rather broad, the use of many of them is limited. It should be noted that not all activities are offered to all redundant employees. As can also be seen in Table 3.1, there is quite some variation in this. Most of the redundant employees make use of only a small part of the range of support activities. It is unclear why relatively few people make use of the FJTJ activities on offer.

A majority of 60 percent is positive about the perceived usefulness of FJTJ activities. Despite the cautiously positive opinion of the redundant employees, the effect of FJTJ activities seems very modest. For example,

neither the number of FJTJ activities in which redundant employees participate nor participation in specific activities has a positive effect on the chance of returning to work at Measurement 2. Indeed, if we look at the duration of unemployment, it appears that the more FJTJ activities people have participated in the longer they remain unemployed after dismissal. Of course, there is a good chance that this relationship will be influenced by the fact that those who immediately or almost immediately find a new job will no longer participate in FJTJ activities. Despite the negative effect of the total number of FJTJ activities, participation in a number of specific activities (in particular the training and schooling referred to above) does have an accelerating effect on finding work. Earlier research shows that FJTJ activities can indeed increase the chances of finding new work, but only if the activities simultaneously focus on increasing skills and on the motivation of job seekers (Liu, Huang & Wang, 2014).

Demographic factors also play a role in work outcomes after redundancy. For example, redundant employees younger than 55 are better off than older ones, and those with higher education generally go through the transition better than those with lower education. The region, and the labor market in that region, does not seem to have any effect on the work outcomes of the redundant employees.

What is striking about the job transitions is that a majority started working in a different sector after redeployment compared to before dismissal. In addition, the new job often has a temporary contract, while before dismissal this was in almost all cases a permanent contract. Finally, many of them have lost some of their job quality. We can conclude that even if people can get back to work (quickly), this is often accompanied by major changes that are not always positive.

In addition to work outcomes, forced job transitions can have consequences for the mental well-being of those affected. Earlier research shows that both losing a job and being (long-term) unemployed have a negative effect on mental health (McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg & Kinicki, 2005; Paul & Moser, 2009). This is also shown by this study: if we compare the mental health of those who are unemployed with those who have found a job again, we see a very clear difference here: a much larger proportion of the unemployed redundant people have poor mental health. The type of work also has an impact: those who work in a job of lower quality than before dismissal have poorer mental health. By contrast, the type of contract (permanent or temporary) has no effect on mental health.

## TRANSITIONS ON THE LABOR MARKET

# 4 Impeding and Promoting Factors

This Chapter focuses on the following question: are there any factors that impede and promote the FJTJ program, and if so, what areas for improvement can be formulated? These questions were put to both the redundant employees and the employers.

## 4.1 Impeding Factors

### *Perspective of redundant employees*

One in every two redundant employees experiences one or more impeding factors in the process towards new work. In order to gain insight into the nature and extent to which certain obstacles play a role in the FJTJ program, a list of potential impeding factors was submitted to a number of redundant employees, 1,603 in total. Another group of more than 600 redundant employees have been asked whether they encounter obstacles in the process towards work. If the answer is “yes,” the redundant employees have been given the opportunity to indicate in their own words what they encounter in the process towards other work.

The list of possible impeding factors submitted by the researchers and the extent to which they are perceived as limiting by the 1,603 redundant employees can be read in Table 4.1.

Of the more than 600 other redundant employees, 40% indicate that they experience obstacles in the process towards work. In the “open” answers, we see all the obstacles listed in table 4.1, with the exception of the lack of childcare or affordable childcare.

Another perceived impeding factor that is often mentioned in the open answers is *age*. We see almost one third of the open answers filled in with “I am too old for employers,” “age plays a major role” or “age is an issue, but this cannot and will not be described as such,” “I am considered too old for the labor market” or “you are too old apparently.”

In addition to age, redundant employees also indicate other matters that are experienced as impeding in the process towards work, such as:



*Table 4.1*

Extent to which redundant employees encounter obstacles when looking for a paid job or setting up their own businesses

	Not impeding	(Bit/ Quite) Impeding	Very impeding
Physical health disabilities	80,9%	17%	2,1%
Psychological health problems (depression, overstress)	78.4%	20.3%	1.3%
Care for family members	76.7%	21.8%	1.5%
Financial problems	73.9%	24.0%	2.1%
Lack of (affordable) childcare	93.4%	6.1%	0.5%
Problems with the Dutch language	97.7%	2.2%	0.1%

insufficient jobs on offer, the phase in the economic cycle/economic crisis, work experience (one-sided and/or industry-specific) that does not match demand, salary (decline in salary or hesitation recruiter/potential employer in relation to salary, while candidate wants to work and no longer strives for an upward career), being under- or even overqualified. Under-qualification refers to the fact that there are other candidates for the available vacancy and that they were rejected because the other applicants are better educated. It also happens that potential employers determine for the candidate that he/she is overqualified, while the candidate focuses on that position with conviction, even if this means a step backwards in salary. Multiple or changing contact persons during the process, conflicting communication from different coaches (“they are not on the same wavelength”), providing wrong advice/information, and offering little or no vacancies are also considered to be an impediment in the FJTJ by redundant employees.

