

Veterans' Core Data for 2014

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The Veterans' Institute (*V*) implements a substantial part of the Dutch veterans' policy on behalf of the Ministry of Defence and promotes public appreciation for and the well-being of Dutch veterans and their home front partners.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Reason

In conducting the Core Data of Veterans for 2014 survey we hope to gain a clearer understanding of the wishes, needs and experiences of veterans as regards three topics. Those topics are veterans' policy, the services provided by the Veterans' Institute (Vi) and the usefulness of experience working as a serviceman or service woman and deployment experience as far as finding and doing a job after military service is concerned.

Five hundred veterans took part in the survey (this representing a response of 51%; see annex 1 for a description of the structure of the survey and how it was conducted, and annex 2 for the questionnaire). Those veterans were subdivided into four age cohorts: (1) aged 35 and below; (2) between 36 and 50 years of age; (3) between 51 and 65 years of age; (4) between 66 and 90 years of age. Where relevant, we have also described the differences among those cohorts.

1.2 General information

The following paragraph contains a summary of the key findings from this survey. More detailed information about the findings can be found in chapter 2 (characteristics of the response group), chapter 3 (veterans' opinions on veterans' policy and the services provided) and chapter 4 (position in the labour market). Chapters 3 and 4 also contain information - in blue boxes - originating from previous Veterans' Institute studies. That information enables us to put the findings from this survey into a broader perspective.

1.3 Key findings

1.3.1 Opinion on veterans' policy

In general, veterans are positive or very positive about the veterans' policy, the present after-care provided for Dutch service personnel and veterans, promoting and stimulating appreciation for veterans by the government or Ministry of Defence, the Netherlands Veterans' Day, veterans' days in a region or municipality, the veterans' day held by a veteran's 'own' operational command (branch of the armed forces) and remembrance ceremonies for fallen service personnel. Of those aspects, the remembrance of fallen service personnel is considered the most important. In general, least importance is attached to the veterans' day in a region or municipality.

In general, older veterans are more positive about the veterans' day in a region or municipality, the veterans' day held by a veteran's 'own' branch of the armed forces and remembrance ceremonies. We know from annual evaluations by the Vi of the Netherlands Veterans' Day that older veterans also attend regional and local veterans' days more frequently than younger veterans. Older veterans are also more likely than younger veterans to be a member of an association for retired service personnel or veterans. The older veterans also take part in reunions more frequently.

1.3.2 Opinion on the services provided by the Veterans' Institute

In general, veterans are positive or very positive about the services provided by the Veterans' Institute. Roughly four in five veterans find the services provided by the Veterans' Institute important. There are more veterans in the 51 and above age cohort than those aged 51 and below who find the services provided important.

6% of veterans say they have made use of the services provided by the Veterans' Institute. Relatively speaking, older veterans make more use than younger veterans of the services provided. Those who do make use of the services provided give positive responses.

Six per cent is a strikingly low percentage of veterans to make use of these services. We know from an earlier survey that all 1,106 participants in that survey made use of the services provided by the Veterans' Institute in one way or another. Examples include searching for information on the website, by using social media, by telephone or email or by making contact in person. Or, for example, by reading, at least in some cases, the Checkpoint magazine or the newsletter, applying for train tickets, or by asking for help through the central contact point (since 11 June 2014: the Veterans' Office). This

raises the question of what the veterans in that survey understood “services” to mean and whether that idea matches the idea the institution itself has of the services provided.

This survey also shows that nearly one-half of veterans claiming to use the Veterans’ Institute are probably referring to a different organisation (in particular *Stichting de Basis* [De Basis Foundation]). It also becomes clear that veterans think the Veterans’ Institute should provide services which they do not realise are part of its remit, such as providing psychological help and care, organising veterans’ days, remembrance ceremonies and contact between veterans, and ensuring their interests are promoted. In short, it would appear that some veterans have a different understanding from the Veterans’ Institute itself of the services the Veterans’ Institute supplies or (in their eyes) should supply.

1.3.3 Appreciation felt

For nearly one-half of veterans, the government and the Ministry of Defence turn out to be a source of appreciation. Veterans feel they are less appreciated by the media, society at large or their immediate circles than by the government or the Ministry of Defence. In 2014, the appreciation felt from the four parties (government and Ministry of Defence, the media, society at large and immediate circle) was greater than in 2010. However, in comparison with 2013, there was slight fall in the appreciation felt from the government, the media and society at large.

In recent years, the percentage of veterans who feel neither appreciation nor a lack of appreciation by the four parties has remained more or less the same. This year, those percentages range from 36% (government and Ministry of Defence) and 54% (society).

