

Intellectual Output 1

National Report

Country	The Netherlands
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Introduction

This document presents the results of the desk and field research implemented in the frame of the project IO1 for the Social Integration of Migrants and Activation of Paths for Learning and Employability project. It was implemented in the period November 2019 - March 2020.

Desk research was carried out to analyse existing practices in The Netherlands to support migrants and refugees in the reception process. The reception process refers to the process and arrangements to support new arrivals. This reception process can consist of psychological, physical, social or financial support. The reception arrangements generally have two goals. They aim to address basic material and psychosocial needs and distinguish between various categories of individuals; this will help professionals to identify any specific needs. The effectiveness and methodology of each existing practice identified in the desk research was assessed in order to gain inspiration for the current project. In the field research, interviews were carried out with professionals working with migrants in the reception process. The information gathered from the interviews provides an insight into the challenges faced by migrants and refugees, how existing tools can be improved and any existing gaps in the support services. Furthermore, professionals gave their insight into the use of non-verbal tools in expressing trauma and challenges.

Findings of Desk Research

Desk Research was carried out to analyse the Dutch policy and analyse existing practices to support migrants and refugees in the reception process.

Most refugees have great resilience. The current influx involves a relatively young group of people who are still strong in terms of health and who can and want to make an active contribution to Dutch society. For refugees (in addition to young age and education) important protective factors are: being able to resume normal life as soon as possible with a perspective on work, education or other forms of participation, having sufficient social support / networks, proximity of close family and clarity about residence. For children, cohesion and support within the family, the well-being of the parents and a positive school experience are the most important protective factors.

The first priority of the official professional organizations working with refugees lies in the more formal processes: legal counselling, housing, education, employment. In addition, there are many private and non-profit organizations and initiatives that focus more on mental and social well-being.

Language is one of the main problems to really understand the needs, problems and traumas. Creativity can be used as a very helpful tool to express oneself.

In the desk research we focused on creativity and art projects. Many art projects are used to work on awareness, empowerment, dealing with trauma, emancipation, integration and social network. Most of these projects are set in very small groups, so newcomers can feel safe and free to express themselves.

A repertoire of existing practices from the Netherlands is available on SIMPLE Google Drive, under the following link:

Findings of Field Research

From the total of 586.530 asylum seekers asked for protection in Europe in 2018 the Netherlands registered 20.353 in total. In 2019 there were 22.533 asylum seekers in the Netherlands.

The number of family members reuniting with a refugee is falling again, from 6.463 in 2018 to 4.179 in 2019. Syria will again be the country of origin in 2019 with the most asylum seekers (16%) followed by Nigeria (9%) and Iran (7%).

In 2018 there were 1.225 unaccompanied foreign minors who applied for asylum in The Netherlands.

https://e.infogram.com/bescherming_in_nederland_20148?parent_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vluchteling-enwerk.nl%2Ffeiten-cijfers%2Fcijfers%2Fbescherming-nederland&src=embed#async_embed

Most of the asylum seekers in 2019 are young adult men between 18-35 years old. It is striking that this trend is shifting. The number of women is increasing, mainly due to the number of family travellers.