#### *The organization’s perspective*

In the interviews, employers also indicated a number of impeding factors. A major obstacle is that redundancy plans can provide a perverse stimulus. This means that the severance payment for finding a job between the notice of dismissal and the end of the contract is lower than if no job is found at the end of the employment contract.

“...a mechanism is included in it, in our redundancy plan, that we have found to be counterproductive and we want ... whatever it costs, it has to be taken out. Because we believe that this does not benefit the employees either...”

“It happens that employees eventually, because the compensation at the end is higher than when you find a job in between, people pass over the opportunity of a job because they think if I wait for those two months, I will have a higher compensation. Yes, that was, you will understand, not our intention. But in practice it works out like this.”

Too little freedom of choice for employees in choosing the FJTJ activities offered by the employer is another impeding factor. Interviews among employers revealed that it is an obstacle when employees do not feel they are in control and cannot choose FJTJ activities that suit them. As soon as too little framework is sketched out for the individual needs of the redundant employee and this causes a feeling of uncertainty, the employee’s motivation to make use of the FJTJ support offered decreases. Employers also see the motivation decrease as soon as the employee feels the responsibility is placed too much on him/her.

#### 4.2 Promoting Factors

In this section, we discuss the factors that promote the FJTJ process. We will first discuss the answers given by the redundant employees themselves (individual level). We then discuss the stimulating factors that emerged from the interviews with organizations.

##### *Redundant employee’s perspective*

Redundant employees were asked the following question: What has been most helpful to you (so far) in your process towards work. The question has been answered by more than two thousand redundant employees. Table 4.2 shows the top 5 of the most promoting factors in the FJTJ process.

*Table 4.2*

Top 5 of promoting factors in the FJTJ process according to redundant employees

What has been most helpful to you so far in the process towards work?	Percentage
Individual coaching by (external) coach	21.8%
Social support from family and friends	12.2%
Help with (new way of) applying for a job	11.7%
Internal attribution: own commitment/attitude	8.4%
Network	8.2%

*Individual coaching (external coach)*

The factor most frequently mentioned as a stimulating factor is the individual meetings with an (external) coach. One in five redundant employees indicated that these individual meetings helped them most in the FJTJ process. It is not only about guidance to other jobs that might suit the redundant employee, but also about guidance in the mourning process, the attention and support he/she receives in one-on-one conversations. In addition to offering a “sympathetic ear,” the coaches act as sparring partners and they hold up a mirror to the redundant employees.

*Social support*

One in eight redundant employees indicates that family and friends have been an important support in the FJTJ process. This concerns the trust and understanding, especially of the spouse and partner, tips and advice received from friends, children, and grandchildren and the social support received in processing the dismissal. The support of colleagues who are allowed to stay in the organization, but also the conversations with and experiences of (former) colleagues and peers are also important in the FJTJ process (2.3 per cent report this unsolicited as the most important factor). The location of the mobility center being in the vicinity and the link with former colleagues can have a positive effect.

*Help with (new way of) applying for a job*

Number three in the top five of the most important factors promoting the process towards work concerns the help that the redundant employee has received in applying for a job. This concerns job application training, help they have received in drawing up a good CV that is in line with today’s labor market, writing a good job application letter, practicing job interviews with the help of elevator pitches, how to do a presentation during the interview (including by means of role-playing,) and gaining insight into the do’s and don’ts during the application process.

*Own commitment/attitude*

One in twelve redundant employees indicates that they have had the most to gain from themselves in the FJTJ process. This means that people are committed, take initiatives themselves, actively search for vacancies, and actively apply for a job. Also believing in oneself, possessing perseverance and sufficient self-confidence, or regaining self-confidence are important factors in the process towards other work. Being and remaining motivated, not waiting, but taking action yourself (“in the end you have to do

it yourself”), and being positive and radiating that contribute to a good running of the FJTJ process, besides having the right experiences and capacities that are necessary for the new job. From the attribution theory it is known that people tend to attribute pleasant events to themselves (internal attribution). Eight out of ten redundant employees who indicate their own efforts as the most important factor in the FJTJ process have found another job.

### *Network*

The use of the network or participation in network training/meetings is number five as the most important factor in the FJTJ process. The redundant employees indicate that they have found it useful that they have learned how to build and use the network and how to use their own existing social and professional network. According to the redundant employees, the fact that the external coaches have deployed their networks, for example, by bringing the redundant employees into contact with employers the mobility coach is already in contact with, has also had a positive effect. Social media is mentioned by 2.2 percent of the redundant employees as the most important factor in the FJTJ process. LinkedIn is often mentioned. This is not only about building a good LinkedIn profile, but also about updating it. This helps in making it easier for employers to find you for interesting new jobs.

### *Training program (or budget), course, workshop*

According to one in twenty redundant employees (5.2 percent), *participating in a training program, receiving a training budget, participating in a course or workshop* has been the most important part of the FJTJ process. This involves a diverse range of schooling and training, such as participating in a 3-day mobility training at an outplacement agency or participating in a training program as a broker or safety expert.