1.3.4 Impact of deployment on later life

Roughly one in twenty veterans (5.5%) finds deployment has had a negative or very negative impact on his or her life. Among younger veterans (up to the age of 36) the figure is one in seventy (1.4%). Among that group of younger veterans, roughly two in five (44%) find it has had a positive and negative impact on their lives. The percentage of veterans who find it has had a positive or very positive impact ranges from 40% (51-65 year olds) to 52% (between 21 to 51 years).

1.3.5 Impact of experience gained from work as a serviceman or servicewoman and deployment experience on career

Of the 500 participants in this survey, 392 veterans worked or could have worked after leaving service (because they had not retired or were not - partially - unfit for work). One-quarter of them were unemployed one or more times; on average, a veteran was unemployed for a total of fifteen months. Among the veterans who left service in the period between 1979 and 1987, relatively more were unemployed (40%). The veterans who left service in the period before 1979 and after 2005 were unemployed relatively less frequently (14% and 19% respectively).

Nearly one-half of veterans find that the experience they gained from work as a serviceman or servicewoman has helped them to find and do a job in the civil labour market (40% and 49% respectively). Fewer veterans find that deployment experiences help them to find and do a job later on in life (18% and 29% respectively). Younger veterans are more or much more inclined to believe that the experience gained from work as a serviceman or servicewoman and deployment experience has helped them to find do a job.

In general, the veterans are satisfied with their careers after leaving Ministry of Defence service. Three-quarters (75%) say they are satisfied or very satisfied, whilst one in twelve (9%) of respondents are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

2 Characteristics of the participants in the survey

2.1 Demographic characteristics

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The table shows that most respondents are men. More than half of the respondents are 55 years of age or older, married, cohabiting (whether or not with children), have undergone at least senior secondary vocational education and have a net income of at least once to twice the average income.¹

Near one-half of respondents have a paid job (working twelve hours or more a week) and nearly one-half of respondents have retired, have taken job-related early retirement, or receive benefits under the Former Military Personnel (Benefits) Act.

2.2 Military past

Table 2 shows the features of the respondents' military past. Most respondents acquired their experience serving with the Royal Netherlands Army and left service with the rank of private or corporal (or a comparable rank or class). The length of their military careers ranges from 1 to 41 years. More than one-quarter of respondents had a military career lasting one or two years. The vast majority of respondents took part in one mission. On average, veterans from the youngest cohort took part in more missions than veterans from the oldest age cohort (an average of two missions versus one). Roughly one-third of respondents took part in a mission before 1979 and roughly one in six respondents took part in a recent mission (after 2005). Together, the 500 respondents have 705 missions to their names. One respondent took part in the Second World War. Nearly one-half of respondents acquired mission experience in the Balkans.

Roughly one-half of respondents find that the mission or missions has or have had a positive or very positive impact on their lives. That impact was negative or very negative for roughly 6%. Within the group of veterans aged 50 years or below - and in particular within the group aged up to 35 years - more veterans than those within the group of veterans in the 51-65 age group find missions had a positive impact on their lives. Furthermore, a greater number of younger veterans than veterans in the other age groups had mixed feelings about the impact (both negative and positive). In addition, relatively speaking, there are more veterans aged 51 and above who have neutral feelings about the impact (neither positive nor negative).

See also table 3. 8

Table 1. Demographic characteristics

	Number ^a	%
<i>Sex</i>		
Man	479	95.8
Woman	18	3.6
<i>Age</i>		
35 and below	73	14.6
36-50	106	21.2
51-65	159	31.8
66 and above	162	32.4
<i>Marital status</i>		
Single	59	11.8
Married	359	71.8
Divorced	39	7.8
Widowed	41	8.2
<i>Home situation</i>		
Living at home	6	1.2
Single	69	13.8
Single with child or children	10	2.0

¹ The average income is approximately €1900 a month.

Cohabiting without a child or children	234	46.8
Cohabiting with a child or children	165	33.0
Other	11	2.2
<i>Children</i>		
0	93	18.6
1	63	12.6
2	200	40.0
3	87	17.4
4 or more	53	10.6
<i>Education level</i>		
No or primary education	35	7.0
Junior pre-vocational education	81	16.2
Secondary general education	98	19.6
Senior secondary vocational education	136	27.2
Higher general education	42	8.4
Higher professional education	69	13.8
University education	22	4.4
Other	11	2.2
<i>Income</i>		
No income or below-average income	121	24.2
Once to twice the average income	266	53.2
More than twice the average income	61	12.2
I would prefer not to say	35	7.0
<i>Position in the labour market^b</i>		
In education	9	1.8
In paid employment	243	48.9
In unpaid employment	19	3.8
Unemployed	15	3.0
Retired	244	49.1
Unfit for work	13	2.6
a. The figures do not need to add up to 500 because of the respondents who did not answer.		
b. Respondents were able to tick more than one answer option.		

