

A black and white photograph of a modern building with a grid of windows and a tall, thin tower. The building is the University of Amsterdam building. The tower has a logo on top. The building is surrounded by trees.

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Early Childhood Education and Care in NL

- Privatised sector since 2005; profit and non-for-profit providers

Problems with labour market and job quality

- High workloads: vicious circles of staff shortages - absenteeism – workloads
- Dissatisfaction about professional autonomy and career-development
- Many administrative tasks since legal quality standards 2018

Fragmented and conflictual social dialogue in ECEC

FNV: ‘activistists’ in addressing high workloads and low wages

Two parties left collective bargaining table (FNV and SME’s organisation)

More consensus in tripartite social dialogue about ECEC-reform in 2025

Case studies: social innovations in dealing with sector wide challenges

Case 1 **childcentre organisation**:

cooperation with (public) primary schools to enhance both:

- professional development pedagogical workers and
- educational function early childhood

Case 2 '**commercial childcare organisations**:

recruiting and retaining workers through

- 'formation management'
- improving working conditions such as more working hours, professional development

Long term care in the Netherlands

Reform 2015: more individual responsibility, shift to non-residential care, public procurement model in homecare (by municipalities), public cuts

Problems with labour market and job quality

- Low wages
- High workloads: high demands - low control, same 'vicious circles' here
- Low professional autonomy and low appreciation at work

Cooperative/consensual collective bargaining (nowadays)

Agreement 2022: higher wages, more predictability in working hours, right to be unreachable, increase of standard employment contracts

Case studies: social innovations in dealing with sector wide challenges

Case 3: professionalization of public procurement at regional level

- 'Manageable' numbers of suppliers and increased criteria/control of service
- Combatting 'care cowboys' / 'race-to-the-bottom'

Case 4: self-organising teams in a nursing home

- Longer existing 'Duch model' of innovation in homecare by professionals
- Higher autonomy, but also more stress for some groups

Lessons learned

- Labour as key factor in sustainability care: multi-level responses in social dialogue, collective bargaining, bottom-up innovations, but limits in coordination
- Problems in job quality seem higher in marketized (sub-)sectors, while having lower capacities for 'corrections' because of conflictual labour relations (ECEC)
- Low involvements of social partners in social innovations at the workplace