OECD Reviews of Migrant Education

NETHERLANDS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tables

Figures

Boxes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Sixteen percent of the young Dutch population has a non-Western immigrant background, and education is of key importance to their future success.

Immigrants with low levels of education are at a severe disadvantage in the Dutch labour market compared to their native peers – and this gap is far more pronounced than in the OECD on average. At particular risk are many young adults with non-Western immigrant background who have low levels of education. In 2008, 16% of all young people aged 20 and below had non-Western immigrant background and the majority originated from Turkey, Morocco, Surinam or the Antilles. The population with non-Western background is largely concentrated in the West of the Netherlands, notably, 39% reside in Rotterdam, Amsterdam, The Hague or Utrecht (compared to 13% of the total Dutch population). This residential concentration is to a certain extent mirrored in schools in the four major cities – although other factors such as parental choice and – for secondary schools – academic selection also contribute to the student composition in schools.

Measured results of primary schooling outcomes for students with non-Western immigrant background have been improving over recent years.

In international comparison, Dutch primary school students with an immigrant background perform well. There have been marked improvements in primary schooling outcomes over recent years for young students with non-Western immigrant background, but on average they only perform around the level of the least advantaged native Dutch students. Accordingly, at age 12 students with non-Western immigrant background are overrepresented among those pursuing (pre)vocational studies. However over the years many have pursued the longer route via vocational education to higher education – more so than their native peers.

Secondary schooling outcomes are mixed for students with non-Western immigrant background.

International evidence shows marked average performance differences at age 15 between second-generation immigrant students and native Dutch students – along with Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany and Luxembourg, these are the most pronounced in the OECD. This is reflected in national statistics for dropout rates in secondary education: among the new dropouts in 2007/08, 27% had a non-Western immigrant background – although such students represented only 16% of all students participating in secondary education. However, transition rates to university are very high for students with non-Western immigrant background who complete pre-university education (VWO). The challenge is to increase their access to such education: among students in the third grade of secondary education in 2008/09, 13% of students with non-Western immigrant background participated in VWO, compared to 23% of native Dutch students.

Dutch policy for migrant education emphasises universal policies to improve education for disadvantaged students.

Immigrant students with non-Western background are expected to benefit from educational policies to improve equity including, notably, extra funding to primary schools with students from disadvantaged background and to secondary schools for students living in deprived areas. There are also preschool and early school programmes targeting children from disadvantaged background, as well as policies to correct

for early selection into different school types at age 12 and to ensure that students achieve basic qualification. Specific measures for migrant education include funding to secondary schools for newly arrived immigrants, agreements to reduce segregation between native Dutch and immigrant students in primary schools, induction classes offering intensive Dutch lessons to newly arrived immigrant students and the creation of specific platforms for ethnic minority parents.

There is scope to raise the quality of under-performing schools and enhance immigrant families' means to exercise school choice.

In the Netherlands, there is political support to limit segregation and concentration in education and commitment to build knowledge on effective measures. However, it has proven difficult to sustain efforts to combat segregation and concentration in schools and there is evidence that parental choice has led to increased levels. Another notable challenge is ensuring access to high quality primary education in Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht where between 10 and 20% of primary schools were classified as underperforming in 2007. In this context, the OECD sees a strengthened role for the Education Inspectorate to monitor and ensure the quality of schooling, evaluating specifically school ability to close performance gaps between native and immigrant students (including subgroups of immigrants with non-Western background). Further, consideration should be given to lowering the threshold for initiating corrective action in under-performing schools. In parallel, there is room to enhance for immigrant families, as well as socio-economically disadvantaged families, the means to exercise school choice. This could include the provision of clear and timely information on school choice and enrolment, including the dates and procedures for school enrolment, in clear accessible language and in selected foreign languages. Another option is to encourage co-operation among schools and school boards at the secondary level of education to ensure a more even distribution in enrolment of immigrant students.

There is also scope to strengthen the use of monitoring and evaluation practices within schools and at the system level.

The Netherlands places high value on evidence-based policy making and is in a strong position to monitor the outcomes of immigrant students with a rich national data set and participation in international surveys. There have also been several initiatives to promote the use of monitoring student progress in schools, *e.g.* including a criterion of "use of data and results" in the inspection of primary schools and introducing a financial incentive for secondary school leaders to monitor and prevent drop out at their schools. The challenge in pushing forward this agenda primarily lies with the fact that not all school leaders and teachers have the necessary training to make effective use of monitoring and evaluation. The OECD sees scope to work with teacher training institutions and the national educational advisory centres to take stock of existing instruments and teacher training to monitor student progress and to make such information available on a systematic basis to teachers and school leaders, *e.g.* through pre- and in-service training. School initiatives to improve staff competency in use of monitoring tools should be evaluated. Further, existing statistical information can be reclassified and analysed to monitor emerging issues of the integration of new immigrant groups in the Netherlands. There is also scope to evaluate the adequacy of actual weighting schemes in ensuring that schools have sufficient resources and to monitor how they use these.

Efforts to provide young children with non-Western immigrant background adequate opportunity to develop social and Dutch skills can be enhanced.

The Netherlands introduced preschool and early-school education programmes (VVE) in 2000 to combat educational disadvantage at an early age. While this initiative has been promising in increasing participation in ECEC of young immigrant children from disadvantaged backgrounds, challenges remain to capitalise on the potential that this offers. Research shows only modest positive effects of ECEC participation and no effects for young children with Turkish or Moroccan low-education backgrounds. The

OECD sees scope to strengthen the existing VVE programmes by complementing enrolment targets with quality targets. For example, by ensuring that teachers in preschool programmes with high proportions of immigrant children have access to in-service training to effectively care for linguistically and culturally diverse children and by setting minimum qualification requirements for ECEC staff. In parallel, major stakeholders need to continue their efforts to engage immigrant parents, to achieve the government's target for 100% participation of disadvantaged children in VVE by 2011.

Schools and communities play a key role in improving migrant education.

In the Netherlands, there is political support to raise teachers' and school leaders' competencies and qualifications in all schools (*e.g.* the action plan on teachers to improve staff remuneration and professional enhancement) and to improve all students' language and arithmetic skills (*e.g.* common standards for literacy and numeracy and plans to introduce performance reference levels in 2010). Efforts to increase targeted support to students include the recent introduction of induction classes for newly arrived immigrants in secondary schools and many municipality and school initiatives to offer additional language support activities. However, there are major challenges to attract teachers to schools in disadvantaged areas and to build teacher and school leader capacity to meet diverse individual students' needs. The OECD encourages continued prioritisation of recruitment and retention of high quality teachers to schools in disadvantaged areas and suggests that prioritising training and professional development within these schools will help to attract the brightest candidates from teaching colleges. For teachers in schools with high proportions of immigrant students, in-service training in the second language acquisition theory and practice is strongly recommended and the implementation of this could be monitored by the Inspectorate. Consideration should also be given to setting minimum qualifications for school leaders to ensure their ability to lead in a multicultural environment. Further, the OECD encourages the Netherlands to pursue a long-term policy to recruit more school leaders and teachers with immigrant background and to ensure adequate support to immigrant students in teaching programmes.

As part of the political goal to reduce the number of young people leaving education without basic qualification, there has been increased provision of support and guidance services at school, including "Care and Advice Teams" and mentor programmes. Plus, there are regional and municipal initiatives to target transitions that are challenging for many students, *e.g.* from lower vocational (VMBO) to upper vocational (MBO) programmes. However, the toughest challenges are to retain students in the one year MBO programmes and to promote successful participation of students with a non-Western immigrant background in apprenticeship-type vocational programmes. As such, the OECD recommends the implementation of "Care and Advice Teams" in vocational schools as priority, particularly those in disadvantaged areas, and supports the further development of systems to report absenteeism. Another policy option is for the Government, municipalities and vocational schools to work together with business partners and local communities (especially ethnic minority communities) to establish apprenticeships. There is also a role for the Council for Vocational Education (MBO-Raad) to promote support to written and academic Dutch skills throughout vocational schools.

In the Netherlands, there is increasing recognition of the importance of engaging immigrant parents as partners in education, with notably the Platform for Ethnic Minority Parents and Education (PAOO) playing a leading role in this along with local platforms in 30 large municipalities. There are also established partnerships among schools, communities and other welfare partners to offer extended support to parents and students. The OECD sees scope to enhance the involvement of immigrant parents in official school/parent partnerships by taking a more proactive approach, for example school boards reserving places for them, schools developing plans for parental involvement and the government supporting municipality initiatives in this area and promoting effective ones. There is also room to focus existing initiatives on providing educational support to disadvantaged students, *e.g.* by extending homework support and access to computers and libraries in community schools.

CHAPTER 1

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES FOR IMMIGRANTS AND MIGRANT EDUCATION

This chapter identifies successes and challenges for immigrants and migrant education in the Netherlands. An analysis of performance and participation in education identifies immigrants with non-Western background as a priority group. Although these students have made significant educational gains over recent years they remain at an educational disadvantage on average compared to their counterparts. The chapter presents an overview of Dutch policies for migrant education which emphasise universal equity and quality policies but include some specific measures targeting immigrant students.

OECD Review of Migrant Education

This review is one of a series of policy reviews of migrant education in OECD countries (see Box 1.1) and follows the policy evaluation framework established for the OECD Review of Migrant Education. However, policy challenges and priority issues for immigrant students vary from country to country. To this end, each country was invited to tailor the focus of the policy review in consultation with the OECD Secretariat in order to ensure that the immediate output of the review will meet the specific needs of the country. This policy review of the Netherlands presents selected policy options designed to respond to high priority issues and supported by evidence and research or other country practices. (See Annex A for the Terms of Reference and Annex B for the visit programmes).

Box 1.1. OECD Review of Migrant Education

The OECD launched the Review of Migrant Education in January 2008. The scope of the project includes pre-school, primary school, and secondary school. The overarching question of the review is ***what policies will promote successful education outcomes for first- and second-generation immigrant students***[1]***?***

"Education outcomes" are defined as follows:

- **Access** – Whether immigrant students have the same access to quality education as their native peers; and if not, what policies may facilitate or hinder their access.
- **Participation** – Whether immigrant students may drop out more easily or leave school earlier than their native peers; and if so, what policies may influence immigrant students' completion of schooling.
- **Performance** – Whether immigrant students perform as well as their native peers; and if not, what policies may effectively raise immigrant students' performance at school, especially for those from low socio-economic background?

The project consists of two strands of activities: analytical work and country policy reviews.

- **Analytical work** draws on evidence from all OECD countries. It includes an international questionnaire on migrant policies, reviews previous OECD work and academic literature regarding migrant education, and explores statistical data from PISA and other sources.
- **Country policy reviews** aim to provide country-specific policy recommendations. Reviews are being conducted in Austria, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. Each participating country has prepared a Country Background Report based on common OECD guidelines.

The results of both the analytical work and country policy reviews will feed into the final report of the OECD Review of Migrant Education.

[1] First-generation immigrant students were born outside the country of assessment and their parents were also born in a different country. Second-generation immigrant students were born in the country of assessment but their parents were born in a different country, *i.e.* they have followed all their pre-school/schooling in the country of assessment.

This Review should be read in conjunction with the Country Background Report prepared by the Dutch authorities (Herweijer, 2009).

Summary of the position of immigrants in the Netherlands

Where possible, this section presents comparable information for immigrants in the Flemish Community of Belgium and Germany (see Annex A).

Recent immigration trends

Arrival of new immigrant groups in the Netherlands

Over recent years, there has been a decline in the number of immigrants coming from traditional sending countries such as Turkey and Morocco. On average, over the period from 1995 to 2005, 7% of all immigrants came from Turkey and 5% from Morocco, but this was 4% and 2.5% of all immigrants in 2006, respectively (OECD, 2008a). The two largest groups in 2006 were immigrants from Germany and Poland (each around 10% of all immigrants), and immigrants from the United States, China and India were among the top ten nationalities. A similar trend is observed in Germany, where 5% of new immigrants came from Turkey (a decline from an average of 8% over the previous ten years), but 27% came from Poland. However, in Belgium, 9% of new immigrants came from Morocco and 4% from Turkey, representing only a slight decline from the average of the previous ten years.

Despite the decline in numbers of new immigrants from the traditional sending countries, 47% of immigrants in 2006 entered with family permits. This is a larger proportion than in Germany (23%) and Belgium (35%). Notably, in the Netherlands, 24% of immigrants entered with humanitarian permits in 2006 – a much higher proportion than in Germany (3%) and Belgium (7%) – which stands in contrast to the general decline in OECD countries (OECD, 2008a).

Increased responsibilities for immigrants

Over the past few decades, the thrust of strategies to address the disadvantages confronted by immigrants in the Netherlands has evolved in important ways. In 1983, the White Paper on Minorities provided the basis for a so-called "ethnic minorities policy". Strategies were premised on the notion of "multi-culturalism" and the objective of accommodating the diversity that accompanied the increase in the number of immigrants living in the Netherlands. Strategies aimed for "emancipation and participation in society", reduction of social and economic disadvantage, and preventing and overcoming discrimination. In 1985, immigrants who had lived in the Netherlands for at least five years were granted certain voting rights. In 1989, the Scientific Council for Government Policy published a report that recommended a shift of objectives, downplaying the emphasis on accommodation and emphasising integration instead. It also recommended shifting the focus from migrant status, *per se*, to particular problems that hindered integration, such as weak language skills, low levels of education, and discrimination. In the years that followed, the government incorporated many of the key recommendations into policies that balanced rights with responsibilities, particularly with the obligation for immigrants to integrate into Dutch society. Compulsory language and "civic integration" courses were established for newly-arrived immigrants. The new approach also put in place affirmative action measures to pressure employers to hire immigrants and diversify their staffs, and strengthened the legal basis for immigrants to fight discrimination (OECD 2008a, pp. 200-204).

The Civic Integration Act (passed in January 2007) heightens the importance of and requirements for immigrants to have sufficient skills in the Dutch language. The Act targets both new immigrants and established immigrants aged 18 to 65 meeting the following criteria: from countries outside the European Economic Agreement (EEA) area; with low command of the Dutch language; and who had not attended at least eight years of compulsory education in the Netherlands. Similarly, in the Flemish Community of Belgium, there are stricter demands for immigrants to improve their proficiency in Dutch and to accept

Flemish societal values: certain benefits for adult immigrants are contingent upon their participation in language and civic courses.

Immigrant population

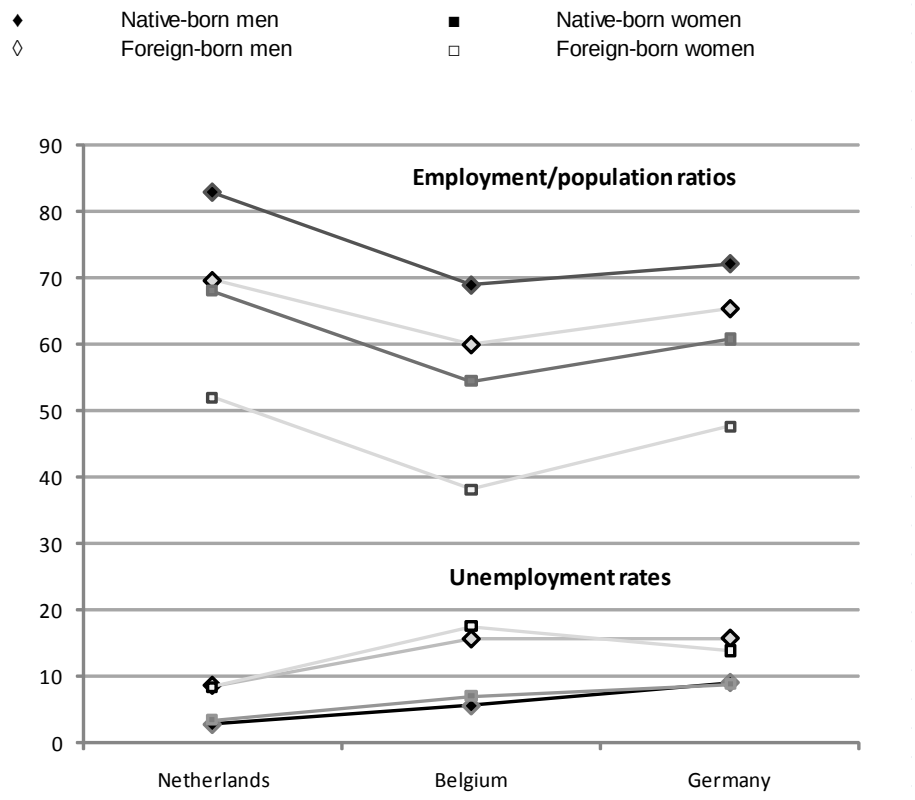
In 2008, 16% of young people (aged 0 to 20 years) in the Netherlands were immigrants from non-Western countries and roughly 70% of these originated from Turkey, Morocco, Surinam or the Antilles (Herweijer, 2009). In Germany, 27% of the population aged 25 or under has an immigrant background, including 9% originating from Turkey and 5% originating from other former countries of labour recruitment (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung, 2006). In the Flemish Community of Belgium in 2008/09, 8% of children in pre-primary and primary education did not speak either Dutch or French at home and 6% did not have Belgian nationality. The major immigrant groups originate from Turkey, Morocco, the Russian Federation and Serbia.

Low educational attainment for immigrants is a strong barrier to labour market participation

Foreign-born individuals in the Netherlands are less likely to be in the labour force. Although unemployment rates are comparatively low for all groups compared to in Germany and Belgium, they are still three times as high for foreign-born men than for native-born men (Figure 1.1). In all three systems, there are comparatively low employment rates for foreign-born women: only one in two of foreign-born women are employed in the Netherlands.

Figure 1.1. Average employment/population ratio and unemployment rate

By gender and place of birth



Source : OECD, 2008a.

Evidence shows that low educational attainment is a strong barrier to labour market participation for immigrants. Table 1.1 compares employment rates of native and immigrant 20-to-29-year-olds according to their educational attainment. Employment rates are substantially lower for immigrants who do not have higher education qualifications and are particularly pronounced for second-generation immigrants who have not attained basic qualification at the upper secondary level. In all cases, the relative employment gaps between immigrants and natives by educational level are higher in the Netherlands than in the OECD on average. This is not a marginal issue: 47% of immigrants aged 15 to 64 years with non-Western background have low levels of educational attainment (Table 1.2).

Table 1.1. Employment rates by educational attainment

	Educational attainment							
	Low		Medium		High		Total	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Belgium								
Native born	68	49	82	71	88	89	81	77
Second-generation immigrants	47	32	69	57	79	82	61	54
First-generation immigrants	53	21	67	56	88	71	65	43
Germany								
Native born	56	44	82	77	90	86	79	73
Second-generation immigrants	54	43	76	73	81	64	69	62
First-generation immigrants	62	34	81	68	90	80	74	55
Netherlands								
Native born	81	66	94	90	96	94	91	87
Second-generation immigrants	53	48	80	75	93	n.a.	70	67
First-generation immigrants	72	42	81	70	n.a.	94	78	63
OECD								
Native born	66	49	85	76	91	89	83	77
Second-generation immigrants	58	43	79	69	86	82	74	68
First-generation immigrants	65	39	78	65	86	78	75	59

Note 1. "Low" indicates ISCED 2 or below; "Medium" indicates ISCED 3; "High" indicates ISCED 5 and 6.

Source : OECD Migration statistics.

