



DIVERSITY IN RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

EXPERT REPORT

COLOPHON

DIVERSITY AT WORK

Diversity at Work is an initiative of the **Dutch Labour Foundation**. Founded in 1945, the Labour Foundation (Stichting van de Arbeid) is a private national consultative body incorporating Dutch employers' federations and trade union confederations. Today its members are the Confederation of Netherlands Industry and Employers (Vereniging VNO-NCW), the Royal Dutch Association of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (Koninklijke Vereniging MKB-Nederland), the Dutch Federation of Agricultural and Horticultural Organisations (Federatie Land- en Tuinbouworganisaties Nederland), the Netherlands Trade Union Confederation (Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging), the Confederation of Christian Trade Unions in the Netherlands (Christelijk Nationaal Vakverbond), and the Trade Union Federation for Professionals (Vakcentrale voor Professionals). Diversity at Work is financed by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment and the Dutch Labour Foundation.



Diversity at Work **transcends** different dimensions of diversity, **connects** networks of companies and social organisations, **supports** companies in strengthening diversity and inclusion, and **assesses** the results of diversity policy.

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INTRODUCTION

Many companies and organisations aim for greater diversity in the composition of the workforce. For example, there is a high demand for women in technology and for employees with a migration background in the healthcare sector. Whether companies succeed in making them more diverse often depends on their recruitment and selection procedures. These procedures largely determine the inflow of new staff: who applies and who is hired for jobs.

Various studies indicate that the recruitment and selection procedures are often not sufficiently inclusive¹ and therefore mainly attract employees whose background and characteristics match the profile of the existing staff. This Expert Report addresses the question of what steps companies can take to create a more diversity proof recruitment and selection process. Where do you find diverse talent and, more importantly, how do you ensure that they choose your organisation?

This Expert Report first and foremost focuses on the pitfalls that play a role in recruitment and selection. Based on this analysis, tips and best practices are provided for the entire process, from the preparation of the vacancy notice to the selection of the final candidate.

Literature research was used to compile this document. This information has been supplemented with practical examples from the signatories to the Diversity Charter who have implemented these changes in their recruitment and selection policy.

1. 'Discriminatie in de wervings- en selectiefase; Resultaten van 'virtuele' praktijktests.' (Discrimination during the recruitment and selection phase; Results of 'virtual' practical tests). Panteia (2015).

1. THE BUSINESS CASE

The business case approach to diversity and inclusion takes business interests as a starting point. A diverse workforce and inclusive business climate have added value for a work organisation and contribute to the achievement of business objectives. For example, research from McKinsey shows that companies with greater gender and ethnic diversity achieve greater success than their less and non-diverse competitors.² A similar picture emerges from a survey conducted in 2017 among more than 8,000 Canadian companies and organisations: 1% greater cultural diversity in the company increases the return by 2.4% and productivity by 1%.³

It pays to invest in an inclusive business culture. A diverse workforce can have economic and social added value for the company. Diverse teams are more creative and have better problemsolving abilities because they think and act from different perspectives and experiences. They are better able to respond to the needs of a diverse clientele and increase access to new markets. They also take a broad network with them, making it easier to find new staff, lower recruitment costs and reduce the chance of staff shortages.

Investing in diversity and inclusion increases the likelihood that a company will be more responsive to developments in society. It ensures that the company distinguishes itself positively in the market and takes a lead over its competitors.

When it comes to recruitment and selection, access to a broad pool of talented individuals is crucial. It has been established that inclusive recruitment and selection promotes the recruitment of talented individuals with very different backgrounds and characteristics. The company fishes in a larger pond and therefore has the opportunity to attract more (top) talent. Certainly in the current tight labour market, companies benefit greatly from this.

CSR

A second important reason for greater diversity and inclusion in the workplace is corporate social responsibility (CSR): everyone has the right to equal opportunities and treatment, regardless of background or other personal characteristics. Many companies opt for this perspective. They strive to make their workforce representative of the composition of the workforce.

In practice, the business case and the CSR perspective (moral case) often occur in combination with each other. This is also visible in the reasons that the current signatories of the Dutch Diversity Charter quote for the implementation of diversity policy.



2. Delivery through Diversity, Hunt, V., et al., McKinsey & Company, January 2018. Diversity Matters, Hunt, V., Layton D., and Prince, S., McKinsey & Company, February 2015.
3. Diversity Dividend. Canada's Global Advantage, Momani, Bessma & Stirk, Jilian, Centre for International Governance Innovation/Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation, 2017.

2. BOTTLENECKS IN RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

INTRODUCTION

According to 60% of recruitment professionals, enticing talented people to apply for jobs is the greatest challenge of our times. Recruitment technology and target group knowledge are increasingly being applied and attention is being paid to 'smarter' recruiting: targeted target group approach using data and recruitment marketing. To respond to the current diverse composition of the labour market and to reach all potential talented individuals, many companies are redesigning their recruitment and selection and tightening procedures, communication and recruitment channels.

The use of algorithms in recruitment and selection is relatively new. They are expected to contribute to discrimination-free recruitment and selection by minimising the role of the human factor ('bias'). Whether this effect actually occurs with the use of algorithms has not yet been demonstrated empirically and requires more scientific research.

A recent survey of recruitment and selection activities among twenty companies in the Netherlands, including many signatories to the Dutch Diversity Charter, provides the picture below.

This indicates that companies are already actively working on improving the diversity awareness of their recruitment and selection. Nevertheless, many companies are not successful in attracting diverse talent. This chapter analyses the obstacles in recruitment and selection that may be blocking the path to a more diversified workforce. The next chapter provides tips for tackling these obstacles.

RECRUITMENT	Job profile, vacancy text and visual material adaptation.	85%
	Internal and external communication adjustment.	75%
	Broadening of recruitment channels.	70%
SELECTION	Training selectors and other selection process participants.	90%
	Engaging external knowledge and expertise in the area of diversity and inclusion.	60%
	More diversified selection committee.	55%

2.1. BIASES

The lack of diversity aware recruitment and selection is partly due to the conscious or unconscious biases of recruiters and employers. Biases often lead to the applicant with the most similarities with the current staff being chosen and therefore being deemed to fit best in the team (affinity bias). This also results in a uniform workforce with a dominant monoculture that leaves little room for difference.