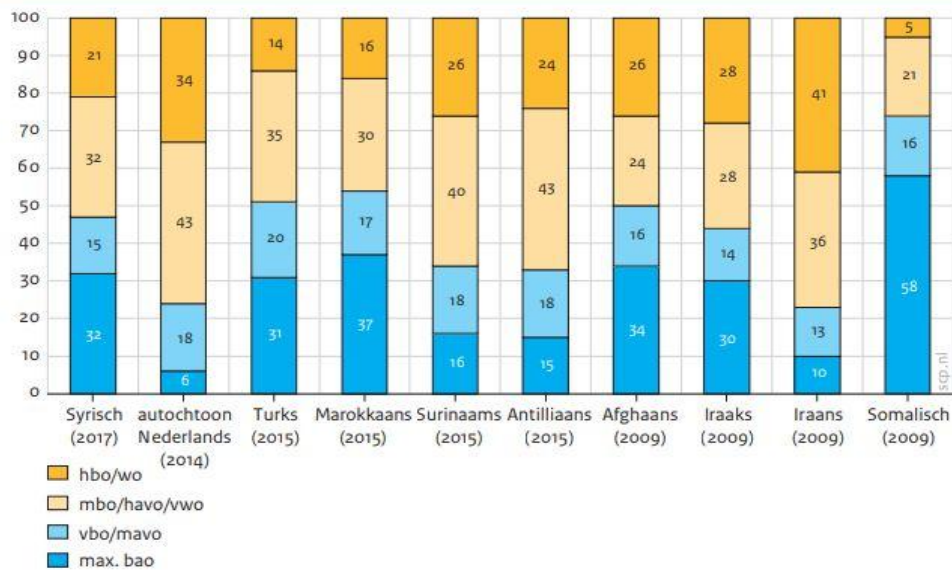
<https://longreads.cbs.nl/asielenintegratie-2019/>



situation October 2019 in asylum centres

Education level of 15-64 year-old non-school goings by origin in percentages

Gerealiseerd opleidingsniveau van 15-64 jarige niet-schoolgaanden naar herkomst, 2009, 2014, 2015 en 2017
(in procenten)



The Dutch government has an integral approach to migration to ensure a wise well-considered and controlled migration: protection who really need it. In addition, migration must also match the capacity and needs of Dutch society.

The basis of an integrated migration approach are 6 pillars:

1. Preventing irregular migration
2. Strengthen reception and protection for refugees and displaced persons in the region
3. Solidary and solid asylum system within the European Union and in the Netherlands
4. Less illegality, more return
5. Promote legal migration routes
6. Encourage integration and participation

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (IND) implements the immigration policy in the Netherlands. The IND assesses all residence applications from people who want to live in the Netherlands or who want to become a Dutch citizen.

CAO, Centraal orgaan Opvang Asielzoekers (central body for the reception of asylum seekers) is the organization in the immigration chain that offers asylum seekers viable and sage reception (providing guidance, deliver necessities for accommodations, paying weekly money, acquire and manage reception locations, maintaining safety and quality of life in reception locations) and guides them towards a future in the Netherlands or abroad.

COA does this in collaboration with partners in society:

- *Leger des Heils* (Salvation Army) delivers a structural contribution to the collection, sorting and delivery of clothing.
- *Nidos* is a guardianship institution for unaccompanied foreign minors
- The *UAF* supports refugees and asylum seekers with advice and information, but also with guidance during their studies, job meditation and financial support.
- *Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland* (the Dutch Council for Refugees) is an independent organization that works for the interests of refugees and asylum seekers and works closely with the *Stichting Rechtsbijstand Asiel* (Asylum Legal Aid Foundation).

- *De Vrolijkheid* organizes creative activities for children and young people at azc's (asylum seekers centres).

In the field research, interviews were carried out with professionals working with migrants in the reception process as well people that work with long term residents.

The information gathered provided us information about the actual practices, the existing gaps, how existing tools can be improved. Professionals gave insight into the use of non-verbal tools in expressing trauma and challenges.

We tried to reach all the official and partner organizations, supplemented with organizations that work creatively with asylum seekers.

It was hard to get in contact and make appointments for interviews: mails, calls, repeated calls, and finally a lot of negative response. Also, the corona crisis made a lot of organizations not really willing to participate, there were other priorities. Finally, in the process of interviewing we came in contact with other organizations the interviewees were collaborating with. In total we encountered 18 organizations. We finally did 9 interviews until now. At least one more interview will take place within the next weeks.

Description of interviewee's profile.