Given the strong likelihood for immigrants with lower education to have weak labour market outcomes, the persistent problem of low attainment levels for non-Western immigrant groups is particularly worrisome (Table 1.2). Analysis of attainment levels for the adult population overall (aged 15 to 64 years) compared to for young adults only (aged 25 to 34 years) indicates that the proportion of immigrants with very low attainment levels is declining, particularly for those with Western backgrounds. This is a positive development. Nonetheless, the absolute number of poorly qualified young adults with non-Western immigrant background is still large – 49% of younger Turkish and 39% of younger Moroccan immigrants have less than a basic qualification as currently defined. Regarding higher education, the proportion of some of the young adults from non-Western immigrant groups with university qualifications is equal to that of the native Dutch.

Table 1.2. Level of education for native Dutch and immigrants

Educational attainment in percentage of population, 2008

	15-to-64-year-olds	25-to-34-year-olds
Attained less than 'basic qualification'		
Total population	32	18
Native Dutch	31	15
Western immigrants	28	18
Non-Western immigrants	47	35
Turkish background	61	49
Moroccan background	56	39
Surinamese background	40	21
Antillean background	40	18
Other non-Western background	39	29
Attained university education		
Total population	9	14
Native Dutch	9	14
Western immigrants	15	21
Non-Western immigrants	8	9
Turkish background	4	5
Moroccan background	3	3
Surinamese background	5	7
Antillean background	7	14
Other non-Western background	16	16
Attained higher professional education		
Total population	17	24
Native Dutch	18	27
Western immigrants	16	20
Non-Western immigrants	9	14
Turkish background	6	11
Moroccan background	7	14
Surinamese background	12	21
Antillean background	13	18
Other non-Western background	10	13

Source : Statistics Netherlands (StatLine).

Residential concentration of immigrants in the West and major cities

Immigrants – in particular with non-Western backgrounds – are to a great extent concentrated in the West of the Netherlands and mainly in the four cities of Rotterdam, Amsterdam, The Hague and Utrecht (Table 1.3).

Table 1.3. Geographical distribution of non-Western immigrants in the Netherlands

Percentage of distribution across North, East, South and West, plus percentage in major cities (2008)

	North	East	South	West	4 major cities
Total population	10	21	22	47	13
Non-Western immigrants	4	15	14	67	39
Turkish background	2	21	16	60	35
Moroccan background	1	10	16	72	47
Surinamese background	3	12	6	78	52
Antillean background	6	14	14	66	34

Source : Statistics Netherlands (StatLine).

Languages

Dutch is the language of instruction in compulsory and early childhood education in the Netherlands. However, in the province of Friesland primary and secondary schools are obliged to include the Frisian language in their educational programme. English is also part of the core objectives in primary education (SLO, 2007).

Performance and participation in education and identification of priorities

A comparison of selected systems

The Netherlands is one of several systems within the OECD practising selection of children into different types of school or educational tracks at an early age according to their academic ability (Table 1.4). For the purposes of this section, comparisons will be drawn with Germany and the Flemish Community of Belgium. However, in general, there are limitations to the availability of information on immigrant students within these systems. As such, international evidence is presented to allow comparison of how immigrant students perform compared to native students in each system.[1] Wherever possible, more detailed national data are provided to allow analysis of different immigrant groups, in particular immigrants from non-Western background.

Table 1.4. Overview of selected education systems

	International enrolment data for 2007					Structural features	
	Age range at which over 90% of the pop-ulation is enrolled in education	Age at which compulsory schooling starts	Children enrolled aged 4 as a percentage of the population aged 4	Students aged 16 as a percentage of the population aged 16	Students aged 17 as a percentage of the population aged 17	First age of selection in the education system	Number of school types of distinct educational programmes available to 15 year olds
Austria	5-16	6	84%	91%	89%	10	4
Belgium	3-17	6	100%	100%	100%	12	4
Germany	4-17	6	94%	96%	92%	10	4
Netherlands	4-17	5	99%	98%	92%	12	6
United Kingdom	4-16	4/5	91%	90%	75%	16	1

Source : OECD, 2009 and the Education database; Herweijer, 2009; Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung, 2006.

Early childhood education and care (ECEC)

International data show almost universal participation for four-year-olds in the Netherlands and Germany and for three- and four-year-olds in Belgium despite the fact that schooling is compulsory at a later age in all systems (Table 1.4). In the Netherlands, participation rates in preschool playgroups (for children aged 2.5 to 4 years) have been traditionally lower for children with Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Antillean immigrant background (Table 1.5). However, this has increased over recent years for children of Turkish and Moroccan immigrant background and around a third of these children participated in targeted preschool and early school education programmes (VVE) in 2004. It is also a political priority in Germany to increase participation of children with immigrant background in preschool to stimulate language learning and social integration at an earlier age: 89% of native children and 84% of second-generation immigrant children attended preschool in 2004 (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung, 2006). For younger children, a similar pattern can be observed in the Flemish Community of Belgium: in 2004, 24% of children aged three months to three years whose mother did not have Belgian nationality when the child was born participated in ECEC compared to 63% of native children.

Table 1.5. Participation in early childhood education and care (VVE) by immigrant group

Percentages of children participating from 1996 to 2007

	Turkey	Morocco	Suriname/Antilles	Native Dutch low	Native Dutch high
Preschool playgroups					
1996	46	25	63	79	81
1998	59	38	65	79	82
2000	67	39	71	83	80
2002	74	51	63	83	79
2004	75	52	61	80	76
2007	83	70	64	84	73
Preschool and early-school education					
1996	32	26	13	3	1
1998	42	24	13	5	2
2000	39	28	17	4	2
2002	51	41	22	13	5
2004	30	27	14	10	5
2007	33	30	21	9	7

Note 1. For native Dutch children "high" and "low" refer to the highest level of education attained by either parent, where "low" represents no higher than ISCED level 2 (vmbo), and "high" represents at least ISCED 3 or higher (havo/vwo/ mbo or higher education). Data for 1996 and 1998 are based on small samples of immigrant parents and should be interpreted with caution.

Source : Table 18 in Herweijer, 2009, supplemented from COOL 5 to 18.

Looking back to earlier years, results from a recent survey of 18-to-35-year-old second-generation immigrants with a Turkish background show at least 90% of respondents in the Netherlands, Belgium and France had participated in ECEC by age four (Table 1.6). However, corresponding participation rates were much lower in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

Table 1.6. Age of entry into education for second-generation Turkish immigrants

Survey of 18-to-35-year-olds (2007/08)

	Percentage of 18-to-35-year-olds who reported being enrolled in education:			Number of individuals surveyed
	By age 3	By age 4	By age 5	
Austria	17%	41%	56%	458
Belgium	87%	93%	97%	582
France	90%	96%	99%	500
Germany	39%	67%	77%	490
Netherlands	13%	90%	97%	499
Sweden	53%	67%	80%	232
Switzerland	1%	12%	77%	464

Source : TIES survey 2007/08.

Compulsory education

Strong performance internationally in primary education for immigrant students despite relative disadvantage to native peers

Primary school students in the Netherlands perform well internationally, including students with only one or neither parent born in the Netherlands (Table 1.7). This is also the case for students in the Flemish Community of Belgium and Germany. In all three systems, there are already pronounced performance differences between native and immigrant students. Indeed, more detailed national evidence for the Netherlands reveals a significant performance lag for non-Western immigrant groups already in year two of primary school (Gijsberts and Herweijer, 2007). However, from 1988 to 2004, there has been steady progress in raising educational outcomes for primary school students from the non-Western

immigrant groups, in particular students from Turkish and Moroccan background. In 2004/05, at the end of primary school, students from Turkish, Moroccan and Surinamese background had similar scores in arithmetic to native students whose parents have limited education.[2]

International evidence shows that students in the Netherlands have greater scheduled opportunity to learn in schools compared to other OECD systems: schooling is compulsory in the Netherlands from the age of five (in contrast to age six in Belgium and Germany) and the majority of four-year-olds participate in early school education at primary schools; plus there is comparatively greater intended instruction time from ages 7 to 14 in primary and secondary education (Tables 1.4 and 1.8).[3]

Table 1.7. Reading performance in the fourth grade of primary school

Mean achievement scores in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) 2006

	Native students				Immigrant students	
	Both parents born in country		Only one parent born in country		Neither parent born in country	
	% of students	Score	% of students	Score	% of students	Score
Austria	72	548	11	540	17	501
Belgium (Fl.)	79	554	13	530	8	511
England	71	552	17	539	12	502
France	67	531	19	518	14	496
Germany	71	564	14	543	16	515
Netherlands	77	553	11	547	12	513
International average	76	508	14	491	10	476

Source : IEA, 2007.

Table 1.8. Intended instruction time in primary and secondary education

2007

	Average number of hours per year of total intended instruction time		
	Ages 7 to 8	Ages 9 to 11	Ages 12 to 14
Austria	735	812	958
Belgium (Fl.)	835	835	960
England	846	893	925
Germany	634	784	883
Netherlands	940	1 000	1 027
OECD average	790	839	926

Source : OECD, 2009.

Early streaming lowers possibility for some immigrant groups to attend higher education

At the end of primary education, when students are age 12, most schools administer a standard test developed by the National Institute for Test Development (CITO) to measure student performance – although such a test is not compulsory. The outcome of this test, as well as the recommendation of the teacher (in consultation with the parents) combine to advise parents on the type of secondary school their child should attend.[4] Students enter either pre-vocational secondary education or general secondary education comprising a total of six different tracks: in pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO), either basic vocational, advanced vocational, combined vocational-theoretical or theoretical programmes; in general secondary education, either senior general secondary education (HAVO) or pre-university education (VWO), both being designed to give students direct access to higher education. National data show similar patterns of participation in academic and vocational tracks for native Dutch students and students with a Western immigrant background (Table 1.9). However, students with a non-Western immigrant background are underrepresented in HAVO and VWO, the two tracks preparing for higher education: in 2008/09, 22% of students with a Turkish or Moroccan immigrant background and between

32 and 34% of students with a Surinamese or an Antillean immigrant background were enrolled in HAVO or VWO, compared to 48% of native Dutch students. But compared to native students, slightly larger proportions of students with a non-Western immigrant background are also found in the highest vocational track, which is a possible route to higher education (via the second phase of senior general education). Students from Turkish, Moroccan and Antillean immigrant background are strongly overrepresented in the lowest vocational track (Table 1.9).

Table 1.9. Participation in different educational tracks in the third grade of secondary education

2008/09

	Percentage of students in each educational track								
			Immigrant students						
	Total all students	Native Dutch	Total Western	Total non-Western	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinamese	Antillean	Other non-Western
General secondary education - with access to higher education	**45**	**48**	**49**	**31**	**22**	**22**	**34**	**32**	**42**
Pre-university education (VWO)	22	23	25	13	7	8	13	14	20
Senior general secondary education (HAVO)	20	21	21	15	12	13	16	14	18
Combined HAVO/VWO	3	3	4	3	3	1	4	4	4
Prevocational secondary education (VMBO) - with access to senior vocational education	**55**	**52**	**51**	**69**	**78**	**78**	**66**	**68**	**58**
Theoretical track - with access to second phase of senior general education (HAVO)	18	17	19	21	22	22	21	17	20
Combined vocational-theoretical track	8	9	6	5	7	5	4	6	5
Advanced vocational track	15	14	13	19	20	22	19	19	15
Basic vocational track	14	12	12	24	29	29	21	27	17

Source : Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2009a.

Immigrant students appear to be underrepresented in the "higher" academic tracks in other selective systems also – although detailed data for these other systems are not available. In the Flemish Community of Belgium, students are selected into different school types at age 12, and those who do not speak Dutch at home represent 10% of students in the first year of academic education and 22% of students in the first year of vocational education. In Germany, students are selected into different school types as early as age ten. National analysis of PISA 2000 results suggests that while comparatively large proportions of students overall attend "higher" academic Grammar schools, certain immigrant groups are significantly underrepresented there: 33% of native students attended Grammar school, compared to 25% of immigrant students and only 13% of students with a Turkish immigrant background (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung, 2006).

Improved performance internationally for immigrant students in the Netherlands, but persistent gaps

International evidence shows that at age 15 there are significant performance differences on average between native students and immigrant students in the majority – but not all – of the OECD countries (OECD, 2007). Some of the most pronounced performance disadvantages in reading for second-generation immigrant students are observed in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland. However, both first- and second-generation immigrant students in the Netherlands show

better reading ability on average compared to their peers in the Flemish Community of Belgium and Germany (Table 1.10). Further, the relative performance gap in reading – although still pronounced – appears to have reduced in the Netherlands since the first PISA survey in 2000.[5] Unfortunately, it is not possible to identify progress for particular immigrant groups within these international results, as the Netherlands did not choose to collect such data via the PISA survey. Such analysis would have been interesting as a comparison of results for immigrant students with a Turkish background reveals significant average performance differences among different education systems (OECD, 2006).[6]

Table 1.10. Reading performance at age 15

Mean score and scores at the 10th, 25th and 75th percentiles of the performance distribution, PISA 2006

	Average performance	Bottom 10% of students score below:	Bottom 25% of students score below:	Top 25% of students score at least:
Belgium (Fl.)				
Native students	530	394	474	601
Second-generation immigrant students	421	263	341	499
First-generation immigrant students	432	276	358	515
Germany				
Native students	510	376	448	581
Second-generation immigrant students	427	271	350	515
First-generation immigrant students	440	264	369	531
Netherlands				
Native students	515	395	457	582
Second-generation immigrant students	454	318	386	524
First-generation immigrant students	449	294	370	530

Source : OECD PISA 2006 database.

It is important to note that in the Netherlands, Germany and the Flemish Community of Belgium at least 25% of immigrant students perform around or above the OECD average on the PISA reading test (Table 1.10). However, among both the top and bottom performers on the test, native students outperform immigrant students in all three systems (although these gaps are more pronounced in the Flemish Community of Belgium).

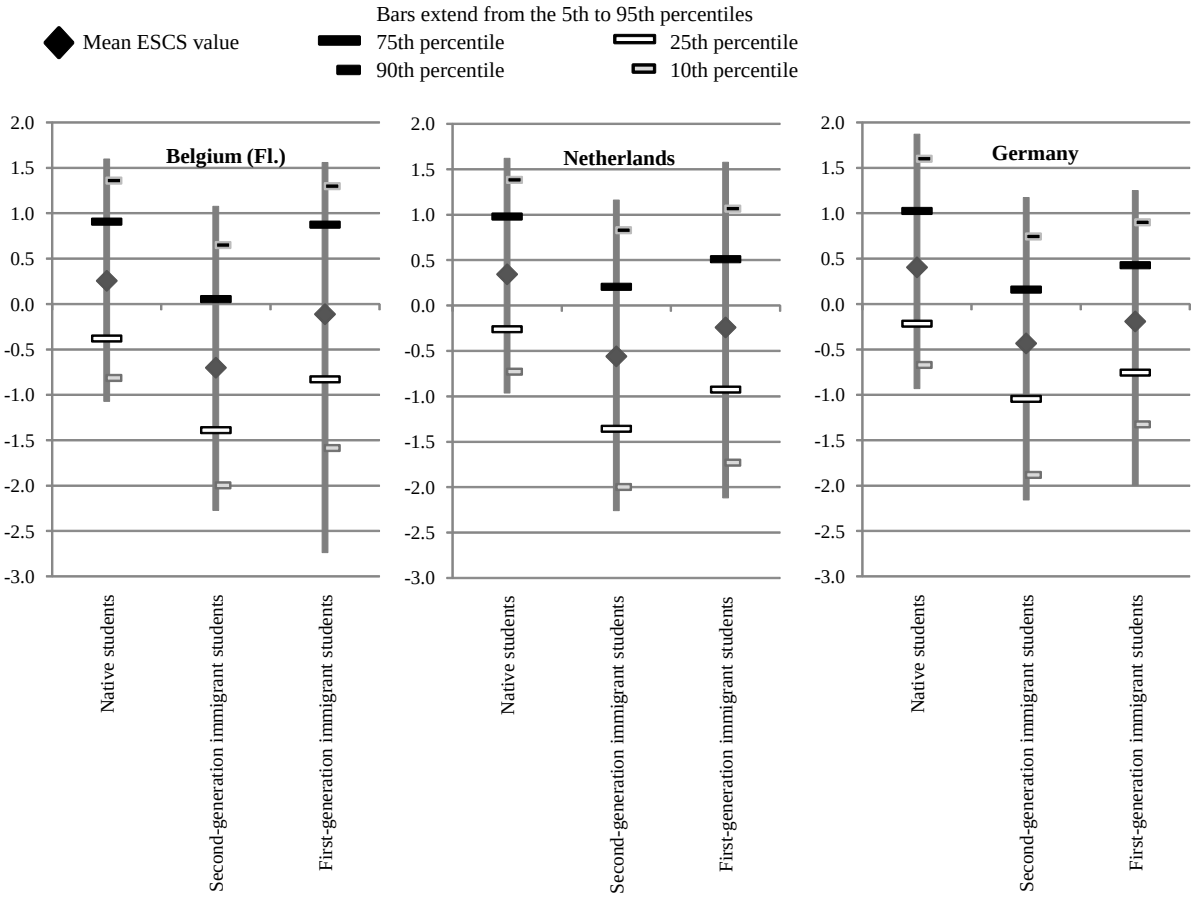
Less advantaged socio-economic background and not speaking Dutch at home are major educational challenges for immigrant students

Much of these performance gaps are explained by students' socio-economic background – native students in all three systems have both higher average and less varied social, economic and cultural status – but there are still significant performance differences even after taking account of this (Figures 1.2 and 1.3). The relative disadvantage in average socio-economic background is more pronounced for second-generation immigrant students than for first-generation immigrant students in all three systems. However, in the Netherlands this does not translate into lower average performance for second-generation immigrant students compared to first-generation immigrant students (Table 1.10). Generally, second-generation immigrant students in these systems have similar socio-economic composition – although this is slightly higher on average in Germany. In contrast, there is a much wider range of socio-economic backgrounds among first-generation immigrant students in the Netherlands and the Flemish Community of Belgium compared to in Germany.

In the Netherlands and Germany, the language spoken at home is also an important factor and performance differences in reading at age 15 are no longer significant once this together with the students' socio-economic background has been accounted for (Figure 1.3).