Table 2. Military past

	Number ^a	%
<i>Served with...^b</i>		
Royal Netherlands Indies Army	4	0.8
Royal Netherlands Navy	121	24.3
Royal Netherlands Army	327	65.7
Royal Netherlands Air Force	53	10.6
Royal Netherlands Military Constabulary	21	4.2
Merchant Navy	1	0.2
<i>Rank or class among leaving service</i>		
Private ^c	179	35.8
Corporal ^c	133	26.6
Non-commissioned officer	117	23.4
Officer	67	13.4

Civilian	3	0.6
<i>Duration of military career (in years)</i>		
1	52	10.4
2	92	18.4
3-5	119	23.8
6-10	82	16.4
11-20	39	7.8
21 or more	114	22.8
<i>Number of missions</i>		
1	377	75.4
2	66	13.2
3	31	6.2
4 or more	22	4.4
<i>Deployment period^{b,d}</i>		
Before 1979	153	30.8
1979-1987	86	17.3
1988-1996	124	24.9
1997-2005	145	29.2
After 2005	78	15.7
<i>Mission(area)^e</i>		
WW II / former Dutch East Indies / New Guinea / Korea	160	32.2
Middle East	95	19.1
Gulf Region / Iraq	55	11.1
The Balkans	234	47.1
Africa	20	4.0
Afghanistan	100	20.1
Other ^f	41	8.2
<p>a. The figures do not need to add up to 500 because of the respondents who did not answer.</p> <p>b. Respondents were able to tick more than one answer option.</p> <p>c. Or comparable class or rank</p> <p>d. 497 respondents together report 586 deployment periods.</p> <p>e. 497 respondents together report 705 mission (areas)</p> <p>f. Other contains 13* Cambodia, 1* Haiti and 27* not completed</p>		

Table 3. Impact of missions on life in percentages by age cohort

	Age	35 and below	36 - 50	51 - 65	66 and older	total
Positive or very positive		52.1	51.9	39.6	47.1	46.5
Both positive and negative		43.8	34.9	34.6	32.5	35.4
Neither positive nor negative		2.7	6.6	18.9	15.3	12.7
Negative or very negative		1.4	6.6	6.9	5.1	5.5

A survey involving 2,814 veterans to establish their level of well-being turns out to match the overall picture of the impact of missions on later life. The impact missions have on veterans also proves to be bound up with their well-being; a positive impact means a greater level of well-being and a negative impact will result in a lower level of well-being.

Source:

Veteran, how are you? A survey to establish the level of well-being of the Dutch veteran. Trimbos Institute and the Veterans' Institute (2014 draft report).

3 Veterans' opinions on veterans' policy and the services provided

3.1 Satisfaction with veterans' policy and the services provided

In general, respondents are satisfied with veterans' policy and the services provided by the Veterans' Institute. Veterans are most positive about the remembrance of fallen service personnel. Eight in ten respondents give positive or very positive responses with regard to this. The most negative responses are for promoting and stimulating appreciation for veterans by the government or Ministry of Defence. One in nine respondents gives a negative or very negative response with regard to this. See graph 1 and table 4. In general, the older the veteran, the more positive he or she is about regional veterans' days and the veterans' days held by the branches of the armed forces, remembrance ceremonies and the services provided by the Veterans' Institute.

Graph 1. Opinion on veterans' policy and the services provided in percentages

neither positive nor negative
 very negative
 negative
 both positive and negative
 positive
 very positive

Table 4. Opinion on veterans' policy and services provided in percentages

	opinion on veterans' policy	opinion on after-care	opinion on appreciation	opinion on NL Veterans' Day	opinion on regional veterans' day	opinion on veterans' days held by branches of the armed forces	opinion on remembrance ceremonies	opinion on services provided by the Vi
Very positive	7.1	3.3	6.9	13.4	9.0	7.0	20.1	10.4
Positive	65.4	54.9	55.5	61.8	53.3	49.6	61.5	60.9
Both positive and negative	16.0	23.0	20.1	8.6	10.7	12.6	8.9	10.0
Negative	3.0	5.0	8.7	1.7	6.4	4.2	1.2	1.1
Very negative	0.2	1.2	2.0	0.4	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.2
Neither positive nor negative	8.3	12.6	6.7	14.0	20.3	26.4	8.3	17.4

A survey [source 1] involving 1,386 veterans to establish what they think of the after-care revealed that 66% of veterans report having received sufficient after-care following a deployment. Veterans of more recent missions (Afghanistan and Iraq) are more satisfied than veterans of less recent missions (Lebanon and the former Yugoslavia).

Another survey [source 2] involving 1,106 veterans to establish what they think about the quality of services provided by the Veterans' Institute showed that 94% found the services provided to be satisfactory or excellent; 6% found the services provided to be average.

A survey [source 3] involving 296 veterans to establish their opinions on the Netherlands Veterans' Day shows that the appreciation for the various components of that day - expressed in a mark - ranges from 7.7 to 8.4.

