

## Case Study



GEMEENTE BARENDRECHT



Gemeente  
Albrandswaard



GEMEENTE RIDDERKERK

## Enables

Citizens to Apply for  
Funding Online

# BAR Gemeenten Supports Freelance Workers with Rapid Access to Emergency Funding

When the coronavirus crisis hit Europe, the government of the Netherlands quickly implemented new legislation to deliver financial support to freelance workers. To rapidly process, validate and pay out on funding applications from thousands of citizens, municipal-service organization BAR Gemeenten is using Kofax RPA™ to cut hours of manual effort down to just four minutes per application.

## 96% Faster

Processing of  
Funding Applications

## 1,900 Workers

Supported with Emergency  
Funds to Date

*Work Like Tomorrow.™*

# KOFAX

## Case Study



### Meet BAR Gemeenten

WWW.WERKENBIJBARORGANISATIE.NL

BAR Gemeenten (in English: BAR Municipalities) is a local government organization that provides public services to the three Dutch municipalities of Barendrecht, Albrandswaard and Ridderkerk. From three offices throughout the region, BAR Gemeenten delivers a wide range of back-office and front-line government services that support more than 125,000 inhabitants across the municipalities.

### Products in Use

Kofax RPA™  
Kofax Mailroom Automation

### Focus

Robotic Process Automation,  
Operational Efficiency, Digital Transformation



### Meet BMconsultants

WWW.BMCONSULTANTS.COM

Headquartered in Soesterberg in the Netherlands, BMconsultants is an expert provider of business process automation solutions. Through its smart digital solutions, BMconsultants helps businesses to reduce the cost and complexity of manual workflows and liberate employees to focus on value-added activities.

**“The work we are doing with Kofax and BMconsultants will greatly improve the quality of our services, and we look forward to exploring new opportunities to infuse automation into our back-office operations.”**

**Dick Slottje, Information Consultant – Social Domain, BAR Gemeenten**

The new legislation also includes a means-tested support scheme for freelance workers, allowing self-employed people who lost income because of the COVID-19 crisis to access emergency funding.

To minimize the economic and social impact of the coronavirus crisis, municipal governments throughout the Netherlands faced the tough task of processing funding applications from thousands of freelance workers in a very short space of time.

This was a particular challenge for BAR Gemeenten, a local government organization that shares the responsibility for serving 125,000 inhabitants in the three municipalities of Barendrecht, Albrandswaard and Ridderkerk. With a lean team of back-office employees, BAR Gemeenten wanted to ensure that it was ready for the influx of funding applications, and minimize the time required to send funds to citizens in need.

Dick Slottje, Information Consultant – Social Domain at BAR Gemeenten, explains: “The temporary bridging scheme for independent workers [Dutch: tijdelijke overbruggingsregeling zelfstandige ondernemers, or TOZO] requires citizens to submit an application form that includes copies of their national identity card, trade registration and bank statements. We knew that processing all of this information manually for thousands of applicants would overload our back-office team, and prevent us getting funds to citizens in a timely manner.”

## Challenge

When the COVID-19 pandemic reached Europe in the spring of 2020, countries across the region were quick to implement nationwide lockdowns to contain the spread of the coronavirus.

In the Netherlands, the government quickly passed a package of financial relief measures to ensure businesses across the country could continue to pay their employees.

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### Solution

To achieve the goals of the TOZO scheme, BAR Gemeenten knew it needed to act quickly. To help it to accelerate the processing of emergency funding applications, the organization engaged its trusted business partner BMconsultants to deploy an enterprise-class automation solution: Kofax RPA.

Marco van Schoonhoven, Support Manager – Social Domain at BAR Gemeenten, says: “BMconsultants truly understood the urgency of our project, and provided us with all the resources we needed to speed up the design, development and deployment work. In fact, we had our first meeting with BMconsultants four days after the TOZO regulation was announced. A week later, our new Kofax RPA solution was in production.”

Dick Slottje adds: “BAR Gemeenten has been using Kofax Mailroom Automation for a number of years, and we were also well aware of the potential of Kofax RPA from our conversations with our colleagues in the planning department, who were already using the solution. We were particularly impressed by how straightforward Kofax RPA is to use, and our experience during the deployment convinced us that we’d made the right choice.”

Today, Kofax RPA is an integral part of the processing workflow for TOZO applications. Citizens submit their application via the BAR Gemeenten website, and attach digital copies of all necessary documents. Next, the Kofax solution checks the application for completeness and performs a basic validation check to ensure that each applicant is living in the Barendrecht, Albrandswaard or Ridderkerk region.

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**Marco van Schoonhoven, Support Manager – Social Domain, BAR Gemeenten**

If all the conditions are met, Kofax RPA populates the data into BAR Gemeenten’s social case management system, where an employee checks and approves the application for immediate payment. At the end of the process, the Kofax solution triggers Kofax Mailroom Automation to print a confirmation letter for the payee, and send a digital copy to BAR Gemeenten’s long-term data repository for archiving.

“We have worked together with BMconsultants on a number of technology projects in the past, and we’ve always valued their commitment to our success,” comments Dick Slottje. “This project was no exception, and we are delighted with how smoothly and quickly we were able to move workflow automation off the drawing board and into production.”

### Results

By shaping a highly automated application process using Kofax RPA, BAR Gemeenten is achieving its goal of delivering vital emergency funding to the communities who need it most.

"If we had to work through TOZO applications manually, we estimate that it could take up to two hours of work to collate and validate all the information and make a payment," explains Dick Slottje. "Thanks to Kofax RPA, we can process requests for emergency funding in just four minutes, a time-saving of 96 percent that helps us to provide support to every freelance worker who needs it."

Marco van Schoonhoven adds: "To date, we've processed more than 1,900 TOZO applications using Kofax RPA. If we'd had to process all the funding applications we received in the wake of the COVID-19 lockdown by hand, we would still be doing it now. Instead, our team is completely on top of the work, which frees them to focus on applicants who require additional support."

Based on its success with the Kofax RPA solution, BAR Gemeenten is planning to work with BMconsultants to automate additional business processes. For example, the organization is currently investigating the possibility of using the automated workflow to process applications for government accessibility grants, which can be used to install stairlifts and mobility devices in homes and offices.

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"We see that robotic process automation has huge potential for cost-savings, which ultimately means better value for money for the Dutch taxpayer," says Dick Slottje. "We're also witnessing a significant shift in the type of work we do behind the scenes. Instead of spending large amounts of time manually rekeying data from applications into other systems, we can focus on actions that actually move the applications forward."

He concludes: "The work we are doing with Kofax and BMconsultants will greatly improve the quality of our services, and we look forward to exploring new opportunities to infuse automation into our back-office operations."

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