Figure 1.2. Students' socio-economic background at age 15, by immigrant status

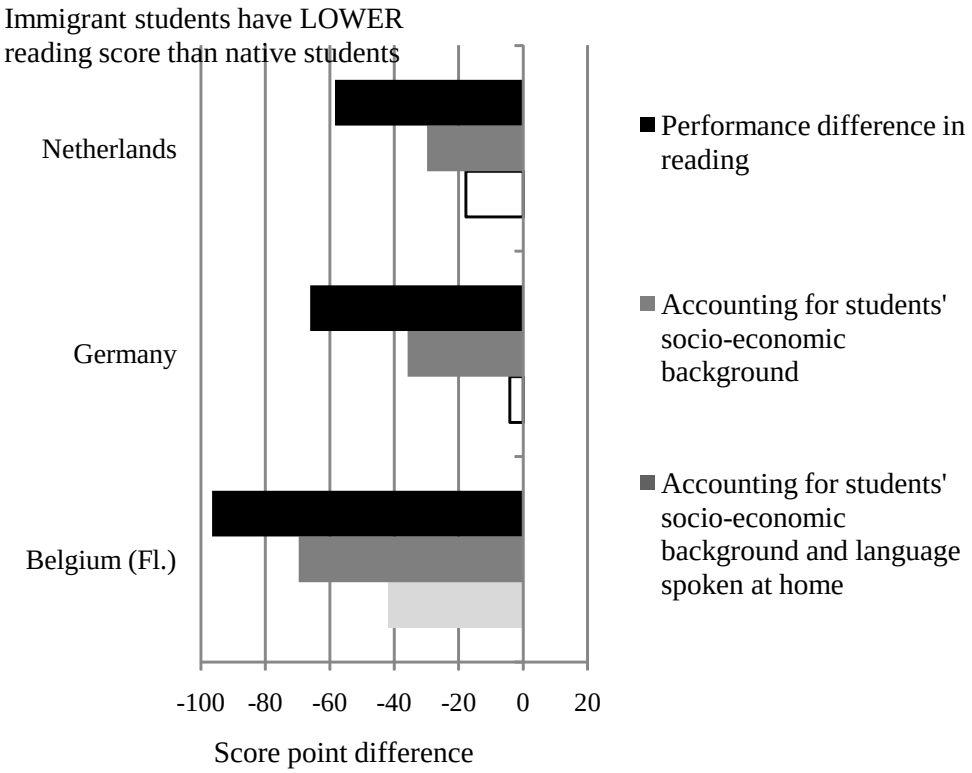
Distribution on the PISA index of economic, social and cultural status (ESCS), PISA 2006



Source: OECD PISA 2006 database.

Figure 1.3. Reading performance at age 15 and socio-economic and language differences

Differences in reading performance by immigrant status, PISA 2006



Note 1. Statistically significant differences are marked in a darker tone.

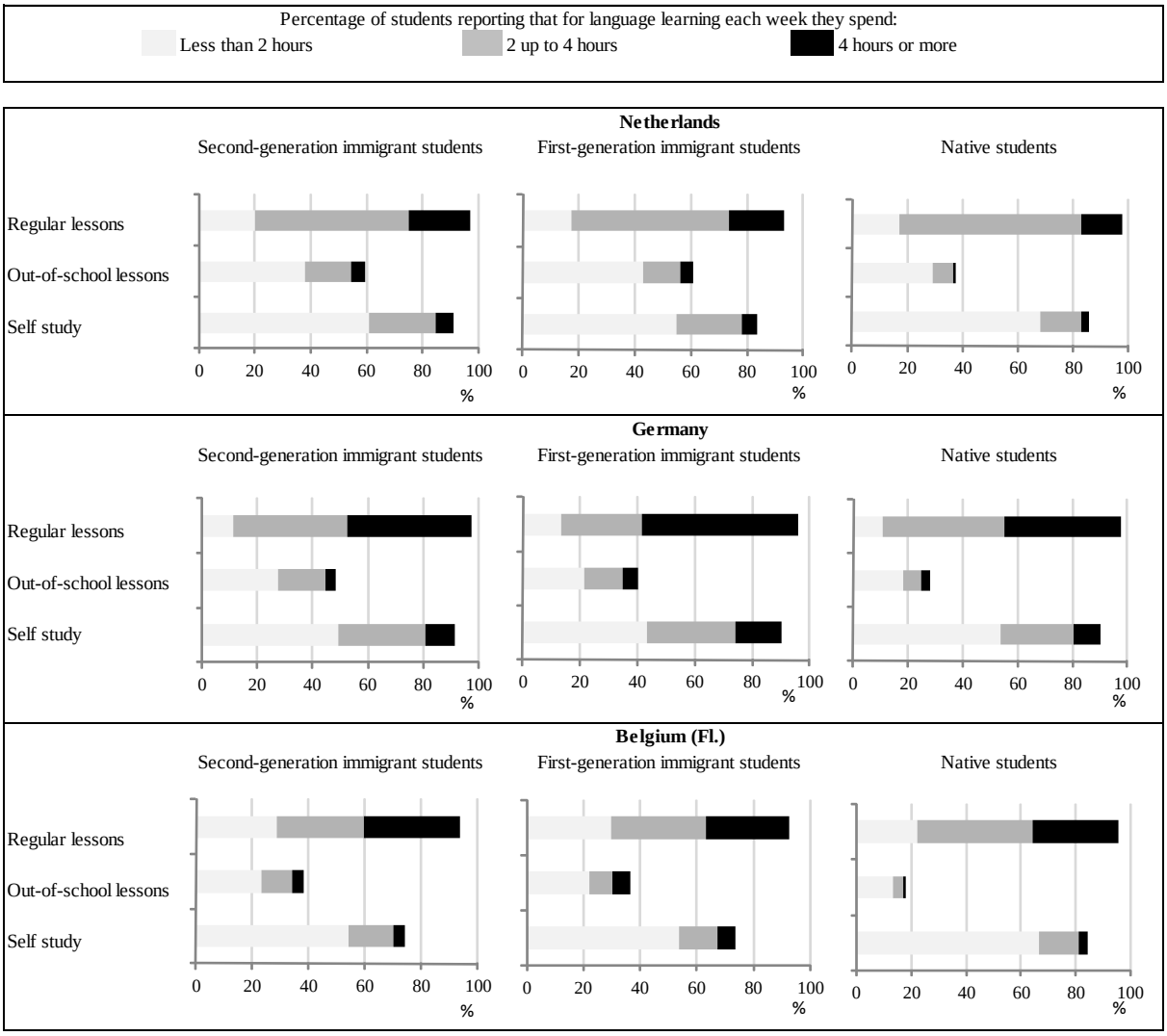
Source : OECD PISA 2006 database.

Immigrant students report investing time in learning outside of regular school lessons

Results from PISA 2006 indicate that immigrant students in the Netherlands invest extra time learning Dutch outside of regular school lessons: around 60% report spending some time on out-of-school lessons in the language of instruction[7] each week – higher than in both Germany and the Flemish Community of Belgium (Figure 1.4). In all three systems, immigrant students report spending more time learning the language of instruction in out-of-school lessons than their native counterparts. This stands in contrast to student reports of time spent learning the language of instruction in school, which do not vary so much among student groups. However, in general students in Germany report spending comparatively more time learning German in school. Reports by students in the Flemish Community of Belgium, indicate high variation among schools in provision of Dutch language lessons.

Figure 1.4. Time spent learning the language of instruction at age 15, by immigrant status

Student reports on how much time they spend learning the language of instruction each week, PISA 2006



Source : OECD PISA 2006 database.

Higher compulsory education age has strong potential to reduce drop out for students with a non-Western immigrant background

International evidence on the performance gaps at age 15 are reflected in national statistics for early school leavers or dropout rates in secondary education. By far, the highest dropout rates are in senior vocational education, where immigrant students are over represented (Herweijer, 2009). It is a political goal to effectively reduce the number of early school leavers – that is, students who leave school without a basic qualification (an upper secondary qualification [ISCED 3]). As such, as of 2007/08 the ending age of compulsory education has been raised from 16 to 18 years for those young people who have not yet successfully completed a basic qualification. In 2007/08, students with a non-Western immigrant background represented 15.7% of all students participating in secondary education, but 26.7% of new dropouts (Table 1.11). In Germany, the total number of foreigners leaving school without final qualifications is double the number of native early school leavers, in particular, 20% of male foreigners are

early school leavers (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung, 2006). In general, the Netherlands' success in keeping students enrolled at school is similar to Belgium and Germany – in 2007, over 90% of 17-year-olds were enrolled in education in all three systems – and compares favourably to the United Kingdom (Table 1.4). National data indicate that progress is being made in reducing the number of dropouts with non-Western immigrant backgrounds: 6.8% were dropouts in 2005/06 (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2009b).

Table 1.11. New dropouts, by immigrant background (2007/08)

	Number of students in secondary education (1/10/07)	New dropouts (2007/08)	% of new dropouts in immigrant group	% of total new dropouts
Native Dutch	1 029 942	31 212	3.0	64.6
Western immigrant	78 300	3 693	4.7	7.6
Non-Western immigrant	602 542	12 848	6.2	26.7
Other non-Western	64 739	3 541	5.5	7.3
Morocco	41 938	2 903	6.9	6.0
Turkey	46 977	2 642	5.6	5.5
Surinam	37 413	2 492	6.7	5.2
Aruba/Netherlands Antilles	15 475	1 288	8.3	2.7
Unknown	1 777	559	31.5	1.2
Total	1 316 561	48 330	3.7	100.0

Source : Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2009b.

Transition to tertiary education

Increased access to tertiary education for students with non-Western immigrant background, with high transition rates from pre-university education

There has been great success over recent years for second-generation immigrant students with non-Western backgrounds in the Netherlands in terms of entrance to tertiary education. Entry rates for students with Turkish, Moroccan and Surinamese immigrant background have doubled from 1995/96 to 2007/08 to 37%, 40% and 49%, respectively. The entry rate for native Dutch students in 2007/08 was 56% (Herweijer, 2009). Crul and Schneider (2009) point out that given their parents' limited educational background this is a significant achievement.

The proportion of immigrant students with a Turkish, Moroccan or Surinamese background participating in pre-university education (VWO) is relatively low (Table 1.9). However, among those that do successfully complete VWO, the majority choose to continue on to the highest level of tertiary education, the research universities (Table 1.12). In comparison, proportionately more native Dutch choose to continue on to the universities of applied sciences (HBO). Although the number of immigrant students with a Turkish, Moroccan or Surinamese background in VWO is a relatively small, this is a positive trend.

Table 1.12. Transition to higher levels of education, by immigrant background

Percentage of secondary education certificate holders (2006/07) transferring to higher levels of education in 2007/08

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinamese	Antillean	Other non-Western	Native Dutch
Pre-vocational (VMBO) basic vocational track certificate						
to senior vocational education (MBO)	93	94	90	87	89	90
Pre-vocational (VMBO) advanced vocational track certificate						
to senior vocational education (MBO)	96	96	95	93	93	95
Pre-vocational (VMBO) combined track certificate						
to senior vocational education (MBO)	84	89	90	93	75	90
to senior general education (HAVO)	8	9	7	5	22	7
Pre-vocational (VMBO) theoretical track certificate						
to senior vocational education (MBO)	70	73	76	76	60	76
to senior general education (HAVO)	26	25	20	19	32	20
Senior general education (HAVO) certificate						
to senior vocational education (MBO)	n	n	1	3	1	4
to higher professional education (HBO)	88	90	84	69	80	78
to pre-university education (VWO)	6	4	4	7	7	5
Pre-university education (VWO) certificate						
to higher professional education (HBO)	2	2	5	10	5	15
to university education	89	89	84	72	82	70

Source : Statistics Netherlands (StatLine).

The longer route to higher education is followed more often by students with non-Western immigrant background

A significant proportion of students with a non-Western immigrant background also make the transition to senior general education via the combined/theoretical track of pre-vocational education. This serves as a correction of sorts for the early age of selection streaming more academically able students into pre-vocational education. Students from Turkish, Moroccan and other non-Western immigrant background pursue this route more often than native students (Table 1.12). Results from a recent survey of 18-to-35-year-olds confirm that this is an established route for students with a Turkish immigrant background: 33% of second-generation immigrants with a Turkish background reported that they had participated in higher education, but only 26% had attended a pre-academic track in secondary education, indicating that a significant number had reached higher education via the longer vocational route (Crul and Schneider, 2009). This also appeared to be the case in Switzerland (Table 1.13). These results indicate that selection into academic or vocational education at an early age can be premature for certain students and in particular for students who may not have had adequate time to sufficiently develop the language of

instruction. Other studies show that an estimated 12 to 15% of immigrant students attain a higher level of secondary education than predicted by their primary school recommendation (Kuyper and Van der Werf, 2007; Mulder *et al*., 2007).

Table 1.13. Participation in higher education for second-generation Turkish immigrants

TIES survey of 18-to-35-year-olds (2007/08)

	Percentage of 18-to-35-year-olds who reported participating in:		
	Pre-academic track	Higher education	Number of individuals surveyed
Austria	n.a.	20%	458
Belgium	51%	24%	600
France	54%	52%	500
Germany	13%	8%	505
Netherlands	26%	33%	500
Sweden	56%	36%	251
Switzerland	8%	14%	465

Source : Crul and Schneider, 2009.

Similarly, in the Flemish Community of Belgium, there is some flexibility through the different tracks in secondary education to allow students to obtain access to higher education.[8] Unfortunately, there are no data available to show the use that students with an immigrant background make of these flexibly longer routes through secondary education, but there are reports that students graduating from the general track are better prepared for higher education.

Priority groups

Given the challenges identified above, the OECD and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science agreed to focus the policy review on immigrants with non-Western background (see Annex A). However, the OECD notes that both the influx of new immigrant groups and the observed performance disadvantages for first-generation immigrant students at age 15 indicate the need to continue provision of targeted support to a wider group, notably new arrivals to the Netherlands.

Designing policies for migrant education

Important characteristics of the Dutch education system

Article 23 of the constitution concerns freedom of education and educational institution and allows civic organisations to establish their own schools and to organise and design the education in those schools. As such, there is a variety of privately managed schools based on different religious or pedagogical/didactical principles all of which receive full state funding. To establish a new school and to continue to run a school there must be a minimum number of students. This is also the case in the Flemish Community of Belgium. Currently, there are 44 Islamic primary schools in the Netherlands in which 6% of all students with Turkish and Moroccan immigrant background are enrolled (Herweijer, 2008).

Schools enjoy a high degree of autonomy in the Netherlands and the trend over recent years has been to increase this. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science sets quality standards that schools must meet, including teacher qualifications and training, core objectives in primary and secondary education and minimum instruction hours.

Box 1.2. School choice and autonomy

Since 1848, the Dutch Constitution has embraced "freedom of education", meaning the freedom to found and organise schools and choose the religion or belief on which a school is based. Since 1917, it has been accepted that freedom of education also implied equal state support for public and private schools. As a result the schools in the Netherlands are a mix of public and private (including a small number of independent schools that adopt specific educational approaches) with roughly a third being public at the primary level and less than a fifth at the secondary level[1]. This makes it easy for parents to exercise choice in where they send their children.

The freedom of founding schools and of school choice is complemented by the high degree of school autonomy. The Netherlands is consistently at or near the top of the OECD league on the various measures of school autonomy. Schools have greater autonomy than most or all countries on everything from construction and use of facilities, to curriculum and teaching material, to hiring and pay of teachers, to decisions on how to spend money (see Indicator D.6 in OECD 2008b). In principle, private schools can also exercise considerable latitude in imposing requirements "based on ideological, religious or pedagogical identity" (Herweijer 2009, pp. 39-40). In practice, they almost never do so, and this is reflected in the composition of their enrolments. In recent years, considerable attention has been given to the small but growing number of Islamic schools. Like many of the religiously oriented Catholic and Protestant schools in earlier times, supporters of the Islamic schools have argued for "emancipation within the own group". In the past decade the government has increased school autonomy to make it easier for schools "to adapt to local conditions and to the diverse needs of their pupils" (Herweijer 2009, p. 3).

The role of central government in "steering" schools is limited. It sets "framework and boundary conditions" (regarding educational structure and goals); it finances schools (directly or through municipal governments, and according to formula); organises and oversees examinations; and inspects schools and makes findings available to parents. In one sense it embodies the combination of central guidance of outcomes, through common goals and central inspection, and a high degree of local autonomy over decisions about how to teach – a combination that is found to be strongly associated with better schooling outcomes (Woessman 2007a, 2007b).

However, this overall pattern of school autonomy, when combined with a high degree of parental choice also militates against collaboration between schools. There is fierce competition between schools for students and the per capita financing that brings. This may, in some cases, discourage schools from sharing good practice and co-operating.

[1] In 2004, there were 27 Muslim schools and 3 Hindu schools. In 2009, there were 44 Islamic schools at the primary level.

Focus on educational disadvantage

In the Netherlands, there has been a shift away from specific policies targeting immigrant students to more general policies targeting students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The provision of mother-tongue teaching in primary schools was stopped in 2004 and students' ethnicity was dropped as an indicator for extra funding for both primary and secondary schools. National research has identified that a shift to targeting students from disadvantaged backgrounds is more in line with the actual educational disadvantage students suffer (Herweijer, 2009). Indeed, PISA 2006 results indicate that 25% of immigrant students came from more socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds than the least advantaged native students (Figure 1.2). Moreover, national data indicate a need for targeted support to native Dutch children whose parents have limited education: for the period 1995 to 2005 results in comprehension at age five show no improvement, plus their results in language and arithmetic at age 12 show a gradual decline from 1988 to 2004 (Herweijer, 2009). It is of note, however, that despite improvements on the same measures for students with Turkish, Moroccan and Antillean immigrant background, there is still a considerable performance lag for these children. A similar shift towards a measure of "disadvantage" has taken place in the Flemish Community of Belgium. However, a comprehensive set of indicators to measure "disadvantage" includes the language spoken at home. Indeed, results from the CITO test are better for students with non-Western immigrant background who speak Dutch at home (CBS, 2008 in Herweijer, 2009).

Universal and targeted measures to benefit immigrant students

Immigrant students, therefore, are expected to benefit from broader equity policies and in particular from the following measures:

- Preschool and early school programmes targeted at students from disadvantaged backgrounds with the aim to provide an enjoyable and stimulating learning environment for young children, so that they are motivated to learn Dutch through play. The aim is to realise a coverage of 100% by 2011. Preschool playgroups and primary schools provide these programmes in collaboration.
- Extra funding to schools with students from disadvantaged backgrounds. For funding in primary education, extra weight is given to students whose parents have a low or very low level of education. In 2008, funding was EUR 314 million – representing around half the total government expenditure on educational disadvantage (Herweijer, 2009). Secondary schools receive extra funding based on the number of their student population living in deprived areas and or newly arrived immigrants (the "learning plus" arrangement). In 2008, EUR 72 million was spent on disadvantaged funding in secondary education.
- Policies to correct for the early selection into different school types at age 12. There are two main options for students to advance to higher levels of education at a later stage: a) students can take a longer route to higher education through a vocational track; b) students can accumulate qualifications in secondary education to advance to higher levels.
- Policies to improve the quality of Dutch language and arithmetic teaching, including the introduction of reference levels and basic competencies for students (expected to be implemented from 2010 on).
- Policy priority to tackle early drop out from secondary school and to reduce this by 50% in 2012. Covenants to reduce drop out were signed between the government and 39 regional partnerships in 2008. Prevention measures include improved career guidance, smoother transitions through secondary education and improved care and support via collaboration with other agencies.
- Policy to increase the school leaving age to 18 for students who have not achieved basic qualification (ISCED 3) as of 2007/08.
- Statutory requirement for primary and secondary schools to promote active citizenship and social integration as of 2006. This replaces the objective of intercultural education introduced to primary schools in 1985 which "did not really get off the ground, partly because of the lack of common vision on what form intercultural education should take" (Herweijer, 2009).
- The presence of "Care and advice teams" offering counselling and social/welfare support to students in secondary schools. These are becoming commonplace and the goal is for all secondary schools to have one by 2011.
- There are no financial barriers to participation in compulsory education. Schools are not allowed to demand mandatory fees. Only voluntary contributions may be requested.
- Parents receive an allowance for their child (*kinderbijslag*) up until age 18.
- Though tertiary education fees are high compared to other European countries, low interest, long-term (15 year) loans are available to cover the direct and indirect cost of participation. Student loans are complemented by basic grants – for all students – and additional grants for students from low-income families.

There remain several targeted measures for immigrant students.