Sources:

[1] Back home again after deployment. Survey in respect of the after-care and reintegration following a return from a mission. Veterans' Institute (2012).

[2] Veterans panel - measurement 5. Survey to establish the level of appreciation for the services provided by the Veterans' Institute (2014).

[3] Evaluation of the 2014 Netherlands Veterans' Day. Veterans' Institute (2014).

3.2 Importance of veterans' policy and the services provided

Not all respondents attach the same level of importance to all components of the veterans' policy. Respondents attach most importance to the remembrance of fallen service personnel. Nearly all think this is important or very important. Respondents attach least importance to the veterans' day held in their region or municipality. Four in ten respondents think a regional or municipal veterans' day is not particularly important or completely unimportant. See graph 2 and table 5. Among the older veterans (66 years and older) there are fewer who find after-care important. Relatively speaking, there are more veterans in that age cohort who have no opinion on this element. The older the veteran, the more likely, comparatively speaking, he or she is to attach importance to regional veterans' days. Veterans aged 51 and above attach more importance than veterans aged 50 or below to the veterans' days held by the branches of the armed forces. In the group of veterans aged 50 or below, there are slightly more veterans than in the group of those aged 51 years or above who attach less importance to the services provided by the Veterans' Institute.

Graph 2. Importance of veterans' policy and services provided in percentages

no opinion
 completely unimportant
 not particularly important
 important
 very important

Table 5. Importance of veterans' policy and services provided in percentages

	importance of veterans' policy	importance of after-care	importance of appreciation	importance of NL Veterans' Day	importance of regional veterans' day	importance of veterans' day held by branch of the armed forces	importance of remembrance ceremonies	importance of services provided by the Vi
Very important	19.8	43.8	31.1	17.6	11.6	12.9	46.1	27.9
Important	53.6	44.0	57.3	51.4	41.2	44.8	48.1	55.7
Not particularly important	19.2	3.9	7.1	20.0	32.9	25.6	3.0	8.5
Completely unimportant	1.0	0.4	0.2	2.6	4.9	3.9	0.0	0.4
No opinion	6.5	7.9	4.3	8.3	9.5	12.9	2.8	7.5

Of the 1,106 veterans who took part in the survey relating to the services provided by the Veterans' Institute 95% think it is important that the institute exists.

Source:
 Veterans panel - measurement 5. Survey to establish the level of appreciation for the services provided by the Veterans' Institute (2014).

3.3 Feeling appreciated as a veteran

Nearly one-half of respondents feels appreciated as a veteran by the government and the Ministry of Defence. Fewer respondents feel appreciated by the media, society at large and their immediate circles. In general, a large group of respondents gave neutral responses to the statement included to establish whether or not they feel appreciated. The strongest responses were directed at society at large. More than one-half of respondents feels no appreciation or an absence of appreciation from society at large. See graph 3 and table 6. Among the veterans aged 36 years or below, there are comparatively more veterans who feel unappreciated by the media and society at large, whilst in the group of veterans aged 51 years or above there are comparatively more veterans who feel appreciated by the media and society at large.

Graph 3. Feeling appreciated in percentages

appreciation by the government and Ministry of Defence
 appreciation by the media
 appreciation by society at large
 appreciation by immediate circle

completely disagree
 disagree
 neutral
 agree
 completely agree

Table 6. Feeling appreciated in percentages

	appreciated by the government and the Ministry of Defence	appreciated by the media	appreciated by society at large	appreciated by immediate circle
Completely agree	6.8	3.0	2.0	7.5
Agree	42.4	34.4	26.9	37.0
Neutral	36.1	46.3	54.2	46.5
Disagree	11.8	14.3	14.3	7.7
Completely disagree	2.8	2.0	2.6	1.4

The appreciation felt from the government, the media and society at large is greater in 2013 than in 2010. In 2014, the appreciation felt by those groups fell again slightly. The appreciation felt from immediate circles was virtually identical in 2010 and 2013, but increased in 2014.

It is noteworthy that, over the years, a significant group of veterans has given neutral opinions on the appreciation they feel from the government, the media, the public and their immediate circles.

government
 media
 society at large
 immediate circle

negative
 neutral
 positive

Sources:
 Veterans: Recognition & Appreciation Felt. Motshagen (2010).
 Veterans' Policy & Appreciation. Opinions of Dutch Veterans. Veterans' Institute (2013).

The vast majority (84%) of the 296 veterans who participated in the survey on the 2014 Netherlands Veterans' Day feel that the Veterans' Day contributes to a reasonable or large extent to public recognition of and appreciation for veterans in general. The group of veterans which feels that the day contributes to a reasonable or large extent to their being personally recognised and appreciated is smaller (63%).