The recruitment and selection process is often unconsciously influenced by social categorisation and bias. This means that differences between groups are manifested and those between individuals within the majority group are minimised. The result is that an individual candidate is often assessed on the basis of the assumed competencies of the group to which he or she belongs.⁴ The implicit stereotypes may evoke negative associations among selectors with regard to characteristics of minority groups. Regardless of the sincere conviction of selectors that they only opt for quality and do not include (negative) associations in their decision making, there does appear to be unintended exclusion.⁵

The Discriminatiemonitor (Dutch Discrimination Monitor) 2018 shows that reports to the anti-discrimination agencies most often related to the labour market (28%). Most of the reports concern the discrimination ground of origin (36%). Then come age (22%) and gender (18%). By far, the vast majority of labour market reports concerned controversial treatment (84%). Slightly less than half related to recruitment and selection, for example, an unjustified rejection of an application. Often they concerned people whose application was unjustly rejected based on their name, age or for reasons of pregnancy.⁶

Employers still often have negative notions about the productivity of people aged 50 and over. They expect that these job seekers will be absent a lot due to health problems and therefore exclude them from the initial selection phase.⁷

The College voor de Rechten van de Mens (Netherlands Institute for Human Rights) commissioned a screening of a total of 1.8 million Dutch language job vacancy texts on the internet in 2018 and found that at least 8,000 job vacancies

4. J. Dagevos, 'Arbeidsmarktdiscriminatie gebeurt vaak onbewust' (Labour market discrimination often occurs unconsciously). *Tijdschrift voor Arbeidsvraagstukken* (Journal for labour issues) 2015 (31), 186-188.
5. J. Dagevos, 'Labour market discrimination often occurs unconsciously.' *Tijdschrift voor Arbeidsvraagstukken* (Journal for labour issues) 2015 (31), 186-188.
6. Discriminatiecijfers in 2018. Een rapport over registraties van discriminatie-incidenten door de politie, en meldingen bij antidiscriminatievoorzieningen en andere organisaties in Nederland (Discrimination figures in 2018. A report about registrations of discrimination incidents by the police, and reports to anti-discrimination agencies and other organisations in the Netherlands). Art. 1, April 2019.
7. For more information about job seekers aged 50 and over, please also refer to the Expert Report 'De kracht van 50-plus (The power of persons aged 50 and over)' from Diversity at Work.



(0.44%) contain direct age discrimination, for example an age requirement, and at least 61,000 vacancies (3.33%) contain indirect age discrimination, for example a vacancy aimed at students.⁸

Research from the Institute also showed that a reference to (young) age groups has a strong deterrent effect on older job seekers. If students or recent graduates are being sought, older employees are not inclined to apply.⁹

Virtual practical tests show that profiles and CVs with a Dutch name in CV databases are 60% more likely to receive a positive response than profiles and CVs with an Arabic name.¹⁰ This is confirmed in a study by CVster¹¹ which shows that even before the motivation letter and CV have been read, an applicant with a migrant background is less likely to succeed.

The disadvantage of a non-Dutch surname experienced by a jobseeker is also apparent from a study where ethnic

minorities without a criminal record are less likely to receive a positive response to their application than native Dutch people who do have a criminal record.¹² Furthermore, a recent large scale field experiment on discrimination against minorities in the labour market indicates that an applicant with a Dutch background is 40% more likely to be approached by an employer than an applicant with a non-Western background. The inclusion of more personal information in CVs (on hard and soft skills, for instance) also makes no difference. The researchers therefore argue for more attention to be paid to employers' practices and for research into alternative methods of recruitment and selection that minimise the influence of group preferences. For the field experiment, the researchers sent more than 4,000 letters and CVs from fictitious applicants in response to real vacancies.¹³

Temporary employment agencies are a major player in the field of recruiting

and selecting candidates for vacancies. There are more than 20,000 employment agencies in The Netherlands. They are mostly small companies. In 2017, 62% were sole traders. In recent years, much attention has been paid to discrimination in this sector. The ABU (Algemene Bond Uitzendondernemingen/Federation of Private Employment Agencies), a signatory of the Dutch Diversity Charter, has actively set about combating this (see box).¹⁴ The NBBU (the Dutch Association of Intermediary Organisations and Temporary Employment Agencies), the smaller trade association, is also committed to this.¹⁵ Consequently, the number of intermediaries of temporary employment agencies affiliated to the ABU and the NBBU that respond to a discriminatory request has been reduced.

Employment agencies that are not affiliated to the ABU or the NBBU score much worse. This is evident from the results presented in July of 2019 from

8. Fokkens, A., Beukeboom, C. J. & Maks, I., *Leeftijdscriminatie in vacatureteksten. Een geautomatiseerde inhoudsanalyse naar verboden leeftijdgerelateerd taalgebruik in vacatureteksten (Age discrimination in job vacancy texts. An automated content analysis into forbidden age-related language use in job vacancy texts)*. VU University Amsterdam, 2018.
9. College voor de Rechten van de Mens, *Om mij wordt niet gevraagd: Onderzoek naar het effect van leeftijdsonderscheid in vacatureteksten op oudere werkzoekenden. (Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, They are not looking for me. Research into the effect of age discrimination in job vacancy texts on older job seekers)* Utrecht, 2018.
10. L. Blommaert (2012). 'Discrimination of Arabic-named applicants in the Netherlands: An internet-based field experiment examining different phases in online recruitment procedures.' In: *Social Forces*, Manuscript ID: SF- Aug-12-349.R1; L. Blommaert (2013). 'Are Joris and Renske more employable than Rashid and Samira? A study on the prevalence and sources of ethnic discrimination in recruitment in the Netherlands using experimental and survey data.' Doctoral thesis, Utrecht University.
11. See: <https://cvster.nl/cv-onderzoek>
12. Van den Berg, C., Blommaert, L., Bijleveld, C. and Ruiters, S. (2017), 'Veroordeeld tot (g)een baan: hoe delict- en persoonlijkheidskenmerken arbeidsmarktkansen voor veroordeelden beïnvloeden' (Sentenced to a job/no job: how delinquent and personality traits influence labour market opportunities for convicted persons) *Tijdschrift voor Criminologie (Journal of Criminology)*, 59 (1-2), 113-135.
13. Lex Hijssen, Marcel Coenders and Bram Lancee: 'Etnische discriminatie op de Nederlandse arbeidsmarkt' (Ethnic discrimination on the Dutch labour market). Differences between ethnic groups and the role of available information on applicants'. In: *Mens en Maatschappij (Man and Society)*, July 2019. See also: <https://www.uva.nl/content/nieuws/persberichten/2019/07/gediscrimineerde-sollicitant-kan-weinig-doen-om-baankans-te-vergroten.html?1567593335883>
14. See: <https://www.abu.nl/kennisbank/arbeidsmarktdiscriminatie/>
15. See: <https://www.nbbu.nl/themas/discriminatie-op-de-arbeidsmarkt/>

a sample of this group of employment agencies, conducted by the Inspectie SZW (Inspectorate Social Affairs and Employment). These non-organised employment agencies were found to honour a discriminatory request based on the origin of potential clients in 40% of these cases.¹⁶