- Political aim to reduce segregation between native Dutch and immigrant students in primary schools. In 2006 the legal requirement was introduced for consultation among school boards, municipalities and childcare providers to achieve a "more balanced distribution of students across schools".
- Recognition of the importance of engaging immigrant parents. The "Ethnic Minority Parents Platform" and local platforms in 30 municipalities were set up to reach out to parents from immigrant groups.
- Induction classes in primary schools for intensive Dutch language teaching. Similarly, some primary schools offer an extra year at the end of primary schooling to improve the students' transition to secondary school.
- "Promoting integration through sport" targets youth from ethnic backgrounds to take up sport and was established in 2007 and will end in 2010 (Ministry of Youth and Families, 2007).
- The collection of statistics on educational outcomes of immigrant students. Much attention is paid to students from non-Western immigrant backgrounds and in particular to the established immigrant groups in the Netherlands, including students from Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Antillean immigrant backgrounds. In Dutch statistics, "non-Western" includes these four major groups, plus more recent immigrant groups from the Middle East and/or Asia and Africa. "Non-Western" does not include students from Indonesia or Japan.

NOTES

[1] Immigrant students in OECD's PISA are defined as students with both parents born outside the country of assessment. Second-generation immigrant students were born in the country of assessment and, therefore, have had the opportunity to fully participate in compulsory education in that country. First-generation immigrant students were themselves born outside the country of assessment and may have joined the education system at any stage up to age 15. In IEA's PIRLS, results are reported for students with one or both parents born outside the country of assessment. Students with both parents born outside the country of assessment are equivalent to the collective term "immigrant students" in OECD's PISA.

[2] For 2004/05, average scores in arithmetic tests in year eight were as follows: students with a Turkish background and native Dutch students whose parents had only completed lower secondary education or less scored 1 215, students with a Moroccan background scored 1 214, students with a Surinamese background scored 1 213. For comparison, native Dutch students whose parents had completed at least upper secondary education scored 1 229 (Gijsberts and Herweijer, 2007).

[3] Intended instruction time data come from the 2008 OECD-INES Survey on Teachers and the Curriculum and refer to the school year 2006/07. Intended instruction time refers to the number of hours per year during which students receive instruction in the compulsory and non-compulsory parts of the curriculum.

[4] For more information on the CITO test, see the brochure developed for parents: *www.onderwijsconsument.nl/php/forms/download.php?did=230*.

[5] In the PISA 2000 survey, the response rate for the Netherlands was too low to allow comparison of mean performance results, but does allow analysis of comparative differences among sub-groups. In PISA 2000 reading, the performance disadvantage compared to native students was -89 score points for first-generation immigrant students and -72 score points for second-generation immigrant students (OECD, 2001, Table 6.10). In PISA 2006 reading, the equivalent results were -66 score points and -61 score points, respectively. In Germany, while the reading performance gap between first-generation immigrant students and native students was reduced (-88 score points in PISA 2000 and -70 score points in PISA 2006), it increased for second-generation immigrant students (-75 score points in PISA 2000 and -83 score points in PISA 2006).

[6] For mathematics in PISA 2003, immigrant students with a Turkish background scored 405 points in Germany, compared to 421 points in Belgium and 436 points in Switzerland (OECD, 2006). For science in PISA 2006, results for the same group were: 409 points in Germany, 415 points in Belgium and 429 points in Switzerland.

[7] Student reports in PISA 2006 are useful in gauging a measure of students' personal investment learning in Dutch. While they do not shed any light on the actual content of the lessons, students were able to independently report learning time for "test language", "mathematics", "science" and "other subjects". In the Netherlands, the PISA test was administered in Dutch.

[8] In the Flemish Community of Belgium, a qualification from vocational education is not sufficient for students to enter higher education. Students who enrol in pre-vocational education at age 12 need to complete one extra year if they decide to switch to the "higher" academic or general track. In the second grade of secondary education (age 14 to 16), students can theoretically switch freely among the four tracks (general, technical, artistic or vocational). However, those students who choose to switch from vocational to other tracks lose one year. In the third grade of secondary education (age 17 to 18), it is very difficult to transition between tracks. However, students in the vocational track have the option of completing one extra year at the end of their studies to gain an equivalent qualification to students graduating from general, technical or artistic secondary education and are therefore able to access higher education.

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CHAPTER 2

POLICIES TO IMPROVE MIGRANT EDUCATION

This chapter identifies policies to improve migrant education in the Netherlands. Policy areas include: a) balancing school choice, equity and integration; b) ensuring monitoring and evaluation; c) ensuring early intervention; d) the quality of teaching and learning environments; e) preventing drop out; and f) effective partnership and engagement.

Introduction

This chapter identifies strengths and challenges in key policy areas to improve migrant education. Policy options are suggested in three distinct sections: for overall system management, including to balance school choice, equity and integration, and to ensure monitoring and evaluation; for early childhood education and care (ECEC) to ensure early intervention; and for schools and communities, including the quality of teaching and learning environments, preventing drop out, and effective partnership and engagement. In each case, the report presents current strengths and challenges in each area, followed by suggested policy options.

System management

Balancing school choice, equity and integration

Strengths

Political support to limit segregation and concentration in education

The education system (broadly defined) plays a crucial and well defined role in addressing the needs of immigrants and encouraging their integration (see Chapter 1 for an overview of universal and targeted measures in place). A key element in the education component of the overall integration strategy has been deliberate steps to reduce ethnic concentration and segregation in education. Public authorities see this as indispensable to facilitating integration. As noted earlier, the distribution of immigrant students in Dutch schools is uneven, concentrated in particular schools within certain communities, and heavily concentrated in schools in four urban areas (Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht). This pattern of concentration and segregation mirrors to a certain extent the patterns of residential concentration and segregation. Therefore, since 2006, school boards, municipalities and childcare providers are legally required to consult each other in order to achieve a "more balanced distribution of students across schools". Schools under public authority (*e.g.* municipalities) are legally required to accept all students, if there are places available, and to encourage citizenship.[9] Some municipalities have gone further in encouraging schools to set limits on the percentage of ethnic minority students.

Box 2.1. Segregation and concentration in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands (as in other countries) different population groups are not distributed evenly throughout the country. There frequently is uneven distribution of immigrants and native Dutch and of particular immigrant groups in, among other things, housing and schools. In the Dutch debate this uneven distribution is often characterised as "segregation". This refers to patterns of residency or school enrolment that are observed, without regard to what is the driving force behind the observed. This reflects a view, that the OECD review team found to be widely held, that though there are no laws imposing segregation (no *de jure* segregation), segregation does occur in fact (*de facto* segregation), and regardless of its causes, should be addressed. In the report the terms "concentration" and "segregation" are used interchangeably.

Building knowledge of effective measures to tackle segregation and concentration in schools

Another facet of public policy to reduce segregation in education is the National Knowledge Centre on Mixed Schools (*Kenniscentrum Gemengde Scholen*) supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The mission of the Centre is to disseminate knowledge on initiatives to promote quality education in mixed schools and to push for action by identifying and taking stock of local interventions (often involving parents) that reduce segregation (see Herweijer 2009a, p. 92). There are a number of other measures, some local, that aim to foster integration. The OECD review team was informed by the

Municipality of Rotterdam that it offers a bus tour of potential schools for parents when choosing their child's school. This is judged to be an effective way to open parents' minds to consider choosing their local school as parents meet and make pacts with each other during the tour.

The government of the Netherlands as well as local authorities have taken steps to realise more mixed primary schools, while preserving choice and autonomy. There are projects to facilitate moments of interaction between immigrant students and native Dutch students. In order to better determine what measures actually work, experiments are being conducted in eleven municipalities. These experiments examine the effectiveness of various measures, such as the central registering of students to achieve a better mix of students with various backgrounds (*e.g.* in Nijmegen).

Challenges

Ensuring access to high quality primary education for immigrant students

There are substantial and persistent differences between non-Western immigrant students and their native peers in the Netherlands with regard to how they perform in education and the educational pathways they follow (Chapter 1). Given the selection at age 12 into different school types, access to high quality primary education is of key importance for non-Western immigrant students. The OECD review team was not able to obtain school-specific performance data that would make it possible to link comparatively weak immigrant education performance to their enrolment in weak schools. There is no clear evidence that concentration *per se* has a negative impact on education performance (van Ewijk and Sleegers, 2009). However, there is a relatively high degree of concentration of immigrants in some cities where there are concerns with school quality. Overall, more than one in ten Dutch schools are found to be under-performing. Though there are few "very weak" schools (in 2006/2007 only 1.7% of primary schools, and 1.8% of secondary schools were in this category) there were large numbers of under-performing schools in cities with high concentrations of immigrant students. In 2007, 14.1% of primary schools in the four largest cities (Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht) were classified as under-performing; in Amsterdam alone a fifth of all primary schools fall in that category, though the proportion of schools in disadvantaged neighbourhoods – *krachtwijken* – was slightly lower at 16.9%. There is also evidence that the quality of schools in disadvantaged neighbourhoods is impaired by lack of high quality teaching staff (see "The quality of teaching and learning environments").

In the Dutch context in which schools have a high degree of autonomy in deciding on education content and pedagogy, and hiring and evaluating teachers, the Education Inspectorate plays a pivotal role in quality assurance (Box 2.2). In its supervision, the Inspectorate applies supervision arrangements which are calibrated according to the strength or weakness of schools. "Very weak" schools are put under a strict supervision arrangement and are given a period of two years to realise adequate quality. At the end of this period, the Inspectorate conducts a "quality improvement survey" to determine whether the school has achieved adequate quality. If this is not the case, an extra year may be allowed, but only when there is realistic expectation of improvement. The Inspectorate has performed 92 such surveys on primary schools. In January 2009, 125 of the 7 199 primary schools were judged "very weak" (including 17 schools for special primary education). Among the 125 very weak primary schools in 2009, the quality improvement surveys showed in nine cases that improvement was insufficient. Six of these schools were allowed the extra year to try to improve quality. For three of them, the Inspectorate had no realistic expectation of improvement and administrative procedures were started.[10]

Box 2.2. Quality assurance: the role of inspection

Responsibility for quality of schooling rests first with the school. Schools set learning objectives (with the national framework), and then decide on organisation, teaching and learning material, methods and pedagogy. Schools also indicate how quality is to be assessed and, where lacking, improved.

However, the Education Inspectorate is responsible for assessing school quality. To do this, the Inspectorate carries out periodic assessments of quality of each institution, taking into account overall student test results, school reports on quality and achievement, and "signals" of deviation from historical performance or emergence of particular problems.

The practice of the Inspectorate since 2007 has been to collect annually from all schools information on possible risks. On the basis of that information the Inspectorate then decides whether a particular school offers "good quality education" (meaning no risks have been detected). The Inspectorate may grade schools as "very weak", "weak", "sufficient" or "good"). Schools in which no risks have been detected are graded as "sufficient" or "good" and are trusted to be able to continue with minimal supervision (annual monitoring) under a "basic arrangement".

The Inspectorate concentrates more detailed scrutiny on schools where risks have been detected of poor education and unsatisfactory results and carries out a quality inspection. In primary and secondary schools this considers variables such as student performance, the adequacy of the quality assurance system in the school, school climate, teaching, and responsiveness to particular student needs. The Inspectorate determines whether the information on risks warrants investigating a particular school in more detail. Schools with insufficient quality are required to take action to improve quality, and are subject to further Quality Improvement Inspection by the Inspectorate, additional monitoring, and eventually sanctions. If very weak performance persists, the Inspectorate can advise the minister to terminate school funding (which, if the minister follows the advice, in practice, leads to the school's closure). However, this is a rare occurrence. The time from when a school is first identified as being weak to the time that improvements take effect should be no more than two years. The inspection regimes for schools under the responsibility of public authorities and private schools are the same[1].

[1] For further information on the Education Inspectorate see *www.onderwijsinspectie.nl/nl/home*.

Parental choice has contributed to increased segregation in schools

There is evidence that parental choice has contributed to increased segregation and concentration in schools. A group of Dutch researchers (see Karsten *et al*., 2006, pp. 228-247) estimated that in the Amsterdam area a quarter of elementary schools are "considerably nonrepresentative" of the population of the postal code area in which schools were located, leading them to conclude that "choice is playing an important role in those districts". They cited an earlier study (published in 2003) that estimated throughout the Netherlands, 6.2% of all elementary schools had pupil populations that did not mirror the ethnic composition of the neighbourhood. In trying to discover the reasons for their decisions about where to enrol their children, the researchers surveyed parents in postal code areas with non-representative schools and found that native and non-native parents gave different reasons for their choices. The former preferred schools that matched with home ("people like us"), while non-native parents paid more attention to the academic quality and the capacity to offer differentiated instruction (*e.g.* for children experiencing difficulty learning Dutch).

Sustaining efforts to combat segregation and concentration in schools

Herweijer (2009a) cites a number of examples where municipalities and in one case parents tried measures to reduce the ethnic composition of schools, that ultimately had little or no evident effect. In the municipality of Gouda, for example, an agreement to limit the number of ethnic minority students enrolled in schools showed promising results initially, but then showed less effect after the total number of ethnic minority pupils in the municipality increased and several school boards failed to set new quotas. The municipalities of Ede and Tiel tried similar measures, with no evident effect in Ede and some positive effect in Tiel; however, in the latter case the measure was seen as problematic because it was targeted (at ethnic minority students). In any case the "flight" of native students continued to rise (Herweijer, 2009a, pp.

92-93). As it stands, there are scattered examples of local initiatives by native parents getting together and enrolling their children *en bloc* in schools with large numbers of ethnic students, much as was seen in some neighbourhoods in Denmark (OECD, 2010, forthcoming).

Policy options

The Dutch government has made it clear that a policy of "separate but equal" schools is not an option. At the same time, the freedom of school choice and patterns of residential concentration make it difficult to ensure balanced enrolments across all schools. This makes it essential to ensure quality education is accessible in all schools. The first step should be to raise quality by more closely overseeing and strengthening the numerous weak as well as rare very weak schools.[11] A second step (of equally high priority) should be to ensure that immigrant families are more able to exercise their right to choose schools more effectively.

Raise the quality of schooling for immigrant students by identifying under-performing schools and either improving them or closing them

School autonomy and choice are not, in and of themselves, bad for achieving good and fair education outcomes. Indeed, recent analyses of system level variables suggest that when there is strong guidance regarding desired outcomes (*e.g.* through centrally administered external examinations) a high degree of autonomy at the level of the classroom is strongly associated with better and more equitable outcomes as measured by PISA.[12] Following a decade of measures to strengthen school autonomy, the Dutch government should now shift emphasis even more to the complementary need to set explicit common quality targets for schools, and ensure that they are met. The purpose of this strategy should not be to cut back on school choice. Rather it should be to capitalise on the capacity of the highly autonomous education system to provide diverse learning opportunities, and channel that capacity towards achieving common high quality outcomes. This will better ensure that the exercise of choice really does lead to efficient and equitable matching of learning needs with high quality learning opportunities.

It is important to monitor and ensure the quality of teaching, without impinging on the authority of school leaders. Presently the Inspectorate evaluates the general quality of teaching in a school, but leaves to school leaders the responsibility for evaluating the quality of individual teachers. Where the quality of teaching in a particular school is found to be poor, the Inspectorate works with the school to develop a plan for improvement, and then follows up to see whether improvements have occurred. This is similar to developments in Scotland where the Inspectorate has broadened its role from narrow monitoring of compliance, to collaborating with schools in developing improvement plans. In the Netherlands, targets for improving the quality of teaching need to be clear and measureable.

The common standards and performance reference levels that the government will introduce provide a good basis for stronger oversight of school quality (see "Quality of teaching and learning"). These need to be incorporated now into explicit criteria that the Education Inspectorate can use to monitor the quality and equity of education outcomes of individual schools. For example, once levels of basic competencies for all students are established, these can be used to evaluate school performance with respect to how all groups perform and to explicitly evaluate school ability to close performance gaps among the different groups. At the same time, it would be useful to monitor school enrolments of different student groups to ensure that schools do not attempt to raise or sustain quality performance by excluding particular sub-groups.

The approach of focusing on the quality of schools is consistent with developments in other countries. In the United States, federal legislation holds individual schools accountable for ensuring that a given percentage of students from different socio-economic and ethnic sub-groups perform adequately; the targets rise over time.[13] In Denmark, municipalities are now responsible for preparing quality of education reports based on performance measures of individual schools.

However, strategies based on improved performance feedback, though necessary, are not sufficient. Once feedback identifies shortcomings there is a need for robust remedies. When performance for any particular group – immigrant or disadvantaged students – falls short, the Education Inspectorate, directly or in collaboration with municipalities and/or independent experts, should collaborate with school leaders and teachers to develop a strategy for improvement. This would not represent a radical expansion of the present responsibilities of the Education Inspectorate to oversee quality of schools as a whole and help seriously under-performing schools develop strategies for improvement. However, the Inspectorate's role needs to be strengthened to:

- Broaden the criteria for evaluating performance as suggested above;
- Lower the threshold for initiating corrective action by identifying weak performance early (before schools slip into the category of "very weak"), determine the reasons for underperformance, and specify enforceable remedies needed to improve performance, and set deadlines for progress.

Enhance for immigrant families as well as socio-economically disadvantaged families the means to exercise choice

The vitality and indeed the legitimacy of school choice policy hinges on families being active and informed "education consumers". It hinges as well on a nuanced notion of "choice" in which parents can do more than simply *choose* between alternative schools, but can also have a *voice* in the school of their choice. This second, more implicit facet of choice reflects well the fact that education is not a commodity to be taken or left as it is, and that education is a dynamic process that engages parents and children, as well as educators (OECD, 2006). These ideas are not alien to the Netherlands. The vitality of the Dutch education system owes much to the fact that it offers families great latitude in exercising choice, *and* because of its high degree of decentralisation, also offers considerable space for local stakeholders, including parents, to become involved in strategic decisions affecting the education of their children. However, the formula works less well for immigrants. Even if the public authorities manage to turn around or weed out failing schools, the system of school choice will fail to deliver its full potential to immigrant children if parents are unable to make informed choices between schools, and if they are unable to make their voice heard in the schools of their choice.

Parents need to know what pathways are open for their children's education, which schools offer which pathways, and what are the strengths and weaknesses of alternative schools. The Ministry should encourage and, if necessary, assist municipalities in providing to all parents clear and timely information on school choice and enrolment, including the dates and procedures for school enrolment. Such information should be available in selected foreign languages as well as Dutch, and should be accessible to parents with limited literacy. For example, in the Flemish Community of Belgium partners in local consultation platforms establish guidelines to facilitate fairer and more inclusive enrolment policies, including commonly agreed dates to start enrolment, legal possibilities to increase a more diverse mix of socio-economic background. Although not legally binding, such local agreements represent a "soft law". In Austria, the Ministry for Education created a DVD for parents and this is distributed by NGOs. The DVD informs parents on different issues about their child's schooling and importantly how to get involved with other parents and existing initiatives. The Ministry also publishes information folders on school in different languages and sends these to school boards (OECD, 2009).

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science should encourage schools and school boards at the secondary level of education to co-operate to ensure a more even distribution in enrolment of immigrant students. For example, in the Flemish Community of Belgium local co-ordinating platforms were established in 2003. They bring together school leaders and a wide variety of stakeholders. The main objective is to help design locally contextualised equal opportunity policies which is not always easy as schools compete for students. Co-operation among all local stakeholders may reduce competition and

increase educational benefits for the most disadvantaged students. There is a need for both school boards and municipalities to commit to pull together. For example, in Rotterdam the school boards are building new schools in the suburbs as the municipality is trying to encourage parents to choose the local inner-city school.

