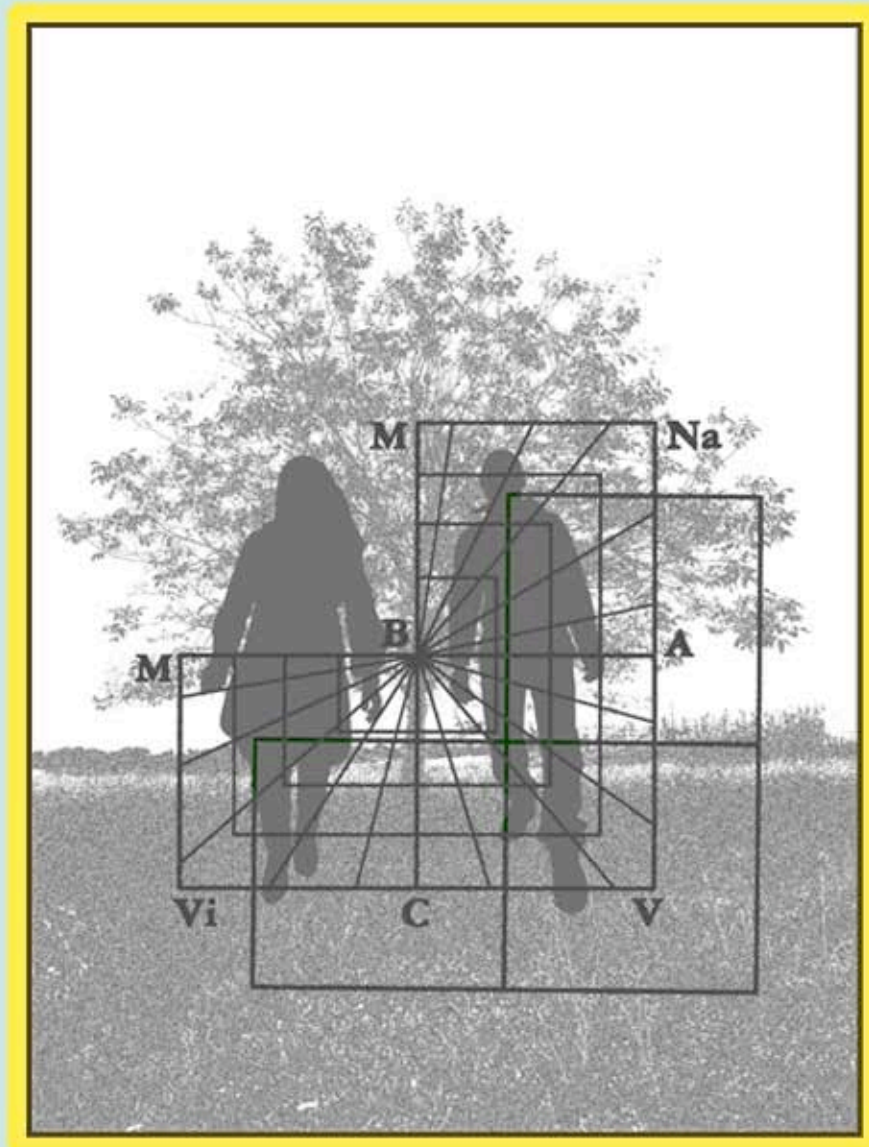


The Netherland - Comparative Report

Discussion paper 2013/7.2.

Erik Kats & Jaap van Lakerveld





Tertiary Higher Education for People in Mid-life (THEMP)

The Netherlands - Comparative Report

Discussion paper 2013/7.2

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Introduction

Lifelong learning at university level

The project Tertiary Higher Education for Mid-Life People (THEMP) aims to obtain insight in adequate forms for lifelong learning at university level. In a knowledge economy people are expected to keep up and develop their knowledge and skills throughout their career. Lifelong learning may contribute to the continuing professional development of employees and to an enduring utilization of their expertise in organisations. Thus lifelong learning may help to prevent that people in midlife drop out from employment or that their careers come to a deadlock. This is also a social loss.

European policy, just as policy in the Netherlands, is aiming at increasing the labour participation, especially of people in later life. The ageing population increases the importance of 'sustainable employability' of all people. It however appears that the labour participation decreases from the age of about 45/55.

The situation of higher educated people regarding 'sustainable employability' is generally better than the situation of lower educated people. While the working population is ageing, the number of higher educated people is increasing. National policy prescribes that people keep working till a higher age. All these conditions challenge universities to consider a contribution to programmes and activities that advance lifelong learning. The question is which forms are adequate for these programmes and activities. This question is addressed in the project THEMP.

Universities that want to take up a new role in lifelong learning cannot just open their standard initial courses to adult learners. We are considering 'post-initial' programmes. That is to say that these programmes are followed by experienced people who have already left the initial education system for some time and who are in the midst of their working life; they may be looking out for developing their career and/or finding a (new) job.

Programmes that respond to professional practice

In a knowledge economy ever more professional practices require a scientific way of action and reflection. Many higher educated professionals develop a variety of learning activities in their practice. These activities may remain implicit like building up expertise through the years; they may also become explicit in all kinds of organised ways to generate, to communicate and to implement knowledge in professional practice. A strategic principle for adult and professional learning is that programmes and activities should link to the learning activities taking place in professional practice.

So, when developing lifelong learning activities for higher educated professionals, formal programmes or separate courses are not the most natural format. Learning activities have to be adjusted to adults who, sometimes already for a long time, have left behind initial education and its formats. It is their employment situation that creates the need to develop themselves and their career. Then it is required not to ignore the expertise they have been acquiring during a long time. Learning in networks in the professional context is mostly more meaningful for experienced people than returning to the classroom.

Against this background we consider 'programmes' for lifelong learning as any kind of organised learning activities. These may concern course activities, but also conferences,

workshops, networks, hybrid learning environments and other forms of transfer of knowledge. Lifelong learning programmes require an approach that is adjusted to adult professionals, to their situation and to their ways of learning. Programmes need to make a connection between the development of scientific knowledge and the knowledge that is build up in professional practice. Expertise centres based upon a cooperation of universities with relevant companies, organisations and institutions in the field concerned may here play a useful role.

The situation in the Netherlands

To consider the situation of lifelong learning at higher education level in the Netherlands it is useful to look at the general economic conditions that differ from many other European countries and to the perspective of universities on lifelong learning.

The actual situation of economy and employment in the Netherlands: some basic data

To assess the conditions to lifelong learning it is useful to take a look at some features of economy and society in the Netherlands. The Netherlands has approximately 16.5 million inhabitants. With a country size of 41,526 km² the Netherlands is the most densely populated country of the EU after Malta, with on average almost 500 inhabitants per km². The population is distributed in age groups as follows: 0-19 years (4 million), 20-64 (10.1 million) and 65+ (2.4 million).

In 2006 the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was 32,700. This puts the Netherlands in the top 5 of the EU-27 after Luxemburg, Ireland, Denmark and Sweden. The GDP per capita index is 130.8, with the EU-27 average being 100.

The total working population is around 7.4 million (data from 2005). The labour participation rate in the Netherlands then was 63% (men between 15 and 65: 72%, women between 15 and 65: 54%). Unemployment rates vary between 3 and 7 percent during the last decades. Since the beginning of the actual economic crisis in 2008 the unemployment rate has increased from about 4% to about 6%; this is still low in European perspective (all data from www.cbs.nl).

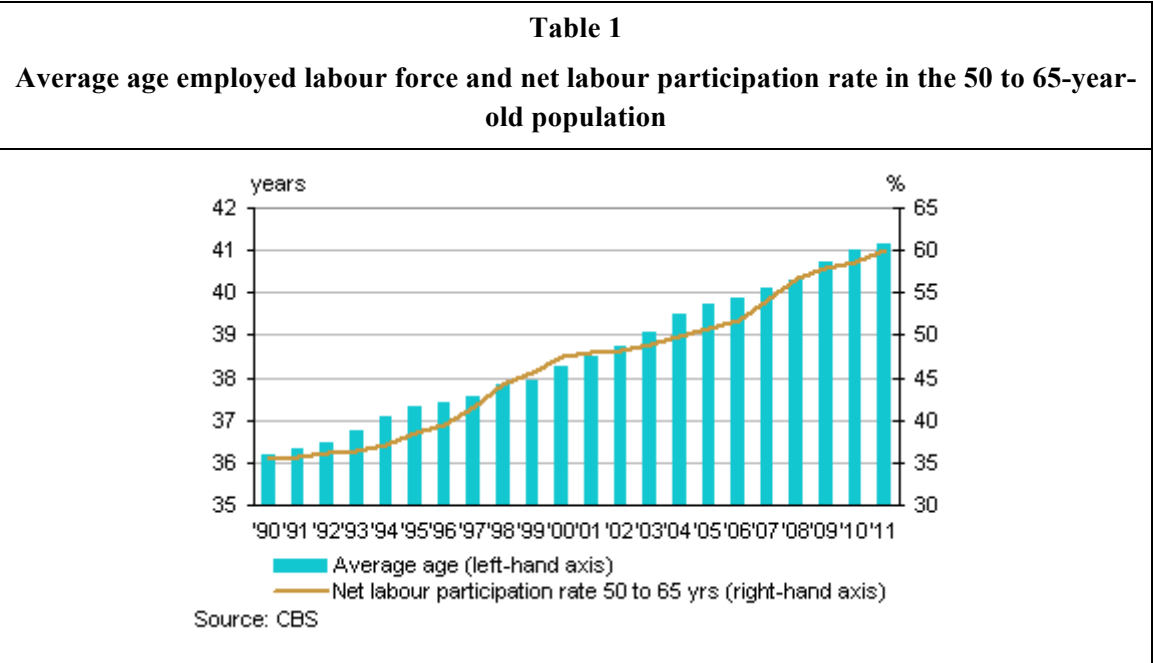
The employment participation of women in the Netherlands used to be lower than in other European countries. The arrears have however diminished during the last decades; the possibilities for career development of women still lag in many sectors. In university education the number of female students is by now exceeding the number of male students.

