Government plans to expand programmes to help asylum seekers find work

With the aim of allowing newcomers to start working earlier, the government announced plans to open additional participation desks in asylum seekers' centres. The participation desks *(Meedoenbalies)* assist asylum seekers to find paid work, in addition to volunteer work and other activities. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment is allocating EUR 5 million annually to expand the number of participation desks. 12 new desks will open in 2026, bringing the total to 50, with further expansion planned for 2027 so that the vast majority of regular asylum seekers' centres will have a participation desk. Additionally, the government noted that it plans to shorten the period from when an asylum seeker can engage in paid work from 6 months to 3 months for asylum seekers for whom there is a good chance that they will be allowed to stay in the Netherlands.

The government reported that its ambition is to help 75,000 newcomers find work within 4 years. To realise this, both the Minister of Work and Participation and the Minister for Asylum and Migration have jointly launched the work and participation newcomers approach, which focuses on work and language in asylum reception, agreements with (shortage) sectors to hire more newcomers, and to put work at the centre of the entire asylum and civic integration system.

Source(s)

- Government | Rijksoverheid (28 October, 2026), Kabinet: meer Meedoenbalies in azc’s om nieuwkomers aan werk te helpen [Cabinet: more Participation desks in asylum seekers' centres to help newcomers find work], https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2026/10/28/kabinet-meer-meedoenbalies-in-azcs-om-nieuwkomers-aan-werk-te-helpen

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