In inspecting schools the Education Inspectorate should take into account the effectiveness of teachers, school leaders and school boards in involving parents. Performance of schools regarding parental involvement should be monitored – and shortcomings remedied – as seriously as the education performance of children. See also "Effective partnership and engagement".

Ensuring monitoring and evaluation

Strengths

Rich data set on educational outcomes of immigrant students

Unlike the situation in many other OECD countries, in the Netherlands, data are available by individual students and ethnic group. Results from national tests such as the longitudinal study COOL (formerly PRIMA) and the national standard assessment at the end of primary education (the CITO test in grade eight for 11-to-12-year-olds) used by 85% of primary schools are a rich resource and demonstrate improved educational outcomes for certain ethnic groups over the last 20 years. There are also national periodic assessments in different subjects in primary education (Periodic Assessment of Educational Achievement [PPON]) in which immigrant students' performance is monitored. The Netherlands also participates in international assessments (the OECD's PISA and the IEA's PIRLS and TIMSS fourth grade tests) which allows a comparison of the educational outcomes of immigrant students with their peers in other education systems.

Emerging culture of monitoring and evaluation in schools

It is of particular importance in an education system practising selection at an early age that this selection is informed in part by student performance on a standard test. In other systems practising early selection – Austria, Germany and the Flemish Community of Belgium – there is no such test. Many school leaders and teachers in the Netherlands, therefore, are in a stronger position to support their recommendations on the type of lower secondary school their students should attend, as they can administer a standard test at age 11 to 12. Research adds weight to the importance of doing so, as results of the CITO tests prove to be robust predictors of students' future pathways in lower secondary education. In the few cases where teacher recommendations deviate from these students change type of school at a later stage (Herweijer, 2009b).

However, several school leaders are also realising the importance of carefully monitoring the progress of students during their time in primary school and adapting their educational support to children accordingly. CITO – in addition to the standard test at the end of primary education – offers monitoring and assessment tools to primary schools. The OECD review team visited one such school where the school leader in collaboration with staff uses test results to develop individual learning plans for students. Another secondary school visited by the OECD review team had engaged the Universities of Amsterdam and Leiden to develop a progress plan and targets for second language learners.

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has pushed the agenda of monitoring and evaluation at schools via the Primary Education Inspectorate which uses the indicator "use of data and results" as part of its evaluation of schools. Also, as part of the political focus on preventing drop out, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has introduced a financial incentive for secondary school leaders to monitor and prevent drop out at their schools (see "Preventing drop out").

Strong political commitment to evidence-based policy making

The government has strong political commitment to evidence-based policy making. With respect to education policies, the Top Institute for Evidence-Based Education Research (TIER), an inter-university research institute, has been established to promote an evidence-based approach as a guiding principle in education policy and practices and conduct evidence-based educational research. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science publishes an annual report "Key Figures" clearly presenting a series of indicators on major national and international themes at distinct levels within the education system for policy makers and other decision makers throughout the system. Further, in youth care, as part of a programme to develop professional expertise for effective youth care, interventions and instruments to promote young people's psychological and social development that have been evaluated and approved are included in the Netherlands Youth Institute's *www.jeugdinterventies.nl* database (Ministry for Youth and Families, 2007).

Challenges

Narrow focus of data on established immigrant groups

Dutch statistics focus on "non-Western" immigrants. Statistics Netherlands uses this classification for practical purposes as the four major groups identified within the "non-Western" category – Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Antillean – represent two-thirds of the immigrant population. However, with recent trends of reduced numbers of "non-Western" immigrants entering the Netherlands it is necessary to add categories for the newer immigrant groups arriving in the Netherlands to assess and monitor the educational outcomes of first-generation immigrants.

Ensuring effective use of monitoring and evaluation in all schools

While there is much information available to schools and many schools practice regular monitoring and evaluation of their students, not all school leaders capitalise on these opportunities. First, it is not compulsory to administer a standard test in grade eight of primary school despite the fact that various educational measurement institutes have developed such tests and these are administered in the vast majority of primary schools. Second, not all schools effectively exploit the opportunity that student monitoring presents. The Primary Education Council reported to the OECD review team that leadership training is of priority in making better use of results of student tests and evaluations. School leaders need to engage all teachers to use results of student tests to give useful feedback for their educational development.

Many teachers lack the skills and know-how to carry out formative assessment and interpret the results in a way that would strengthen their support to students encountering learning difficulties. A recent OECD review highlights that teacher use of formative assessment has helped to improve student achievement and the equity of student outcomes as teachers are better able to meet the needs of increasingly diverse student populations (OECD, 2006).

Policy options

Monitor educational outcomes and progress for new immigrants in addition to the established immigrant groups

With recent trends of reduced numbers of "non-Western" immigrants entering the Netherlands, it is necessary to add categories for the newer immigrant groups arriving in the Netherlands to assess and monitor the educational outcomes of first-generation immigrants (see Chapter 1 "Recent immigration trends"). Information exists but will need to be classified into more detailed breakdowns and analysed if policy makers are to keep on top of emerging issues, in particular to assess whether the language and wider

educational support needs of later arrivals to the Netherlands are being adequately met at school. In the United Kingdom, evaluations of targeted support programmes for immigrant students (*e.g. Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant*) reveal that the effective use of data helps schools in monitoring and setting targets for educational outcomes of their students. For example, such information could help evaluate the adequacy of induction classes in secondary schools.

Strengthen the use of monitoring and evaluation practices within schools through teacher training and Inspection

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science should co-operate with teacher training institutions and the national educational advisory centres to strengthen the use of monitoring and evaluation practices within schools. A first step would be to take stock of existing instruments and practice regarding evaluation, testing and assessment adapted to the level of the classroom, and the arrangements for training teachers in their use. A second step would be to make such information available on a systematic basis to teachers and school leaders, through pre- and in-service training as well as other means. The intended introduction of reference levels in Dutch language learning and arithmetic presents an opportunity to promote school use of student monitoring tools and systems.

Ireland has recently introduced language assessment kits for primary and secondary schools to help teachers diagnose and monitor student progress in English as an additional language (Irish Department of Education and Science, 2009). In Sweden, schools are required to prepare individual plans for all students, which is the basis for a dialogue between teacher, students and their parents. In this way, with adequate training, teachers can use the results of student assessment to bridge the transition between primary and lower secondary education.

The Inspectorate should continue to take into account the adequacy of arrangements in schools for monitoring student performance, and effectively using feedback to diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of individual student performance. Consideration should also be given to the school's monitoring of teachers' ability to adapt lessons accordingly, for example through the development of individualised learning plans and differentiated instruction. School initiatives to improve staff competency in use of monitoring tools should be evaluated, for example, teacher participation in specific training, as well as the existence of teacher groups to exchange information on students' performance and to develop learning plans to further develop students' competence in different subjects.

Monitor how schools spend lump-sum and earmarked money and evaluate the adequacy of weighting schemes

The Ministry, in co-operation with the Central Financing Organisation for Educational Institutions (CFI) should document how lump-sum money that is provided by the Ministry to schools and municipalities, as well as money that is earmarked for specific purposes, is actually spent; they should also estimate the cost of providing various non-educational services to students with particular deficiencies and needs (medical, social support, care services), and evaluate the adequacy of actual weighting schemes in ensuring that schools have the resources they need.

The Flemish Community of Belgium has recently implemented a "weighting scheme" based on student numbers and indicators of disadvantage (family income, home language, educational achievement of mother and neighbourhood) to allocate operating expenses to schools, but this has not been evaluated yet. However, the Inspectorate has made successive evaluations of a programme to allocate additional teaching staff to schools that meet a certain threshold of "disadvantage" as measured by one of the following indicators: educational attainment of the mother (no secondary education qualification), the child does not live with his/her family, the family has a replacement income (unemployment allowance, minimum income provided by social services, etc.), the child's family are travellers (circus artists, new age travellers, etc.) or (in combination with at least one other indicator) the child's home language is not Dutch.

While the vast majority of schools have shown efficient and effective use of these additional staff a limited number of schools do not use these additional resources effectively. To receive additional human resources, schools must develop an "Equal Opportunities Policy" plan and can focus on improving proficiency of the language of instruction, better communication with parents, enhancing participation of students and parents in school life, achieving greater social cohesion, etc.

Box 2.3. Policy options: system management

Balancing school choice, equity and integration

- Raise the quality of schooling for immigrant students by identifying under-performing schools and either improving them or closing them
- Enhance for immigrant families as well as socio-economically disadvantaged families the means to exercise choice

Ensuring monitoring and evaluation

- Monitor educational outcomes and progress for new immigrants in addition to the established immigrant groups
- Strengthen the use of monitoring and evaluation practices within schools through teacher training and Inspection
- Monitor how schools spend lump-sum and earmarked money and evaluate the adequacy of weighting schemes

Early childhood education and care

Ensuring early intervention

Strengths

Well established early education for children from age four in primary schools

The Netherlands has relatively high rates of access to early childhood education and care (ECEC).[14] Although education is compulsory from the age of five in the Netherlands, the majority of children start early school education in primary schools from the age of four (Figure 2.1). For children under the age of four there are educational provisions available before primary education, including preschool education starting from age 2.5 years. In 2006, about 63% of Dutch children aged 2.5 to 3 years attended preschool playgroups. Native children are more likely to attend a playgroup than immigrant children are (Broekhof, 2006).

Figure 2.1. Educational provisions for children aged 0 to 12 years

	Preschool education	Primary education	
0 to 2.5 years	2.5 to 4 years	4 to 6 years	6 to 12 years
Programmes preparing for preschool playgroups	Preschool playgroups	Grades 1 to 2 (former nursery schools; no formal instruction in reading, writing and mathematics)	Grades 3 to 8
	Preschool and early school education (*VVE*)		

Note 1. Compulsory education is for children 5 to 16 years.

Source : Figure 1 in Broekhof (2006).

Programmes to target disadvantaged children from age two

A typical measure of early intervention at the system level is to widen participation and encourage quality in ECEC. In the Netherlands, ECEC – as a means of early intervention – is among the top educational policy priorities to improve the equity of education. "Preschool (children aged 2.5 to 4 years) and early-school education (children aged four and five years) programmes" (VVE) were introduced nationally in 2000 to combat educational disadvantage at an early age. This initiative provides young immigrant children from disadvantaged backgrounds with the opportunity to develop their Dutch language and arithmetic skills before entering primary education. The government has a policy to achieve 100% participation of the target group in ECEC by 2011 and promotes links between preschool and early school education. Some primary schools and preschools arrange playgroups for children from the age of two to stimulate children's language use through play.

Since 2002, the budget for the VVE programmes has been part of the municipal budget targeting young children from disadvantaged backgrounds. This implies that local authorities may define the target group more precisely. The provision of the programmes may vary among municipalities. In general, many primary schools in disadvantaged areas provide the programmes for children from disadvantaged backgrounds through co-operation with preschool playgroups or childcare (Herweijer, 2009b).

A national evaluation of the VVE programmes in 294 municipalities in 2007, showed that the programmes reached 53% of children aged 2.5 to 4 years in the preschool target group and 67% of children aged 4 to 5 years in the early school target group (Thijs *et al*., 2008). The programmes have been promising in increasing ECEC participation for disadvantaged children. The longitudinal study (the PRIMA cohort study) provides positive signs on wider participation of ECEC for immigrant children (see Chapter 1 Table 3; Herweijer, 2009).

Challenges

Ensuring access to quality ECEC for children from disadvantaged backgrounds including immigrant children

Despite the impressive success of increased participation in ECEC for children from disadvantaged backgrounds, research shows that there are only modest positive effects from participating in ECEC in the Netherlands. For example, a study by Nap-Kolhoff *et al*. (2008) found a positive effect on learning outcomes in arithmetic from participation in the VVE programmes only for native Dutch and "other non-Western" ethnic minority pupils with low-educated parents. No effects of the participation in the VVE programmes were found in the case of children from Turkish or Moroccan backgrounds with low-educated parents, who are the main target groups of the programmes (Herweijer, 2009b).

However, this may reflect the consequences of the rapid increase of access to ECEC for the target group on the quality of ECEC provision (Doolaard & Leseman, 2008 in Herweijer, 2009b). Since the VVE programmes have set the goals for the target group, in order to reach the goal of the percentage of participation in ECEC, municipalities may rush the implementation of VVE programmes and not ensure that they meet proper quality criteria. International evidence shows that earlier intervention at the preschool level is effective if the implementation is carefully processed with quality controls (Heckman, 2000).

Broekhof (2006) also pointed out that there is a challenge in quality of preschool education. In particular, unqualified staff and high staff turnover in ECEC are problematic. There are significant proportions of preschool staff who have not received a specialised training in working with children from disadvantaged backgrounds. In-service training for preschool leaders and staff was included in VVE programmes in order to equip them with the necessary skills, but many leaders and staff in preschool and early education still have not followed this training (Leeuwen *et al*., 2008).

Further, there is still a significant proportion of disadvantaged children who do not participate in any ECEC provision (Broekhof, 2006). In particular, parents who have not yet enrolled their children in ECEC would be the most challenging to engage. More efforts are therefore required to communicate the importance of ECEC to the parents of the target groups.

During the OECD review, another potential barrier to participation in ECEC was identified by primary school teachers: parents can hesitate to enrol their child in preschool if there are no longer available places in the preschool attached to their primary school of choice.

Policy options

Set quality targets for the provision of ECEC along with the goal of enrolment targets for disadvantaged children

The OECD review team supports "Preschool and Early-School Education (VVE) Programme", which aims to provide children from disadvantaged backgrounds with better access to ECEC from the age of two. Research findings on ECEC confirm that carefully implemented provision of ECEC at early ages can be effective, in particular targeting children from disadvantaged backgrounds (Heckman, 2000; Doolaard & Leseman, 2008 in Herweijer, 2009b). This also contributes over the longer term to effectively reducing the number of early school leavers, as tackling educational disadvantage at an earlier stage of education should reduce the risk of weak Dutch skills – a risk factor for dropping out at later stages of education.

Increased participation in the VVE programme for target group children does not guarantee their improved educational outcomes. Priority now should turn to providing access to quality ECEC for the target group. The Ministry should set quality targets for the provision of ECEC, to accompany enrolment targets. The nature of the VVE programmes, targeting disadvantaged children in disadvantaged areas may cause undesirable results such as segregation and/or concentration of disadvantaged children. As Leeuwen *et al*. (2008) summarised, the most important aims of ECEC can be to prevent segregation, to strengthen the quality of early childhood education, to enhance the smooth transition to primary schools and to diagnose and tackle Dutch language disadvantage as early as possible.

In particular, in order to ensure the quality of ECEC staff members, minimum qualification requirements for ECEC staff should be set by the government, which should be comparable with qualification requirements for staff working in early school education. Evidence from Germany indicates that "staff who have more formal education and more specialised early childhood training provide more stimulating, warm, and supportive interactions with children, not least in the area of language" (OECD, 2004; p. 58). Furthermore, teachers in pre-school programmes with high proportions of immigrant children should have access to in-service training programmes to build their capacity to effectively educate linguistically and culturally diverse children by integrating culture and language into the overall pedagogical activities in preschool and early school education.

In addition, schools can hire ECEC teachers from immigrant backgrounds. Ethnic minority parents have been employed in ECEC as bridge staff between schools and the local community in the Netherlands (OECD, 2001). The approaches to diversify teachers and care-givers in ECEC should include hiring more regular teachers from immigrant backgrounds to help facilitate better understanding across language and cultural diversity.

Support and promote efforts to engage immigrant parents to enrol their children in preschool and early school education

Life-cycle human capital formation literature emphasises that interventions for children from disadvantaged backgrounds have more effect when started from the earliest stage of education (Cunha *et*

al., 2005; Heckman, 2006). Evaluations of public interventions at the preschool level reveal that participants in such programmes increased performance scores, decreased grade retention and increased high school graduation (Cunha *et al*., 2005; Heckman, 2000).

In particular, in the case of immigrant children, earlier interventions can stimulate language development and lead to better chances in their education. This can reduce the gaps of cognitive, linguistic and social ability between immigrant children and their native peers later on. For instance, Germany has continued a series of reforms to improve the quality of ECEC, especially for children from lower socio-economic or immigrant backgrounds. In particular, to develop German language skills at earlier ages, language competence tests are required for children one to two years before they start school, followed by compulsory intensive language training for six months to one year in the case that their German language skills are inadequate in the tests (OECD, 2008b; pp. 102-103). As mentioned above, in addition, providing access to quality preschools can reduce the rate of dropouts in secondary schools for immigrant students.

To achieve the government's target for 100% participation of disadvantaged children in VVE by 2011 requires continued efforts from major stakeholders. Municipalities should find ways to inform immigrant parents who still do not enrol their child in the programmes about ECEC opportunities and encourage them to enrol children in programmes that would allow children to continue on to primary education at the same institution. The Forum and local platforms can play a bridge role between municipalities/preschools and immigrant parents in providing information and encouraging immigrant parents to enrol their children in ECEC.

Box 2.4. Policy options: early childhood education and care

Ensuring early intervention

- Set quality targets for the provision of ECEC along with the goal of enrolment targets for disadvantaged children
- Support and promote efforts to engage immigrant parents to enrol their children in preschool and early school education

Schools and communities

The quality of teaching and learning environments

The capacity of a system to deal with the challenges posed by an increasingly multicultural student population that is more diverse in its learning styles and needs is determined in large part by the capacity of its teachers, and the climate in which learning takes place.

Strengths

Political support for raising teachers' and school leaders' competencies and qualifications

Recruiting and retaining high quality teaching workforce is top of the educational policy agenda in the Netherlands. In 2007, the government commissioned a report on teachers and founded the Commission on Teacher Recruitment and Retention (CL). This Commission prepared recommendations on recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers, including recommendations to provide better salaries and enhance career opportunities. In response, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (2008a) presented the action plan on teachers (*Actieplan Leekracht*). In covenants which were concluded with the representatives of primary education, secondary education, senior vocational education and higher vocational education, three major lines were set out: improved remuneration, professional enhancement and a more professional school. Targeted salary adjustments were introduced by making more teachers eligible for higher salary scales – the net result being a temporary salary supplement in the secondary education and (junior and

senior) vocational sector in the urbanised areas centering on the four major cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague) and increased salaries for school managers in primary schools. The Association for the Professional Quality of Teachers (SBL) set up new professional registers for teachers to support their personal and professional development. There are also measures to improve the quality of new teachers: all students are required to sit a compulsory arithmetic and language test at the end of the first year of the teacher-training course.

Given the high level of autonomy that schools enjoy, there is recognition that school leaders play a key role in improving educational quality. Currently, the Ministry is developing initiatives to strengthen school leadership in primary and secondary education. The Board of management in each school is responsible for both the quality of education and the management of the school. Schools receiving additional funding via the weighting system, (for which the sole criterion of parents' education level is used in primary education) can use this funding for teacher training. The OECD review team visited a primary school in Rotterdam that used 50% of its funding for teacher training with teachers spending 10% of their time on in-service training. The Inspectorate monitors the general improvement of teacher quality at the school level, including the use of information reported in school annual reports on staff satisfaction, teachers' professional development and the number of non-qualified staff employed.

Strong commitment to improving all students' language and arithmetic skills

A key reform in the Dutch education system is the development of common standards for literacy and numeracy for all students at different educational levels in 2007 (Leeuwen *et al.*, 2008). These standards specify desired learning outcomes in the domains of language development (Dutch) and mathematics for students aged 12, 14, 16 and 18 years. Along with the common standards, the government aims to introduce 'reference levels' of performance, which can be used by teachers to monitor student progress in learning and provide tailored support to them. The standard grade eight test developed by CITO will be connected with the reference levels.