The ageing population is considered a growing problem in the Netherlands. The labour participation rate among elderly above the age of 55 until recently was less than 50%. The government stimulates people to keep working until they reach the legal retirement age of 65. Government policies to increase the labour participation in that age group are restricted to the reduction of financial conditions that allow for early retirement. Recently policy measures are introduced to heighten the retirement age to 66 in 2020 and to 67 in 2025. The degree to which companies and organisations make efforts to promote the sustainable employment of elder employees however is low in many sectors. Only 6% of all companies and organisations stimulates lifelong learning to this end (Otten et al., 2010).

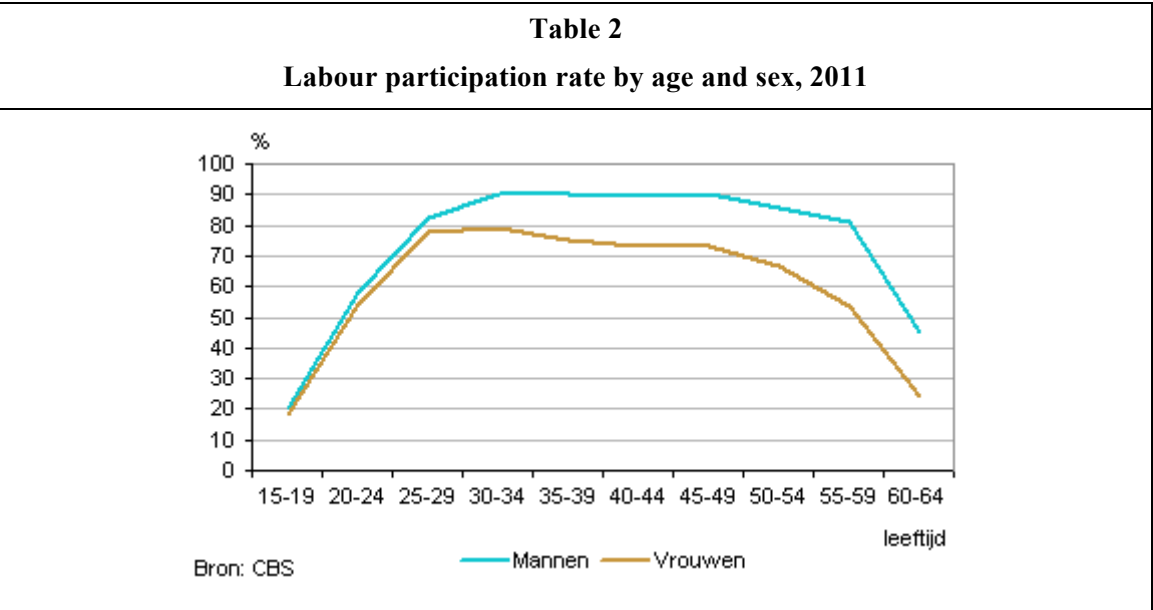
In an international perspective the labour participation rate (net: 73% in 2005) in the Netherlands however appears to be among the highest in Europe, especially for men. It should also be noticed that the proportion of part-time jobs in the Netherlands (46%) is higher than in any other country in the world; this especially is due to the position of women (Beckers & Langenberg, 2006).

The labour participation rate among elderly people, men and women age 55-64, was 47% in 2008 (Janssen & Souren, 2009). The table below shows that the average age in the employed labour force has risen by 5 years to 41.2 between 1990 and 2011. The population has aged during this period. The labour participation rate among 50 to 65-year-olds also increased

noticeably, i.e. from 35 percent in 1990 to 60 percent in 2011. The increase was mainly recorded among women. When people over 45 however loose their jobs, it still appears to be difficult to regain work. The actual economic crisis clearly involves an increased pressure on these conditions.



The next table (only in Dutch) shows that by now the labour participation rate among men remains above 80% until around the age of 58 and this rate among women remains above 50% until that age. Only after this age there is a serious decline.



These data allow to qualify the question of the labour participation rate among elderly in the Netherlands and the policies that are introduced to heighten this rate. As compared to other

European countries the participation rate is relatively high; and the participation rate is even higher among higher educated people. In the period 2007-2009 the participation rate among higher educated men is 88% and among higher educated women 81% (Leufkens & Souren, 2011). The labour participation rate for higher educated people over 45 is around 80%, while the figures for secondary educated and lower educated people in the same age group are around 70% and 55% (source: CBS, www.cbs.nl).

A thorough research report on vulnerable groups at the labour market in the Netherlands stresses that higher educated people have a much stronger position (van Gaalen et al., 2011). As a consequence the perspective towards university level lifelong learning in the Netherlands would be much more about increasing chances than about remedying vulnerabilities.

The perspective of universities on lifelong learning

Universities in the Netherlands generally consider their primary task to conduct fundamental disciplinary research and secondary to provide initial education to young people according to the requirements of the disciplines concerned. Only the Open University is an exception in this respect. This is not to say that a number of activities may not be mentioned that are relevant to lifelong learning. These activities do however not represent a lifelong learning perspective aiming at the ‘sustainable employability’ of people.

The following activities may be mentioned because they might create a possible basis for future lifelong learning activities.

- The Open University in the Netherlands aims to provide higher education programmes that are accessible to anyone with the necessary aptitudes and interests, regardless of formal qualifications. The Open University develops, provides and promotes innovative higher distance education. The Open University offers open and flexible possibilities for lifelong learning. Linking up with formal education, forms of education are needed that are not primarily aimed at acquiring diplomas, but also to education that recognizes competencies that have been gained elsewhere and in alternative ways.
- Most initial programmes of the regular universities are also open to post-initial adult learners. The number of programmes with student quotas however is growing. The open programmes vary as to the degree they are linked to the situation of this target group. However, there is a tendency to reduce the number of part-time studies and evening courses.
- The introduction of the bachelor-master system has for most part been realized in the Netherlands by retaining the old curricula, but complemented with an extra interim test. The number and variety of master tracks is now increasing and among these tracks there is a growing number of professional master tracks.
- Dual programmes are quite common in vocational education. These programmes combine courses with training in vocational practice. In the 1990s it is tried in the Netherlands to introduce dual programmes also in initial university education. These programmes should integrate studies at the university with a formative work trajectory in professional practice. Now there is a small number of dual study programmes at the Dutch universities.

- With regard to post-initial university education many universities have developed programmes that are directed to specific groups of professionals. Some universities have established special departments for this kind of programmes. Cooperation with the companies and organisations that employ the groups of professionals concerned here is of strategic importance. This cooperation advances that the programmes get a made-to-measure design.
- The integration of learning in professional practice is a major concern regarding continuing professional development. University programmes for professionals increasingly are designed as in-company programmes. This maximally allows to gear learning activities to the needs of the organisation involved and to utilize professional expertise for the learning process.
- Management courses (business administration, public administration, financial administration, human resource management etc.) constitute an important field of post-graduate courses. Several universities have established a separate institute to provide such courses.
- A number of professions require their members to participate in continuing education. The professionals concerned are obliged to follow courses to preserve the qualification to practise their profession. This for instance applies to medical professionals, to lawyers and to accountants. The universities concerned provide numerous programmes in this field.
- The education of first degree teachers (those teaching in the higher levels of secondary education) is reserved to universities. The universities concerned each have a special department for the education of these teachers. Connected to this task these departments conduct research and they provide a variety of activities to support the professional development of teachers and the innovation of education.
- In some sectors and areas separate scientific expertise centres are established, evolving from (individual or groups of) universities. Examples are the sector of vocational education, the area of youth welfare, the public administration sector and the field of organisational development. Such expertise centres conduct research and support the professional development of practitioners and the innovation of their sectors. They do often not only provide training but use a variety of means to communicate knowledge: conferences, newsletters, handbooks, consultancy etc.
- Specific sectors and organisations have academies of their own that themselves provide education at university level or are linked to university education. This applies to the police and the army. These institutions are classical examples of organisations that afford employees the possibility to develop their career and thus to move up to a position during their working life.
- The liberalization of the ‘market’ for higher education has opened the possibility for private education and training institutes to offer courses at academic level and acquire accreditation for these courses.
- Professional associations organize numerous activities that contribute to the professional development of their members. The activities vary from more traditional courses to separate lectures and conferences. The most important role of these associations with regard to professional development may be that they lay the

foundation of many communities of practice that advance professional communication, sharing knowledge, mutual consultation and interactive learning.

- More informal connections between the academic world and professional practice are also important. Many professors are active in consultancy for the sector of their expertise. A number of professors have a double position, at the university as well as in a company or organisation in their field (this especially occurs in the technical and economic sciences). These connections advance two-way traffic: professional practice benefits from scientific knowledge and science is enriched by professional expertise.
- Many universities also conceive as part of their task to make scientific knowledge accessible to the general public. The traditional idea of ‘university extension work’ might be used as an umbrella concept for such activities. A great variety of activities may be mentioned here: open lectures (e.g. Studium Generale), ‘universities of the third age’, network meetings for alumni, conferences and symposia, open debates, etc.
- Stemming from the wish for democratization of science, from the 1970s so-called ‘science shops’ were established at several universities in the Netherlands. These science shops aim to make scientific knowledge and research accessible, especially for groups who normally lack that access. A more commercial type of this kind of work is done by ‘transfer points’ that aim at valorization of scientific knowledge and research.

Methodology; selection of cases

The project THEMP focuses on the question which forms for lifelong learning programmes are adequate. This question is studied in seven European countries. In these countries the state of the art regarding such programmes and activities is analysed. In each country three cases are further explored. To this end, programmes are investigated that are tailored to the situation of experienced professionals. Such programmes have to make a link between scientific knowledge and professional development. A 'programme' here refers to any coherent package of learning activities: course activities but also conferences, workshops, networks, hybrid learning and other forms. Indeed, less formal learning activities and learning networks that build on the acquired expertise of participants often fit better to professional learning.

The programmes in question have to make a bridge between the scientific world of universities and the professional world in organisations. Considering this approach, a deliberate selection of three cases is made for the Netherlands: two cases starting at either sides of the bridge and one case aiming to be a bridge itself.