### *Insight into your own possibilities/wishes, motives, assessments*

Losing a job is a major event. It means more than just the loss of income. Four percent of redundant employees indicate that the most important thing in the FJTJ process for them is that they take stock of what they want and can do and what the next step will be after losing the job. *Gaining insight into your own possibilities, wishes, and motives* is possible with the help of various instruments. The redundant employees mentioned, among other things, motivation research, career scans, career tests and (competency) assessments, and self-assessments.

### *Other promoting factors*

In addition to the important factors mentioned above that redundant employees have experienced in the FJTJ process, there is also a wide variety of other stimulating factors that have been spontaneously mentioned by redundant employees. This concerns: approaching potential employers for traineeships; voluntary work; talent classes; a different way of thinking by the redundant employees (acceptance of the situation, processing the loss of a job, working on self-confidence); the realization that you have to do it yourself as a redundant person; cooperation of the former employer by, for example, making time available for applying or a shorter notice period, and job centers with other jobseekers. More generally, it is mentioned that the time after the resignation is important in order to make choices, relax, process everything, “break away from the old work psychologically,” and take time for reflection.

Seven percent of the redundant employees answer that nothing or no one has been helpful (yet) during the FJTJ process. Some explicitly state that the FJTJ process has not been useful because they have not found new work yet; others state that they have not taken advantage of the offer because they almost immediately found another job after dismissal. When we analyze the “work-results” figures for redundant employees who answer “nothing” to the question what they have benefited most from, we see that the group consists of both people who have already found a new job (69 percent) and people who are negative precisely because they have not (yet) found a job (31 percent).

*“I think that one-to-one coaching from such an agency helps. You notice that there is a kind of connection between the coach and the employee. The employee has someone he can regularly look for another job with, when necessary, when he needs it. So that’s very pleasant.” (HR manager, financial institution)*

## **The Organization’s Perspective**

### *Customization and personal attention*

In the previous section, we saw that personal attention and support are important from the perspective of the redundant employees themselves. This is confirmed in the interviews with the employers. Customization and personal attention are mentioned by organizations as an important promoting factor. This includes personal programs with room for (individual) adjustments. The moment at which the redundant employee

receives support is also important. The advice is to start the support as early as possible, if possible before the end of the contract.

#### *Communication*

Another important promoting factor in the process surrounding the reorganization and the FJTJ programs, according to several organizations, is communication. Good (personal) communication and clear, correct information is essential. A single point of contact for employees seems important. Self-reflection by the organization was also mentioned.

#### *Leadership role*

Good leadership qualities are also an important promoting factor. It has been indicated that for the success of an FJTJ transition, it is important that the redundant employee is adequately supervised by the manager. This means that the employee's manager in question is aware of how the redundant employee is doing, what he/she needs, and then responds to this and thinks along with him/her.

#### *Choice of FJTJ provider*

An organizational branch is not always free to select the most suitable FJTJ provider because of decision-making by the head office or foreign parent branch. A head office can choose for an organization with a national network and/or already has ongoing contracts with this organization. It can actually be beneficial to deviate from this standard and make agreements with regional suppliers who have contacts with employers in the vicinity of the organization that is closing down or has to let people go.

#### *Financial resources and internal redeployment opportunities*

Availability of financial resources and internal redeployment opportunities can have a positive effect on the process towards other work. It is expected that small companies will have these opportunities less often compared to large or larger companies.

### **4.3 Points for Improvement**

In addition to the aforementioned impeding and promoting factors, redundant employees were given the opportunity to suggest areas for improvement with regard to the FJTJ activities on offer. More than 40 per cent of the 2,258 redundant employees indicate that improvements are possible.

*Points for improvement with regard to guidance*

A number of points for improvement have been raised with regard to guidance. The advice is to appoint one contact person for the guidance and to limit changes as much as possible. Comply with agreements and do not promise unrealistic things. If more coaches or advisors are involved in the coaching, they should be on the same wavelength. Improvement can also lie in the link between the experience and knowledge of the coach and the needs of the redundant employee. Sometimes the expertise offered is not sufficiently specific, too general, or the coach is unfamiliar with the field in which the redundant employee wants to work and, therefore, not able to really help that person. Offering customization is an “open door” but is still mentioned as a point for improvement by redundant employees. Better looking at/responding to the personal situation and needs of the redundant employee but also more involvement from both the outplacement organization and the employer emerge as points for improvement. One-on-one guidance is important. Make sure that people are guided and treated at their level, taking into account the wishes of the individual and their feasibility.

“Better customization. This is promised, but not done in practice.”

“More customization, more attention for the wishes of the candidate and not on the basis of what the candidate offers him/herself. Look at what is needed.”

“Delivering more customization and outsourcing if needed.”

“More person-oriented and less focused on achieving targets.”

A more active attitude on the part of the coach, actively helping to find a new job (at the right level), actively using his/her own network, a more active mediation, or being introduced to employers are answers that redundant employees give indicating that they expect more on this point.

“As a mediator you have to mediate, bring supply and demand together. Do not give a training ‘live your dream’ and send the jobseeker away with nothing.”

“It would be better if more concrete jobs could be offered to redundant employees. Now it is just a small support group in which generalities are exchanged.”