There are also targeted measures to provide educational support to students with weak language skills. In municipalities with large numbers of new comers (first-generation immigrant students), induction classes – which have been used in primary schools for a number of years – have been recently introduced in secondary schools to provide targeted instruction to students with weak language skills in a separate group for a full year. At the end of the year students' language skills should be at a level that enables them to follow regular instruction. However, the OECD review team visited a school in The Hague that offers induction classes from one to three years depending on the students' previous education level and learning progress. The government provides additional funding to secondary schools for such classes (one of the instruments included in the "learning plus arrangement"), although schools can decide how to use the funding.

Municipality and school initiatives in offering additional learning support activities

Many schools face the reality of teaching to a student group with diverse proficiency in Dutch and have developed initiatives to support second language learners. Some initiatives that the OECD review team noted during visits to schools in Rotterdam and The Hague include homework support, the use of state-of-art teaching techniques of adaptive instruction and activity centres, school rule to only speak Dutch in lessons and with each other and provision of supplementary education to children aged 10 to 14 on Saturdays or Sundays. In addition to extended day schools, Municipalities also organise "community schools" (*brede* school) which aim to offer extended services to students and the community in co-operation with school boards, welfare services and other local educational and cultural agencies (see "Schools and communities – effective partnership and engagement").

Well-established education support system for teachers and schools

The OECD review team interviewed representatives from three national educational advisory centres in the Netherlands: the Educational Advisory Centre (APS) for non-denominational schools, the Protestant Educational Advisory Centre (CPS) and the Catholic Educational Advisory Centre (KPC). The school advisory services help schools to introduce innovations and solve problems. For instance, they provide information and case studies on new teaching techniques and ways to both work with different cultures in classrooms and promote safe school environments. An increasingly important part of their work is helping schools to build capacity in dealing with students from different cultures. Through the block grant funding system, schools receive funds from central government and can choose the necessary services from the providers. In addition, there are a few specialised organisations to support teachers and schools such as the Dutch Language Teaching Expertise Centre, the Freudenthal Institute for Science and Mathematics Education and the National Institute for Curriculum Development (SLO).

Promoting societal values in schools

In 2006, the laws governing primary and secondary education were amended to include the requirement for schools to stimulate active citizenship and social integration. The aim of this amendment was to strengthen education on cultural diversity of Dutch society which had been compulsory in primary schools since 1985, but which was not often addressed seriously by schools. Since the amendment, there has been an increase in the number of schools with a detailed vision of how to stimulate active citizenship and with specific school objectives in this area. According to the Inspectorate's evaluation, schools also use separate teaching materials for active citizenship more often than in the past (Herweijer, 2009b).

In addition, there are core objectives in primary education within Social studies to learn about the essentials of Dutch and European politics and citizen's duties, to respect generally accepted standards and values, to learn essentials of religious movements that play an important part in the Dutch pluralistic society and to respect people's differences of opinion (SLO, 2007). Further, as of 2011/12 all secondary school students will complete 72 hours of compulsory social apprenticeships, for example they will work in a sport club, community centre or retirement home (Herweijer, 2009b).

Challenges

Shortage of teachers and school leaders

Despite strong political commitment to recruit and maintain high quality teachers and school leaders, the public is worried about the recruitment potential of the education sector. School management boards, in particular in disadvantaged areas of big cities, are experiencing greater difficulty in filling their vacancies. The average number of vacancies in primary, secondary and senior vocational education increased from 950 during the 2005/06 school year to 1 540 in 2008/09 (although this was already a drop from 1 850 in 2007/08) (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2009a). School managers in primary schools are also in shortage. It is estimated that the shortage of school managers could reach almost 5% by 2011 (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2008b). This combined with the ageing teaching workforce in the Netherlands, presents a big challenge to improving quality education. The proportion of senior workers (*i.e.* 55-years-old and above) in education is about twice as high as the Dutch national average of senior workers (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2008b).

There is also evidence that retaining teachers in schools with a high concentration of immigrant students is a particular challenge. Karsten *et al*. (2006) found strong indication in Amsterdam of teachers' flight due to concentration and segregation of immigrant students. Teachers who had served in schools with a greater proportion of minority and low income students were more likely to switch their schools. In addition, the study identified teacher vacancies in vocational schools were the most difficult to fill. Hanushek *et al*. (2001) also concluded that more qualified and more experienced teachers may prefer schools enrolling mostly native students.

Capacity of teachers and school leaders to meet diverse individual students' needs

While research shows that most teachers have a positive attitude towards the cultural diversity in their classrooms (Derriks and Ledoux, 2002), other research reveals that teachers do not always feel sufficiently equipped to deal with diversity in a positive way and they want to learn more about their students' cultural backgrounds and how to offer effective intercultural education (Leeman, 2008; Thijs and Berlet, 2008 in Thijs *et al*., 2008). Further, van Ewijk (2009) finds in a small study of secondary schools that teachers may have unfavourable attitudes toward immigrant students, which may indirectly result in immigrant students performing below their ability level. During the OECD review visit, representatives from Teachers Unions reported that more school leaders and mainstream teachers would need access to training to learn how to cope with cultural diversity, and such training needs to be deepened. Some teacher training programmes offer additional modules to prepare student teachers for teaching in multicultural classrooms in the large urban centres, but a case study in two teacher training courses in the north of the Netherlands, illustrates that the topic is not receiving high priority in teacher education (Hermans, 2002). National pedagogical centres can play a key role by promoting participation in relevant training and sharing information on effective pedagogical strategies for migrant education.

There are no accurate data on how many teachers of Dutch as a second language have specific qualifications as second-language teachers. However, concerns were reported during the OECD review visit that many such teachers have not followed the necessary training. Although there is little empirical research on the characteristics of successful second language learning (Nusche, 2009), trained teachers in second language acquisition are essential in providing high quality second language instruction (Christensen and Stanat, 2007).

Limited number of teachers and school leaders with immigrant backgrounds

The proportion of teachers and school leaders with immigrant backgrounds in the Netherlands, as in other OECD countries, is very low. Although the non-Western immigrant population represents about 11% of the total population in the Netherlands, in 2008, a proportion of around 4.5% of the teaching staff in primary, secondary and vocational education had an immigrant background (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2009a). However, there have been modest increases in the percentage of teaching staff with immigrant background in secondary education (*e.g.* an increase by 0.6% between 2007 and 2008). The challenge is to get more immigrant students into higher education teaching colleges and to ensure they do not drop out from their studies. The number of ethnic minority students in teacher training courses has remained stable since 2000 and they drop out from their studies more frequently than native students (Herweijer, 2009b).

Policy options

Continue to prioritise the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers to schools in disadvantaged areas

The government should continue to prioritise the recruitment and retention of high quality teaching staff. Improving the quality of the teaching workforce is strongly related to enhancing students' learning outcomes (Hanushek, 2005). The targeted financial measures to increase teacher salaries in selected schools in the four major cities seem well prioritised and effects of this policy should be carefully monitored and reviewed. Combating teacher flight from schools with high shares of disadvantaged students and immigrant students is of particular importance otherwise the quality of those schools could be at great risk. The relevant municipalities and school boards, using the teacher register, should pay particular attention to the professional and personal development needs of teachers in the urban areas, centering on the four major cities. High quality teachers should be seen as the key to increasing the quality

of schools in these urban areas. Prioritising training and professional development of teachers within these schools will also help to attract the brightest candidates from teaching colleges.

Enhance the capacity of teachers to improve the educational outcomes of immigrant students

As part of its policy to improve basic Dutch skills for all students, the Ministry should promote teachers taking responsibility for language teaching during their core subject lessons to improve proficiency in Dutch for all students, including immigrant students with weak language skills. Teachers should expect high quality outcomes of all their students. However, they may need some tools to effectively support all students. All teachers, not only language teachers, need to be equipped with skills to deal with a linguistically diverse student group. Core elements of in-service training and initial teacher education could include: (1) the second language acquisition theory and practice as a required subject for all teachers – this should be compulsory for teaching workforce in schools with high proportion of immigrant students; (2) Dutch as a second language qualification for language support teachers. These would complement the recommended additional training on the better use of evaluation and assessment to help teachers increase capacity to raise the quality of students' basic Dutch (see "Ensuring monitoring and evaluation"). Here also, the Inspectorate could play an important role in ensuring the actual implementation of training for second language acquisition.

Teacher colleges could build on models of guest lessons from immigrant parents to student teachers by the FORUM, to include intercultural education as a part of initial teacher education programmes and in-service training for current teachers and school leaders. The Ministry should explore ways in which such initiatives could be matched with citizenship requirements in schools.

In Germany, there is political support for "continuous language development" and the *FörMig* project is a good example of a new strategic approach to achieve this throughout a student's educational career, with particular focus on transition phases: from kindergarten to primary school, from primary school to secondary school and from secondary school to professional training (see Box 2.5).

Establish minimum qualifications for school leaders

Literature has identified that strong leadership is one of the most important elements of effective schools in improving educational outcomes for immigrant students (Brind *et al*., 2008; Heckmann, 2008). Evidence of the programmes for improving educational outcomes of ethnic minority students in the United Kingdom also highlights the importance of strong leadership in achieving goals of the programmes (DFES, 2004). A number of school leadership factors (*e.g.* commitment to addressing inequality and mainstreaming initiatives to improve educational achievement of underachieving students) were regarded as necessary preconditions for schools with good practices to meet effectively achievement goals for them (Tikly *et al*., 2006).

The Ministry and Association of School Leaders should set minimum qualifications for school leaders to ensure they are adequately trained to lead in a multicultural environment, and support teachers seeking to individualise instruction to meet individual students' needs. In England, for example, new school leaders are required to finish leadership training and meet the "National Professional Qualification for headship" (Pont *et al*., 2008). Furthermore, it is important to provide an opportunity of continuing training for current school leaders to enable them to deal with schools with students from diverse backgrounds. For instance, the Swedish government is currently reforming training for school leaders. The new training programmes aim to improve school leaders' knowledge of national goals for education and evaluation and monitoring of students' educational results. The new training programme is voluntary for school leaders but the government wants the programme eventually to be mandatory.

Box 2.5. Continuous language development in Germany: the FörMig project

There are three focus points of the *FörMig* project:

1. Language support based on individual language diagnosis: selection of diagnostic tools; literacy development
2. "Continuous" language development and support: development of local or regional language development planning; bringing together language development in the home and school environments; language development within all-day educational offers and after-school support; concepts of multilingualism.
3. Professional training and transition into the labour market: language in professional training; multilingualism as a resource in the labour market (especially: entry to the labour market); support for newly immigrated youngsters.

Project structure:

- Local: It is based on local partnerships between different "basic units", *e.g.* a kindergarten, a primary school, a local authority, a parent initiative, an after-school centre and a "strategic partner" such as a library, psychological support centre, or educational authority. These basic units serve to transfer information, experiences and evaluation results on a local or regional level. They also have to establish and maintain regional internet platforms and have regular contact with the central project coordinator.
- Central: The central project co-ordinator provides to the basic units: central and decentral professional development offers; advice and support in the development of local initiatives; support in monitoring and evaluation; guidelines and materials on related topics; facilitation of external expertise; support in collecting and interpreting data and establishing the internet platform; networking between different project units (*e.g.* between different Länder).

The evaluation of the project reports positive results. The following elements were key to the success of the programme:

- It pursues a holistic approach, in which language development is not only the task of individual teachers, but of the school as an organisation and of the students' environment as a whole, including parents and the local community.
- The continuous language support is aimed at immigrant as well as native children.
- The development of language diagnosis tools as an essential part of the project. Tools were developed to analyse the language profile of participating children and to diagnose and monitor the language development of bilingual children.

Pursue a long term policy to recruit more school leaders and teachers with immigrant backgrounds

The government has initiated programmes to increase the number of non-Western ethnic minority students entering teacher training programmes in higher education institutions, including extra language support in the first year of the programmes and senior student mentors from the same ethnic background. However, the initiatives so far have had little impact on increasing teaching workforce with immigrant backgrounds (Herweijer, 2009b). But efforts to increase the number of immigrant students in teaching courses are well founded. According to research on ethnic minority teachers in the Netherlands, school managers and minority teachers feel that minority teachers make the school recognisable for ethnic minority pupils and are role models for ethnic minority students (Autar and Moeniralam, 2002, in Herweijer, 2009b). Indeed, Nusche (2009) summarised that "while the available evidence is limited, it is generally supportive of the assumption that increasing the share of minority/immigrant teachers may have a positive influence on immigrant students' learning experience and education outcomes".

The government should pursue a long term policy to attract more young immigrant students to teacher education programmes and to ensure adequate support to immigrant students in teaching

programmes. Continuing language and academic education support for immigrant students in teacher education programmes, in particular during the first year, is critical to prevent dropout of immigrant students from teacher education programmes. The Ministry should also investigate alternative ways to recruit more school leaders and teachers with immigrant background, such as by practicing recognition of prior learning and foreign qualifications (*e.g.* stimulating Dutch teacher education for teachers previously hired for mother-tongue teaching). However, high quality criteria for future teachers should not be compromised and adequate additional training should be provided where required.

Preventing drop out

Strengths

Strong political leadership to reduce the number of youth leaving education without basic qualification

Reducing school dropout is a key policy goal in the Netherlands. To prepare young people for labour market participation adequately and to reduce the number of early school leavers, the compulsory age of schooling has been raised to 18 years for those who have not yet achieved a basic qualification (Leeuwen *et al*., 2008). In particular, the Cabinet has set the goal to half the number of dropouts by 2012 compared to the number in 2002. Table 2.1 indicates that there have already been impressive results in this policy.

Table 2.1. New school dropouts, 2001/02 to 2010/11

	2001/02	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2010/11[a]
New school dropouts	71 000	60 500[b]	54 100	52 700	48 300	35 000

Note 1. a – target; b – break in series as a result of the switchover to a different way of registration (as from 2004/05, the figure is based on "education number" records).

Source : Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2009b.

The government has established agreements with all 39 regions to combat early school leaving – this follows the pilot agreement with an initial 14 regions in the school year 2006/07 and builds on well established efforts to reduce drop out. In 1995, municipalities were made responsible for registering early school leavers. Following the Early School Leavers Act in 2001, an early school leaver regional reporting and co-ordination centre was established in each region. In addition to the requirement for schools to report dropouts to municipalities, as of August 2009, they must also report truants (who are considered to be potential dropouts). Financial incentives are offered to schools to monitor and prevent drop out.

Increasing provision of student support and guidance services at school

In co-operation with municipalities, schools and welfare partners, the government has initiated various types of extra support to effectively combat drop out. Initiatives include "Care and Advice Teams" and career guidance with mentor services. Through Care and Advice Teams, schools work with youth health care, social welfare and other regional education and care agencies to provide extra support to students with emotional, behavioural, developmental or learning difficulties. In 2008, such Teams were present in 95% of general secondary schools and in 82% of vocational secondary schools and the target is for these to be in 100% of secondary schools by 2011 (NJI, 2009). By providing support to students of potential risk at earlier stages, the Team can prevent educational disadvantage and failure such as dropout at the later stage.

A good number of immigrant students in secondary schools also receive support from a mentor who can provide counselling. Mentor programmes in secondary schools use successful students from the same ethnic group in higher education, *e.g.* the ECHO ambassadors. In Rotterdam – as part of a joint policy with school boards to increase the number of immigrant students going to the higher tracks in secondary

education – mentor projects have been introduced during the last two years of primary school. The aim is to support younger students in setting realistic career expectations by giving an accurate overview of types of jobs available. The mentors go to the primary school and interview with the children to ensure a good match.

In addition, the government is currently introducing "Youth and Family Centres" to provide a one-stop service to parents and children aged up to 23 years in disadvantaged neighbourhoods (see "Effective partnerships").

Although beyond the scope of this review, it is worthy of note that the government has also initiated projects in universities of applied sciences in the four big cities. Different activities are set up to increase the study success of students from non-Western immigrant backgrounds. The institutions can make their own choices of interventions to support their student population, but the universities of applied sciences and the government have concluded clear output agreements to prevent drop out and to improve retention of students from non-Western immigrant backgrounds. These universities of applied sciences have set up activities such as summer courses, mentor and tutor programmes and academic language skills. The research universities in the four big cities will start with their projects in 2011.

Regional and municipal initiatives to ease transition between different educational programmes and offer second chances

There are several regional and municipal initiatives to prevent early school leavers. Major initiatives highlighted to the OECD review team target key areas where risk of drop out is high. Pilot projects in Amsterdam and Rotterdam aim to bridge the transition from lower vocational programmes (VMBO) to upper vocational programmes (MBO) by offering these programmes within the same institution. The fact that VMBO and MBO programmes are generally offered in different schools and locations is thought to increase the risk of drop out. In addition, municipalities offer free second chance education (VAVO) to students aged 18 or older. Seventy percent of VAVO participants have an immigrant background.

Challenge

Reducing the number of students dropping out from vocational programmes

Despite encouraging results in reducing the number of early school leavers this remains a major educational problem in the Netherlands. Immigrant students – particularly first-generation immigrant students – are more likely to leave school without qualifications (Table 2.2). A closer look at dropout data reveals tougher challenges for particular immigrant groups: the dropout rate for immigrant students of Antillean background increased from 7.9% in 2005/06 to 8.3% in 2007/08; corresponding rates for immigrant students of Moroccan background were 6.8%, and 6.9% (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2009b).

Table 2.2. Dropout rate (public and private schools, 2005/06)

	Overall dropout rate	Dropout rate of natives	Dropout rate of first-generation	Dropout rate of second-generation
ISCED 2	3.0	2.3	8.2	3.6
ISCED 3	5.6	4.7	10.0	8.8

Source : Table 1.3 in Herweijer (2009b).

In 2008, dropout rates were much higher for students in vocational tracks (36.2% for MBO one-year programmes and 7.6% for MBO two- to four-year programmes) than for students in academic tracks (1% for HAVO/VWO). There has been minimal improvement over recent years (37.7% of students dropped out

of MBO one-year programmes in 2006), and reducing the number of dropouts from MBO one-year programmes remains a key challenge (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2009b). Results from a survey of 18-to-35-year-old Turkish and Moroccan second-generation immigrants in big cities reveal traditionally high dropout rates for the one- and two-year vocational tracks: more than 40% of the respondents had dropped out of a one-year programme (Crul and Heering, 2008).

During the OECD review visit, the Ministry of Employment cited the lack of professional networks for immigrant students to find apprenticeship places as a risk factor to their success in vocational education. Indeed, immigrant students with non-Western backgrounds are largely underrepresented in the apprenticeship-type vocational programmes – which might provide smoother transition from school to work for students in vocational tracks – presumably due to difficulty securing an apprenticeship contract with a company (OECD, 2008a).