Source: 2014 Netherlands Veterans' Day Evaluation. Veterans' Institute (2014).

3.4 Services provided by the Veterans' Institute

3.4.1 Use of support and services

86% of respondents report having made no use of the support or services provided by the Veterans' Institute and also report that they did not need them. 8% did need the support or services provided by the Veterans' Institute, but nevertheless made no use of them. 6% did make use of the support or services provided by the Veterans' Institute. The group of veterans aged 66 and above contains, comparatively speaking, the most veterans who use the services provided by the Veterans' Institute or who are in need of them, but do not use them.

A survey in respect of the services provided by the Veterans' Institute involving 1,106 veterans' card holders reveals that *each of them* makes use in one way or another of the services provided by the Veterans' Institute. For example, by applying for train tickets, making use of the offers provided with the veterans' card, by reading the Checkpoint magazine (in some cases) (whether or not using the *app*), by contacting the Veterans' Institute through the website or by email, by contacting members of staff or the central contact point, by reading informational posts from the Veterans' Institute on *social media*, and by reading the digital newsletter or by using the Veterans' Handbook (in some cases). The number of services used increases the older the veteran becomes.

Source:

Veterans panel - measurement 5. Survey to establish the level of appreciation for the services provided by the Veterans' Institute (2014; secondary analysis of data).

3.4.2 Experience of using the services provided

The 31 respondents who reported having used the support or services provided by the Veterans' Institute were able to specify which support or services were involved. They were also able to describe their experience of using that service. Table 7 contains a summary of the results.

In total, the respondents reported having used seven types of support or services. However, two of those services turned out not to originate from the Veterans' Institute, but from other organisations. The services provided by the Veterans' Institute - mainly related to travel allowances - are rated highly. In nearly all cases, the services provided by the other organisations involved the provision of assistance only. In general, the respondents also gave those services a positive rating.

Table 7. Experience of the services provided by the Veterans' Institute in figures

	Experience						Total
	Very negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Very positive	Unknown	
<i>Veterans' Institute</i>							
Advice				1			1
Travel allowance			1	5	2	4	12
Accounts of veterans						1	1
Internet/email				1			1
Discounts/packages				1			1
<i>Other organisations</i>							
Assistance	1	2	1	6	3		13
Meeting					1		1
Total	1	2	2	14	6	5	30

3.4.3 Needing the services provided but not using them

Thirty-eight respondents reported not having used the services provided by the Veterans' Institute despite having needed them. Those respondents were able to specify the need involved and the reason why they had not made use of the services provided. Table 8 shows the results. In total, seven needs and eight reasons were specified. The most commonly cited need is "psychological help". The most commonly cited reason is "unfamiliarity with the institute".

Table 8. Nature of need and reason for not using the services provided by the Veterans' Institute

Need	Number
------	--------

Psychological help	9	
Practical help	3	
Reunion	3	
Advice	1	
Collaboration	1	
Visiting patients	1	
Everything	1	
Total	19	
<i>Explanation of why services were not used</i>		
Unfamiliarity with the Institute	4	
Did not exist	3	
Distance	2	
Requested but not received	2	
Disabilities	1	
Process is yet to start	1	
For relatives	1	
Able to do it himself or herself	1	
Total	15	

Table 9. Key services provided by the Veterans' Institute

Type of service	Number	%
1. Support/help	295	45.8
• Psychological help	33	
• Contact point/office	25	
• Work/integration into society	14	
• Other help	13	
• Relatives	9	
• Care for the elderly	4	
2. Recognition and appreciation	118	18.3
• Organising veterans' days	23	
• Remembrance ceremonies	23	
• Image	18	
3. Knowledge	95	14.8
• Checkpoint	13	
4. Contact between veterans	64	9.9
5. Practical benefits	42	6.5
6. Promotion of interests	30	4.7
Total	644	100.0

3.4.4 Key services for veterans

The respondents were able to specify what they view as the three most important services the Veterans' Institute should provide for them as veterans. In total, the respondents cited 644 key services. Forty-five respondents stated they did not know and, in ten cases, respondents stated 'it is fine as it is'. Table 9 provides an overview of the key services the Veterans' Institute could provide for them as veterans.

There are six main categories with "support/help" being mentioned most frequently. That category was mentioned 295 times, and in 33 cases the respondents stated explicitly that they regarded psychological help as an important service. 'Contact point/office', 'work/integration into society', 'other help', 'relatives' and 'care for the elderly' are also specific services mentioned and which come under 'support/help'.

3.5 Membership and participation in events

Four in ten respondents (42%) are members of an association or organisation for retired service personnel or veterans. Relatively speaking, veterans aged 51 and above are more likely than younger veterans to be a member of an association. 25% of the group containing the youngest veterans are members of an association.