This bias mainly influences the selection phase, but also determines choices during the recruitment phase. For example, when drawing up the desired profile when the subjective choices are made to determine the required competences. The way in which the required competences are obtained is also often measured against the frame of reference of the majority group.

2.2. PROFILING

Companies that want greater diversity often do not make it clear that there is room for difference in the organisation. The lack of diversity often dominates the company's image. The digital channels, such as the website, usually give a one-sided view of the staff through photos and illustrations. This even happens with companies whose staff composition is diverse. For broad groups of job seekers, this has an adverse effect on the attractiveness of the company. Potential applicants who do not see themselves represented in the company's outward manifestations consequently do not expect that they will fit in with the teams. They assume a low person-organisation fit and will not usually apply.

2.3. RECRUITMENT

VACANCY

How vacancy notices are composed and presented has a major influence on the supply of candidates. For example, when job vacancies and positions are described based on male language use, women are less likely to be attracted to the organisation and the job.¹⁷

When determining the desired competencies and knowledge of the applicant, the same issues often arise. Little attention is paid to specific competencies and knowledge that diversity groups put forward, such as the ability to approach a problem from different cultural perspectives or having knowledge of diverse customer groups. Employers often do seek these qualities, but do not name them as such. Consequently, they are not taken into account in the assessment of the applicant.

Competencies are also assessed from the frame of reference of the majority group. The requested profile is filled in based on the prevailing views on the development of certain competences and leaves little room for diversity. Two examples: when assessing the competence 'independence' experience abroad is taken into account, but not the experience in the candidate's (or his/her parents') country of origin. And when looking at independence and responsibility, family responsibilities are almost always overlooked.

ABU: MEASURES AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

ABU endeavours to combat discrimination in the labour market in various ways. There is a mandatory membership criterion to prevent discrimination, extensive information material and a hotline. ABU also regularly carries out mystery call surveys, the total score of which is disclosed. There is also an active Think Tank Diversity, which plays a key role as a guardian of ABU's diversity policy.

See: <https://www.abu.nl/kennisbank/arbeidsmarkt-discriminatie/wat-de-abu-doet-tegen-arbeidsmarkt-discriminatie/>



16. Rapport Mystery calling-onderzoek arbeidsmarktdiscriminatie (Labour market discrimination mystery calling report), Inspectie SZW (Inspectorate SZW), Juli 2019.

17. S. Keulen & E. Mollema (2017), 'Inclusief werven & selecteren: Hoe doe je dat?' (Inclusive recruitment & selection: how do you do that?). Direction.

RECRUITMENT CHANNELS

Recruitment channels determine the diverse groups of applicants that a company attracts. However, traditional recruitment channels that do not reach all potential applicants are often opted for and alternative channels are not sought. The channels used and the potential target group(s) do not match each other.

2.4. SELECTION

Selecting the right candidate for a vacancy is difficult and uncertain. A choice must be made in a short time based on limited information. The outcome of that choice often seems unpredictable. The lack of information means that implicit biases can play a decisive role. The social class of applicants, for example, has a strong influence on the work they are offered, especially for higher-skilled positions¹⁸. And gender plays an important role in the selection process for a managerial position¹⁹.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

The selection procedure focuses on soft skills or subjective skills. This means that employers' decisionmaking is not based on objective characteristics but on subjective observations. Knowledge and skills, but certainly presentation and interaction are important when choosing a candidate. In the latter two factors in particular, conscious and unconscious biases appear to play a role.²⁰ This is reflected in many studies. Native Dutch people often present themselves differently from applicants with a non-Western origin, who are more cautious in job interviews. The result is that they are therefore assessed as insufficiently assertive and go no further in selection procedures.^{21 22}

Prior to their definitive choice, many companies and institutions conduct an assessment after the application process. However, many assessments are 'coloured' and use culturerelated and conventional selection tools.²³ Applicants of non-Western origin are at a disadvantage because their cultural background is not included in the test. The diverse composition of the group of successful candidates can be influenced positively by offering training or exercises in preparation for an assessment.

INSPECTORATE SZW: EXTENSION OF POWERS

The Inspectorate SZW has an important role to play in the government's policy against labour market discrimination. In this way the powers of the Inspectorate are extended. Employers will soon be obliged to implement policies to prevent labour market discrimination. A proposed amendment to the Working Conditions Act will ultimately authorise the Inspectorate SZW to monitor the presence of recruitment and selection policies with the aim of preventing and combating discrimination.

18. Torche F. (2011), 'Is a College degree still the Great Equalizer?' *American Journal of Sociology*, 117 (3), 521-548.
19. J. Williams, (2014), 'What works for Women at Work.'
20. SCP (2102). 'Op achterstand. Discriminatie van niet-westerse migranten op de arbeidsmarkt' (At a disadvantage. Discrimination of non-western migrants on the labour market). A. Backer (2011). 'Uitzendbureaus, gekleurde doorgeefluiken?' (Employment agencies, coloured intermediaries?); E. Loeters (2011). 'De klant is koning. Een onderzoek naar het honoreren van discriminerende verzoeken van werkgevers door intercedenten van uitzendbureaus in Nederland' (The customer is always right. An investigation into the honouring of discriminating requests from employers by employment agency intermediaries in the Netherlands); Möbius (2013). 'Mystery calling. M. Janssen and J. Noomen, 'Help ik heb goed personeel nodig!' (Help I need good personnel!). Boom Lemma Uitgevers, Den Haag (2013).
21. SER (2010) 'Discriminatie werkt niet' (Discrimination doesn't work).
22. M. Janssen and J. Noomen. 'Help ik heb goed personeel nodig!' (Help I need good personnel!). Boom Lemma Uitgevers, Den Haag (2013).
23. Raad voor werk en inkomen (Council for Work and Income) (2006), 'Hogeropgeleide allochtonen op weg naar werk: successen en belemmeringen' (Higher educated immigrants on their way to work: successes and obstacles).



