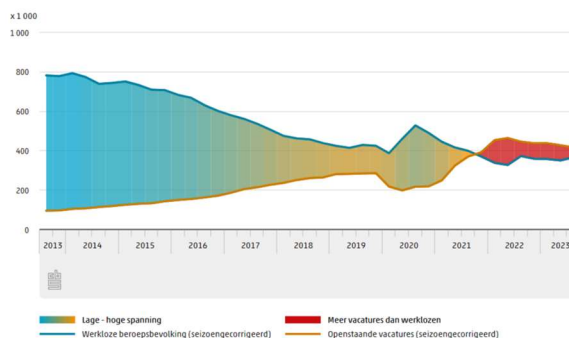


BARMETAL: Digitalization, Automatization and Decarbonization: Opportunity for strengthening collective bargaining in the metal sector (101052331) Country Factsheet – THE NETHERLANDS

/Elevators pitch/

The Dutch labour market currently offers more jobs than there are job-seeking people available. This also causes labour shortages in the metal sector, where the need for technically skilled workers is high. Trade unions and employers' associations in this industry are on good terms: next to the CBA, they also created a strategic vision for the manufacturing sector. They deem this necessary, as they both see the shortages as threatening the industry's competitiveness.



CBS (2023), Spanning op de arbeidsmarkt. <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/visualisaties/dashboard-arbeidsmarkt/spanning-op-de-arbeidsmarkt>

Key challenges in the metal sector

- Labour shortages, mainly of technically skilled workers, are hindering business operation.
- The redistribution of work due to D-A-D requires upskilling and reskilling of workers.
- The lack of government policies on D-A-D and/or the lack of clarity surrounding them threatens the Dutch metal sector, while foreign competitors and industries become more competitive.

Role of social partners in addressing D-A-D

- To address labour shortages, companies are working together with educational institutions in so-called technohubs, where new technologies can be tested and taught, using subsidies from the sectoral training and development funds.
- Training and development funds are financing Ozone, an online learning platform for the whole metal sector.
- The social partners participate together in lobbying towards the government, to implement policies that will make the Dutch metal sector, and the manufacturing sector in its entirety, more competitive.

D-A-D in workplace

- Decisions regarding D-A-D are mainly taken by management. Works council and trade unions are not involved in these business decisions, except when they touch on employment or the workers' labour conditions.
- The introduction of D-A-D often goes hand in hand with the redistribution of work, instead of layoffs. This does require workers to reskill or at least switch to different tasks.
- Among the case studies, the importance of decarbonisation is shared with workers through online courses in Ozone or through internal communication channels, highlighting the sustainable projects that they are working on.

Bargaining efforts in companies

- Topics in collective bargaining agreements are limited to the availability of training days and training leave.
- Trade unions often do not have the prerogative to bargain on D-A-D issues, since these mainly affect the business operations and not employment or the workers' labour conditions.
- Still, employers' associations and trade unions have constructive social dialogues on D-A-D related issues.
- In general, there is a cooperative mentality within the Dutch metal sector, as all social partners see the importance of a strong metal sector that is relevant and competitive, and offers jobs to technically skilled people, essential for a healthy workforce.