



# Exercise as a warm-up for reintegration

REINTEGRATING PEOPLE WITH OCCUPATIONAL DISABILITIES INTO THE LABOUR MARKET

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## THE NETHERLANDS

The practice is part of the government's efforts to reduce and prevent long-term unemployment and to reintegrate people with occupational disabilities into the labour market. At the start of the programme, the participants are asked to complete questionnaires about their mental and physical health and are checked by a professional physician. This is taken into account when drafting the individual and group exercise programme. The evaluation shows that the chances of getting paid work increased by 300 % for those who participated in the programme in comparison to someone who participated in a reintegration programme without the physical exercise programme from Ergo Control.

Name of the PES	Ergo Control (from 2019 Bewegen Werkt – Movement Works, which now is also the name of the practice)
When was the practice implemented?	1999–ongoing.
Which organisation was involved in its implementation?	PES/municipal services.
Which groups were targeted by the practice?	<p>Jobseekers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Long-term unemployed;</li> <li>▶ People suffering from physical disability or illness;</li> <li>▶ Disabled (physical) / disabled (mental/psychological).</li> </ul>
What were the practice's main objectives?	<p>The programme uses physical exercise to reactivate people with lengthy occupational disabilities but who are at least partially able to work in the labour market. In particular, the programme is intended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. improve the physical condition and lifestyle of participants;</li> <li>2. broaden their social networks;</li> <li>3. improve their daily routines;</li> <li>4. improve their well-being (self-confidence, motivation); and</li> <li>5. improve their chances in the labour market.</li> </ol>
What activities were carried out?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Mainly physical exercise: a custom-made programme for each participant;</li> <li>▶ Lessons on the importance of exercise, healthy food and relaxation by professional instructors;</li> <li>▶ Coaching during group sessions as well as on the individual level.</li> </ul> <p>The programme lasts for three to five months during which the participants exercise for 3.5 hours, two or three times a week.</p>
What resources and other relevant organisational aspects were involved?	<p>'Exercise as a Warm-up for Reintegration (BWR)' was developed in 1999 by Ergo Control, a private company, at the request of the PES.</p> <p>Since the development of the programme, Ergo Control has implemented the programme as a contractor of PES, municipalities and other organisations involved in the labour market transition of long-term unemployed people with physical and/or mental problems.</p>

What were the source(s) of funding?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ National budget (tax revenue).</li> <li>▶ The programme is funded by the organisation that commissions Bewegen Werkt to perform the assignment. This can be the PES, municipalities or any other organisation responsible for realising transitions to the labour market via reintegration programmes (using government funding).</li> </ul>
What were the outputs of the practice: people reached and products?	<p><u>People reached:</u> Since 1999, more than 15 000 people have been reached by the programme.</p> <p><u>Products:</u> A three- to five-month programme of physical exercise for the participants, guided by professional training instructors.</p>
What outcomes have been identified?	The evaluation shows that the chances of getting paid work increased by 300 % for those who participated in the programme, in comparison to someone who participated in a reintegration programme without the physical exercise programme from Bewegen Werkt.
What are the lessons learnt and success factors?	The University of Groningen undertook the evaluation of the programme. The evaluation compares a group that participated in the intervention programme (n=102) with a control group (n=38). The evaluators looked at short-term effects (just after the test group completed the exercise programme) and long-term effects (15 months after the completion of the exercise programme). Mainly questionnaires were used for the evaluation, i.e. one at the beginning of the programme, one after completing the programme, and one 15 months later.



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