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Owner
Bruintjes Juridisch en BeleidsOnderzoek en Advies

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Inclusion is often discussed in terms of individual support: what can be done to help a person participate in an existing system? For Hans Bruintjes, a legal and policy researcher and adviser specialising in neurodiversity, discrimination, equal treatment, and inclusion, a more fundamental question needs to be asked: how accessible is the system itself?

Through Bruintjes Juridisch en BeleidsOnderzoek en Advies, Hans brings together legal research, policy analysis, empirical research, and lived experience to examine the barriers that neurodivergent people encounter in education, employment, and interactions with government. His work focuses particularly on the gap between formal commitments to equality and the experiences of people navigating systems that may appear neutral while creating unequal outcomes in practice.

As the owner of his independent research and advisory practice, Hans conducts legal and policy research, analyses legislation and policy, develops practical policy tools, publishes research, and delivers presentations, webinars, and advice to policymakers, public organisations, and professionals. His objective is not simply to identify shortcomings, but to translate evidence into practical recommendations that can help organisations become more accessible and inclusive.





From Professional Experience to a Research Mission

Hans Bruintjes' professional background combines law, public policy, and social inclusion. His experience in Dutch politics as a policy adviser involved translating complex social and legal issues into policy documents, speeches, and parliamentary contributions, including matters concerning discrimination and inclusion.

His interest in neurodiversity is also deeply connected to lived experience. As an autistic and gifted person, Hans encountered significant barriers during his own education. He was rejected by four vocational education programmes, received negative advice about pursuing vocational education, and was advised against continuing into higher education because of accessibility concerns. During an internship, he also experienced aggression that, according to his account, was tolerated by the educational institution.

These experiences led him to question how neurodivergent people were represented - or overlooked - in policy documents and discrimination reports. Rather than viewing these difficulties only as individual circumstances, he began examining whether institutional structures and procedures themselves could contribute to exclusion.

That question developed into systematic research drawing on legal, sociological, and policy perspectives. His research has involved 631 neurodivergent participants and has contributed to a book, research publications, policy tools, and professional presentations. Establishing his own practice provided a framework through which he could bring these different areas of work together.

His book, *The Voice of the Neurodivergent*, combines an overview of research findings with practical tools intended for researchers, HR managers, and policymakers. The publication reflects his broader approach: research should not remain confined to analysis, but should provide knowledge that can be applied in professional and institutional settings.

Looking Beyond Individual Adaptation

At the centre of Hans' vision is a shift in how inclusion is understood. Rather than placing the primary responsibility on neurodivergent people to adapt to existing structures, he advocates examining whether those structures are sufficiently accessible to human diversity.

A recruitment process, educational environment, or government procedure may be formally neutral while presenting substantial barriers to some people. Communication expectations, administrative procedures, institutional culture, and organisational assumptions can all influence whether someone is able to participate on equal terms.

For Hans, making these structural barriers visible is an important part of advancing inclusion. His work seeks to connect evidence with legal arguments, policy recommendations, and practical solutions. He also aims to strengthen international exchange concerning neurodiversity, equal treatment, human rights, and inclusive employment.

This perspective informs both his research and his communication. He engages with researchers, policymakers, professionals, and neurodivergent people while following developments in equality law, human rights, disability rights, public policy, and neurodiversity research.



Presentations, publications, webinars, and professional discussions provide opportunities to test and communicate his findings to different audiences.

Making Structural Discrimination Visible

One of the challenges Hans encounters in his work is that discrimination against neurodivergent people is not always immediately recognisable. It does not necessarily appear as explicit hostility. Instead, it can be embedded in recruitment procedures, educational structures, communication expectations, administrative processes, and organisational culture.

This makes research particularly important. When exclusion is built into ordinary procedures, it can be difficult to identify and even more difficult to address. Hans therefore combines empirical research with legal and policy analysis and lived experience to examine these less visible forms of exclusion.

Another challenge lies in translating research into action. Evidence alone does not automatically change institutions. It needs to be communicated in ways that policymakers and professionals can use, whether through legal analysis, policy recommendations, practical tools, publications, presentations, or webinars.

This translation from research into practice is one of the most meaningful aspects of Hans' work. He particularly values moments when a policymaker or professional recognises that what initially appears to be an individual problem may actually be connected to a broader structural barrier.

A Multidisciplinary Approach to Inclusion

Hans places considerable value on integrity, reliability, openness to different perspectives, and a genuine commitment to the work. He believes that meaningful progress in neurodiversity requires complementary expertise because the subject intersects with law, policy, education,



Hans Bruintjes & Lara McLachlan, May 2026

Discrimination Against Neurodivergent People: Lessons for Canada from the Netherlands

Neurodiversity Change Foundation (NCF)
517 volgers

mei 15, 2026

NCF spoke with Hans Bruintjes LLB, a Dutch legal researcher and neurodivergent lived-experience expert, about the policy blind spots, legal gaps, and advocacy strategies shaping neurodivergent rights in Europe — and what Canada can learn.

Hans's work connects law, policy, practice, and lived experience. He translates research into concrete

employment, healthcare, and organisational practice.