In the last three years, participation in events for veterans, such as a reunion or veterans' day, has varied sharply. Slightly more than one-half of veterans (56%) have taken part in one or more veterans' events. Of the participants, three-quarters (75%) attended one to three events. There are three respondents who report having taken part in 75 or more events. Among the respondents who are members of an association there are comparatively more who participate in events for veterans than among non-members - 72% and 43% respectively. Of the group containing the youngest veterans, one-third have participated in one or more events. For veterans between the age of 36 and 66, the figure is roughly one-half. Of the group containing the oldest veterans, four in five have participated in one or more events.

A survey involving 2,814 veterans to establish their level of well-being [source 1] shows that 43% are members of an association or organisation for retired service personnel or veterans. Of the veterans participating in the survey, 46% take part in an event for veterans (e.g. a reunion or veterans' day). The percentage of veterans who are members or participate in activities varies by age category, namely up to the age of 35: 25% (member) and 24% (participation); 35-50 years: 31% and 32%; 51-65 years: 48% and 48%; 66 years and above: 62% and 72%.

A survey [source 2] involving 296 veterans to establish their opinions on the 2014 Netherlands Veterans' Day shows that 18% of them attended the Netherlands Veterans' Day. The figure for veterans aged 41 and below is 3%, for veterans in the 41-60 age group 23% and for older veterans 18%. Of the veterans participating in the survey, 38% had attended a local or regional veterans' day. There were age-related differences here, too. The figure for veterans aged 41 and below is 18%, for veterans in the 41-60 age group - 26% and for older veterans - 48%.

Sources:

[1] Veteran, how are you? A survey to establish the level of well-being of the Dutch veteran. Trimbos Institute and the Veterans' Institute (2014 draft report; secondary analysis of data).

[2] Evaluation of the 2014 Netherlands Veterans' Day. Veterans' Institute (2014).

4 The veteran's position in the labour market

4.1 Finding work after leaving service

Table 9 shows the results relating to the respondents' position in the labour market after leaving service. One-quarter of respondents left service before 1979 and more than one-quarter after 2005. After leaving service, 216 respondents sought work. Of that number, 71 respondents (33% of the job-seekers) needed the Ministry of Defence's support to find work. In the end, 34 respondents (16% of the job-seekers) made use of the support provided by the Ministry of Defence. Among those who made use of the support provided by the Ministry of Defence there are also some respondents who had no need of support (see table 10). Roughly one-third of veterans aged 35 and below made use of the support provided. The figure for veterans aged 36-65 years was roughly one in ten. One in twenty veterans in the 66 years and above age group made use of the support provided by the Ministry of Defence. Unlike actual use, the need for support is not related to the veteran's age.

Table 9. Position in the labour market after leaving service

	Number = 500 ^a	%
<i>Year in which left service</i>		
Before 1979	128	25.6
1979-1987	73	14.6
1988-1996	41	8.2
1997-2005	95	19.0
After 2005	143	28.6
<i>Sought work after leaving service ...</i>		
No, because I am retired	73	14.6
No, because I am unfit for work	11	2.2
No, because I am studying or in training	40	8.0
No, I have become self-employed	21	4.2
No, I already have another job	89	17.8
No, I am back with my old employer	18	3.6
Yes	216	43.2
Other ^b	8	1.6
	Number = 216a	%
<i>Needed the Ministry of Defence's support when looking for work</i>		
Yes	71	32.9
No	142	65.7
<i>Used the Ministry of Defence's support when looking for work</i>		
Yes	34	15.7
No	179	82.9
	Number = 392a	%
<i>Unemployed after leaving service (total number of months)</i>		
0	292	74.5
1-3	24	6.1
4-6	21	5.4
7-12	19	4.8
13 or more	24	6.1
a. The figures do not need to add up to 500 because of the respondents who did not answer.		
b. Example: "became a stay-at-home mother" or "went travelling for one-and-a-half years".		

Table 10. Need for and use of the support provided by the Ministry of Defence when seeking work

		Needed the Ministry of Defence's support		Total
		Yes	No	
Used the Ministry of Defence's support	Yes	12.3	3.8	16.0
	No	20.8	63.2	84.0
Total		33.0	67.0	100.0

The table shows the percentage of the total (212 respondents)

A survey involving 1,114 veterans to establish their experiences in relation to the labour market shows that roughly one in three veterans (28%) needed training or retraining. Roughly one-half of those veterans did in fact make use of the re-training offered (13% of those leaving service). One-quarter of veterans needed support or additional support from the Ministry of Defence to find a new career.

Source:

Employment after leaving service. A survey to establish veterans' experiences in the civil labour market. Veterans' Institute (2013).