The *first* case is a programme starting from a university. Leiden University has created a separate faculty that, among other activities, offers a number of courses for professional learning, especially directed at people working in and around government institutions. The case study focuses on one of these courses.

The *second* case concerns activities started by an intermediary organisation. The University of Amsterdam and organisations in the field of vocational education have founded an autonomous Expertise Centre for Vocational Education, under legal and financial regulation of the government. This expertise centre has a variety of activities aiming at the dissemination and exchange of knowledge in the field of secondary vocational education.

The *third* case concerns professional education provided by a large organisation. The Dutch Police Academy offers a large number of programmes up to master level. To this end the Police Academy cooperates with several universities. The case study focuses on one of the master courses.

Each case study is carried out by collecting documents regarding the case and by interviews with policy makers from the organising institution, supervisors of the programmes, stakeholders from the field concerned and participants of the programmes.

Campus The Hague, Leiden University

The position of Campus The Hague in Leiden University

Leiden University

Leiden University was founded in 1575 and is the oldest university in the Netherlands. From the beginning, freedom of belief and religion was practiced, as reflected by the university's motto, Praesidium Libertatis, Bastion of Liberty. Over the centuries, Leiden University has been internationally renowned for its high-quality academic teaching, scholarship and research in both liberal arts and sciences. Currently, Leiden University counts approximately 17,000 Students and 4,000 staff members. The University consists of seven faculties: Archaeology, Humanities, Law, Leiden University Medical Centre (LUMC), Science and Social, Behavioural Sciences and Campus The Hague.

Campus The Hague

Campus the Hague was opened in 1999 with support of the city council of The Hague. Though firmly embedded in the academic tradition of Leiden University, Campus The Hague was established to function as a centre of innovation, meeting with the demand of professionals working in the public sector, the legal sector or the corporate world.

Thus, contributing to the unique identity of The Hague as the International City of Justice and Governance, Campus The Hague specializes in academic and post-academic training on (international) law, political science and public administration in close cooperation with the respective faculties of Leiden University. Later the scope of Campus the Hague has been broadened to the field of Safety and Security, Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism Studies, Social History, Urban Studies and Multilevel Governance.

Campus The Hague launched Leiden University College (LUC) The Hague in 2010. This College provides a three year Liberal Arts & Sciences program in English for a selected group of excellent and highly motivated students from around the world.

In 2011 Campus The Hague became a faculty of Leiden University. Campus The Hague has the ambition to further develop into an internationally renowned academic knowledge-crossroad, responding to current developments in society and taking into account the main characteristics of The Hague and of the Randstad Holland agglomeration (the region between Rotterdam, The Hague, Amsterdam and Utrecht). This will be achieved by providing innovative education programmes for professionals and conducting research with a strong focus on themes in the domain of safety, security and justice and multilevel governance.

Campus The Hague presents itself as a platform for strategic cooperation between various universities and knowledge institutions and, in general, as a meeting place for academic professionals, civil servants, politicians and entrepreneurs.

Campus The Hague aims to provide academic and post-academic teaching and research in the fields of International Law, Political Science, Public Administration and Safety & Security. The Campus promotes academic entrepreneurship by offering a market-based and demand driven supply. An interdisciplinary approach with innovative combinations of traditional academic disciplines is adhered to. And the Campus follows a modern teaching philosophy and didactics.

Centre for professional learning

Campus The Hague offers a wide range of continuing education courses. These courses are specifically meant for professionals with an academic background who aim to deepen their knowledge and skills in a public sector related field.

These continuing education courses focus on Politics, Public Administration, Political Sensitivity, Public Affairs, Governance & Media, International Relations and Development Cooperation. Leadership in the Public Domain is offered as a cross cutting theme as well as in relation to global and European contextual challenges. Most of the continuing education courses are tailor-made courses, developed at the request of an organisation. In addition there is a number of open enrolment programmes available such as professional courses in Public Affairs, Policy Development and the functioning of the European Union.

All courses are developed by the programme managers at the Centre for Professional Learning of Campus The Hague. The course programmes combine academic excellence of Leiden University based scholars and scholars from other universities with the rich experience of senior practitioners such as politicians, journalists, and managers working in the public and semi-public sector.

The tailor-made training courses are based on the specific background of the participants, as well as their learning objectives and the envisaged results of a course. The small groups and the interactive set-up of the courses enable participants to bring in individual themes relevant for their working practice. The courses are developed specifically to maximize the practical applicability of the generated knowledge and insights.

The course ‘Public Affairs’

Since 2002 the Campus The Hague organises the course ‘Public Affairs’. The initiative to start the course stems from the professional group. Public affairs refers to the promotion of the interests of an organisation in its field of action by anticipating, monitoring and influencing policy and decision making and changes in society and in the public opinion.

Target group; participants of the course

The course is targeted at those who are working in or are aiming to obtain a job in the field of public affairs, for instance as a lobbyist, communication advisor, public relations officer, policy officer and the like. Positions close to, or in between governmental, non-profit and private organisations and companies are concerned.

The course is aiming to serve participants who are already experienced professionals but who wish to expand their expertise and experience and share their expertise with other players in their field of work. Participants are supposed to have already a higher education level.

Most participants are around the age of 30-40; they want to make progress in their career. Some participants are older and have more experience. Participants are somewhat, but certainly not exclusively, internationally oriented.

Most professionals in the field, except for those working in a specialized public affairs agency, have a rather individual position in their organisation. The participants search for theoretical deepening, intervision and exchange of knowledge and experience.

“You could say that working in public affairs used to be a question of skill; it has gradually become a profession that needs a knowledge base.” (an expert)

The groups of participants are composed of men and women. Their numbers are in balance. Participants usually at the beginning of their career with 1-3 years of experience in public affairs.

People come from various organisations, such as local, national government, NGO's, interest organisations, branch organisations and energy suppliers. The ambition of the programme co-ordinators is to extend the target group even further towards other kinds organisation. The organisers, the participants and the alumni indicate that:

“the broadness/width of the outreach is highly appreciated by participants.”

Access and funding

Public affairs is an open access course. The entry level is usually but not exclusively a post masters level. An intake procedure manages the expectations of the participants, so apart from formal selection upon entry there is a kind of informal self selection. This intake procedure provides:

- an introduction about the centre;
- some information on the participant
- his/her reasons to take part
- the theory behind the programme and
- the backbone/structure of the programme

Not much information is given on what one may expect to be able to do with it after completion of the programme. Participants have various reasons to take part in the course. Some people take part for career purposes; some for making the initial step into public affairs; some wish to strengthen their professional potential (the majority says this), or come for general personal development purposes.

The course participants have to pay a fee for taking part, a fee which usually but not always will be reimbursed by the employer. Some participants pay for themselves. The co-ordinators explain that the proportion of participants for whom the employer provides the funding is 85%; 15% of the participants pay for them selves.

Design and implementation of the programme

The programme consists of an introduction and five modules of two days each among which a two days course activity in Brussels is included. Between modules periods of two weeks allow for preparatory activities.

The consecutive modules have the following themes.

1. *Public influencing*, a module about the ways in which the public affairs work and how the various actors in the field operate, what their mandates are, the legislative context in which they work and what to do to influence policy and decision-making processes within these circumstances.
2. *Public affairs and agenda management*, a module on how to get issues high(er) on the political agenda or priority list. It is about the obstacles, opportunities and the adequate momentum for political change.
3. *Public affairs in Brussels*, a module on the particulars of public affairs in the Brussels political arena and scenery. During this 2 days module they work on international public affairs. The purpose is to de-mystify Europe a little.
4. *Public affairs and media* is the fourth module. It is on how to influence the media and how to make use of media (traditional news media as well as the digital media and modern social media) for purposes of influencing policy making and decision making. It also includes an element of training in rhetoric.
5. *Grass roots and parallel sessions*, a module focusing on how to mobilize key players in local communities, how to gain support among societal groups and how to make things move this way. In parallel sessions participants are offered the opportunity to share and discuss their experiences in such matters. In this final module, there are also slots in the programme which are filled in accordance with specific learning goals of the current participants.

The course has as its overall aim to raise the level of performance with respect to competences referred to by the programme co-ordinators as :

- Organisational sensitivity
- Communication
- Political and governance sensitivity
- Strategical analysis
- Co-operation
- Pragmatism

75% of the programme is fixed and 25 % flexible. The programme is not individualized or tailor made for individual participants, but it is flexible in view of collective needs, or wishes.

As for the didactics: a lot of course work includes working with cases. Cases on paper enriched with media. 60 to 70 % of the offer is practically oriented; 30-40 % is university/theory based and staffed. Participants tend to appreciate the input of experienced experts somewhat better than the inputs of regular university professors. Some teachers are both.

Participants work in intervision (peer review) groups. A follow up course is being developed at present.

The majority of the staff are men, they operate in the roles of expert; coach, experienced professional.

The modules are being evaluated internally, but there is no evaluation of the external consistency of the programme. The evaluation focuses on learning outcomes and the level of

satisfaction with the programme offered among the participants. External consistency of the course programme, meaning whether the programme brings to the work situation what is needed in order to improve things or solve problems, is not included in the evaluation at present. The course has gradually developed, grown and improved. The focus has shifted from a more academic approach towards a more professional orientation, as is indicated by the proportion of academic versus professional content as well as by the kind of staff recruited from either background (30–40 % academic versus 60-70 % professional). The co-ordinators state that the Brussels module may need some revision. "It is too much based on systems theories and too little on human relations and communication at present".

Didactics: approach to professional learning

The 'Course Public Affairs' has, like other courses of Campus The Hague, grown into an increasingly active and interactive programme that builds upon the knowledge and experiences that course participants bring with them. The connection to professional practice is the primary principle. Throughout the years of its existence the programme adapted increasingly to the needs of the participants and of thus to needs of the professional field. To this end the learning aims of the participants are discussed in an in-take interview.

Also as far as the content is concerned the programme has developed over time to meet the changing needs of the field of work of PA professionals. In the programme, practice is linked to academic insights by introducing cases, simulations, and practical assignments.