RABOBANK: MEASURES RELATING TO DIVERSITY

Rabobank takes various measures to attract more diverse talent. Examples:

- > Increasing awareness in recruiters through awareness training.
- > Composing selection committees that consist of at least 30% women (for senior positions in particular).
- > Specifying specific objectives with regard to compiling the shortlist (for example, that at least one 'diverse' candidate must be listed).
- > Formulating specific objectives with regard to the composition of teams.

3. DIVERSITY AWARE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

3.1. (UN)CONSCIOUS BIASES

So-called unconscious bias training courses can make recruiters more aware of their prejudices. If the knowledge can be applied directly, training courses to break through prejudices are effective. So it only makes sense to offer an 'unbiased recruitment and selection' training course if the recruiters are given practical tools. There must be clearly formulated criteria and structured procedures and recruiters should be able to put these guidelines into practice immediately. This is only possible if there is diversity among the candidates.²⁴

WE ARE NOT ALL THE SAME

The recruitment site of the **Ministry of Defence** provides information about the various job opportunities at the ministry as well as visual material that appeals to the imagination. An explicit text makes it clear that there is room for difference: 'Given that the ministry of Defence is a reflection of that society, the composition of our staff is also extremely diverse. For example, do you have special wishes regarding nutrition? This can be catered for, whether you want vegetarian, kosher or halal food, the Ministry of Defence has it all. Are you looking for spiritual support? We have spiritual carers in the humanist, Jewish, Islamic, Protestant, Hindu or Catholic traditions.'

For further information, visit www.werkenbij-defensie.nl



Prejudices and stereotypes are broken through in personal contacts in particular. Meeting each other contributes to mutual understanding and breaks through the compartmentalised thinking. Meeting with members of diversity groups is also of crucial importance for inclusive recruitment and selection. Networks can facilitate this. A good example is the company Nextworker in Rotterdam, which brings young people with a migrant background into contact with employers of various small and medium-sized businesses. Another example is the ECHO expertise centre that contributes to changing perceptions by offering internships to students with a migrant background. The centre annually presents the ECHO Award, a Dutch national incentive prize for excellent multicultural talent in higher education.

3.2. PROMOTE DIVERSITY

It is important that the company makes it clear to the outside world that it has an inclusive business climate in which there is room for diversity. This is possible, for example, by using visual material. The use of photos and films in a job vacancy text or on the website is recommended to reflect the diversity in society and among staff. Some organisations already have a separate recruitment site. An example of this is het ministerie van Defensie (the Ministry of Defence). Charter signatory PwC presents the clear message on its recruitment site www.werkenbijpwc.nl 'Diversity provides for greater quality' and thus makes it clear that it also regards diversity as added value. Its four different employee networks (Women NL, GLEE (Gay, Lesbian and Everybody Else Network), Connected Cultures and YoungPwC) are explicitly mentioned, enabling the company to show that attention is devoted in-house to the different needs of various groups. PwC also has a special magazine dedicated to diversity.²⁵

3.3. RECRUITMENT

MAKE JOB VACANCY TEXTS APPEALING

A job vacancy text aimed at recruiting more diverse staff must be composed carefully. The job profile, the required qualities and competences of candidates must be clear.²⁶ In addition, it can be explicitly stated that the company strives for a diverse workforce or values diversity.

The recommendations below for drafting an attractive vacancy text have been derived, among other things, from the guidelines of the Dienst Diversiteitsbeleid (Diversity Policy department) of the Flemish government (see Appendix 1).

24. Homan (2017). 'Vier de verschillen; De vele gezichten van diversiteit' (Celebrate differences; The many faces of diversity). Rede bij de aanvaarding van het ambt van hoogleraar (Address on accepting the position of professor). Oktober, 2017.
25. <https://www.werkenbijpwc.nl/Global/Documents/Diversiteit-special.pdf>.
26. M. Janssen and J. Noomen, Help ik heb goed personeel nodig! (Help I need good personnel!) Boom Lemma Uitgevers, Den Haag (2013).

- > Write creatively. The vacancy text is composed based on the job description and the job profile. The text can affect who is going to respond. Creative job vacancy texts, such as those from web shop Coolblue, attract a wider group of applicants and, for example, start with: 'What you say on birthdays that you do, what you really do, how you approach this'. The emphasis is on the concrete definition of the task and the workplace and less on the competences. Coolblue's copywriters justify this approach with: the wider the audience that you attract, the greater the chance that you will find the right candidate for the job.
- > Do not set strict requirements that are irrelevant for the position. For example, if good language and writing skills and a driving licence are not necessary, they do not have to be included in the vacancy text.
- > Avoid gender-specific language, but use gender-neutral language in the job title and requirements. Research shows that through male language use women regard a position and organisation as less attractive.²⁷ A neutral job description contains both traditional 'male' and 'female' skills.²⁸
- > Also mention employment conditions in the vacancy notice that may make it more attractive to apply and make use of knowledge about the target groups. Research shows that, for example, young people born between 1982 and 2001 are more interested in career opportunities and training opportunities than in salary levels. Companies respond to this by emphasising career and training opportunities in the vacancy notice. The flip side of this targeted persuasion strategy is that other groups feel less attracted to the position. Other targeted persuasion strategies include mentioning leave options, flexible working hours for a better work/life balance, accessibility of the company, facilities that are important for candidates with an occupational disability, gender-neutral toilets, contribution to health insurance, etc.
- > Make the vacancies accessible to people with an occupational disability, for example visually impaired candidates.