Start FJTJ activities and guidance on time, preferably already before the dismissal is announced. Make sure you are focused on where you want to go and link it to the time and money available. Make sure that the time between appointments between redundant employees and coaches is not too long.

“There was no attention for the mourning process. There was immediate pressure to find something new in six months.”

“Starting the trajectory later, so you have more time to process the loss of a job first.”

*Areas for improvement as regards the supply of FJTJ activities*

Differentiate the supply of FJTJ activities by target group. These include activities for commercial professions, highly educated employees, low-skilled employees, and the elderly. Training and/or courses at function level and/or work and thinking level has also been put forward as a point for improvement.

In the program offered, first provide help with processing the loss of the job, so that a difficult period can be closed, and then work can be done with a focus on the future.

“I should have followed a computer course regarding pharmacy. By the time I found that out, the money had already been spent on books and the deadline had passed.”

“I soon had another job, but needed coaching in the first hundred days of my new job. That was not offered.”

Another point for improvement is to match the program offered better to the needs of the future employer. This means thinking carefully about what and when a redundant employee will do something, taking into account the available budget and the wishes of the future employers.

“Made-to-measure also in groups. I had a couple of characters in the course that were not very inspiring. The trainers were fine, but you end up in a group with whom you will never win a war.”

“I don’t know if the guidance that was offered to me could have been offered in a group. I would have found that useful. My experience is that I miss my colleagues the most since I stopped working. You can support each other in a group of like-minded people.”

In addition to one-on-one guidance, it is advisable to offer or continue to offer the possibility of following FJTJ activities in groups. When there are too many differences levels within a group, however, this is not conducive. So make sure you have like-minded people in a group.



“The guidance was aimed at finding a similar job, while I wanted a change of course. I would have benefited more from finding work that suits me.”

In addition, several redundant employees recommend offering more internships in the FJTJ program. Finding a new job does not always happen in one go. The FJTJ program offered could also include feedback on why people were rejected for the job and how to deal with the rejections.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

In this Chapter, various impeding and promoting factors are discussed and points for improvement are identified from the perspective of both redundant employees and organizations. Approximately half of the redundant employees who participated in this study experience problems in the FJTJ process. Financial problems, care responsibilities for the direct family or other family members and/or health problems are impeding factors that are often mentioned in the FJTJ transition.

Based on the respondents' answers to the question of what helped them most in the FJTJ transition, we conclude that the content of the FJTJ activities should be tailored to the individual, and that not only the content but especially the process surrounding the FJTJ programs plays a more important role. Frequently mentioned promoting factors are: personal guidance and attention appropriate to the individual's needs by the coach; own initiative; motivation; perseverance; receiving support from family, friends, and former colleagues; making use of the (professional) network, and the insight gained by the FJTJ program into one's own competencies and interests; and acquired job application skills. Clear and unambiguous communication between the coach and the redundant employees and between providers/coaches themselves and sticking to agreements are also important.

In *Chapter 3*, we saw that a small majority (60 percent) perceived the content of the FJTJ activities as positive but also that the effects of the FJTJ activities seemed small. We conclude that participating in training or schooling (whether or not as part of an FJTJ process) does have an impact. Participating in schooling or training is also explicitly mentioned as a stimulating factor in the FJTJ program by the redundant employees.

# 5 Conclusions and outlook

This Chapter integrates and summarizes the findings of the study and looks ahead to the further development of FJTJ policy in the Netherlands.

## 5.1 The Importance of From Job-To-Job Policy

Facilitating people to make the transition from one job to a new job (FJTJ) has long been considered important for various reasons. First, work is of great value to people themselves because it leads to income security and contributes to social and economic security. However, it also contributes to social participation, vitality, well-being, and development.

If people are unable to move to another job while the old one stops, there are also social security and reintegration costs, and it is to be seen how quickly they can return to the labor market. Prevention of unemployment, especially long-term unemployment, is therefore required. The recent crisis has underlined this importance.

In addition, the labor market has become much more dynamic over the last 20 years, and employment relationships and careers are much more flexible and less predictable, especially in the Netherlands, where the number of people with a flexible contract has grown more than in most European countries. This has to do with the market and competitive position of companies and institutions, which is also less guaranteed. Technological developments, such as automation and robotization as well as internationalization and geopolitical shifts play an important role in this. This means that the chance of workers to maintain work or keep the same job for a long period of time has decreased. Some people are not looking for that either. They want more variety in their work and attach less importance to job security, but they do attach importance to employment security.

At the same time, the labor market has tightened again over the last four years and companies and institutions are eagerly looking for well-qualified staff who were lost out of sight of and were discouraged by the crisis. As a result, the economic growth of companies and the services of institutions in the health care, education, and other public sectors are now

under pressure. The insight is that it is better to keep people on the labor market, “in the game,” and to keep educating them (Wilthagen, 2018).

These developments and insights have also led to the launch of research into FJTJ. So far, little large-scale research has been carried out on this subject, so we did not know whether labor market mobility in the event of redundancies is being supported and to what results this leads.