Course participants have access to a learning environment through which they can download relevant course information and literature, and share experiences with colleague participants. This sharing of experiences is both the vehicle and the goal of the learning process. Phrased in an other way, the programme co-ordinators put it like this: "Attention is paid to internal lobbying". This implies that not only do participants take part in order to develop public affairs competences such as extending ones network, but they learn that by doing exactly that. They already extend their networks by communicating with fellow participants and by sharing knowledge with them.

Supervision of the course; lecturers

The course provides a high level of content by involving highly qualified and respected training staff. The intention for the near future is to establish a professorship on the very theme of public affairs, to be appointed at the Centre for Professional Learning. The programme is to a large degree based upon cases; many cases are presented by visiting lecturers from professional practice.

Participants who have a large experience less appreciate full group university way lectures. They prefer small group intervention (peer review) and working together in projects for the development of knowledge.

Impact of the course

After completion of the course, participants may stay connected in an alumni association (named 'Willem V') of which they are invited to become, and stay members without any costs.

The course is embedded in and linked to the work practice. This is accomplished by seeking a close co-operation with the BVPA, a professional association of professionals in the domain of public affairs.

“Networking is an important element of the hidden curriculum of the course.” (an expert)

Public affairs is a professional field of work in a variety of sectors and in governmental, non-profit and private organisations and companies. Many professionals switch after a number of years from one position to another.

“I consider changing your job a kind of professional development, a course like this may contribute to broadening your perspective. This is however hindered when there are participants with conflicting interests. ” (an expert)

Many participants consider a next step in their career; this is a side motive for attending the course. Respondents (teachers, participants as well as alumni) indicate that according to them in the course on public affairs:

- networking is promoted very well;
- the broadness/width of the programme is a powerful quality
- differentiation/opportunities for individual learning itineraries may be a bit further elaborated
- in a follow up course the emphasis may be more on co-creation of knowledge and less on the still more tradition transfer of knowledge
- the course quality highly depends on the quality of the staff/coordinators involved
- content wise there is flexibility; no taboos, no dogmas, no strict rules
- a negative point raised is the fact that too many participants too often do not attend meetings.

Recommendations regarding Campus The Hague

A separate faculty for professional learning?

Campus The Hague is seated in The Hague, the residence of the Dutch Government and also the domicile of many institutes in the field of international law. The Hague is at a distance of twenty kilometres from Leiden, the seat of the University with its traditional disciplinary based faculties.

There are intensive discussions about the relation between the two seats and the respective functions. If one would use a ‘separate faculty model’ for professional learning, a challenge is to preserve the scientific input from relevant disciplines. On the other hand a ‘separate faculty model’ might also invite the traditional disciplines to neglect their practical potential, because it is already ‘taken care of’.

Perspectives of curriculum development for professional learning

Today the 'Course Public Affairs' is a mixture of scientific knowledge and professional knowledge. An expert argues that a real integration has not yet succeeded. The programme still is too much a collection of separate elements.

Participants who have a large experience less appreciate full group university way lectures. They prefer small group work and working together in projects for the development of knowledge. This may be an incentive for the Campus The Hague to extend the 'Course Public Affairs' to a more comprehensive programme with a research component. For some participants a master course may even be attractive. The intention mentioned to establish a professorship in public affairs seems to offer a good perspective on the feasibility of this. Also the plans to create a follow up course with a stronger focus on the production of knowledge in a dialogue among academics and professionals seems to point already somewhat in that direction.

As for the model of the course, or the course design, the mix of methods, the active involvement of participants and the variety of academics and professionals involved seem to be perceived as factors that make the course successful. Also the role of a course co-ordinator, who represents the backbone of the programme, who moderates the course sessions and who serves as a contact for participants to support and facilitate the learning processes, forms a key feature of the courses' success.

Another key element of this model is the fact that taking part in the course provides participants to enter into a community of learners and professionals in public affairs consisting of the various cohorts of previous and present course participants. They together form a community of practice in which they work together and learn together in parallel. This mechanism is shown in the fact that former participants after years of experience and further development re-enter the course programme but now as teachers. It is an interesting example of a sector that brings itself to a higher level.

The course as it is now seems to be an enthusiastic initiative targeting at a group of professionals and offering them a platform and an opportunity to professionalise themselves in public affairs. So far the course does not seem to be based on an in depth analysis of what is going on or on what should be going on in the work and the field of public affairs. It is in that perspective that the course is not evaluated as for its external consistency. Of course by providing the course and by getting feed back to it, it has gradually tuned in to the needs of the participants. Whether these individual needs coincide with, or parallel what is needed from a more organisational, or societal, or governance perspective is not analysed. This would strengthen the programme, as well as its future follow up activities and their impact.

Social inclusion

The fate of adult education is in a sense that, while efforts aim at the edification of disadvantaged groups, programmes will always primarily reach the vanguard. No wonder that university level lifelong learning is an activity that primarily appeals to professionals who have a relatively advantaged position. The participants in the 'Course Public Affairs' are generally highly motivated professionals, who relying on their own power or supported by their employer want to develop themselves in the field concerned.

The professional field of public affairs covers a broad area of competences that may be acquired in a variety of branches. When people in midlife are confronted with the risk of drop out from employment or when their careers come to a deadlock, a course like the present one might open new opportunities.

This would however mean a drastic change of policy. Many professional courses are developed in close cooperation with professional associations. Regarding the 'Course Public Affairs' this exactly is an asset.

If, however, all kinds of continuing professional development are structurally restricted to established groups, it may get the character of a closed circle. Open access and reaching groups at risk will then not be plausible. This could be improved by an active involvement of employment offices. A government policy that enlarges funding for mid-life learners would also be important. Under such conditions a faculty that is especially directed at professional learning could broaden its scope. Broadening the scope is exactly what the Campus The Hague has as its ambition. This could lead to a broader influx of participants from a wider variety of sectors. The consequence might also be that the course increasingly may be perceived as giving access to other professional careers. In future the focus may shift a bit towards raising the level of employability among others in less advantaged sectors as well.

The Expertise Centre for Vocational Education (ECBO)

The intermediary position of ECBO

The origin of ECBO and its relation to universities and scientific research

ECBO is the national expertise centre for vocational education. ECBO is founded in 2009. ECBO originates from a merger between the CINOP expertise centre and the Max Goote expertise centre. CINOP is a research and consultancy agency in the field of learning, training and development. The Max Goote expertise centre is a research institute of the University of Amsterdam on the field of vocational and adult education.

The foundation of ECBO stems from the idea that a bridge is needed to open communication between science and professional practice and to support the field of vocational education with scientific expertise. The aim of ECBO is the linking of knowledge development in local situations and projects to the development of generic knowledge that is more generally applicable. The three main activities of ECBO are:

- synthesizing of and opening access to knowledge
- development of knowledge, research
- dissemination and exchange of knowledge

ECBO cooperates with several research universities and universities of applied science to accomplish its activities. There is a program council that also seats representatives of science. ECBO is also connected with science through three special academic chairs focused on the study of vocational education, adult education and lifelong learning.

ECBO is funded by the government under a law that regulates the subsidizing of the institutions that support education in different sectors (SLOA: Wet Subsidiering Landelijke Onderwijsondersteunende Activiteiten).

Opening access to and dissemination of knowledge

The present project focuses on the contribution from universities and science to lifelong learning. That is why the case study of ECBO concentrates on learning projects that integrate the dissemination of knowledge and professional development. ECBO organises among others courses and learning networks for people already working in vocational education or aspire to a job in that sector

ECBO develops a variety of means to reach the different groups involved. ECBO publishes research reports on a website (www.ecbo.nl). With a view to increase the accessibility of research reports, condensed versions of these reports in the form of so-called factsheets are also edited. In addition there are regular electronic and paper newsletters and ECBO organises different types of sessions, such as debates, expert meetings, conferences and lectures. If desired, such activities are organised on the location of the vocational schools.

ECBO has recently started an open accessible national search portal with policy and research information in the field of vocational education and lifelong learning (www.bvekennis.nl). This portal allows all kinds of professionals and interested visitors to search and find information on subjects of their interest.

In cooperation with others ECBO organises ‘communities’, that support the exchange of knowledge and experience among educational professionals. The learning network that is one of the subjects of this case study may be considered as an example of such a community.

Another subject in the case study is the ‘Course Vocational and Adult Education’. This course is organised yearly; it was started by the Max Goote expertise centre in 2000. The course can be attended by up to 22 participants a year. The course offers to new staff members in the field an introduction, an overview and a deepening of several subjects that are relevant in the sector concerned. Participants will gain insight into the views and interests of the many organisations that play a role in the sector. All seven sessions of the course focus on a topical issue central, that is discussed by an expert from science or from the field. It is also important that course members build a network; many of them later participate in other activities of ECBO.

Development of the ‘Learning Network Management of Innovation’

For several years ECBO organises the ‘Learning Network Management of Innovation in Secondary Vocational Education’. The learning network is concerned with the numerous innovations taking place in the field of secondary vocational education (MBO: Middelbaar Beroeps Onderwijs). The network aims at the exchange of knowledge and experience among the participants other and with scientists from ECBO and from universities. The learning network yearly organises four days for this aim.

Participants of the learning network

The participants are professionals in the field of secondary vocational education involved in innovation in their organisation. The participants generally already have a position in the sphere of innovation. Most participants are already advanced in their careers, their age is roughly between 30 and 50 years. Their training is higher education. Career development is not an explicit goal of participating in the research group, gaining strength in their profession and change of position and / or career prospects may result from participation in the network.

"My aim here is to bring in and to pick up: I want to test my knowledge against that of others and against scientific insights. That helps me in the unruly practice." (a participant)

It is important to say that the participants are not only individual members of the learning network. They also function as representative of their institution. In case of absence replacement is usual and if desired, specific experts from the institutions of the participants also join the learning network. So there is an active involvement of the institutions where the participants are employed.

