The Netherlands
Legal Aid Services and Access to Justicein the Digital Age

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kenniscentrum

Raad voor Rechtsbijstand

Overview

1. Netherlands Legal Aid System
2. Rechtwijzer experiences
3. Innovation 2023 (and beyond)

Legal Aid in The Netherlands

Legal Aid Board Netherlands

- Established 1994
- 300 staff
- 24.1 mio euro organisation costs
- ~371,000 applications in 2022
- ~348,000 certificates granted in 2022
- ~36% population is eligible
- 540,000,000 euro budget (open end)

Legal Aid System

- Gatekeepers (a.o. social counselors, legal aid clinics)
- Zeroth tier (online provisions)
- First tier (a.o. legal services counters)
- Second tier (legal aid lawyers and mediators)
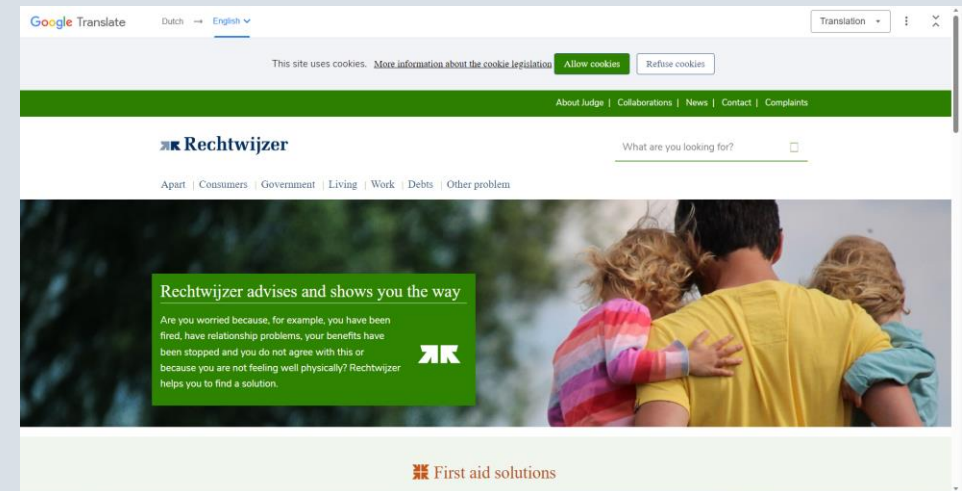- 6,125 registered legal aid lawyers (total lawyers ~18,000
- 768 mediators

Rechtwijzer
(since 2006)

Rechtwijzer

- Online diagnosis, triage and self-help platform

- Decision tree guidance for broad range of issues:

  - Separation

  - Consumer

  - Government

  - Housing

  - Employment

  - Debt

- First aid tool

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Rechtwijzer

- External software supplier (SaaS)

- External UX and UI expertise

- In-house content development

- Dedicated team:
  - Product management
  - Relationship management
  - Content coordination

- ~712,000 unique users in 2022

- Scientifically proven positive impact on experiences relative power

- Cooperation with innovative legal aid providers

Rechtwijzer

- Platform for R&D

- Research into citizens

Challenges

- Waterfall versus agile

- User testing, testing, testing

- Ongoing improvements and modernisation UX/UI

- Speed of ICT developments

- Privacy versus insights

- Tough competition for talent

Innovation 2023 (and beyond)

Focus

- Improving UX for users of legal aid
- Improving access to legal aid
- Improving access information
- Improving transparency of process
- Improving access to legal aid lawyers

Tranformation

- Modernisation of ICT landscape of the Dutch Legal Aid Board

Legal Aid as a Black Box

- No direct access for citizens

- No insights in information provision

- Challenges in finding legal aid lawyer (availability, expertise, good fit)

Modernisation

- Direct access to information via interface for citizens

- Matching tool for finding suitable legal aid lawyer

- Feedback loop for permanent learning, monitoring, evaluation and signalling

Direct access

- Citizen interface

- Diagnosis information

- Personal application information

- Information about legal aid

- Information about application process

- Updates during process

Matching

- Suitable legal aid lawyers
    - Specialisation
    - Personal preferences
    - Distance
    - Other
- Available legal aid lawyers
- Additional information about legal aid lawyers

Feedbackloop

- Citizen on radar early stage
- Tracking their process
- Collecting feedback from citizens
  - Experiences services Legal Aid Board
  - Experiences services lawyer
  - Experiences process
- Collecting feedback from lawyers
  - Experiences services Legal Aid Board
  - Experiences process
  - Activities undertaken
  - Time spent
- Combining with procesinformation from systems

Contact

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Stelsel Gesubsidieerde Rechtsbijstand