SELECTION WITHOUT BIASES AND WITHOUT RESTRICTION

The **Netherlands Institute for Human Rights** has developed the 'Selection without biases' training course. This training is based on the principle that you as an employer want to find the best candidate for a position and you apply your knowledge and experience in search of talent and quality. When recruiting and selecting you look critically at the people you speak to. The training can be an eye-opener: you gain greater insight into the selection process and the organisation gains greater scope for quality and competences. Recruiting without (unconscious) biases often means greater focus on individual qualities.

<https://mensenrechten.nl/nl/selecteren-zonder-vooroordelen-0>

The **Netherlands Institute for Human Rights** and **Ieder(in)** (a Dutch umbrella organisation for people with a physical disability, mental impairment or a chronic illness) offers training for employers and HR professionals that addresses making optimum use of the potential of people with disabilities in the labour market. During this training the participants investigate their own unconscious ideas about people with a disability and practical possibilities are offered to make recruitment and selection more inclusive.

<https://mensenrechten.nl/nl/selecteren-zonder-beperking>

27. M. Janssen and J. Noomen, *Help ik heb goed personeel nodig!* (Help I need good personnel!) Boom Lemma Uitgevers, Den Haag (2013).

28. <https://www.leiderschapontwikkelen.nl/wp-content/uploads/eBoek-Inclusief-Werven-en-Selecteren-1.pdf>

THE CITY OF AMSTERDAM: GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE

The City of Amsterdam wants to attract applicants from different groups and be an inclusive employer. The use of language by the municipality has been adjusted by using gender-neutral words so that nobody has to feel excluded. There is a manual for respectful and inclusive communication, the Regenboogtaaltips (Rainbow language tips). The second edition was released in November 2018.



USE THE CORRECT RECRUITMENT CHANNELS

Diversity groups are reached effectively through their own networks. Employers can use specific channels of people from those groups to implement diversity recruitment. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people are often organised along the lines and networks of the different groups. Examples are Gendertalent and Work Place Pride. People with disabilities have many (self-) organisations. A number of these in The Netherlands specifically focus on promoting the labour market position and mediating for work, such as Werkpad (for job seekers with a sensory disability) and Autitalent (for people with autism). The advantage of these specific channels is that the organisations have a wealth of knowledge and experience of their target group and can often facilitate guidance and support during placement.

Job seekers with a migration background use formal channels relatively often and apply via job sites, werk.nl (from UWV, the Employee Insurance Agency), employment agencies, recruitment and selection agencies and job fairs²⁹. To reach these job seekers, it is crucial that employers recruit not only through their own (informal) network, but also through formal channels.

Jobsupport (UAF) and VluchtelingenWerk (the Dutch Council for Refugees) are suitable channels for asylum permit holders.

USE DIGITAL RESOURCES

There are more and more ways to make candidates aware of a vacancy. Increasingly, social media and mobile onboarding, that is recruiting via the mobile phone, are being

used. More than 80% of recruitment professionals consider LinkedIn an important tool for achieving recruitment objectives. Social Media Recruitment research shows that Facebook is also gaining popularity compared to recruitment and selection agencies: no less than 72% of employers post vacancies via Facebook.³⁰

Companies can also use Twitter to increase their reach among potential candidates for a vacancy. For example, Monster Board, one of the largest job sites, works with Monster Social Jobs Ads, a fully automated tool that offers a job posting to a select group of Twitter users.³¹

3.4. SELECTION

Looking for more inclusive selection mechanisms, employers or selection agencies use a variety of resources. An objective selection method can be applied in which the background characteristics are concealed as much as possible or a procedure in which these characteristics are positively emphasised. For example, this happens with speed dates, pitches, video applications, etc.³² A number of different methods are explained below that can make selection processes more diversity-proof.

PERSONALISE APPLICATION PROCEDURES

The personification of the procedure is based on the importance of the personal connection between the employer and the applicant. Video applications in particular are gaining popularity³³. A video clip of an applicant can dispel any prejudices. For example, Sollicatiemarkt.nl is convinced of the power of body language and appearance and only uses this method. 'Visual application' workshops teach applicants how to present themselves to best possible effect

29. Raad voor Werk en Inkomen (Council for Work and Income) (2006), 'Hogeropgeleide alloctonen op weg naar werk: successen en belemmeringen.' (Higher educated immigrants on their way to work: successes and obstacles).
30. https://www.mt.nl/business/facebook-populairder-voor-werving-dan-recruitmentbu-reaus/547191?utm_source=nieuwsbrief&utm_medium=link&utm_campaign=nieuwsbrief-woensdag-13-december.
31. See Personeelsbeleid (Staff Policy), volume 50, September 2015, pg. 31.
32. Walz & Coenders, 'De vijf misstanden over anoniem solliciteren' (The five misunderstandings about anonymous applications).
33. 'Stand van Werven' (2015). (The status of recruitment). Academie voor Arbeidsmarktcommunicatie. (Academy for Labour Market Communication).

to a potential employer through images. Dutch Charter signatories Coca-Cola Netherlands and ABN AMRO Bank also work with video applications. ABN AMRO uses this method to recruit candidates for IT and financial positions that are difficult to fill.³⁴ The videos meet the needs of specific target groups and are tailored to their perceptions. The bank uses videos on relevant (social media) channels. The first results of this recruitment strategy indicate that the response rate is no less than 25% higher than with traditional recruitment messages.

ANONYMISE APPLICATION LETTERS

By anonymising application letters, it is hoped that candidates with a 'different' background are more likely to get through the letter selection. Characteristics such as name, gender, photo, place of birth, date of birth and/or nationality of the applicant are deleted. Application procedures can be anonymised manually, but also digitally, whereby the online application form automatically anonymises personal data. More and more local authorities are using anonymous job applications, especially to attract applicants with a migrant background.

The City of The Hague started a pilot in 2016 in which CVs and application letters for higher positions were anonymised manually. This greatly increased the influx of applicants with a migration background. The results also show that multicultural candidates had a greater chance of being invited for an initial interview (8%) than during the reference period (7.1%). Their likelihood of being hired for the position was also higher (2.4%) than in the reference period (1.1%).³⁵ Although this success may be partly due to the broader diversity and inclusion policy that was initiated at the same time, The City of The Hague is positive about the pilot and has decided to include anonymous job applications structurally in its personnel policy.

NATIONAL POLICE: MULTICULTURAL CORE COMPETENCIES

The functions of the **National Police** are described in terms of competence, including multicultural core competencies. For example, with respect to police officer positions, the application form specifically asks for multicultural competences in the field of language proficiency, culture and networking.