Funding

Funding of the learning network is provided by ECBO. A voluntary contribution towards the costs of € 400 a year is requested to the participants. This contribution is sometimes paid by the

institution where they are employed, especially when the participation in the learning network follows from the policies of the institution involved.

Design and implementation of the programme

The program of the learning network has not the form of a course following the traditional model. The learning network is an ongoing project for the exchange and development of knowledge; it is not a programme with a fixed start and a formal ending. Participants may, according to their needs and those of their institution, get in and get of; it runs like a through train. Yet the desirability of a formal acknowledgement of the efforts of the participants is mentioned.

"It would be good if the learning activities that we perform also could be acknowledged as part of a master." (a participant)

Participants play an active role in the programme. In fact, the programme is generated by them. They search themselves, together with the staff of ECBO, for necessary input and support from the scientific world.

'Finding a connection between scientific knowledge and the development of professional practice' may be considered the general description of the design of the learning network. The practical knowledge of the participants may serve as starting material for the development of scientific knowledge.

"Our practical knowledge may help to enrich and to make concrete scientific models and theories." (a participant)

The programme of the learning network is set up in consultation with the participants on the basis of the needs that they themselves and the institutions where they are employed, experience. The staff of ECBO also brings up suggestions. Steady recurring elements in the program are:

- Presentations of and discussion with scientists on topics relevant to secondary vocational education.
- Examine experiences of participants with innovation projects in their institution.
- Discuss current developments in education policies.
- Evaluation of the progress of the learning network.

Examples of topics that are addressed are:

- Curriculum development
- Competence directed education
- Flexibilisation of courses
- Language and arithmetic skills
- Internal communication
- Competences, motives and craftsmanship of teachers

The learning network allows participants to evaluate scientific knowledge and transfer it to practice. In reverse direction the input from practice in science could be further developed. That

could go towards influencing the research agenda. Also, participants in a learning network might work as co-researchers to embed research in practice and to create an optimal connection. Such activity also contributes to further professionalization.

Guidance and support of the network

Staff members of ECBO who have expertise in the field of secondary vocational education provide the general organisation and supervision of the learning network. Scientists from universities and from ECBO are invited in line with the subjects placed on the agenda.

Impact of the learning network

The functions that the learning network fulfills for professional practice are specified by the participants as follows:

- Exchange of knowledge and experience of the participants with regard to practical solutions for all kinds of issues in secondary vocational education.
- Testing practical knowledge from the field against scientific insights.
- Supporting continuing professional development of the participants on the basis of these insights.
- Reflection on one's own professional role and on developments in secondary vocational education.
- Making scientific knowledge available to the institutions involved.
- Support implementation of innovations in the institutions involved.
- Networking: strengthening of relations between the participants in their professional roles and of the relationships between their institutions.
- Benchmarking: comparing the results of different institutions and planned innovation processes.

The transfer of knowledge is promoted, because the participants are members of the learning network not only individually but also as a representative of their institution. The products of the activities of the learning network are directly fed back to the institutions involved. As a spin off of the common learning network, it happens that a local learning network develops in the institution where the participants are employed.

The learning network aims at development of knowledge regarding the field concerned. This development is supported by universities and scientific research. This benefits the continuing professional development of the participants and may lead to further career development. Several participants have thus started another position in their institution.

The focus of the learning network on development of the professional practice also appears from the products that the learning network yields. Thus, the participants together produced a publication about innovations in secondary vocational education. This publication again serves a further dissemination of developed insights in the field.

The close link between the activities of the learning network and professional practice has obvious advantages but also reinforces the sense of the stubbornness of organisations in innovation processes.

Recommendations regarding ECBO

The position of an intermediary between science and professional practice

From the aims of the project THEMP, ECBO appears to be an appropriate model. It is an organisation that is an intermediary between science and professional practice. Thus, ECBO offers a playground where scientists from universities and professionals from the field of vocational education can meet in an equal way.

The position of an intermediary may also involve some vulnerabilities. ECBO is directed by a program council that seats representatives of science and representatives from the field of secondary vocational education. ECBO however has no structural relation with universities or with organisations in the field. This makes ECBO dependent on government policy and funding.

It might be useful for ECBO to develop a structural relation with one or more universities. This would allow for a steady connection between more practice-oriented research and more fundamental research. Both kinds of research might benefit from such a connection.

Next to this connection, it could be useful to develop a structural relation with a representative organisation from the field. For ECBO this might be the council for secondary vocational education (MBO-raad). Such a relation might strengthen the role of intermediaries like ECBO as organisations that both offer scientific support to the field and support professional development in the field concerned.

Beyond didactics: requisite variety in professional learning

As the present study focuses on university level lifelong learning, we will here concentrate on the dissemination and exchange of knowledge. The way ECBO elaborates this function shows a variety of methods: electronic media, newsletters, debates, expert meetings, conferences and lectures. Courses and learning networks are valuable elements in a broader set of activities.

Such activities draw attention to many important features of professional learning:

- they start from the frame of reference, the needs and the interests of the professionals involved
- the (tacit) knowledge of the professionals is considered a relevant knowledge base
- further professional development should be complementary to the acquired expertise of the professionals concerned
- the learning process is aiming at the articulation and the exchange of this knowledge and expertise
- the agenda of programmes is determined and subjects are selected according to the needs of the participants
- scientific knowledge and research are brought in on invitation; the traditional idea of a transfer of knowledge is replaced by a consultation of science, the initiative rests with the participants

- the participants also decide the way subjects are dealt with: it is self directed learning
- the supervision of the learning process has the character of facilitation
- programmes do not beforehand comply to a formal curriculum; it is firstly non-formal learning (see however below)

The activities of ECBO go beyond the conception of a contribution of universities to the development of social practice by means of, one-way, transfer of scientific knowledge. Initial university education usually follows a ‘one size fits all’ approach. Post-initial education demands a two-way traffic between science and professional practice. Professional knowledge is an equally relevant source for knowledge development. The meeting, or even confrontation, of different kinds of knowledge asks for further research.

A consequent step would be to involve educational professionals in research processes. Several projects in the Netherlands already try to do so. The transfer of knowledge that is replaced by the exchange of knowledge now becomes common development of knowledge.

This may not only contribute to the substantial development of knowledge, but also to the further professionalisation of educational practitioners. This is not to say that practitioners should become researchers and should comply to strict methodological rules. Conducting research in their own working environment allows professionals to develop a way of thinking that advances their practice. They will also be better able to talk about the research agenda, to mobilise the research world towards the needs of professional practice and to assess the opportunities and limitations of scientific propositions.

Conducting research is also a distinctive feature of academic level education. So, integration of a research component in lifelong learning programmes may also add to the quality of such programmes. ECBO offers by its activities a broad variety of non-formal lifelong learning opportunities to professionals in the field of vocational education. Opening the possibility to complement a programme with a research component would allow participants to obtain a formal degree at university level.

Social inclusion

The fate of adult education is in a sense that, while efforts aim at the edification of disadvantaged groups, programmes will always primarily reach the vanguard. No wonder that university level lifelong learning is an activity that primarily appeals to professionals who have a relatively advantaged position. An intermediary organisation like ECBO will attract highly motivated professionals, who often have a more coordinating position in the field of vocational education. The teachers appear to be harder to reach.

From the perspective of the project THEMP, the model of an intermediary like ECBO might benefit from a more structural embedding in the sector concerned. More specifically, more learning networks like the one discussed, could possibly develop when they are part of the policy in the sector. These learning networks might then also reach other groups of practitioners.

Such a structural embedding would promote to integrate lifelong learning activities in general HRM and HRD policies. Learning projects could not only serve the career development of staff members at different levels. They may also be useful in the recruitment of staff in a sector that

continuously needs new personnel. The possibilities of lateral influx could be extended. Vocational education always attracts people with experience in their branch who want to change to an educational role. This fits to the aim of the project THEMP that lifelong learning may help people at risk or people who need a new perspective to develop their 'sustainable employability'.

The Dutch Police Academy

The position of the police academy in the system of higher education

The Dutch Police Academy ('Politieacademie') is a separate department of the Dutch police. The Police Academy is concerned with recruitment and selection, with education and training and with research and knowledge development for the Dutch Police. The Police Academy aims to offer education and knowledge at a high level, to anticipate social trends and to translate these into tailor-made training. The 'Politieacademie' cooperates here with the police forces and many partner organisations in the field of safety & security, education and knowledge & research.

The 'Politieacademie' is a recognised college for professional education and it offers a broad range of professional training, from secondary vocational education and higher professional education to a specialised masters and leadership programme at academic and post-academic level. In a rapidly changing and complex society the tasks of the police are constantly developing. This asks for continuing professional development. The 'Politieacademie' provides the required education and training. These involve a combination of specialised knowledge, skills, professional attitude and behaviour.

The system of police education

The system of police education is divided in initial and post-initial programmes. The initial programmes are directed at people who are starting to work in the police. These programmes provide education to the levels two to four of secondary vocational education, to bachelor and to master level.

The post-initial programmes offer further education to experienced police staff. As part of career policy, it is possible to follow these programmes after completion of initial education. The 'Politieacademie' organises seventeen post-initial courses, that are provided by a number of schools within the academy. The specialisations concern the fields of investigation, aliens, traffic, environment, risk management and police leadership. The 'Politieacademie' also provides custom-made courses that answer special educational needs of police departments and also of other organisations in the field of security.

Starting point is that all students hold an appointment in a police department. Each regional police department has a special budget that allows them to enrol a number of their staff members in post-initial courses. Access to the courses is open to already employed police staff as well as to newly recruited staff, the so-called lateral influx.

Educational philosophy

All programmes provided by the 'Politieacademie' have a 'dual' structure: they are constituted by alternating periods of studying at the academy and working in police practice. This dual design assures the link between learning and working.

The programmes follow the principle of competence based learning. Professional profiles describe the requirements of actual and future police duties in a number of areas. These requirements are represented in the core tasks and authorities that a professional police officer will practise in fulfilling his duties. The programmes are organised around these core tasks. The

students exercise these tasks in the study periods as well as in the work periods to complete their competence tests.

