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Integrating NEETs in Society through Employment, Recruitment and Training in the Belgian Defence

Closing Conference 20.11.2023



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NEET policies in Belgium

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- Implications of subnational governance of NEET Policies
- Complexity due to lack of unified national policy
 - *Subnational (regions, communities and municipalities)*
 - *Differences in scope, focus, actors and approach*
 - *Different labour markets, location & political decisions*
- Political acknowledgment of NEET policy importance



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Challenges and Opportunities in NEET Policy Implementation

Unique Challenges in Belgian Institutional Context:

- **Overlapping challenges** from NEET policy
- Additional complexities specific to the **Belgian context**

Inherent Challenges in NEET Policy:

- **Heterogeneity** within the NEET group
- Lack of **visibility**

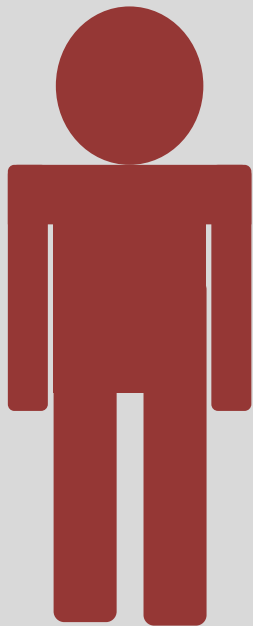
Common Issues Across Institutional Structures:

- **Collaboration** challenges
- **Eligibility** criteria issues
- **Information exchange** difficulties

Subnational Challenges:

- **Collaboration gaps** among service providers
- Lack of **structured collaboration** and information exchange
- **Border regions** face additional issues, both internally and externally

NEETs among Defence Entrants?



Profile of the typical Defence entrant:

- Young (< 24) ↗
- Male
 - 90% of total personnel
- Medium education level ↗
- EU 15 countries
 - 80% of total personnel

Defence workforce dynamics overview

74% of young individuals remain in Defence for more than 1 year

- Labour market average: 40%

Outflow: Majority exit due to retirement

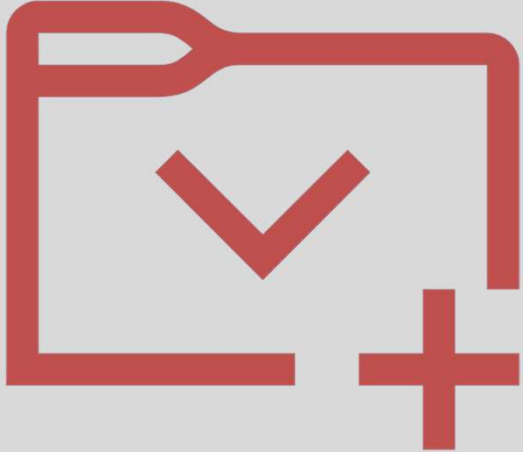
76% of new entrants were not employed the previous year

- 70% of this group is under 25 years old

Defence serves as the first job for many young individuals

Majority of entrants come from the temporary employment sector

The Defence “NEET project”



- Initiated in 2020 (Pilot Project Implemented from 2021)
- NEET Group as a Recruitment Target
- Integrating Recruitment Efforts with Societal Contribution
- Project Adjustments and Redesign

Project design



Tailored process organised in three phases

Reaching out/preparation/selection



Each phase comprises several steps



Shared responsibilities between the Defence and Partners organisations



Involvement of Multiple Defence departments



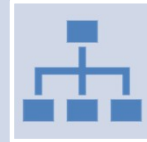
Challenges – 4 dimensions

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**Global challenges
faced by the Belgian
Defence**



**Internal organisational
challenges**



**Challenges associated to
external partnerships**



**Challenges related to
the target group**



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CONDUCTING COORDINATED TRACKING AND ASSESSMENTS OF RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES

- *Limited follow-up and communication during the recruitment process*
- Collect and analyze data on candidate recruitment and job discovery;
- Ensure continuous follow-up of candidates by NEET project officers and partners organisations;
- Develop a clear roadmap for candidates communication.

BUILDING SUPPORT FOR THE NEET PROJECT

- *Insufficient internal support within the Belgian Defence*
 - Improve internal communication to garner support from the workforce.
 - Systematize and coordinate units and workforce initiatives supporting the NEET group.
 - Establish a list of tailored military and civilian functions for NEETs within the Defence.

INCREASING SOCIAL INCLUSIVITY WITHIN THE BELGIAN DEFENCE

- *Limited integration of vulnerable groups in the workforce*
 - Foster inclusivity and adapt recruitment/retention practices.
 - Integrate expertise from partner organizations.
 - Provide reinforced psycho-social support during recruitment and job integration.

OPTIMIZING NEET RECRUITMENT PROCESSES

- *Lengthy and rigid recruitment trajectory*
 - Streamline the recruitment process with flexibility.
 - Anticipate and address potential risks.
 - Tailor communication for NEET candidates and roles.
 - Explore adaptable selection criteria and timeline for NEET candidates.
 - Formalize partnerships for knowledge exchange and support.



The future of the NEET project



**Redesign based on
assessment and feedbacks**



**Combination with other
projects**

Reboot4you

Collective Utility Service



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Thank you for your attention!

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DEFENCE-RELATED RESEARCH ACTION



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