In the study reported in this publication, three research questions were asked about FJTJ in the Netherlands. These questions are answered below. A *mixed method* approach has been chosen. Qualitative (interviews at organizational level) and quantitative (digital questionnaires among redundant employees and employers) research methods were combined.

## 5.2 Do Employers Offer FJTJ Support and If So, What and Why?

Large organizations have more often drawn up policies and applied FJTJ programs in practice than small companies, according to data from the SCP labor demand panel. This is confirmed by the study carried out among branches in the Province of Noord-Brabant. Large and public or semi-public organizations in particular appear to be focusing on providing FJTJ support to redundant employees. Other institutional factors, such as membership of an employers’ organization and adherence to a collective agreement, also have a positive effect on efforts to support FJTJ. The motives for employers’ commitment to FJTJ vary from economic stakes to nurturing the reputation of the organization and the feeling of being responsible for keeping individual employees at work. The motive for doing something or nothing in this area is related to the short- and longer-term vision that organizations have. Organizations that have to “survive” are primarily concerned with acting as cost-efficiently as possible in the short term, while organizations that focus on a longer-term strategy also consider the consequences for the welfare of their staff, the reputation of the organization, and societal effects in their decision-making on FJTJ.

It is remarkable that the way in which employers offer FJTJ support differs between public or semi-public and private organizations. For example, public or semi-public organizations are more likely to offer internal FJTJ by means of internal mobility officers, and FJTJ support is more likely to be aimed at finding other work within the organization. These organizations are, therefore, inclined to support employees in finding alternative employment at an earlier stage, before they are given notice of dismissal. Although research among companies in the Province of Noord-Brabant

shows that branches in the public or semi-public sector are more often medium-sized or large, this cannot be the reason why branches in the public or semi-public sector are more inclined to offer internal FJTJ support. The proportion of branches where FJTJ support is offered internally does not vary according to the size of the branch. Other factors may play a role here, such as own-risk bearer status regarding the unemployment benefit. Financial incentives could encourage employers to invest in the staff's employment security at earlier stages.

A wide range of support and facilities is available and can be offered by different providers via the employers. For example, individual coaching and guidance, training/workshops, group-based guidance, assessments, online career portals, job hunting/job search activities, and network meetings.

### **5.3 Are the FJTJ Programs Offered Used? If So, What Are the Outcomes and Results?**

When discussing the results of FJTJ programs, it is important to realize that the results of this study only concern those who have also participated in an FJTJ program. It is, therefore, impossible to make hard (causal) statements about the net effectiveness of these processes. In the analyses, we looked at the relationship between the outcomes and “predictors” and whether there are differences between different groups (age, education, et cetera). In order to get a picture of the (gross) effect of FJTJ activities, we looked (within the group of redundant employees who have participated in an FJTJ program) at whether participation in specific FJTJ activities, the total number of activities in which they participated, and the perceived usefulness of these activities makes a difference in (work) outcomes.

It is clear from the replies of the redundant employees that, although the supply of different types of FJTJ activities is rather broad, the use of many of them is limited. Most of the redundant employees make use of only a small part of the range of support activities. This mainly concerns individual coaching/guidance and job application training/workshops. It should be noted, however, that not all activities are offered to all redundant employees.

The study shows that participation in a number of specific activities is considered useful or very useful in finding new work. It emerges that participating in training or schooling (whether or not as part of an FJTJ program) does have an impact. Those who have been trained or schooled in the period just before or after their redundancy are, on average, almost

half a year less unemployed compared to those who have not. We do see differences between groups of redundant employees. Participating in training or schooling makes a greater difference for the elderly compared to young people. Educational level also makes a difference. The effect of participating in schooling and training is strongest for the lower and middle educated.

As regards the other support provided, such as individual coaching and job application meetings, the picture is somewhat less clear. Even if the FJTJ activities are generally assessed as positive or reasonably positive by the redundant employees, the effect of most activities seems very modest and sometimes even negative. Nevertheless – in addition to training and schooling – a number of other specific activities also contribute to shortening the unemployment period. This is the case for individual coaching and guidance, intake interviews, drawing up an FJTJ plan, job application training and workshops, online career portal, group-based training, and network interviews.

In this study, more than three quarters of the redundant employees who wanted a paid job again found another job after dismissal. Demographic factors play a role in work outcomes after redundancy. For example, redundant employees younger than 55 are better off than those older than 55, and those with higher education generally go through the transition better than those with lower education. The region and the labor market in that region do not seem to have any effect on the work outcomes of the redundant employees. What is striking about the job transitions is that a majority of the redundant employees who found work started working in a different sector than before the dismissal. In addition, the new job often has a temporary contract, while before dismissal this was in almost all cases a permanent contract. Finally, almost half of the people who find a new job lose out in terms of job characteristics. This mainly concerns salary and fringe benefits.

In addition to work outcomes, forced job transitions can also have an impact on the mental well-being of those affected as also shown by this study: the mental health of those who are unemployed is much worse than that of those who have found a job again. But also those who work in a job of lower quality than before dismissal have poorer mental health. By contrast, the type of contract (permanent or temporary) has no effect on mental health. We can conclude that even if one can get back to work (quickly), this is often accompanied by major changes that are not always positive.