The course ‘Master of Criminal Investigation’

Design of the course

The course Master of Criminal Investigation (MCI) is part of the system of police education. It is provided by the School of Criminal Investigation, that is one of the schools of the ‘Politieacademie’. The course has six specialisations: General Investigation, Crime Analysis, Forensics, Digital Investigation, Environment Policing, and Financial Investigation.

The course has, like all courses at the ‘Politieacademie’, a dual structure. The size of the programme is 60 ECTS, which equals to one full year of study. The programme is spread according to the dual nature over two years, constituted by alternating periods of studying at the academy and working in police practice. The curriculum is build up by 40% education activities, 20% home study and 40% working on assignments of the police department and the academy. So, the programme implies the combination of three learning environments.

Students and outreach

All students hold an appointment in a police department. Each regional police department has a special budget that allows them to enrol a number of their staff members in post-initial courses. Access to the courses is open to already employed police staff as well as to newly recruited staff, the so-called lateral influx.

This way of funding of a post-initial course implies that lifelong learning in this case is an integral part of human resource management and development in the police organisation.

The course MCI, like all post-initial courses at tertiary level, requires the students to have a qualification at higher education level. It is however also possible to pass through an APL procedure (accreditation of prior learning). Police departments may recommend talented staff members for such a procedure.

Transition courses are offered to both the students moving on (already in the police) and the students moving in (lateral influx) to remove deficiencies and to open the possibility for participation in the master course itself. For the students moving on this course emphasises research methods. For the students moving in the emphasis is on getting acquainted to professional police practice.

Aims and level of the programme

The formal level of the programme corresponds to seven in the EQF. Graduates have to be able to provide a scientific basis to the practice of investigation. They are educated in collecting relevant scientific sources and translating these in guidelines to the practice of investigation. The graduates are also able to conduct scientifically adequate research in answer to the needs for knowledge from the practice of investigation.

Link of the programme to scientific research

Conducting research is an important part of the programme; research tasks take up overall 36 ECTS. Students present their research to their fellow students, they translate research results to their own professional practice and they give account for their strategic choices.

The 'Politeacademie' has appointed thirteen professors of applied science who conduct research in the various fields that the academy covers. These research projects feed the educational programmes. Higher education institutions in the Netherlands are subject to a regular 'visitation' that is meant to assess the quality of the educational programmes. According to this visitation, the connection between research and education in the Master of Criminal Investigation may be strengthened.

Implementation of the programme: didactics

The programme follows, like all courses at the 'Politeacademie', the principle of competence based learning. The professional profile of the police investigator is leading for the programme. The programme is organised around the core tasks and authorities that a professional police officer will practise in fulfilling his duties.

The 'Politeacademie' has stipulated its didactical principles in a document. These principles are founded in the theory of social constructivism. The idea is that learning is an active process of knowledge construction. Students accomplish that process building on their prior experience. This implies that knowledge development takes place in realistic contexts and that cooperation is vital. The students themselves have to direct their learning process. The role of the teacher is focused on coaching. Reflection is stimulated by comparing various approaches. Learning results are to be assessed in authentic situations.

The students have rather diverse backgrounds, especially with respect to practical experience. These various backgrounds and working in heterogeneous groups allow the students to get acquainted with a variety of expertise. Both teachers and students report that this variety is a stimulating factor to the learning process.

Guidance and support

In the course MCI 22 teachers are involved. Fifteen teachers have an academic background; two among them have a Ph D. Eight teachers have their background in police practice. Next to regular teachers a number of visiting teachers are involved in the programme; they bring in a special expertise from within of outside the police.

The teachers care for the students to acquire subject knowledge; they support learning and give explanation, instruction and training and they assess the learning results of students.

Guidance of the learning processes of students is not only provided by teachers. Following the dual structure of the programme professional practice is also a learning environment. The managers of the students here fulfil a coaching role; they are responsible for the integration of learning and practice in the working environment.

An important role in the programme is fulfilled by three special tutors. They care for supervision of the students and monitor their progress in learning activities at the academy and

activities in police practice. These tutors are also contact persons in the communication between the academy and the police departments.

Evaluation of the programme

The 'Politieacademie' uses a detailed system of evaluation of all courses. Alumni are also questioned to evaluate the courses. Students and alumni are actively involved in innovations in the programme that follow regular evaluations.

It appears that many students experience difficulties in completing the programme within the formal duration of the course. This is supposed to be due to the complex combination of studying, professional practice and private life.

Impact: relevance of the course to professional practice and career development

The dual structure of the programme allows the students to link their learning activities directly to professional practice. The active learning formats that are used in the academy like simulations, role play, assignments and group work, contribute to this link. The learning activities are continued in practice because students participate there in ongoing investigations. The development of competencies thus gets a realistic and concrete context. The experiences from this context for their part feed back to further learning.

There is an association of alumni of the course. This association regularly organises conferences that support further professional development.

Many representatives from police practice are members of policy boards and committees regarding the courses of the 'Politieacademie'. The police departments are involved in further development of the programmes.

The visitation committee that assesses the quality of the programme has interviewed graduates and representatives from police practice. They conclude that graduates are doing well in professional practice, but that they sometimes have to struggle to gain a position in the organisation.

Recommendations regarding the Dutch Police Academy

The position of an in-company academy

It might be useful for the 'Politieacademie' to consider a structural relation with one or more universities.

Beyond didactics: professional learning formats for professionals

¶The 'Politieacademie' has developed an advanced model for professional learning. Unlike some other cases, the dual structure of the programme involves a real integration of learning and working. The working periods are devoted to participation in investigations in which the competencies are practised that are developed in the learning periods. The core tasks that

constitute the study programme represent the professional profile that is based upon the needs of the police organisation. So, the working and studying periods feed each other.

Social inclusion

Lifelong learning is intending to open possibilities to professional development for people throughout their career. Lifelong learning may thus prevent that people drop out and it opens 'second' chances for education to people who could not benefit from the 'first' chances, if any. Organisations that systematically pay attention to lifelong learning possibilities may thus forward their employees and at the same time progress themselves.

The Dutch police and the 'Politieacademie' offer an, at least for the Netherlands, exceptional example of an organisation that systematically promotes lifelong learning up to tertiary level. The fate of adult education is in a sense that, while efforts aim at the edification of disadvantaged groups, programmes will always primarily reach the vanguard. No wonder that university level lifelong learning is an activity that primarily appeals to professionals who have a relatively advantaged position. The 'Politieacademie' not only serves the already advantaged; the system of police education systematically opens pathways to people to advance themselves. This education addresses not only employees who are already in, but also newcomers who want to develop new perspectives.

The opening of possibilities for transition is a focal point of the project THEMP. In this context it is important to note that the 'Politieacademie' not only opens its courses to people who are completely qualified to attend. Both the use of APL procedures and the provision of transition courses to remove deficiencies broaden the outreach of the courses. The courses of the 'Politieacademie' thus may be considered a good example of transitional lifelong learning.

The programmes of the 'Politieacademie' are an integral part of human resource management and development in the Dutch police. The programmes do not only serve the career development of police officers at different levels. They are also useful in the recruitment of staff in a sector that continuously needs new personnel.

A model like this might clearly be a contribution to 'sustainable employability', which is the aim of the project THEMP. It might be considered if such a model could be used in other sectors as well.

A comparison of three cases of lifelong learning in higher education in the Netherlands

An overview of three programmes for ‘Tertiary Lifelong Learning’

In the preceding chapters we described three programmes at higher education level, that may be said to offer opportunities for lifelong learning to people who are in their mid-life and/or mid-career. The programmes differ with respect to their positions in the system of higher education and to their relationships with companies and organisations where people are working. They try to reach different target groups, whose situations are also different. The providers from their own backgrounds follow various strategies in designing programmes that are adjusted to the groups they try to serve.

In the following table we offer an overview of some basic elements of the three different programmes.

<i>Name of the institution</i>	Campus The Hague, Leiden University	Expertise Centre for Vocational Education	The Dutch Police Academy
<i>Institutional setting in the system of higher education</i>	Separate faculty of the university for (a.o.) professional learning	Intermediary organisation between universities and the field of vocational education	Recognised college for higher education, cooperating with universities
<i>Programme name</i>	Course Public Affairs	Learning Network Management of Innovation	Master course Criminal Investigation
<i>Cooperation with stakeholders</i>	Close cooperation with the professional association for Public Affairs	Close cooperation with the institutions for vocational education	Close cooperation with the police departments
<i>Target group</i>	Professionals working in the field concerned	Professionals working in vocational education	Police officers wanting to develop their careers and ‘lateral influx’ from outside the police
<i>Access to the programme</i>	Open access for higher educated professionals	Access for professionals holding or acquiring a staff position in that field	Both groups having or acquiring HE level; transition courses and APL available
<i>Labour market orientation; motivation of participants</i>	Not direct: professional development of participants	Not direct: innovation of professional practice	Direct: fulfilling the need of the police for higher educated staff
<i>Funding</i>	A fee of €4550, mostly paid by the employer	Voluntary contribution to the costs: €400, mostly paid by the employer	No fee; all students have/get an appointment in the police organisation

<i>Educational approach; teaching and learning</i>	Series of lectures and workshops, study trips; participants work on assignments and take part in discussions	Learning network: participants share experiences, discuss practices and develop knowledge, supported by researchers	Dual programme: integration of learning and working; study projects and working projects are connected
<i>Duration of the course</i>	One semester	Continuous programme; participants may join according to their needs	Two year dual programme; roughly 50/50 studyload and workload
<i>Outcome/ certification</i>	Non-formal certificate	No certificate (although desired by some participants)	Formal master certificate
<i>Evaluation and assessment of impact</i>	Process evaluations during the course No formal assessment of impact	Informal process evaluation No formal evaluation of impact	Formal evaluation of educative process and learning outcomes Semi formalised evaluation of impact, through field committees and evaluations among alumni

The programmes are followed by people in mid-life or mid-career. This does not imply that the providers of these programmes themselves all adhere to the idea of tertiary lifelong learning as conceived in the project THEMP. In this conception the emphasis is on lifelong learning as a way to improve the sustainable employability of the learners. In this chapter we will give a comparison between these three cases that starts from this conception. We question the cases as to their potential contribution to models for tertiary lifelong learning. This is thus not to say that the organisations themselves would always be made to feel responsible to the questions posed.