4.2 Unemployment after leaving service

Of the 392 respondents who worked or could have worked after their term of service (these are the people who have not retired or who were not - partially - unfit for work) one-quarter was unemployed on one or more occasions. The total period of unemployment ranges from one month to 120 months. On average, a respondent was unemployed for more than fifteen months. At the time of the survey, 3% of respondents were unemployed. See also table 9.

The period in which a respondent left service has a bearing on whether or not he or she was unemployed. A comparatively smaller number were unemployed among those who left service before 1979 and after 2005 (see table 11; green box). A comparatively larger number were unemployed among those who left service in the period between 1979 and 1987 (see table 11; yellow box). This finding can also be seen in the differences between age cohort and employment. Of the veterans aged 35 and below and those aged 66 and above, roughly one in six to nine was unemployed. The figure for the other veterans (36-65 years of age) is roughly one in three.

Table 11. Link between employment and the period in which a respondent left service

Was unemployed	Period					Total
	Before 1979	1979-1987	1988-1996	1997-2005	After 2005	
No	90 (86.5)	39 (60.0)	24 (72.7)	56 (71.8)	79 (81.4)	288 (76.4)
Yes	14 (13.5)	26 (40.0)	9 (27.3)	22 (28.2)	18 (18.6)	89 (23.6)
Total	104	65	33	78	97	377

The percentage for each column is shown in brackets.

Whether or not respondents made use of the support provided by the Ministry of Defence in finding employment has no bearing on whether or not they were unemployed. There is a link as far as the need of support is concerned, though. In general, there are more respondents among those who reported having needed support who were unemployed than among those who had no need of support (52% and 20% respectively).

The survey to establish veterans' experiences in relation to the labour market shows that roughly one-third of veterans had a little difficulty to extreme difficulty in finding a job after leaving service. The older the veteran the less difficulty was experienced in finding a job. For veterans aged 30 and below the unfavourable labour market was the main reason for the difficulty experienced. For veterans aged 30-55 years, the main difficulty was that the labour market was less compatible with their military experience. Those two reasons also played a part for veterans aged 55 and above, but the majority cite a variety of different reasons.

Source:

Employment after leaving service. A survey to establish veterans' experiences in the civil labour market. Veterans' Institute (2013).

4.3 The impact of experience gained from work as a serviceman or servicewoman and deployment experience on career and work

The respondents were able to state whether their military careers and experience helped them to find and do a job in the civil labour market. Respondents were also able to state the extent to which finding and doing a job was influenced by their specific deployment experiences. Graph 4 and table 12 show

the results. Their military careers and experience helped more respondents to find and do jobs than their specific deployment experiences. Four in ten respondents even stated that their specific deployment experiences did not help them in finding a job. Three in ten respondents believe that their deployment experiences did not help them in doing their jobs.

Graph 4. The extent to which experience helps to find and do a job

the extent to which career helps in finding a job
 the extent to which career helps in doing a job
 the extent to which deployment helps in finding a job
 the extent to which deployment helps in doing a job

completely disagree
 disagree
 neutral
 agree
 completely agree

Table 12. The extent to which experience helps to find and do a job

	the extent to which career helps <i>in finding</i> a job	the extent to which career helps <i>in doing</i> a job		the extent to which deployment helps <i>in finding</i> a job	the extent to which deployment helps <i>in doing</i> a job
Agree completely	13.5	14.3		4.7	5.8
Agree	26.9	34.4		13.5	23.0
Neutral	28.2	27.5		37.5	38.3
Disagree	19.3	14.6		29.6	22.2
Completely disagree	12.1	9.3		14.8	10.8

There are differences among the age cohorts for all four aspects. In general, the younger the respondent the more likely he or she is to find that experience as a serviceman or servicewoman and deployment experience helps them to find and do jobs.

Graph 5. The extent to which experience helps to find and do a job by age cohort

up to 35
 36 to 50 inclusive
 51 to 65 inclusive
 66 and above
 the extent to which career helps in finding a job
 the extent to which career helps in doing a job
 the extent to which deployment helps in finding a job
 the extent to which deployment helps in doing a job

disagree or completely disagree
 neutral
 agree or completely agree

In the case of roughly one-half of veterans who sought work after leaving service, deployment experience was discussed during the job interview and the responses to that experience were positive. For a smaller number, the response was neutral (13%) or negative (6%). Deployment experience was not mentioned in the case of roughly one-third of veterans. The experiences of veterans aged between 30 and 55 years are slightly more favourable than those of veterans aged 30 and below.

65% of veterans aged 30 and below find they derive a slight to substantial benefit from their deployment in their jobs after leaving service. The figure for veterans aged between 30 and 55 years is 63% and, for veterans aged 55 and above, 52%. The five main reasons cited as regards that benefit are: being able to work in difficult circumstances, being able to improvise well, being able to work under great pressure, being able to work well as part of a team, and having learned perseverance.