Profession	Role	Tasks (official contract statements)
Designer materials and games	-developing materials and games - involve Dutch youth in refugee problems	Project leader Critical Mass (design interactive exhibitions, multimedia installations, films, games)
Psychologist	- improving quality and coherence caretaking - preventive interventions - early detection of psychological complaints	Trauma treatment of traumatized refugees ARQ (national psycho trauma centre)
Lawyer	-long term juridical assistance during the legal processes	Coordination of the care process during the legal process in human trafficking SHOP Den Haag (Help and Shelter for Prostitutes)
Communication scientist	-research concerning refugees, status holders and migrants - giving advice and thinking along with municipalities	senior Advisor Movisie (institute for joined-up approach to social issues)
Lawyer and politician	-working in collaboration on a sustainable future	-Coordinator and team manager RGOA (supervision of the implementation of municipal and national policy on undocumented migrants)
Anthropologist, Chinologist	-shelter for people with labour problems	Project leader/ Social worker Hai An / Haags Welzijn (providing free information, advice and assistance to Chinese)

	-information about legal situation and rules in the Netherlands	migrant workers in region Den Haag)
Creative therapist	-visual arts to refugees and staff members -therapy in reflection to works of art	Creative therapist St. Nieuw Thuis Rotterdam (offering 200 Syrian families with a residence permit a new home)
Actor, Filmmaker	-produce theatre performances with young (ex) refugees -workshops together with companies - linking refugees to coaches and buddies	Artistic director New Dutch Connections Foundation (Job-counselling refugees in a creative process)
Anthropologist, journalist.	- find local examples that can be distributed throughout the rest of the country - dissemination of knowledge - trainings	Researcher and trainer Movisie (institute for joined-up approach to social issues)
Graphic Designer, artist	- realising art projects related to migration/integration/human trafficking with migrants to create exposure of the current human tragedy - all the necessary services	Realize art projects

Additional activities your interviewees are doing for newcomers, which are not included on the list of official services provided by the organization.

Officially there are no additional activities provided by the organizations.

Voluntary organizations state that everything they do is extra on top of the existing support to newcomers. But we see on an individual level a lot of extra support. Because of the relationship that is build it consists of all kind of support: inspiration, facilitating, encouraging, developing, information, empowerment, assistance in legal procedures, support in social and economic self-reliance.

Possible differences in needs of the psychological support between men and women.

Our interviewees give all kind of differences, that also depends on different cultures and characters, also in approach of groups with only man of women, or mixed groups.

Because a lot of newcomers have big family's man are more focused on work, and women stay at home where they have a great responsibility. More women are being exploited because of their position in society, they are in danger more quickly, and they are ashamed of sexual abuse.

In general, it is harder for men to show weakness and emotions. A lot of them are ashamed they are not successful in life. Autonomy in approach is important for them.

Women talk more easily about what happened to them, men talk more in general, women in detail. Providing information appears to be very important for identifying and acknowledging problems.

The Dutch approach pays more attention to the individual. Most men and women live in groups and are not used to think in a way where they are as an individual which makes it difficult to get to know what their qualities are and what they want.

Cases of distress/discomfort/difficulty or even incapacity in expressing and describing past events faced by newcomers.

Some interviewees notice a lot of distress and discomfort. A lot of newcomers are traumatized and suspicious after their flight, a long period of uncertainty and adapting to a new society. They need professional help, but most methods in the Netherlands are developed from the western point of view and have a western way of quantifying.

Chinese people for instance do not trust outsiders easily, they do not want to lose face, and they accept abuse more easily because tolerance is embedded in the Chinese culture.

If a relationship of trust has grown newcomers like to talk, and that seems easier with women. Time and attention are very important in addition to practical help, especially for people who have just come out of a stressful situation, but also when the basic necessities of life are provided, and traumas arise.

It can be extra difficult if an interpreter is needed to tell their story.

Available instruments, tools, approaches that you know/use to help migrants to overcome the distress caused by the transition to regain the psychological stability.

When interviewees work on empowerment, they use different methods:

- Drama
- Making a lifebook
- EMDR
- Narrative exposure therapy
- 7Roses
- Mindspring
- SAFE toolbox
- IPT
- CBT
- Kick work
- This is me
- Popular education

They try to use the power and positivity of groups and individuals to focus on the future, process traumas, work on professionalism and build new communities.