Different organisations, different orientations

Different organisations have their own aims. Universities in the Netherlands are generally organised in faculties based upon specific scientific disciplines and aiming at the conduct of pure scientific research. Educational programmes are developed according to the requirements of the scientific disciplines concerned.

Against this background the establishment of the Campus The Hague as a separate faculty may be considered as a far-reaching innovation in the university system in the Netherlands. Campus The Hague is established to make a connection between the political and administrative centre of the Netherlands, which is The Hague, and a diversity of relevant disciplines. Campus The Hague offers bachelor and master programmes and educational programmes for professionals working in the public sector. University based research and education thus may contribute to the development and the improvement of political and administrative systems.

The activities of the Campus The Hague aim to open the supply of knowledge and expertise that universities have to relevant institutions and professionals. So, in comparison to the other cases,

the Campus The Hague clearly has its starting point in the world of science and the ambition is to create a bridge to social practice. Campus The Hague presents itself as a platform for cooperation between scientific and other expertise centres.

The Expertise Centre for Vocational Education (ECBO) is, as its name says, an expertise centre, that is situated separate from the university. It originates from an university institute that focused on adult and vocational education. The position of interdisciplinary and practice-oriented studies in fields like this in the Dutch university system has however always been disputed.

The establishment of ECBO stems from the need to bring the development of scientific knowledge and professional development together. To this end ECBO draws from relevant university research in diverse disciplines, but there is also a apparent need for ECBO to conduct research itself. The involvement of institutions and professionals in the field of adult and vocational education is an essential element of the activities of ECBO.

As compared to the other cases, it is relevant to point to the position of ECBO as an independent intermediary between science and professional practice. Scientific research does not only provide an input to professional practice, the professional expertise from the field also constitutes an indispensable input to the development of knowledge. In this sense the activities of ECBO represent two-way traffic.

The Dutch Police Academy is the knowledge and education centre for the Dutch police. In this case we have an organisation that establishes its own institution to provide both professional development and development of knowledge. The Police Academy is a recognised college for professional education; it offers courses up to academic and post-academic level. A variety of scientific research projects are also conducted at the Police Academy. Within this scope the Police Academy cooperates with several universities.

The higher education programmes of the Police Academy draw from a variety of scientific subjects. The Police Academy is aiming to enhance the integration of scientific research not only in the education programmes but also in knowledge networks where experienced police staff share their expertise. The police organisation may in that way transform into a 'learning organisation'. The Police Academy in this sense represents a case of an organisation that itself aims to be a starting point for both professional development and the development of scientific knowledge.

Cooperation with companies and organisations; social reach of the programmes

The Campus The Hague of Leiden University actively strives after cooperation not only with the public institutions that are concentrated in The Hague, but nowadays also with private companies and organisations. As for the centre for professional learning many courses are developed responding to the needs from these kinds of institutions and organisations. The course Public Affairs is developed in close cooperation with the association of professionals working in the field.

As compared with the other cases, the Campus The Hague has no fixed institutional cooperation with particular partners. This contributes to the accessibility of its activities. Campus The Hague represents in a sense a modern form of university extension work. The courses of the centre for professional learning all have an open access character. In practice, the subjects of the courses,

the way they are presented and the image of the university involve that the participants are all experienced professionals at a higher education level.

The two other cases both are closely connected to the organisations in the sector they aim to serve. The Expertise Centre for Vocational Education (ECBO) is funded by the government to support the sector of 'adult and vocational education', that is a distinct sector of the education system in the Netherlands. ECBO consequently has a fixed relationship with the organisations in the sector, but ECBO next to that keeps the character of an independent scientific institute.

ECBO develops a variety of activities to reach the different groups of professionals working in the field of adult and vocational education. The majority of these professionals have some kind of higher education. ECBO is however well aware of the different levels of the different groups of professionals and of their readiness to take part in the process of development and exchange of knowledge. As always, the staff members who have a higher position in their organisation are the ones to be more easily reached. The 'Learning Network Management of Innovation' and its participants resemble this situation. The rooting of ECBO and its activities in the sector however allow that the dissemination of knowledge gets through to other levels in the organisations concerned.

Referring to the opening remark of this chapter it has to be noted that ECBO is no 'lifelong learning institute'. ECBO is a centre for the development and dissemination of knowledge. Regarding the importance of learning networks for adult and professional learning the model of ECBO however certainly may be considered.

The Dutch Police Academy is self-evidently completely rooted in the police organisation. This is however not to say that the Police Academy is some kind of a 'closed shop'. The influx of students originates from inside and from outside the police. And also graduates from the academy find their jobs both inside and outside the police organisation. Regarding this 'outflow' it is interesting that some interviewees say that it might be considered to not only serve the police but also to direct the courses to the broader group of professions in the field of security and investigation.

Formerly many organisations offered the opportunity to employees who often entered with a lower qualification to move through in the organisation by following courses and gradually building up their expertise. Nowadays human resource policies are more directed at recruiting people who already have the required qualification. The police organisation is an example of organisation that still allows employees to move through in their career and to grow from e.g. vocational education level to higher education level.

Next to this influx from inside there is a so-called 'lateral influx' from outside the police organisation. This opens the opportunity to employed or unemployed people with all kinds of backgrounds, although generally higher educated, to make a change in their career.

As compared to the other two cases the Police Academy is the case that is most rooted in a specific organisation and whose educational programmes are most integrated in the human resource policies of that organisation. A concluding remark might be that it appears that these conditions perhaps most offer the opportunity of career development and labour market transitions to people who are in their mid-life.

Development of programmes adjusted to adult and professional learners

Campus The Hague originates from a classic university and this is resembled in the design of the courses they offer. The courses mainly consist of a series of lectures and workshops combined with discussions and assignments. These activities are given by university lecturers as well as teachers from professional practice. The combination of two kinds of speakers is meant to provide an input from science as well as an adjustment to the needs of professional learners.

In this way the programme offers a series of subjects that are relevant to the professional practice of the participants. Although there is evidently room for the participants to play an active role in the various educational activities, it is not their professional action and situation that directs the curriculum.

In the case of ECBO we may observe a larger variety of methods. Next to more supply-directed formats for dissemination of scientific knowledge, we find in the 'learning network management of innovation' a format for professional learning that is very much demand-directed.

Here, the programme is generated by the participants. They search themselves, together with the staff of ECBO, for necessary input and support from the scientific world. They use this input to reflect on opportunities to improve their professional practice and they exchange their experiences in trying to do so.

As stated above the activities of ECBO represent two-way traffic between science and professional practice. However regarding the learning network, although the programme is evidently demand-directed, the research activities of ECBO and relevant universities are not fed by the participating professionals. From the perspective of lifelong learning participation of professionals in the agenda and the conduct of research thus might be a next step.

The dual model of the programmes provided by the Police Academy promises a far-reaching integration of learning and working. Study activities are organised around the core tasks of professional practice; these tasks are explored by drawing on relevant scientific subjects. The working activities are so designed as to meet the needs of professional practice in the department concerned as well as to develop the competencies aimed at by the programme.

So, we here have in principle a programme for professional learning that represents two-way traffic. Study activities and working activities are adjusted to each other, which allows the desired integration of learning and working. However, on both sides limitations occur. The formal character of the programme requires a formal accreditation, which stimulates to build a programme based upon determined subject packages. On the other side everyday practice in the police departments is not automatically ready to receive an innovative or experimental input.

An assessment of the impact of programmes for the participants and for their organisations

For the assessment of the impact of programmes it is generally considered useful to distinguish different aspects. Participation in lifelong learning may bring about different benefits. The participation as such may be valued, learning outcomes are of course relevant and the personal and social situation of participants may undergo changes. The contribution to the professional practice and to the career of the participants is especially important. Learning is one thing, transfer of learning outcomes to professional practice always involves many other stimulating

and hindering conditions. Transfer to practice eventually implies a development of working processes in the companies and organisations where participants are working.

Sometimes it seems if lifelong learning is considered to be a panacea. It is expected to have an impact on or even to be a universal remedy for any problem in the personal, social or professional sphere. An assessment of such a variety of possible outcomes goes far beyond the framework of the case studies. The project THEMP as a whole aims to collect elements for a tool that may be useful to assess the impact of lifelong learning programmes in a more realistic way. The case studies are useful to discuss different conditions that may add to an impact of lifelong learning. These conditions vary among the three cases studied.

In the course Public Affairs of the Campus The Hague there is, as compared to other cases, a limited involvement of companies and organisations where professional are working. The course is not filled by the needs of these companies and organisations. Participation is for the most part a matter of individual choice. Although in several cases the employer provides some support, it is the individual professional who decides to attend the course.

On the other hand there is an active involvement of the professional association for public affairs. Several lecturers are experienced professionals from this association. This emphasises the nature of working in public affairs as substantially requiring a personal professional competence. The participants generally positively evaluate the contribution of the course to their competence. The loose connection to the companies and organisations concerned however makes it difficult to make statements about the transfer to professional practice in these companies and organisations.

ECBO is an intermediary between universities and the field of secondary vocational education. ECBO has strong connections on both sides, but it is an independent organisation. Nearly all activities aiming at dissemination of knowledge are open to professionals working in the field (and also to other interested people), who thus may benefit from the work of ECBO.

The case study shows that the participants in the 'learning network management of innovation' themselves ascribe to the network important learning functions. In the broader approach to the impact of lifelong learning sketched above, it is important to note that the participants in the learning network are in practice delegates of their organisations. The participants in the learning network usually have a coordinating position in their schools. It is supposed that the knowledge that is developed in the learning network is disseminated along that line in the schools. In that way the knowledge developed and shared through the activities of ECBO may eventually add to an improvement of the educational practice in secondary vocational education. For instance: a discussion of research on drop out of pupils and a comparison of approaches to drop out in the learning network may lead to the development of improved strategies. These strategies are transferred to the schools and may be implemented by the training of practitioners.