#### 5.4 Which Impeding and Promoting Factors Play a Role in the FJTJ Process?

Approximately half of the redundant employees who participated in this study experience problems with the FJTJ process. Financial problems, care responsibilities for the direct family or other family members and/or health problems are impeding factors that are often mentioned in the FJTJ transition. In addition, there are also points for improvement with regard to the FJTJ programs offered, for example, the content of the FJTJ activities should be better attuned to the individual. Not only the content but especially the process surrounding the FJTJ programs plays an important role.

Frequently mentioned promoting factors are personal guidance and attention appropriate to the individual needs by the coach; own initiative; motivation and perseverance; receiving support from family, friends, and former colleagues; making use of the (professional) network; and the insight obtained by the FJTJ program regarding own competencies and interests and acquired job application skills. Clear and unambiguous communication not only between the coach and the redundant employees but also between providers/coaches themselves and sticking to agreements are also important. Participating in schooling or training is also explicitly mentioned as a stimulating factor in the FJTJ process by the redundant employees.

#### 5.5 Looking Ahead: How to Proceed with FJTJ Policy in the Netherlands?

What is the picture of FJTJ policy in the Netherlands? There are no statutory regulations, but there are arrangements in collective agreements for part of the labor market. The subject of FJTJ is usually addressed when there is a redundancy plan, which, by the way, is a fairly late moment. The research reported here shows that large companies and public or semi-public employers more often draw up FJTJ policies and offer FJTJ activities to redundant employees with a view to a smooth transition to other work. The latter have an extra motive insofar as they are own-risk bearers for the unemployment benefit. Large and public employers often have their own internal expertise and capacity to provide FJTJ support and/or hire external consultants and coaches. They often do this based on a longer-term strategic vision, which not only benefits the employees concerned but also their social reputation. Companies with a short-term vision, on the other hand, are less inclined to offer FJTJ measures.

Many people or groups of people, such as employees from small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) and flex workers, will not easily be offered FJTJ activities in a formal sense, apart from informal mediation and support, about which little is known.

From this perspective, the Netherlands does not have a comprehensive “system” for the timely support regarding mobility of persons threatened with unemployment, from which all employees can benefit. Other countries, such as Sweden and Finland, have such a systematic approach, based on transition funds in the largest sectors. Belgium has the right to outplacement. In the Netherlands, however, many regions are or have been active (during the crisis) in improving or developing FJTJ arrangements, for example in the form of a transfer center, where people can temporarily be employed. The Netherlands provides (the obligation for) transition compensation in the event of dismissal for employees who have been employed for two years or longer. The costs incurred during the employment to support the employee in finding a new job may be deducted from the transition payment by the employer. This applies to both outplacement and training costs in the event of impending dismissal and to strengthening the employee’s position in the labor market. The condition for deduction is that the employee has agreed to this in advance and the activities may not be aimed at the functioning of the employee in his/her current position. The study shows that a quarter of the redundant employees use the transition payment for FJTJ activities. Nearly half of the redundant people save the transition payment and/or use it to pay the fixed charges.

Opinions in the Netherlands will not be much divided about the importance of job security, regarding a timely and safe step to new work. The key question is, above all, whether more needs to be done than is currently the case and what that should be. That depends, of course, on the effects of what we can now observe with regard to the provision, use, and effects of FJTJ measures. Even though we have not been able to compare the effects of this with a group of redundant persons who do not or cannot make use of such measures, it can be said that the results of the study do not indicate that participation in FJTJ activities leads to the avoidance of unemployment. An exception concerns investing in schooling and training within the framework of FJTJ policy. That has positive results. Unemployment duration is almost half a year shorter after completing training or schooling. The average unemployment duration is also slightly lower among those who took part in an intake interview, drew up an FJTJ plan, participated in a job application training/workshop, had individual coaching, and had network interviews in comparison to those who did not take part in these activities.

It is recommended that further research be conducted in the future into the type of training and schooling and the effects on FJTJ. A large variety can exist in this. This can range from training in job application skills to a fully-fledged retraining program.

In 2015, the third and final tranche will be opened for sectoral plans. This third tranche is aimed at promoting FJTJ transitions. It is not known how much money is involved in the various types of training and schooling in FJTJ programs. In quick scan 6, Evaluation Sector Plans, it is stated that programs aimed at the transition of employees to another profession are proportionally more expensive than programs aimed at the transition of workers to the same profession, but with another employer (Van der Werff et al., 2018).

Based on the research, we do not conclude that the other FJTJ activities such as individual coaching and job application meetings are superfluous. A large majority of the participants consider these useful or very useful in the FJTJ process. Other activities, such as internships, are still offered only very rarely, but those who have used them were all positive or very positive about it. It may be possible to further explore and expand the use of internships in the FJTJ policy and programs offered. However, it is still the case that the transition to another job is generally a certain deterioration, in terms of the nature of the employment contract (more often temporary), salary, and secondary working conditions.