Policy options

Prioritise educational and career support to students in vocational programmes

Keeping immigrant students in upper secondary vocational programmes beyond the first year is critical and requires the provision of tailored educational and career support. Among existing initiatives, the Ministry should prioritise the implementation of Care and advice teams in vocational schools, particularly those in disadvantaged areas, and emphasise career counselling services. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science together with the Council for Vocational Education (*MBO-Raad*), drawing on good practice of vocational schools, should promote the further development of systems to report absenteeism and encourage absent students to return to school. In preventing new school leavers, intersectoral collaboration on current support initiatives and among different levels of education is increasingly important. In Switzerland, a new 'case management' programme targets academically weak or socially disadvantaged students from the second year of lower secondary education through to the completion of their vocational programmes. Using individual student data, case managers are appointed to students "at risk" of dropping out to ensure collaboration with all relevant support services, such as career guidance, mentoring, counselling, housing, drug-use advisors, etc. (OECD, 2008c). In Denmark, the Ministry of Education has made it mandatory for all vocational institutions to offer mentorship to students "at risk" of dropping out. Further, contact teachers assess new students' needs and draw up individual learning plans. "The Retention Caravan" was a four-year programme offering targeted support to immigrant students in vocational programmes and included retention co-ordinators at school, role models, study and homework support, parent contact and development of teacher competencies (OECD 2010, forthcoming).

Contact hours between teachers and students, the duration of schooling and the availability of apprenticeship opportunities have been identified as important factors in the educational success of second-generation Turks in the Netherlands and Germany (Crul and Schneider, 2009). The government and municipalities should support vocational schools in finding apprenticeship places in collaboration with business partners and local communities, especially ethnic minority communities. The virtual platform "Elevplan" in Denmark links vocational schools, students and training companies. This web-based tool allows access by all three partners on common information, plus three independent spaces for information storage and exchange. For example, the student platform allows students to access their individual learning plans, plus other students' portfolios and the teacher platform gives teachers access to feedback by all teachers to a given student, plus overview of all student learning plans. In 2009, 25% of training companies use this platform (*www.elevplan.dk*).

The *MBO-Raad* should promote support to written and academic Dutch skills throughout vocational schools. Targeted support could play a key role given the importance of the vocational route for many immigrant students to enter university. This would also support student learning in senior vocational education (MBO): among the non-Western immigrant students enrolled in MBO in 2008/09, eight in ten

were in the theoretical learning track (*beroepsopleidende leerweg* [bol]), where they go to school and spend a total of 20% to 60% of the course in work placements (Statistics Netherlands, 2009).[15] For example, in the United Kingdom, the "Secondary English as an additional language (EAL) Programme" is aimed at more advanced bilingual learners. The majority of the target group were either born in the United Kingdom or have followed at least three years of schooling there and are often fluent in social conversational English, but need support in academic or standard written English. The programme has three main areas of focus: developing higher order thinking skills; developing academic language; and improving extended writing skills.

Effective partnership and engagement

Strengths

Increasing recognition of the importance of engaging immigrant parents as partners

The government, in co-operation with other educational stakeholders and third parties such as the FORUM, has paid special attention to increasing the involvement of immigrant parents in their children's education. FORUM research and advisory reports show a general increase in the recognition of the importance of parents as partners in education. Parents can help combat drop out, improve language learning and child raising. In 2005, the government reached agreement with other educational associations to increase parental involvement by providing information on good practices (Herweijer, 2009b). In 2006, the Platform for Ethnic Minority Parents and Education (PAOO) was established in addition to the general parents' association, to take a leading role in promoting parental involvement among immigrant parents throughout the country. It is a four-year project financed by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. In addition to the national platform there are local platforms in 30 large municipalities promoting local initiatives such as parent rooms, parent information points at school, teachers visiting students' homes, homework supervision and mixed school initiatives (FORUM, 2009). The PAOO also helps teachers to better understand the social and cultural context of immigrant families. For example, immigrant parents are invited to teacher training programmes to advise on effective ways to engage immigrant parents.

Municipalities and schools also develop various initiatives to get immigrant parents to become more actively involved in their children's education. Primary schools with a high proportion of immigrant students have almost always developed a policy aimed at promoting the involvement of immigrant parents (Smit *et al.*, 2007 in Herweijer, 2009b). For instance, in Rotterdam, schools offer programmes for parents, covering topics such as raising children in the Netherlands. Special parent counsellors trained and funded by the Municipality of Rotterdam visit schools and help to provide these programmes. Schools also provide language courses for newly arrived immigrant parents in co-operation with civic integration services.

Fostering partnerships to provide more effective support to parents and students

Co-operation between schools and other youth agencies is well developed in the Netherlands and includes Youth and Family Centres, Care and Advice Teams in schools (see "Preventing drop out") and Community Schools. Municipalities are obliged to provide parenting support (Social Support Act, January 2007). Further, the youth care system is being simplified to provide more effective support to parents. The Youth Care Act (January 2005) stipulates that "all parents, young people and children must have access to an approachable, recognisable point of contact close to home where they can get advice and support on a wide range of parenting issues" (Ministry of Youth and Families, 2007). Municipalities are responsible for Youth and Family Centres which provide parenting support and family coaching in addition to health care and basic preventive children's services. The first centres were founded in 2008, and the government and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) have set the goal to have one centre in every municipality by the end of 2011, allocating EUR 200 million. The Youth and Family Programme states

that the centres will take "specific steps to target ethnic minority families as effectively as possible, for example by recruiting staff who can act as go-betweens and by applying appropriate methods to different ethnic target groups" (Ministry of Youth and Families, 2007).

There are also initiatives to establish closer co-operation among various agencies, including the electronic child database set up in early 2008 to replace the paper dossiers on children held by the youth healthcare services and to make it easier to identify at-risk individuals. In early 2009, the at-risk juveniles register was established which essentially allows professionals from different sectors to flag potentially at-risk juveniles – if the individual has already been flagged by another professional they are put in contact with each other to discuss the case (Ministry of Youth and Families, 2007).

Community schools are alliances of schools, libraries, sports clubs, child care and health and welfare institutions and provide many community services. The particular services offered by these schools vary to meet local needs. An estimated 1 000 of the more than 7 000 primary schools and 350 of the 1 200 secondary schools were community schools in 2007 (Oberon, 2007). These are present in more than half the municipalities. Almost all primary schools in Amsterdam now offer extended services (Herweijer, 2009b). Results from a monitoring survey in 2003 showed the major partners for community schools at the time were primary education (95%), playgroups (90%), child care (83%), welfare (55%) and libraries (45%) (Oberon/Sardes, 2004). Eighty-three percent of community schools in 2003 had the objective to improve co-operation between institutions.

Challenges

Limited involvement of some immigrant parents in their children's education

During the OECD review visit, schools reported varying degrees of difficulty in effectively communicating with immigrant students' parents and some invested a great deal of effort in engaging parents. An empirical study on parental involvement in Dutch schools identifies communication problems as the greatest obstacle to engaging immigrant students' parents, due to their insufficient proficiency in Dutch, lack of knowledge of the Dutch educational system and low self-confidence to play a role in their child's school (Smit *et al.*, 2007). The same factors are also listed as obstacles in literature on immigrant education (Heckmann, 2008; Schofield, 2006). Some immigrant parents report that they are not welcomed or taken seriously by teachers during discussions about their child's education (Smit *et al.*, 2007; Smit and Driessen, 2007). Immigrant parents have less voice in official school/parent partnership channels, *e.g.* they are less likely to be represented on school boards and advisory councils (FORUM research and advisory reports; Smit *et al.*, 2007). Plus, results from a monitoring survey of community schools in 2003 showed migrant associations to be minor players despite the fact that such schools could be of particular benefit to many immigrant students (Oberon/Sardes, 2004).

Optimising co-operation between schools and communities and their educational benefits to immigrant students

Eurydice (2004) points out that "the kind and amount of school-based support that immigrant children and their parents may receive depends to a large degree on the polices of schools and/or municipalities". Strong leadership in municipalities and schools is key to achieving effective partnerships with immigrant parents. There is a lack of evaluation on the educational benefit of existing partnership initiatives. For instance, although municipalities have provided community schools for a long time, little research has been carried out on how effective community schools are in improving students' educational outcomes. One evaluation on community schools did not find either positive cognitive or socio-emotional effects (Claassen *et al.*, 2008). In general, supporters of community schools do not perceive cognitive improvements to be the most important success factor (Herweijer, 2009b).

Policy options

Enhance involvement of immigrant parents in official school/parent partnerships

School boards need to invest more to realise sincere partnerships with immigrant parents. Where immigrant parents are underrepresented on local school boards, boards should consider affirmative steps (including reserving places for immigrant parents) to encourage participation. Parental involvement in their child's education is considered one of the most important characteristics of effective schools (for the United Kingdom, see Office for Standards in Education, 2002; for the Netherlands, see Driessen *et al*., 2005). Research highlights the importance of parental involvement in education for the achievement of students, independent of their socio-economic background (for a review, see Nusche, 2009; for the Netherlands, see Driessen and Smit, 2007). In addition to supporting their child's learning at home, parents can participate in school activities or organisational matters (Smit *et al*., 2007). There is a double victory to be won in reaching out to immigrant parents as this should improve their knowledge of the education system in general and bring them closer to the school on a social level (Heckmann, 2008). It is crucial that schools provide immigrant parents with information on the Dutch education system particularly given that a high proportion of immigrant students take longer routes to higher education via the vocational track (Crul, 2007).

Schools need to be proactive and take initiative to engage immigrant parents as partners, as they often take a "wait and see" approach (Smit *et al*., 2007). In co-operation with municipalities where possible, schools should develop plans for parental involvement in following their child's education (see "Balancing school choice and equity"). Parents need to have means to communicate effectively with teachers concerning the progress and prospects of their children, and they need to be able to engage in discussions with other parents, school leaders and school boards regarding strategic decisions affecting schools. School leaders need to ensure that teachers have the time and support (including access to translation and interpretation services) to engage with parents who, because of language and perceived social barriers, are more reluctant to participate in the usual parent-teacher exchanges. Individual lesson plans have proven to be valuable tools in some schools in the Netherlands for structuring discussions between parents of immigrant students and teachers. The OECD has seen this in other countries as well. School leaders and teachers should consider the usefulness of more systematic use of such plans (see "Monitoring and evaluation").

School leaders and teachers should also consider the need to support informal means of involving parents, by providing the place for them to meet for coffee clubs (as found in some schools in Denmark) and informal meetings between parents, and between parents and teachers (as found in some schools in Ireland). The government should support and evaluate experimental programmes in municipalities and schools to involve parents (of immigrant students) in their child's education. Based on the evaluation, the government should promote effective programmes in other schools.

Continue to support and promote co-operation between schools and communities and emphasise goals to improve educational quality and outcomes

Partnerships between schools and communities are relatively well-developed in the Netherlands. The government should continue to support the implementation of successful partnerships in all municipalities and schools, with priority to disadvantaged areas. However, there is room for migrant associations to become more active partners in promoting the importance of high quality education and the opportunities it offers children. For example, in the 1950s and 1960s in the Flemish Community of Belgium, cultural and social associations were very instrumental in the progress of democratisation of education and raising awareness among their members, who were all native Flemish, that education could offer social mobility. This approach could be equally beneficial in reaching out to immigrant communities.

Collaboration among existing partnerships in each school and municipality is critical to identify potential at-risk students, preventing their educational failure at an earlier stage by providing them with tailored support. The government in collaboration with the national pedagogical centres and the Education Inspectorate should identify good practices of partnerships in schools and municipalities and share them with other schools and municipalities. In Sweden, for instance, through an initiative called "Schools of Ideas for Diversity" run by the Swedish National Agency for School Improvement, good practices have been collected from schools and the idea schools have disseminated their ideas about how to work successfully with diversity issues to other schools. In England, the Office for Standards in Education (OfStEd) published a report in early 2009 presenting "Twelve Outstanding Secondary Schools" succeeding in delivering quality education to less advantaged socio-economic student populations. The report found that as well as "achieving and sustaining excellence", successful schools "share excellence" by forging partnerships with other schools and often include National Leaders of Education (NLEs) who are nationally recognised leaders who advise underperforming schools. Results have already been impressive and under the guidance of NLEs, a number of schools that were being carefully monitored by OfStEd either in "special measures" or with a "notice to improve" had improved sufficiently to be removed from these inspection categories, plus many showed improvement in national examination results (OfStEd, 2009).

Existing initiatives can be extended to focus more on providing educational support to disadvantaged students with an emphasis on improving their educational outcomes. There is room to better exploit community schools to achieve improved educational outcomes. For example, activities such as homework support and access to computers and libraries for research can be extended. In Germany, for instance, students in teacher education provide mentoring services to immigrant students through the project called "Educational Support for Children and Youth with a Migration Background". Through the project, mentors have experience in teaching immigrant children and thus will be better prepared for their future role as teachers working with an increasingly diverse student population (Heckmann, 2008).

Box 2.6. Policy options: schools and communities

The quality of teaching and learning environments

- Continue to prioritise the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers to schools in disadvantaged areas
- Enhance the capacity of teachers to improve the educational outcomes of immigrant students
- Establish minimum qualifications for school leaders
- Pursue a long term policy to recruit more school leaders and teachers with immigrant backgrounds

Preventing drop out

- Prioritise educational and career support to students in vocational programmes

Effective partnership and engagement

- Enhance involvement of immigrant parents in official school/parent partnerships
- Continue to support and promote co-operation between schools and communities and emphasise goals to improve educational quality and outcomes

NOTES

[9] Of course, the majority of schools in the Netherlands are under private authority (70 to 75% of primary and secondary schooks, [Herweijer, 2009]). In theory, these schools can refuse students on "religious" grounds, but in practice, they almost never do so.

[10] In secondary education, supervision arrangements are not calibrated to schools as such but to the schooltypes within each school (pre-vocational [VMBO], general secondary [HAVO] and pre-university [VWO]). In January 2009, 26 schooltypes were judged very weak. The Inspectorate has performed quality improvement surveys on 17 very weak schooltypes, all with positive outcomes. In the four big cities, 9% of secondary education school types are subject to the supervision arrangement for very weak schools (Inspectie van het Onderwijs, 2009).

[11] The incidence of schools categorised as "very weak" is very low: as of January 2009, among the total 7 199 primary schools (including special primary education) in the Netherlands, only 125 were classified as "very weak". Among these very weak schools, only 15 are located in the four big cities where most of the immigrant population resides.

[12] See Wößmann *et al*. (2007a) and Wößmann *et al*. (2007b).

[13] In the United States, another country with a high degree of school autonomy, federal legislation to improve school outcomes, "No Child Left Behind", has been severely hindered by the absence of common quality standards. This has made it possible for some states to set low achievement targets that fail to signal inadequate school performance. For further discussion see OECD (2007).

[14] In the Netherlands, a distinction is made between "childcare" (*kinderopvang*), "pre-primary education/playgroups" (*voorschoolse educatie*) and "early-primary education" (*vroeg-schoolse educatie*). Childcare is available to all children until they start attending pre-primary education or primary school. Pre-primary education targets 2.5-to-4-year-old children; early-primary education targets four and five year old children in primary schools.

[15] The corresponding figure for native Dutch students was six in ten (see *www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/onderwijs/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2009/2009-2938-wm.htm*).

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ANNEX A: TERMS OF REFERENCE

General

The review addresses the question what policies are most successful in integrating migrant students in the education system. In order to find answers to this question, the review will look at three main topics: access, participation and performance. In general, the themes, topics and (sub)questions as included in the document EDU/EDPC/MI/RD(2008)13 apply.

National policy context

Immigrants in the Netherlands

On 1 January 2008, the number of migrants[16] in the Netherlands was 3.2 million, almost 20% of the total population. Slightly more than half of these migrants (1.8 million) are of non-Western descent. Of the non-Western group, 42% is second-generation: they were born in the Netherlands. Of the Western migrants almost 60 % were born in the Netherlands.

Migrants are considered non-Western when they are of Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese or Antillean[17] descent, or descend from a parent/parents born in a country in Africa, Latin-America or Asia[18]. Migrants born in a foreign country are considered to belong to the first generation, those born in the Netherlands to the second generation.

Among Western migrants Indonesians and Germans are by far the largest groups, with 380 000 persons each. The number of migrants from Eastern Europe has sharply increased, as a consequence of the enlargement of the European Union. The numbers of Poles and Rumanians have doubled since 2000 and the number of Bulgarians – although smaller in absolute numbers – quadrupled.

The dispersion of migrants throughout the country is unbalanced. The province of Limburg has the largest proportion of Western migrants (14%) and the province Flevoland the largest proportion of non-Western migrants (18%). In the provinces Drenthe and Frisia, on the other hand, not one in ten inhabitants is of migrant descent. In the cities Rotterdam, Amsterdam and The Hague one in three inhabitants is of migrant descent.

Of all 15-year-olds in the Netherlands, 15.6% have a non-Western migrant background.

The Netherlands' migration balance (immigration minus emigration) remained negative in 2007, but less clearly so than in previous years. This is caused by, on the one hand, the decrease in emigration and, on the other, the increase in immigration from EU-countries like Bulgaria, Rumania and Poland.

Migrant children and education

Within education, a certain segregation occurs, among "white schools" and "coloured schools". In recent years, the proportion of non-Western migrant children in 8% of primary and secondary education schools exceeds 50%, while in the four big cities more than half of all schools for primary education had more than 50% migrant pupils.

For the Netherlands as a whole, on the average, 14% of pupils in primary and secondary education have a non-Western migrant background. Segregation within secondary education is less poignant than in primary education, which may be explained by the larger area coverage of secondary schools. Primary schools, as a rule, are smaller and – because of the nature of their pupil population – more strongly connected to the neighbourhood where they are located.

Already in the final stages of primary education, the outcomes of the CITO assessment test[19] show that education results of non-Western migrant pupils lag behind those of native Dutch pupils. At the same time, those migrant pupils whose home environment language is Dutch clearly have a better start in education.

During the school year 2007/08 more than 900 000 pupils frequented secondary schools. Almost 129 000 pupils were of non-Western descent. Within secondary education, a significantly larger proportion of non-Western migrant youths frequent (semi-)vocational education than is the case with native Dutch pupils. The latter proportionally more often frequent upper secondary schools. Non-Western pupils in (semi-)vocational education often prefer economic streams (this is specifically the case with boys of Turkish and Moroccan descent). The success rate of non-Western migrant pupils in secondary education still lags behind compared to native Dutch pupils, but in recent years appears to catch up somewhat. At the same time, many non-Western migrant pupils (specifically boys) drop out of education without attaining a basic qualification for the labour market.

All the same, although non-Western migrant pupils are underrepresented in upper secondary education and thus less often acquire an upper secondary education diploma, the great majority of those who actually *do* acquire this diploma tends to enter higher education – and also shows a tendency to directly follow up their secondary education with a higher education study at the highest possible level.

Many migrant pupils attain a basic level of medium vocational education after having completed a practical stream in (semi-)vocational education.

In 2007/08 more than 300 000 students were enrolled in higher vocational education, some 200 000 in university education.[20] The proportions of non-Western migrants, given as percentages of the total student population, were 14% and 12%, respectively. The proportion of non-Western migrants among higher education students is lower than among native Dutch students as a consequence of the fact that migrants less frequently attain the required upper secondary education level.[21] At the same time, among non-Western migrant students a higher proportion has gained entrance to higher education through accumulating subsequent grades of secondary and/or vocational education.

Yet the proportion of non-Western migrants among those who newly enrol in higher education has strongly increased. And, as is the case in secondary education and in medium vocational education, migrant students in higher education, too, often prefer an economic and/or legal orientation, because these, as a rule, are considered to enhance personal status and to contribute positively to the qualifications needed for the labour market.

Non-Western migrant pupils in secondary education experience more delay than do native Dutch pupils. In higher education, too, their studying results lag behind. Yet an improvement is visible among non-Western migrant students in university education, specifically among woman students.