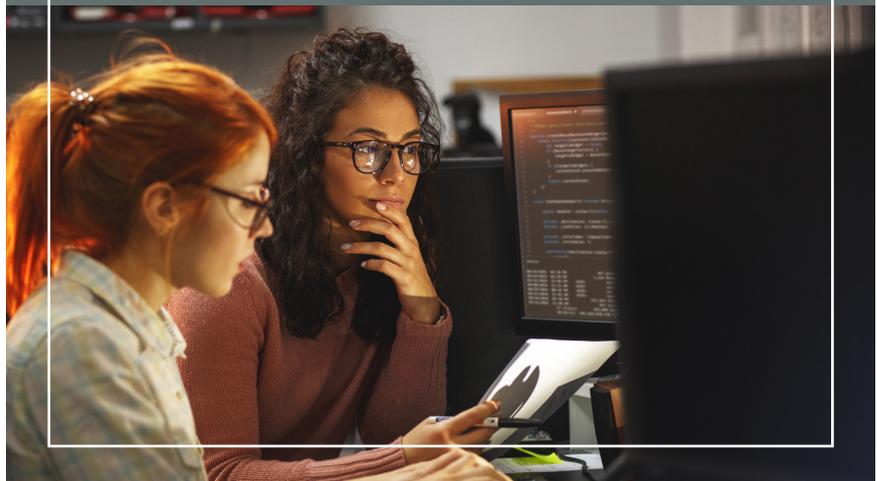
YOUNG SHELL: NETWORK WITH RECRUITMENT VALUE

'An employee staff network naturally has a certain recruitment value for a company like **Shell**. Networks of this type also make a company an attractive place to work as a young talent.'

Jessica van der Puil, chair of Young Shell, in 'Medewerkersnetwerken in beeld' (employee networks in the spotlight), which can be viewed on Diversity at Work's YouTube channel.

COMPUTER FUTURES: MORE WOMEN IN IT

An IT Diamonds team is active within **Computer Futures** that focuses on mediating women within the IT sector. Every organisation with an IT vacancy with a preference for a female specialist will receive a shortlist of available and suitable female IT candidates from IT Diamonds.



34. <https://www.abnamro.com/nl/carriere/vakgebieden/index.html>.

35. Monitor Anoniem Solliciteren en Netwerkbijeenkomsten, eindrapportage (Monitor of Anonymous Application and Network Meetings, final report) November 2016.

In the private sector there seems to be little interest in applying anonymously. A survey among more than 600 SME employers indicates that they do not want to cooperate in this. According to a majority of entrepreneurs (75%) applying anonymously to side-step discrimination will never become the norm. A small group of entrepreneurs (17%) considers anonymous job applications undesirable, but believe in how they work. Only 8% think it is a good idea.³⁶

Although applying anonymously offers no guarantee of preventing labour market discrimination - after all, candidates have to conduct the interview themselves - this approach offers them more chances to get through the written round based on their competences and qualifications. An additional advantage is that recruiters can more easily share and discuss anonymised CVs with others and thereby gain new insights; after all, no personal data is visible and privacy is not at stake. A disadvantage is that this method is labour intensive. A fundamental objection is that, in order to prevent discrimination, applicants must disguise part of their identity.

SELECT BASED ON OBJECTIVE CRITERIA

Prior to the selection procedure, it is important to determine the criteria that a candidate has to meet. Some companies weigh the balance between traditional masculine and feminine qualities.³⁷ For example, prior to job interviews, recruiters from Airbnb draw up a list of characteristics that a candidate must have.³⁸

GIVE STRUCTURE TO THE JOB INTERVIEW

According to economist Iris Bohnet³⁹ candidates should be selected as much as possible based on an objective judgment of selectors. The greatest chance of achieving this is if the interview is structured and follows a set protocol. Every candidate receives the same questions and is assessed using the same system. Naomi Ellemers, social psychologist and university professor at Utrecht University, recommends performing a check before and after a job interview or assessment. 'You look in advance at your own criteria: what am I looking for, and why? Afterwards you check whether you have really judged on factual matters such as achievements and qualifications and not on your own feelings. A simple method and effective.'⁴⁰

COMPOSITION OF SELECTION COMMITTEES

By making selection committees diverse, awareness of differences increases. Some companies indicate that a number of short interviews with individual committee members - instead of the full committee - lead to more diversity among the hired candidates. The committee members exchange their interview results and come to a conclusion. This method apparently leads to more varied insights.

ALLIANDER: RECRUITMENT IN GROUPS

Alliander wants to use the group recruitment approach and supervision of new employees to prevent these employees from feeling like loners in the company and leaving the company for this reason. This recruitment method started with the recruitment of ten refugees who were provided with tailor-made training and supervision. The supervision of the new colleagues consists of, among other things, training the group together in the areas of technology and language skills, placing the talents together in a team and a buddy system.

Alliander's multicultural In-house Day also proved to be a success. One of the graduate participants indicated that he was motivated to come because he knew he would fit in with the group. His expectation proved to be true. He was not the only one because the In-house Day attracted fourteen other job seekers with a migrant background.



APPLY THE ROONEY RULE

The Rooney Rule⁴¹ states that for every vacant position at least one candidate from a diversity group is invited for an interview. MKB-Nederland (the largest entrepreneurs' association in the Netherlands with small and medium-sized enterprises as its members), has proposed inviting at least one person aged 50 years and over in application procedures.

36. http://www.telegraaf.nl/dft/ondernemen/personeel/27765023/Ondernemer_fel_tegen_anoniem_solliciteren.html

37. <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/06/13/vrouw-dan-krijg-je-vage-feedback-11057914-a1562709>.

38. <https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/blog/candidate-experience/2017/how-airbnb-is-working-to-eliminate-bias-from-its-interview-process>.

39. Professor of Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School and author of the book 'What Works: Gender Equality by Design'.

40. <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2017/06/13/vrouw-dan-krijg-je-vage-feedback-11057914-a1562709>.

41. Named after the American Dan Rooney who made it a National Football League requirement in 2003 that at least one candidate from a minority group had to be invited to participate in the application procedure for every management position.