If we consider this further, it would seem obvious that strengthening job security for people who are or are at risk of becoming redundant should be sought mainly in the intensification of schooling and training and individual attention and guidance (*SER*, 2017; *MBO Council*, 2017; *ABU/Cedris/NRTO/Oval*, 2017). However, this must benefit all employees, including employees of small companies and the large group of flex workers in the Netherlands (*SER*, 2018). Consideration could also be given to the position of freelancers in this area, who also have a stake in employment security in the sense of being able to acquire new contracts now and in the future.

This would mean that the discussion about FJTJ could, for the time being, be conducted pre-eminently in the context of the broader discussion and the broader policy on lifelong development. The government, the *SER*, the parties involved in collective labor agreements, companies and institutions, and last but not least the labor market regions in the Netherlands are currently working intensively on this, not only in terms of thinking about it (as has been the case for a long time, without more happening), but also aimed at actually doing it. Schooling and training do



not only help in situations where redundancy and dismissal are already an issue (secondary prevention) but can also prevent redundancy (primary prevention). And that is what it is all about: social security in the broad sense should not only be provided at the time when a right to benefits arises, and should not and cannot be the result of public efforts alone.

AWVN (general employers' association) proposes to add a dimension to the existing unemployment benefit: the *Werk-naar-werk-Wet* (from job-to-job act). The AWVN advocates making part of the unemployment benefit rights flexible and using unemployment benefit resources at an earlier stage (AWVN, 2018). The AWVN does note, however, that this is only possible if developments can be foreseen. It is about prevention rather than cure afterwards. We note that bringing unemployment benefit resources forward is only possible for people who have built up sufficient unemployment benefit rights. In a recent letter to Parliament, *Lifelong Development*, the current Minister of Social Affairs and Employment and the Minister of Education, Culture and Science state that the Cabinet is in talks with the Labor Foundation about the further stimulation of individual learning and development accounts (House of Representatives (TK), 2018). In addition to an individual training budget, consideration could be given to facilitating steering possibilities at a regional level, in the form of regional training and investment funds in which sectors also participate.

At the same time, we should keep an eye on and continue to do research into the way in which other countries are working on FJTJ, to see whether there are not specific systemic innovations possible to make the transition to the labor market even better.

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# Data Collection and Response Accountability

## Data Collection

In order to answer the questions that are central to this publication, the researchers have collected the data via various routes.

### *Route A: via organizations/employers (interviews with organizations and questionnaires among redundant employees)*

The researchers contacted 18 organizations/companies that were (or had been) involved in a reorganization/restructuring or closure of one or more branches in the period 2014–2017 and that have deployed FJTJ programs for redundant employees (or a part thereof) with the request to participate in the research at both an organizational level (interviews) and at an individual level (placement of questionnaires among redundant employees). When approaching companies, the researchers assumed the broadest possible reflection of the type of companies, taking into account a number of characteristics such as: the reason for the reorganization (business-economic or technology-driven), the sector, whether or not they are own-risk bearers for unemployment benefit. A total of six organizations were prepared to participate in the study or a part thereof. These organizations include the following sectors: financial services (1), business services (1), education (1), and industry (3). It concerns large organizations. A total of 14 interviews were conducted.

The inclusion of potentially eligible organizations proved to be one of the major risks of this research. It took a lot of time and energy to find organizations willing to cooperate in the research. In order to involve as many redundant employees as possible in this research and thus to be able to make “mass” on an individual level, it was decided, in close consultation with *Insituut Gak*, to also use route B.

### *Route B: via outplacement/FJTJ providers (digital questionnaire among redundant employees)*

Redundant employees who participate or have participated in an FJTJ program have been approached via private organizations that offer these



FJTJ programs (such as Randstad, Restart, et cetera). Through the Federation of Private Employment Agencies (*ABU*) and Organization for Vitality, Activation, and Career (*OVAL*), the organizations were informed of the survey. A total of nine outplacement organizations have distributed the questionnaire for the researchers among redundant employees who make use of the FJTJ programs offered by these parties.

### *Route C: survey and interviews among employers with at least twenty persons employed in the Province of Noord-Brabant*

As part of a PhD research funded by the Province of Noord-Brabant, a survey was conducted among more than seven thousand employers in the Province of Noord-Brabant. This questionnaire also included questions relevant to the present study. In addition, twelve interviews were conducted with employers in the Province of Noord-Brabant. The knowledge gained in recent months through this PhD project serves as input for this research. On the other hand, the knowledge gained with these additional questions will be relevant and useful for the PhD trajectory, both in social and scientific terms.

### **Response Overview**

Via routes A and B, more than 15,000 questionnaires were sent out to redundant employees. The redundant employees were interviewed at two measurement moments, with a period of six months between the two measurements.

Table B1 contains an overview of the questionnaires and the response. Not everyone has completed the questionnaire. For the analyses at an individual level, those people were included who completed the questionnaire at measurement 1. This results in a total of 2,258 completed questionnaires, a net response of 15 percent.

*Table B1*

Questionnaires sent out and response among redundant employees, two measurements.