Are these tools sufficient for existing needs? Which are the weaknesses of the available tools?

Having a house and a steady job has a focus in the Netherlands. But for a lot of cultures a steady job is unknown, and they have other customs. This conflicts with Dutch society.

For trauma processing you need a stable situation and trust. This can take a very long time in the procedures in the Netherlands. That conflicts often with the process of empowerment and trauma processing.

A lot of methods and tools are based on western cultures and habits, but they only work for them. Some methods have been specially developed for refugees: Narrative Exposure Therapy, 7ROSES and SAFE toolbox.

Every person and situation is different, so tools should be multi interpretable.

Creative methods are experienced as powerful, it chooses the premise that everyone has something to say and can show their own strength.

Most of the interviewees note that a relation of trust is very important, that takes time.

Regarding the access to the professional psychological help, how much do national/regional existing policies focus on the aspect of psychological wellbeing of migrant women? Are they easily accessible?

The focus of national and regional policies is on legal migration, integration and participation: language, housing, education, jobs, finance, safety.

For psychological wellbeing there is the official health care system and a lot of private organizations and foundations.

In the Netherlands man and women in theory are equal, so there are not many policies focused on women. For young women refugees there are girl power groups. Interviewees experience that there are a lot of organizations but that newcomers do not often make the step to ask for help. Undocumented women do not dare to report and walk around uninsured. Asian women do very rarely ask for individual help. They are part of another culture and collective system with a lack of autonomy.

Culture differences, language problems and long waiting times make it more difficult to take the step to ask for help. Individual guidance's, coaches, buddies and information meetings seem to be the way to reach them.

How important is it to overcome the situation of distressed caused by past events on the way toward the successful inclusion in the new society?

Everybody is very convinced that it is necessary to overcome the situation of distress because of traumatic Experiences. For uprooted people, trauma processing is crucial for re-rooting. If you still suffer from the past you cannot engage in the present. And it is also necessary not to become a victim again.

What are the gaps between existing needs and available instruments to help restore their psychological and emotional wellbeing?

People without an official status do not easily have access to care.

To be able to reach everybody and inform them about possibilities requires a more and direct or personal approach by key people with the same background. Official flyers from governments are not read well by

newcomers.

Language is a big barrier, interpreters are an extra barrier, so you need to be able to speak the language of the heart/ love.

A visual manual is lacking on how to handle the psychological and emotional problems.

According to your experience, what would be the migrant women's most preferable way to express and describe difficulties? Do you think that non-verbal techniques can be helpful for migrant women to narrate their stories (for example through the use of images)?

Any way that restores their sense of agency and pride, that is respectful towards the women's wishes, boundaries and needs.

Talk therapy is important, without language it is more difficult.

Non-verbal techniques like images, art, dance, yoga, cooking can be very important tools in recovering from trauma, next to talk therapy.

Overall conclusions

The overall conclusions of the desk and field research suggest that both men and women experience significant amounts of trauma as a result of the situation in their home countries, their flight and the arrival process.

Women tend to be more emotionally expressive in sharing their experiences, if they are informed in meetings and feel safe. They take more advantage if they participate in social activities and become more connected to individuals in their new home. Men can find it difficult to share their traumas because they are ashamed not being able to manage it themselves.

Individual guidance by coaches and buddies can help them overcome barriers.

Besides the official support there are a lot of private and volunteer organizations that support newcomers to integrate in Dutch society.

There is cooperation between many organisations working in the field of integration. Although NGO's and Governmental Organizations work together and support each other on occasions, every organization also appears to have its own interests and agenda.

Working on a relation based on mutual trust can be key for a successful program, non-verbal methods can play an important role in this.

Recommendations for the design of the SIMPLE Model

- Extra attention for LHBTI and homosexual migrant groups is requested.
- Victims are often also perpetrators; it is important to pay attention to this.
- More focus on attention than empowerment is required



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