PWC: TRAINING FOR SELECTORS

The PwC selectors are not only trained in the field of recruitment methods, but also on topics such as multicultural craftsmanship and unconscious bias. This combination reinforces each other. The selectors gain greater insight into the role of intercultural communication in the assessment of CVs and learn to look closer at the diverse backgrounds of candidates. This way of educating and training leads to a different perception of recruitment. For example, not only is the participation in study associations examined, because multicultural students mix in different ways. Sometimes culturally bound and sometimes not.

AUDIT TECHNIQUES

Audit techniques can help with a more objective assessment in the selection procedure. Prior to the application process, the employer sets a set of selection criteria that a candidate must meet. On the basis of that profile, applicants are then assessed by an automated audit process and thus have a more objective opportunity. The employer receives a list of the most suitable candidates for interviewing.

ACCENTURE: WORKING TOGETHER FOR DIVERSITY

To attract more diverse candidates, Accenture works together with external organisations such as the Refugee Talent Hub, UAF, Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland and Unlimited. These organisations have a broad network in the target group that Accenture wants to reach. Together they succeed in getting a more diverse target group interested in the company.

ALGORITHMS

A relatively new trend in recruitment and selection is the use of artificial intelligence. A number of large companies such as Unilever and Vodafone make use of this. Applicants play games or answer questions on a computer. An algorithm then designates the right candidates based on the results.⁴² Smaller companies often work with an applicant tracking system (ATS) because of the costs.⁴³ In doing so, companies not only want to save time for recruiters, but also to make the workforce more diverse. These new ways of recruiting should prevent unconscious selection by recruiters and thereby combat discrimination.

Scientist Colin Lee developed an algorithm with which computers can predict whether candidates will be invited for an interview. This is called 'machine learning' and is a first step in recruiting with big data. Machine learning looks at the competencies and skills of candidates and ignores the personal characteristics. The assumption is that with this method the selection procedure is more objective. The YoungCapital employment agency started selecting candidates in this way in 2018: the recruiters' feedback on vacancies and associated candidates is processed in the computer, which will recognise patterns. With every vacancy, a candidate hears what their chances are of an interview. If there is a small chance, the candidate will receive a proposal for which training he/she can follow to increase his/her chances or which other vacancies could lead to more success.⁴⁴

At the moment there is no evidence available to prove the claim that the use of artificial intelligence in recruitment and selection is an effective means against discrimination. This requires more scientific research.

42. See: <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2018/05/11/solliciteren-bij-een-algoritme-a1602656>

43. See: <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2019/04/03/als-software-je-sollicitatiebrief-leest-a3955667>

44. See: <https://www.mt.nl/business/youngcapital-laait-ai-platform-brain-mensen-en-vacatures-elkaar-zetten/542221>

4. CONCLUSION

There is a lot more to inclusive recruitment and selection than simply adjusting some parts of the recruitment and selection procedure. In the first place it means that the officials involved are aware of their biases and those of their colleagues and that they develop a broader frame of reference for assessing quality and employability. This awareness will have an impact on all parts of the recruitment and selection process.

As a result of the growing quantity of data and the development of digital techniques, there are more and more opportunities for operationalising recruitment and selection. Smart recruitment and selection can contribute to a more inclusive approach. A variety of recruitment channels promotes diversity among applicants.

It is important that the employer starts by identifying the effects of the procedures and the approach to the composition of the applicant population and the hired employees. The employer must formulate answers to questions such as 'What is the influence of unbiased recruitment training on the characteristics of new staff?' and 'Do other application

forms also attract other candidates?' The collected information can then be used to improve the method. This way you can work step by step towards a more inclusive way of recruiting and selecting. A wide range of actions and measures can be used for this.

There is no clear solution or strategy for diverse and inclusive recruitment and selection of talented individuals with different backgrounds. Diverse and inclusive recruitment and selection not only requires an integrated approach combining multiple interventions and activities, but also tailor-made solutions that fit the context (organisational objectives, personnel policy, labour market, etc.) in which the company or organisation operates.

In the first instance, this process takes time and incisiveness. But it offers diversity groups more opportunities in the labour market and offers companies and organisations access to a much wider pool of suitable candidates. This will enable the employer to win the hunt for talent.



APPENDIX 1 - INFORMATION SHEET NEUTRAL VACANCY NOTICES

This appendix includes the publication 'Neutrale vacatureberichten; Infofiche 'Meer werkzoekenden uit de kansengroepen bereiken' ('Neutral vacancy notices; Info sheet 'Reaching more job seekers from disadvantaged groups') from the Dienst Diversiteitsbeleid, Agentschap Overheidspersoneel, (Diversity Policy Department, Agency for Public Personnel, Brussels).

Two rules of thumb are: opt for clear and accessible vacancy notices, and show that diversity is important to you.

SOME GENERAL TIPS

- > Choose images that reflect the diversity of society.
- > Use plain and gender-neutral language. Even those who are not familiar with the government's jargon should be able to understand the texts.
- > Use a neutral form of address (e.g. 'Dear' instead of 'Dear Mr/Mrs (last name)') if there are questions about the vacancy.
- > Pay attention to accessibility and readability for people with disabilities.
- > Only publish the vacancy notice on accessible websites. Also make sure that your attachments are accessible in Word and/or PDF.
- > Do not ask for a specific diploma if that is not necessary. Rather emphasise the required competencies and the willingness to learn.
- > Describe the level of knowledge of the language that is required. For some jobs a basic knowledge is sufficient. Also, do not ask for written language skills if they are not required.
- > State that candidates with a disability or chronic illness can request reasonable adjustments to facilitate participation in the selection.
- > Include a specific paragraph about diversity and equal opportunities. For example: 'Your talent is more important than your gender, gender (identity and expression), origin, age, orientation, disability or chronic illness. Apply and help build the diverse society of tomorrow!'





COMPREHENSIVE CHECKLIST

1. Title and general information

- > The job title has a clear meaning that everyone understands.
- > The job title is gender neutral. The mention of M/F is deliberately omitted to make clear that gender is not an issue within our organisation (e.g. 'cleaner' instead of 'cleaning lady', 'management assistant' instead of 'secretary').
- > The introduction states the degree and level.
- > The introduction states whether it is a full-time or part-time position.

2. Job context and organisation

- > The government and the entity are briefly presented.
- > The position of the job and the objectives are described.