	Total redundant employees 2014–2017	Questionnaires received M1	Response M1	Questionnaire Received M2	Response M2
Route A via employer	1,681	1,418	521 (36%)	360	216 (60%)
Route B via outplacement agency	14,493	13,769	2,932 (21%)	2,860	1,170 (41%)
Total Routes A and B	16,174	15,187	3,453 (23%)	3,220	1,386 (43%)

Via route C, 7,202 branches were approached (total population) that fell within the target group (located within the Province of Noord-Brabant with at least twenty employees), of which 1,060 responded and completed all or part of the survey (see Table C1). This concerns 15 percent of the population. The response is representative of the total population in terms of numbers in size classes and numbers within the public or semi-public and private sectors. The public or semi-public sector includes the organizational branches belonging to Standard Industry Classification (*SBI*) categories: Public Administration, Public Services and Compulsory Social Insurance, Education, and Health and Welfare Care. The organizational entities belonging to the other *SBI* categories are classified under the private sector.

## TRANSITIONS ON THE LABOR MARKET

*Table C1*

Population and response of branches within the Province of Noord-Brabant in numbers for the three size classes (small, medium, and large) and public or semi-public and private branches.

	Total population	Response
Route C	7,202	1,060 (approx. 15%)

Size classes	Small (up to 50 employees)	Medium (50 to 200 employees)	Large (more than 200 employees)	Total
Total population	4,541 (63%)	2,183 (30%)	478 (7%)	7,202 (100%)
Response	626 (59%)	351 (33%)	83 (8%)	1,060 (100%)

Public or semi-public; Private	Public or semi-public	Private	Total
Total population	1,830 (25%)	5,372 (75%)	7,202 (100%)
Response	264 (25%)	796 (75%)	1,060 (100%)

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P. Boselie, University of Utrecht

D. Scheele, Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (in his absence replaced by Senna Maatoug and Rik Dillingh)

R. Slagmolen, VNO-NCW - MKB-Nederland

R. Witjes, UWV (in his absence replaced by Katinka van Brakel)

R. van Baden (FNV)

## TRANSITIONS ON THE LABOR MARKET

## About the Authors

**Irmgard Borghouts-van de Pas** (1973) holds a PhD in Labor Market & Social Security. Her multidisciplinary expertise lies in the fields of Job Security, Activating & Inclusive Labor Market Policy, Social Security, and Inclusive HRM. Her research focuses on the following transitions: 1) the transition from inactivity/unemployment to work with special attention for vulnerable groups (amongst others, Participation Act, *Wajong*, Unemployment Insurance Act, former Sheltered Employment Act, vulnerable young people); 2) the transition From Job to Job for people who (threaten to) lose their jobs. Her dissertation *Securing job-to-job transitions in the labor market: a comparative study of employment security systems in European countries* was awarded a German science prize. This award was presented on November 18, 2016 in Berlin by Prof. Reissert, professor of Political Science at the Berlin School of Economics and Law. For her dissertation she did research in five countries (Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Austria, and the Netherlands) into From Job-to-Job systems that contribute to flexible transitions for redundant employees. Borghouts presents her research at both national and international scientific conferences such as the Academy of Management.

**Mark Bosmans** (1982) holds a PhD in Psychology and Social Sciences. He specializes in research into the coping process and the coping outcomes of people who experience stressful events. For his PhD research, he studied the self-reliance of people affected by potentially traumatic events, ranging from the experience of disasters to the loss of loved ones. Afterwards, as an assistant professor at Tilburg University, he focused on research into dealing with work-related stressors, including forced job transitions. Currently, he is a researcher at Nivel, focusing on the thematic area of Labor and Organizational Issues in Healthcare.

**Jana Verschoor** (1990) graduated in Human Resource Management Studies from Tilburg University and is doing PhD research on the theme of HRM and unemployment prevention. Verschoor researches the stake of employers and the role they play or can play in contributing to the

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**Ton Wilthagen** (1960) is Professor of Institutional and Legal Aspects of the Labor Market at Tilburg University. Wilthagen is also one of the pioneers of the IMPACT program at Tilburg University, in which knowledge is brought to value through collaboration with stakeholders in society. Wilthagen's research focuses on the relationship between labor market and economic dynamics, on the one hand, and social cohesion, inclusion, and resilience on the other. It is in this area that he has published a large number of scientific and social publications and obtained his PhDs. He is also internationally known for having developed the concept of flexicurity, which is one of the pillars of European employment policy. In the social debate and in the media, Wilthagen is a much sought-after labor market expert. He is actively involved in social innovation in the labor market.

## Transitions on the labor market

Trends in the economic cycle, increased competition, and technological innovations mean that — today and in the future — jobs change or disappear. For people themselves, the labor market, and social security, it is very important that employees nevertheless remain in work. In this book, the researchers answer the question of whether and how employers offer From Job-to-Job (FJTJ) support to redundant employees, whether it is used and what the results are. Impeding and stimulating factors that play a role in this FJTJ process are also discussed.

Larger organizations have applied policies and FJTJ programs more often compared to small companies. Although the range of activities offered is rather broad, the use of many activities is limited. More than three-quarters of the redundant employees who wanted a new job after their dismissal find another job, but not always under the same conditions. The researchers conclude that a number of specific activities contribute to finding new work more quickly. Especially participating in training or schooling has an impact. Personal attention and guidance by an external coach, social support from family and friends, and help with applying for a job also have a positive effect on the FJTJ process.



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