28% of veterans aged 30 and below find they experience a slight to substantial impediment in their jobs after leaving service as a result of their deployment. The figure for veterans aged between 30 and 55 years is 14% and, for veterans aged 55 and above, 3%. The main reasons cited as regards that impediment are having difficulty with 'civilian' culture, missing collegiality, missing the atmosphere and missing the challenges experienced during the period of service.

Source:
 Employment after leaving service. A survey to establish veterans' experiences in the civil labour market. Veterans' Institute (2013).

4.4 Satisfaction with career

In general, the respondents are satisfied with their careers after leaving the service of the Ministry of Defence. Three-quarters (75%) say they are satisfied or very satisfied, whilst one in eleven (9%) respondents is dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

There is no link between age cohort and satisfaction with careers after leaving service. However, there is a positive link between satisfaction with careers after the period serving with the Ministry of Defence and feeling that the military career and deployment have helped in finding and doing a job during the career. In general, respondents who were satisfied or very satisfied with their careers after serving with the Ministry of Defence also feel more strongly that their military careers and deployments helped, whereas respondents who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their careers after leaving the Ministry of Defence generally believed that their military careers and deployments did not help. These findings are supported by the explanations veterans were able to give when assessing their satisfaction with their careers after leaving the service of the Ministry of Defence.

Of those who started work after leaving service, nearly three-quarters (73%) are satisfied or very satisfied with the first job. In general, older veterans are more satisfied than younger veterans with their first job. Reasons for dissatisfaction with the first job include finding it difficult to cope with the difference in culture, ill-matched work levels, the job being incompatible with military experience, being worse off financially, or not 'clicking' well with colleagues. Most veterans find that their first jobs after leaving service are incompatible with their military experience. The figure for veterans aged 30 years and below is 64% and, for veterans aged between 30 and 55 years, 37%. This finding applies to nearly one-half of older veterans.

69% of veterans assess their careers after their periods of service as positive or very positive; 9% assess them as negative or very negative. Older veterans are slightly more positive than younger veterans.

Source:

Employment after leaving service. A survey to establish veterans' experiences in the civil labour market. Veterans' Institute (2013).

Annex 1. Sample, data collection and response

At the end of March 2014, we drew a sample from the 'veterans' card holders' database for the survey. The Veterans' Institute manages this database containing the details of veterans holding a veterans' card. When drawing the sample, we limited ourselves to the years of birth between 1923 and 1992. We removed from the database the veterans who had recently been invited by the Veterans' Institute to take part in another survey. We also removed from the database the veterans who do not live in the Netherlands or who indicated they did not wish to take part in any survey. In the end, the database contained 55062 veterans. We divided that group into four age groups and drew a random sample of 250 veterans from each age group.

Data collection

On 25 March 2014, we sent the 1000 veterans from the sample a letter inviting them to take part in the survey, together with a questionnaire and a self-addressed envelope. On 15 April, we sent a reminder letter accompanied by a questionnaire and self-addressed envelope to the 1000 veterans. The collection of data ended on 25 April 2014.

Response

Five hundred of the 987 qualifying respondents that had been contacted returned a usable completed questionnaire. This represents a workable response of 51%. See the following tables for a full overview of the sample and the response.

Determining the sample

a	Database of veterans' card holders (years of birth between 1923 and 1992)	63165
b	Living abroad	2901
c	Does not wish to take part in the survey	618
d	Participated in RZO [Civil-Military Care and Research Council] survey	3592
e	Participated in MONUTA survey	992
f	Available for sample (a – b – c – d – e)	55062
	of which:	
	aged 21-35 (years of birth 1978-1992)	4754
	aged 36-50 (years of birth 1963-1977)	11243
	aged 51-65 (years of birth 1948-1962)	8211
	aged 66-90 (years of birth 1923-1947)	30854

Contacted

g	Sample	1000
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Where reaction meant no participation, and response to the questionnaire

h	Refuses	3
i	Returned as undeliverable	4
j	Died	4
k	Response to the questionnaire*	510
l	Total of reactions (h + i + j + k)	521
m	Gross response (l/g) = (521/1000)	52.1%

* Initially 538, but 28 respondents had completed the questionnaire twice and returned it. Only first version provided by those 28 respondents was included in the data set.

Net response

n	Sample	1000
o	Sent to non-qualifying respondent (i + j)	8
p	Questionnaire completed by non-qualifying respondent*	1
	. no deployment	4
	. still in active service	
q	Sent to the right address (n – o – p)	987
r	Net response (e/j) = (510/987)	51.7%

* Turns out to have been completed by non-qualifying respondent based on the answers given in the questionnaire

Workable response

s	Response (k – p)	505
t	Insufficient information*	5
u	Workable response (s – t)	500
v	Workable response (u/q) = (500/987)	50.7%

* No question about veterans' policy and services provided was completed and/or virtually no question about demographic details was completed.