The broader approach to the impact of lifelong learning asks for a contribution to the development of working processes in professional practice. From this viewpoint the dissemination activities of ECBO may be said to represent a kind of multi-step flow strategy. This approach to communication says that messages do usually not reach people in a direct way, but that mostly a number of intermediate actors are involved. An implication of this approach is that one-way traffic may tend to prevail, because two-way traffic has to pass too many filters. When following such a strategy it is useful to pay attention to the action of the intermediate levels. The involvement of the diverse layers of professionals in learning activities could improve the transfer.

The courses of the Police Academy are directly designed to advance the professional competence of the participants and to improve the professional practice in the police organisation. The master course Criminal Investigation is explicitly directed to deliver a higher education boost to the practice of investigation. The careers of the participants, if successful in their studies, almost automatically get one or more steps up in the organisation. The course opens also a pathway to an attractive position to people from outside the police organisation. It appears that graduates are also in demand at the broader labour market.

Thus considered the desired impact of the courses is nearly guaranteed. However, the desired higher education input to the police organisation stems from central policy decisions. So, in a sense there is a top-down approach. Organisational change can not only result from an external input, it also requires an internal process that involves the staff concerned. The police organisation is traditionally for a large part an organisation of people at the level secondary vocational education. The organisation is consequently not always a receptive ground to 'academic' innovations.

This means in practice that students who are moving through from the organisation sometimes meet difficulties in connecting their tasks in the organisation with the input from the study activities. Students who come from outside experience difficulties in finding a workplace in practice that allows them to develop their 'academic' competencies. And graduates do not always easily find a working environment that is ready to integrate their input.

Other activities of the Police Academy could fulfil a complementary function to the courses in this context. Several projects of the Police Academy aim at the constitution of learning networks of police officers in a specific field. These networks allow to make explicit and to share the practical knowledge that is implied in professional practice and to connect this knowledge to new knowledge from outside, e.g. from the academic world. These projects aim to transform the police into a 'learning organisation'. Such an organisation will be better able to receive innovations.

Advantages and disadvantages of the three models regarding lifelong learning

In the opening remark of this chapter it is noted that the cases do not necessarily adhere to the idea of lifelong learning as presented in the project THEMP. Having said so, it is possible to point to elements of the cases mentioned above that may be advantageous to develop a model for lifelong learning or to elements that may be disadvantageous.

An 'open faculty model'

The Campus The Hague is a separate faculty of Leiden University that is directed at, among other activities, programmes for professional learning. The Campus opens university based programmes in its field of expertise to all adult and professional learners who want to develop their knowledge. We may describe this model as an '*open faculty model*'.

A clear advantage of this model for lifelong learning is the open access to all interested people. In practice the required level is guaranteed by the provided information about the courses and by the in-take conversations.

For the development of its courses the Campus The Hague is open to cooperation with external partners like companies and organisations and professional associations. As compared to the other two cases the Campus The Hague has however no fixed relationship with a specific professional sector. This implies that the impact for professional practice of the courses is generally outside the sphere of influence of the Campus. The transfer to practice depends largely on the possibilities of the individual participant and his situation.

The approach of the Campus The Hague may be described as starting from the supply of scientific knowledge and subsequently steered by the demand of the market. This implies a flexible provision of courses; many of them proof however their reason to exist already for a number of years.

From the perspective of lifelong learning a challenge for the Campus The Hague may be to open the possibility to integrate the separate courses in regular university bachelor and master programmes. This would combine the advantage of university level programmes with a practical orientation.

An 'intermediary organisation model'

The Expertise Centre for Vocational Education (ECBO) is an independent intermediary organisation between universities and the field of secondary vocational education. So here we may say to have an *'intermediary organisation model'*.

The advantage of the independent intermediary position of ECBO is that it may draw from a variety of research at all universities. It may conduct research itself. And it provides a great variety of forms for the dissemination of knowledge. Dissemination of knowledge with a clear scientific input is from the viewpoint of tertiary lifelong learning an attractive model. For adult learning a limitation to the traditional course approach implies far too much a one-size fits all model. The variety of working formats used by ECBO offers to professional learners all kinds of possibilities to design a learning pathway that fits them best.

The connection of ECBO to the sector of secondary vocational education causes that many professionals from the sector take part in the activities of ECBO. From the perspective of lifelong learning this is also a limitation: people from outside the sector will not be easily reached.

An advantage of the position of ECBO is that a connection can be made in the diverse activities between the development of scientific knowledge and the practical knowledge that professionals have. In this sense the activities of ECBO represent two-way traffic.

A challenge to ECBO may be to actually maintain the relationships both with the universities and the practice of secondary vocational education. From outside it is difficult to influence university research policy. And it is difficult to get through to the practical level in the large institutions of secondary vocational education. Dissemination of knowledge may too much get a one-way character when the road for dissemination is too long and/or too complicated. An extension of the 'learning network' model to the different layers of professionals working in practice may help to overcome this last difficulty.

An 'in-company academy model'

The Dutch Police Academy is a typical example of an institute for professional education that is established by an organisation or a sector itself. Several organisations and sectors have established 'academies', but most of them have no recognised position like the Police Academy does have. So, here we have a real '*in-company academy model*'.

The close connection of the Police Academy to the police organisation attributes to the Police Academy an important function for the human resource policy of the organisation. Educational programmes may be used as a direct instrument to fulfil the needs of the police organisation for a qualified staff. These programmes offer both to people from within the organisation and people from outside the opportunity to advance their career. The in-company character does here not lead to a limitation to people who are already in, which is from the perspective of social inclusion an important observation. The programmes offer the opportunity to move in, to move through and even to move out, because people acquire a qualification that is also valuable elsewhere at the labour market. Because we find here a direct relevance to sustainable employability, this case maybe responds best to the ideas of the project THEMP.

The in-company academy model creates favourable conditions for the development of a real dual design of the educational programme, like the Police Academy does. A dual design requires a reciprocal adjustment of study activities and working activities. This is of course better possible when both activities belong to the same organisation. The integration of learning and working is possibly the most important feature of professional learning. The opportunities for a dual design thus still enhance the relevance of the in-company academy model.

Not many organisations or sectors will be able to establish a successful in-company academy. But if they manage to do so they will also have an important source for the improvement of working processes and for the innovation of the organisation.

The great challenge for an in-company academy seems to be to maintain the scientific level by keeping a relationship with the research and education programmes of universities. The danger of staying inside is the growth of a limited scope. The Police Academy is making efforts to strengthen structural relationships with universities and also to develop research programmes in which scientists from inside and from outside the organisation cooperate. This may also strengthen the research component of the master programmes.

Appendix: Persons interviewed for the case studies

Campus The Hague

Ms Nikol Hopman MA

Director Centre for Professional Learning, Campus The Hague

Sander Dikker Hupkes LL M

Senior Programme Leader, Campus The Hague

Youssef Rahman MA

Senior Programme Leader, Campus The Hague

Dr Caspar van den Berg

Assistant Professor Public Administration, Leiden University

Dr Jelmer Schalk

Assistant Professor Public Administration, Leiden University

Peter van Keulen MA

Director 'Public Matters'

Founder of the professional association for public affairs (BVPA)

Remco Heeremans MA

Vice-Director 'NL Ingenieurs'

Chairman of 'Willem V', the alumni association of the 'Course Public Affairs'

Ms Miguette Jadoul MA

Participant in the 'Course Public Affairs'

Senior Advisor Corporate Public Affairs at TNO

Etienne van der Horst MSc

Participant in the 'Course Public Affairs'

Consultant, Project and Process Manager at 'VHD Advies'

The Expertise Centre for Vocational Education (ECBO)

Dr Marc van der Meer

Director of ECBO

Ms Dr Ellen Verheijen

Programme leader at ECBO

Ms Marja van den Dungen MA

Supervisor of the 'Learning Network Management of Innovation'

Ms Eva Voncken MA

Supervisor of the 'Learning Network Management of Innovation'

Ms Ilona Koning MA

Advisor communication and dissemination of knowledge at ECBO

Ben Rijgersberg

Director of the foundation for cooperation between companies and vocational education (SBB)

Ms Mirjan de Lange MSc

Policy advisor at the foundation for cooperation between companies and vocational education (SBB)

Ms Gita Perdon-Griffioen MA

Policy advisor at the foundation for cooperation between companies and vocational education (SBB)

The 'Learning Network Management of Innovation'

The participants are all staff members of the institutions mentioned. These institutions, mostly called ROC (Regional Education and Training Centre), provide secondary vocational education in the Netherlands.

Ms Georgia Vasilaras

ROC Leijgraaf

Hans Kuikman

Alfa College

Ms Jolien van Uden

ROC van Twente

Ms Josée Bours

Koning Willem I College

Claus Hoekstra

ROC A12

Ms Marjo Lam

ROC Landstede

Max van Poorten

Grafisch Lyceum Utrecht

Ms Desirée Haan

Helicon

The Dutch Police Academy

Dr Cees Sprenger

Professor of applied science at the 'Politieacademie'

Ms Erica de Heus MA

Director education at the 'Politieacademie'

Ms Nicole Lieve MA

Project leader higher educated staff at the Dutch police

Jan de Vogel

Manager education at the school for criminal investigation

Ms Simone Bezuijen

Practical supervisor of the students in a police department

Alex Heemskerk MA

Practical supervisor of the students in a police department

Ms Anneke van Meerten

Practical supervisor of the students in a police department

Ms Sharita Gangabisoensingh MA

Educationalist at the master programme

Ms Saskia Dekkers MA

Teacher/researcher at the master programme

Ms Sophie Scholten MA

Teacher/researcher at the master programme

Herman Heijmerikx MA

Mentor of the students in the master programme

Joost Blijham MCI

Graduate from the master programme

Ms Audrey Bulsink MCI

Graduate from the master programme

Ms Karina Kats MCI

Graduate from the master programme

Ms Arjanne Klein-Ikkink MCI

Graduate from the master programme

Ms José Snijder MCI

Graduate from the master programme