3. Duties and job description

- > The duties are described in an appreciative manner with positive examples.
- > The language is gender neutral. Preferably 'you report to'. Avoid 'he reports to'.
- > A number of examples of activities clarify the duties.

4. Profile

- > The profile description is limited to the most important minimum requirements.
- > The profile is described clearly and concisely and contains as few vague terms, such as 'dynamic', 'flexible', 'employability', 'availability' or 'appropriate to the organisational culture', as possible.
- > Describe competencies as behaviour, not as personality traits. e.g.: 'You represent commercial interests' and not 'you have commercial flair'. After all, a behaviour can be learned; a personality trait cannot.

Conditions for participation

- > The nationality conditions are specified. If there are no nationality conditions, this is explicitly stated.
- > It is clear which qualification (level) is required.
- > Specific degrees (law, economics, psychology, etc.) are only requested if really necessary. If not necessary, you will be asked for a general qualification at the required qualification level.
- > The focus is more on the required competencies than the desired diplomas: knowledge acquired through experience.
- > Diplomas obtained abroad are eligible if they have been declared equivalent.

Technical competencies

- > The requirements are realistic and are related to the job. There is a balance between knowledge, skills and attitude.
- > The minimum 'entry requirements' and the possible learning and training programmes are mentioned.
- > The emphasis is on the job-specific core competencies.
- > Specific expertise and experience are only required if really necessary. Otherwise, the willingness to acquire them in a short time is sufficient.
- > A driving licence is only necessary if it is an integral part of the basic requirements of a job.
- > If a basic knowledge of a language is sufficient, very good knowledge is not required. Learning the language better at work is also among the possibilities.
- > Written language proficiency is not a requirement for positions in which someone has little or no need to write.

Personal competences

- > There is a balance between skills such as directing, taking the initiative or independence on the one hand and skills such as supporting, supervising or contributing to on the other.

5. How can the candidate apply?

- > The vacancy notice must clearly state how candidates must apply: by e-mail, letter, standard application form, etc. There must always be another option than just applying by email or the internet.
- > The closing date for submitting applications is stated in the notice.

6. Selection procedure

- > The steps in the selection procedure are summarised and explained: CV screening, selection tests, practical test, oral, written, on PC, assessment, etc.
- > It is clear when the different steps of the selection procedure will take place.
- > The vacancy notice states that people with disabilities can request reasonable adjustments to facilitate participation in the selections.

7. Offer

- > The nature, duration of the contract and the remuneration are explained.
- > Facilities such as the possibility of telecommuting, flexible working hours, leave options, training opportunities, childcare, etc. are explicitly addressed.
- > The vacancy notice states the right to reasonable adjustments to the workstation for people with disabilities.
- > If a job makes different requirements with regard to availability, compensation will also be addressed: possibility of recovery of overtime, childcare, etc.
- > The working conditions are described in a realistic way: frequent business trips, outdoor work, safety clothing, etc.
- > The work location and accessibility thereof are described.

8. Special mention of diversity and equal opportunities

With a specific formulation, the entity indicates that it is open to diversity. Some examples:

- > - 'Given the current composition of the department, we encourage women (or men), people with a migrant background and people with disabilities or chronic illness to submit their candidacy.'
- > - 'Our government wants to be diverse, just like society. Your talent and competencies are more important than your gender, gender (identity), origin, age, orientation, disability or chronic illness. Apply and help build a diverse society!'
- > - 'Our teams are strong because of the qualities of each employee. The strength of our services is the diversity of our teams. That is why we pursue an active diversity policy.'
- > - 'The government does not accept discrimination, not in the selections and not in the workplace. Our teams are diverse: young, old, male, female, LGB, (trans) gender, high skilled, low skilled, etc. That makes our service better'

9. Contact details

It is clear who can be contacted for further information about the content of the position and the selection procedure (name, telephone number and email address).

PUBLICATIONS FROM DIVERSITY AT WORK

For more tips and information on diversity and inclusion within different dimensions and in different sectors, see the following Diversity at Work documents:

- > Diversity in Recruitment and Selection. Expert report. September 12th, 2019.
- > Divers werven en selecteren. Kennisdocument. 12 september 2019.
- > Van diversiteit naar inclusie. Kennisdocument etnische culturele en religieuze achtergrond. 28 november 2018.
- > From cultural diversity to inclusion. Expert report ethnic, cultural and religious background. May 15th, 2019.
- > Diversiteit brengt je verder. Kennisdocument diversiteit in de sectoren transport, logistiek en personenvervoer. (Diversity takes you further; Expert report on diversity in the sectors transport, logistics and passenger transport). 28 november 2018.
- > Diversity Guide From cultural diversity to inclusion. October 11th, 2018.
- > Werken naar vermogen. Kennisdocument arbeidsbeperking/chronische ziekte en diversiteit. (Working capacity; Expert report on occupational impairment/chronic illness and diversity). 18 september 2018.
- > Bouwen aan diversiteit. Kennisdocument diversiteit in de sectoren bouw, infra en techniek. (Building diversity; Expert report on diversity in the construction infrastructure and technology sectors). 27 augustus 2018.
- > Diversiteit onder gemeentepersoneel. Kennisdocument. (Diversity among municipal personnel). 22 mei 2018.
- > Diversity guide From cultural diversity to inclusion. Compact view of the relevant Expert Report. October 11th, 2018.
- > Diversiteitswijzer 'LHBTI op de werkvloer' (Diversity Guide LGBTI in the workplace). 28 maart 2018.
- > Een motor voor verandering; Kennisdocument medewerkersnetwerken. (A force for change; Expert report on employee networks). 10 maart 2018.
- > Meten is weten. Zicht op effecten van diversiteitsbeleid. Kennisdocument.' (Expert report To measure is to know. Insight into effects of diversity policy). 2 januari 2018.
- > De kracht van 50-plus. Kennisdocument en stappenplan over leeftijd en diversiteit. (The power of people aged 50 and over. Expert report and step-by-step plan on age and diversity). Mei 2017.
- > Arbeid en zorg in balans. Kennisdocument over genderdiversiteit. (Work and care in balance. Expert report on gender diversity). 22 januari 2017.

The most recent versions of the above mentioned documents can be downloaded from www.diversiteitinbedrijf.nl



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