Lived experience is another important source of knowledge within his approach. Combining professional expertise with the experiences of neurodivergent people can help reveal gaps that may otherwise remain hidden within conventional policy or institutional analysis.

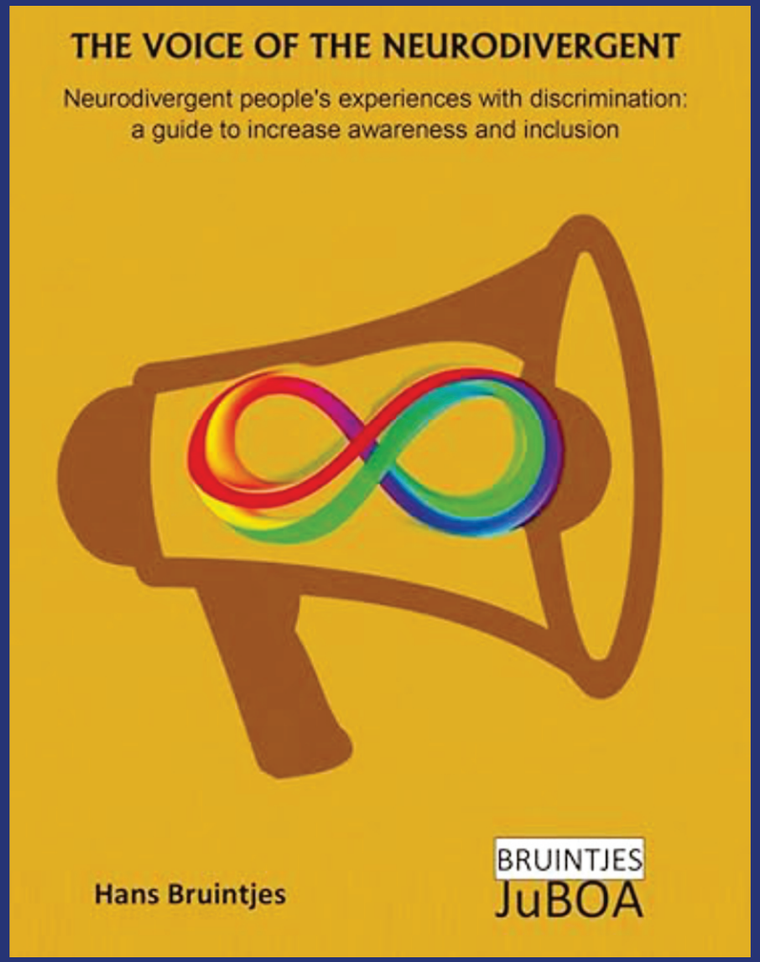
The same principle shapes his view of leadership. He identifies intellectual curiosity, integrity, persistence, and the ability to listen as important qualities for emerging leaders. In his view, leadership requires a willingness to question assumptions that have become normal and to recognise when established systems are not working as intended.

From Research to Practical Tools

Hans' future plans reflect his intention to remain an independent practitioner rather than develop a large consultancy. His ambition is to deepen the quality and impact of his research and advisory work while continuing to investigate the legal and policy protection of neurodivergent people.

Among his areas of interest are the relationships between neurodiversity, equality law, human rights, and inclusive employment. He intends to continue translating this research into publications, policy tools, presentations, and practical recommendations.

One of his practical projects is NeuroVacant, a vacancy platform developed for neurodivergent jobseekers. The ambition is to build a substantial collection of genuinely neurodivergence-friendly vacancies, helping jobseekers identify roles and workplaces that may better



accommodate different needs and working styles.

Hans also plans to develop a professional platform and network for coaches specialising in neurodiversity at work. By connecting specialist expertise, jobseekers, and employers, the initiative reflects his broader interest in creating practical mechanisms that support more inclusive employment.

The development of these tools demonstrates how his research can move beyond academic or policy discussion and become part of practical efforts to improve participation.

Redefining What Inclusion Means

Hans' perspective on inclusion ultimately centres on the question of shared responsibility.

Instead of asking only whether a neurodivergent person can adapt to a school, workplace, government procedure, or social expectation, he believes institutions should also

examine whether their systems were designed to enable different people to participate meaningfully.

This distinction is significant because a system can be formally equal while producing unequal experiences in practice. When procedures and expectations are treated as universally appropriate, people who experience them differently can be perceived as the source of the problem rather than as evidence that the system needs reconsideration.

For Hans, inclusion therefore involves moving beyond individual adaptation and toward institutional responsibility. His work seeks to contribute to systems in which accessibility is considered from the outset rather than addressed only after someone has encountered a barrier.

Success, in this context, is not measured simply by recognition, revenue, or organisational size. Hans defines professional success through work that is rigorous, useful, and capable of contributing to change. If research helps a policymaker recognise a blind spot, enables an organisation to remove a barrier, or helps a neurodivergent person understand that a difficulty is not necessarily a personal failure, he considers that meaningful progress.

As his research, publications, policy tools, and practical initiatives continue to develop, Hans Bruintjes is working toward a more evidence-based understanding of neurodiversity and inclusion. His approach brings together law, policy, research, and lived experience with a clear practical purpose: to help create systems in which human diversity is recognised not as an exception to be managed, but as a normal part of society that institutions should be designed to accommodate.

