

It is important to support people in taking up their social rights to a particular benefit, subsidy, financial or material reimbursements or to any other form of support and/or assistance.

## Preventing social under-protection

We use the term social under-protection or non-take-up when social rights are not or not fully exhausted. This phenomenon is widespread and particularly affects the most vulnerable people.

Since the minimum income protection in our country is too low to live a decent life, especially for families with high housing costs, the exhaustion of all social rights is essential.

*"I believe that people are insufficiently informed. If you don't ask for everything, you simply won't know. I feel as if I have already missed a lot because of this".*

## Let's get started!

There are different ways to take up social rights. If social workers and service providers act actively instead of merely reactively, they can anticipate to possible social under-protection in various areas. In doing so, a more holistic approach is applied. Not only will citizens receive an answer to the question they have asked, but they will also receive information on other forms of aid and support to which they and their family may be entitled.

Acting proactively means that the initiative is not taken by the care seekers themselves but by social workers and service providers. They take steps to ensure that all rights are realised by proactively detecting social under-protection, informing citizens and enabling the realisation of automatic entitlements.



## Best practices

There are many best practices aiming at helping citizens to take up their social rights.

In **Beringen**, social workers pay a home visit to families who are not familiar with the Public Centre for Social Welfare (in Dutch: OCMW) and give them a benefits booklet.

In **Ghent**, there are social advisors who assist clients of the OCMW in taking up their rights.

In **Balen**, they introduced the 'ViA-mobiel', a moving social office where local people can go for 'Questions, Information & Advice' about their rights or where they can be helped to fill in all kinds of documents.



[www.rechtenverkenner.be](http://www.rechtenverkenner.be) (Dutch)

[www.financieelredzaam.be/rechten-uitputten](http://www.financieelredzaam.be/rechten-uitputten) (Dutch)

<https://sienonline.kortrijk.be> (Dutch)

[www.mi-is.be](http://www.mi-is.be) – Non-take-up of rights (Dutch)