As a rule girls and women – and specifically non-Western migrant girls and women – perform better than do boys and men. In virtually all kinds of education, their studying results and their resulting educational level are higher, they experience less delay and are less prone to drop out.

Purpose of the review

The questions specific for the Netherlands are in line with the overarching policy question of the thematic Review on Migrant Education: What policies will promote successful education outcomes for first and second generation migrants? The review will focus on:

- Policies that will effectively help low-performing migrant students raise their learning outcomes;
- Policies which help ensure that determining the educational level and stream fitting for a pupil is in line with the principle of equity;
- Strategies for school choice as well as school autonomy which should be in line with the principle of equity and of equal opportunities;
- Interventions to prevent disproportionate dropout of migrant students;
- Interventions which improve the transition to higher education of migrant students.

Scope

The level of education will include: pre-primary and primary education (including early childhood education and care), secondary education, vocational education and the transition to tertiary education.

Main questions to be addressed

- How do characteristics of the educational system – selection mechanisms, teachers and teachers' training, programmes, measures to combat disadvantage – relate to students' performance and completion rates?
- What are major challenges in raising student performance and improving completion rates? Do current reforms, comprehensive and universal measures and targeted interventions address the challenges sufficiently? What is working and not working – and why?
- Are there comparative international insights in how countries and/or systems comparable to the Netherlands overcome the challenges? What appear to be the principal lessons which the Netherlands may draw from analysing such insights?
- More specifically: how do the outcomes from the Netherlands compare to research outcomes concerning migrant education in Germany and in Belgium (Flanders); to address this question, research and policy information from these and/or comparable countries will be set against the outcomes of the Netherlands' review.
- To translate insights and lessons into practice, what initiatives might be pursued by the state, by local authorities, by schools, by parents and by other key stakeholders in the Netherlands?

Specific questions to be addressed

- What policies and practices can heighten the effectiveness of pre-primary and early primary education for migrant children (including early childhood education and care), especially with a view to language proficiency, preparedness for school and integration within school and surrounding society?
- What policies and practices can effectively help to pursue adequate school careers which help bring about optimum use of migrants' talents?

- What are effective (preventive) interventions to oppose drop out in general and drop out by migrants specifically? What are effective second chance strategies?
- What policies and practices can ensure good learning environments and school responsiveness to cultural diversity (policies and practices connected with teachers, programmes, curriculum and/or pedagogy, peer students)?
- What kind of evaluation and monitoring tools may enhance the effectiveness of policies and practices as mentioned above?
- What kind of strategies might help manage the balance between central government, local government and autonomous schools and school boards?

Timeline

- Agreement on the terms of reference and on expert(s) to be appointed: January 2009;
- Visit by the fact finding team 2-6 February 2009;
- Policy review visit 11-15 May 2009
- Submission of the draft report / country note: June/July 2009;
- Comment on the draft report / country note: 3 weeks after reception;
- Finalisation of (draft) report / country note by OECD: 2 weeks after reception of comments;
- The Netherlands validate the country report: 2 weeks after having received final version from OECD.

NOTES

16 Migrants: persons of whose parents at least one was born in a foreign country.

17 Antillean: from the Dutch Antilles and/or Aruba.

18 Asia with the exception of Japan and Indonesia.

19 CITO, SSB.

20 Not counting students studying only part-time.

21 (Among others:) *Jaarrapport Integratie* 2007, p. 112.

ANNEX B: POLICY REVIEW VISIT OF THE NETHERLANDS

Programme for OECD Fact-finding Mission 2-6 February 2009

Monday 2 February

Meetings at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Hague:

- **15.00-15.25 Kickoff-meeting (1) with Liesbeth van Welie (national coordinator), Marcel Smits van Waesberghe (deputy director, Knowledge Directorate; member of Education Policy Committee), Anneke Boot (Dutch member of CERI Governing Board) and other officials of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Hans Stegeman (member of Education Policy Committee)**
  - After a word of welcome, introductions and an exchange of logistical information, the delegation and the ministry officials will briefly discuss set-up, scope and character of the fact finding mission. Also, first observations on policy, practice and developments in the Netherlands, concerning Migrant Education, will be exchanged.
- **15.30-16.25 Meeting with Lex Herweijer, author of the Country Background Report**
  - Mr Herweijer will inform the delegation on the (research) process leading up to the Country Background Report and draw attention to some of its findings. The delegation will present its own observations concerning the report and its findings and put forward points which it would wish to see elaborated on.
- **16.30-17.25 Meeting with Maurice Crul, researcher, University of Amsterdam**
  - Mr Crul will inform the delegation on his research work and the views and conclusions following from it. Among these may be recent views on the position of the second generation of migrants in the Netherlands. Added to these, suggestions for policy advice may be discussed. The delegation will exchange its own observations with Mr Crul and put forward points which it would wish to see elaborated on.
- **17.30-18.00 Kickoff-meeting (2) with Ms Daniëlle Ternatus and Mr Hüseyin Öztürk from the Ministry "of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration"**
  - Ms Ternatus and Mr Öztürk will introduce the position, structure and role of the Ministry of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration". In this respect, elements of integration vs segregation will be discussed. Attention will be given to the concept of neighbourhood development and to the relation between housing and social-economic disadvantage. The delegation will indicate on which points it would wish to receive additional information.
- **18.00-18.30 meeting with Ms Sigrid van der Laan and other official(s) from the Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs**
  - Ms Van der Laan will inform the delegation on the process leading up to the OECD-report "Jobs for Immigrants, Labour Market Integration in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Portugal" (2008) and draw attention to some of its findings, particularly those which are pertinent to (the relationship between) education and migrant participation on the labour market. The delegation will comment on the report and indicate how its findings will be utilized for the review on Migrant Education.

Tuesday 3 February

Meetings in Rotterdam (1: Municipality):

- **8.00-9.00 Meeting with Roy Geurs, Head of the Department "Youth, Education and Society" of the Municipality of Rotterdam, as well as with other officials**
  - Mr Geurs will introduce the policy of the Municipality of Rotterdam concerning education to migrant students in primary, secondary and vocational education. Attention will be given to factors leading to policy success as well as causes for policy failure. Attention, too, will be given to

aspects of governance (Ministry, municipality, neighbourhood, school autonomy, parents' participation). The delegation will ask questions for elucidation.

- **9.00-10.30 Visit to early childhood education and care facility at school for primary education "Duo 2002", meetings with Ms Mirjam Dries, other staff members, pupils**
  - Ms Dries will present the delegation with an insight in everyday-practice of early childhood education and care. The delegation will meet with and interview teachers, children and parents.

- **10.30-12.00 Visit to Al Ghazali school for primary education (Islamic), meetings with Mr Steef van der Horst, other staff members, pupils**
  - Mr van der Horst will present the delegation with an insight in everyday-practice of the Al Ghazali school. The delegation will meet with and interview teachers, children and parents.

Meetings in Rotterdam (2: INHolland university of applied sciences)

- **12.00-13.00 Meeting, over lunch, with Mr Geert Dales, president of INHolland university of applied sciences, and Mr Peter Peeters, senior policy adviser**
  - Mr Dales will introduce his viewpoints as president of a major institution for higher education. Specific attention will be given to the transition of migrant students from senior secondary education and from medium vocational education to higher education, as well as to their subsequent career. Attention may also be given to INHolland's teacher training facilities and how these prepare (future) teachers for a multicultural school environment. The delegation will respond to Mr Dales' introduction.

Meetings at centralised location (SARDES office), Utrecht:

- **14.00-14.55 meeting with representatives of SARDES research institute (Mr Anton Nijssen, director; Mr Anne Luc van der Vegt; Mr Kees Broekhof; Mr Jeroen Aarssen; Mr Sjak Rutten)**
  - The experts from SARDES will go into their experience with evaluating the implementation of early childhood programmes in primary education (early childhood education and care). Problems concerning the implementation will be discussed, as well as (possible) solutions. The experts will also discuss research and programmes aimed at combating linguistic back-lag. The delegation will discuss these items with the experts, specifically to find out what kind of actions and programmes are successful, which actions and programmes are not and what may be causes of either success or failure

- **15.00-15.30 meeting with representatives from ECHO, knowledge centre on migrants in tertiary education (Ms Mary Tupan, director)**
  - Ms Tupan will introduce ECHO and its work, specifically addressing ECHO's work on combating drop-out of migrants students in higher education. Transition from secondary education and from medium vocational education to higher education will be addressed, as well as ECHO's efforts to break out of the paradigm of deficiency thinking and to promote a study climate combining diversity and excellence. The delegation will discuss with Ms Tupan on these themes and ask specific questions on the various points.

- **15.35-16.15 Meeting with representatives of Forum, Institute for Multicultural Development (Mr Zeki Arslan, coordinator for education, Ms Annet Hermans), and from parents (Ouders en Coo: Ms Gerda Valstar & Mr Harry van der Molen, Platform Allochtone Ouders: Ms Houriya Abbou, Ms Malika Quamar, Mr Hakem Elahi, Ms Letty Cana)[22]**
  - Mr Arslan will introduce Forum's work on promoting and developing elements for multicultural education. Ms Valstar and Mr van der Molen will discuss the role of parents, specifically in relation to multicultural education. Ms Hermans and representatives from the Platform for Migrant Parents will speak on their experiences concerning integration and segregation in schools, as well as on possibilities and risks in connection with these. The delegation will discuss these points with Mr Arslan and the parents' representatives and ask further questions for elucidation.

- **17.00-17.40 Meeting with director of educational support institute APS[23]: Mr Boudewijn van Velzen, Mr Dolf Hautvast**
  - Mr Van Velzen and Mr Hautvast will introduce the work of APS on facilitating and developing migrant education. They will specifically discuss the work on "the culture-in-between", which aims at capacity-building on dealing with codes and expectations from different cultures. The delegation

will discuss these themes with Mr van Velzen and Mr Hautvast and ask further questions for elucidation.

- **17.45-18.25 Meeting with representatives from educational support institute KPC[24] (Mr Thomas Landsman, Mr Hans Burgmans)**
  - Mr Burgmans and Mr Landsman will introduce the work of KPC on facilitating and developing migrant education. They will specifically discuss the KPC's work on "a safe school environment" as well as capacity-building aimed at involving parents in school governance and practice. The delegation will discuss these themes with Mr Burgmans and Mr Landsman and ask further questions for elucidation.

- **18.30-19.10 Meeting with representatives from LOWAN Schools – schools accommodating asylum-seekers and other newcomers (***Ms Annet Jansen – scheduling problem; this meeting may have to be rearranged***)**
  - Ms Jansen will introduce policy and practice concerning, among other things, introductory classes ("schakelklassen") for asylum-seekers and other newcomers in education. Differences with "regular" education will appear. Ms Jansen and the delegation will discuss the possibility to visit a LOWAN-school during the delegation's visit. Due to scheduling problems this could not be arranged in advance.

- **19.15-19.55 Meeting with representative of CPS (Mr Jan Smolenaars, managing consultant)[25]**
  - Mr Smolenaars will introduce the work of CPS on facilitating and developing migrant education. He will specifically deal with the position of school management and school managers in preparing schools and school organisations for new paradigms of migrant education. The delegation will discuss these themes with Mr Smolenaars and ask further questions for elucidation.

Wednesday 4 February

Meetings at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Hague:

- **8.00-8.55 Meeting with Ms Rubina Boasman and Mr Jo Scheeren from "Education labour market" (Sectorbestuur Onderwijsarbeidsmarkt, SBO)**
  - Ms Boasman and Mr Scheeren will inform the delegation on the role played by SBO as a "broker" of knowledge on multicultural teaching and more specifically on the role SBO plays to help increase the proportion of teachers with a migrant background. Also capacity building for multicultural education will be addressed. The delegation will discuss these themes with Ms Boasman and Mr Scheeren and ask further questions for elucidation.

- **9.00-9.55 Meeting with representatives of local government umbrella organisations (VNG: Ms Elly Dekker; NICIS Institute: Head of the Institute Mr Dave van Ooijen, Mr Wim Hafkamp)[26]**
  - Ms Dekker, Mr Van Ooijen and Mr Hafkamp will inform the delegation on urban policies which address migrants and migrant education. Examples of both successes and failures may be mentioned. The role of knowledge and evidence will be discussed, specifically with regard to the role of NICI, which operates as a knowledge centre for large cities. The delegation will respond to these topics and ask further questions.

- **10.00-10.55 Meeting with representatives of School Boards (VBS[27]: Director Mr Simon Steen, Mr Peter Warnders, Mr Marco Matthijsen; Besturenraad[28]: Ms Helma van Schie; "Vereniging voor Openbaar Onderwijs"[29]: Mr Rein van Dijk, senior policy adviser)**
  - Ms Van Schie, Mr Steen, Mr Warnders, Mr Matthijsen and Mr Van Dijk represent a large proportion of school boards (both public and private) in the Netherlands. Their three organisations are central stakeholders within the system of educational governance in the Netherlands. Discussion may include themes such as "freedom of education", free school choice, school autonomy – in relation to migrant education. The delegation will discuss these themes with the representatives of the School Boards and ask questions to gain further insights.

- **11.05-12.00 Representatives of Teachers Unions (AOB[30]: Mr Wouter van der Schaaf, senior policy adviser; CNV Onderwijs[31] :Mr John van den Groenendal, Mr Gerben Horst)**

- Mr Van der Schaaf, Mr van den Groenendal and Mr Horst represent the major teacher unions in the Netherlands. They therefore represent major stakeholders within the educational field. Discussion may include themes such as the teachers' labour market, the proportion and position of teachers with a migrant background, the position of teachers in a multicultural educational environment. The delegation will discuss these themes with the Unions' representatives and ask questions to gain further insights.

- **12.05-13.00 Meeting with representatives from the** *PO-Raad (to be confirmed)*[32]; **the VO-Raad[33]: Mr Kars Veling; the MBO-Raad[34]: Ms Marieke Weemaes**
  - Ms Weemaes and the other representatives of the Councils represent the umbrella organisations of schools for primary, secondary and medium vocational education. They play a crucial role in the shaping and implementing of educational policy in schools. The discussion may include themes such as improving linguistic and arithmetic outcomes, the significance and interdependence of both school examinations and central examinations, assessment tests and the prevention of drop-out. The delegation will discuss these themes with the Councils' representatives and ask further questions.

Meetings and visits in Amsterdam:

- **14.00-15.30 Visit to Kingma School for Special (Secondary) Education, meeting with Mr Wim van Oosten, other staff members, pupils**
  - Mr Van Oosten will inform the delegation on the work of the Kingma School, which is described in the schools' presentation as follows: Because of complex migrant problems, as in so many other big cities, the Kingma school is especially known for its progressive research from an educational point of view. Lots of boys and girls who cannot meet with the standards of the native population simply fail to attend ordinary secondary schools. Most of the time there is an enormous cultural deprivation which shows in language acquisition and in teaching. The pupils run the risk of becoming the drop-outs schools cannot handle anymore. What is lacking is sufficient control and support, subjects at school they do understand, more practical oriented educational programs. The Kingma school's public view is that it can fill the gap and can take up the challenge.
  - The delegation may wish to meet with staff members, pupils, parents and ask questions for further elucidation.

- **15.30-17.00 Visit to IPABO teacher training institute, meeting with school leadership – Mr Henk Tor, secretary to the Governing Board, other staff members, students**
  - Mr Tor will introduce the philosophy and practice of IPABO, where teacher training takes place within a context of three religious traditions (Protestant, Catholic, Muslim). Training of teachers at IPABO gives a central place to interreligious practice in schools of primary education. The delegation will discuss these themes with Mr Tor as well as with other staff members and students. The delegation will ask further questions.

- **17.00-18.00 Meeting with Mr Guido Walraven, director, Ms Mickelle Haest and Mr Jan Tito ("Knowledge Centre on Mixed Schools", Kenniscentrum Gemengde Scholen)**
  - Mr Walraven will present the principles and activities of the knowledge centre. Special attention will be given to ways in which knowledge may support efforts to lessen segregation n edcuation as a whole and within specific schools. The role of school boards, parents and teachers will be discussed. The delegation will respond on these themes and ask questions for further elucidation.

- **18.00–19.00 Meeting with representative from SLO[35], Ms Annette Thijs**
  - Ms Thijs will inform the delegation on the SLO's work on citizenship, as well as on related themes concerning religious education and education concerning memory and celebrating. This information will be connected to the SLO's work on curriculum development. The work's significance and relevance for school practice will be discussed. The delegation will discuss these themes with Ms Thijs en ask further questions.

Thursday 5 February

Meetings in Rotterdam (3. Municipality):

- **8.00-10.00 Visit to Wolfert van Borselen secondary college, meeting with Mr Rob Fens, principal, other staff members, pupils**

- Mr Fens and other staff members will introduce the delegation to the multilingual and multicultural practice of education at the Wolfert van Borselen college. The delegation will see elements of educational practice at the college and meet with students. The delegation will discuss these themes and about school culture at the Wolfert van Borselen College with Mr Fens, the other staff members and the students and ask further questions for elucidation.

- **10.00-12.00 Visit to Albeda ROC, meeting with school leadership, other staff members, pupils, students**

- **13.00-14.30** (Probably visit to Nova College, The Hague. Nova College is a branch of the larger "Johan de Witt College. Nova College specifically accommodates migrants who have recently come to the Netherlands. It is the intention to visit the school and have meetings with its director, other staff members and students)

(Delegation prepares the conclusions to be presented on Friday)

Friday 6 February

Meetings at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, The Hague:

- **9.00-10.25 Meeting with Mr Dick Takkenberg (Statistics Netherlands) and statistical experts from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science**
  - During the meeting, the delegation will briefly resume the findings from the visits, focussing on quantitative and statistical questions related to these findings. The experts and the delegation will discuss the ways and methods to realize adequate statistical input for the review process and for the country note in special, as well as the possibilities to make use of existing statistical material.

- **10.30-11.30 Meetings with:**
  - **Ms José Lazeroms, Director-General for Primary and Secondary Education**
  - **Mr Ron Minnée, Deputy Director-General for Vocational and Higher Education**
  - **National Coordinator and National Steering Group**[36]

  - The directors-general will welcome the delegation to the ministry once again and state the ministry's expectations concerning the review process. The delegation will briefly resume the findings of the previous days' visits, as well as indicate potentials and weaknesses to be deduced from these findings. In the ensuing discussion, the directors general and the delegation will look forward to the policy visit in May and identify policy themes – as well as related stakeholders – which may be addressed during this next visit and in the framework of the country note. A first discussion of possible policy recommendations may conclude the meeting.

- **11.40-12.30 Discussion of Final Terms of Reference with National Coordinator and National Steering Group**
  - The delegation, the national coordinator and members of the national steering group will discuss and establish the final terms of reference for the review of the Netherlands, as well as discuss which international expert(s) to engage in the process.

- **12.05-12.30 First preparations of the Policy Mission (May 2009)**
  - The national coordinator and the delegation will make first arrangements for meetings with stakeholders during the policy visit on May 11-15.

Programme for the OECD Policy Review Visit 12–13 May 2009

Tuesday 12 May

Morning (The Hague):

- 9.00-9.50 Senior executive of a Major Educational Stakeholders' Organisation **(Mr Mark Weekenborg, Primary Education Council)**
- 10.00-10.50 Meeting with teacher unions' representatives (AOB **Ms J. van Woerden**, CNV Onderwijs **(Ms Francis Huisman, Mr Gerben Horst)**, school leaders' associations' representatives (AVS **(Mr Roelf Willemstein)**, CNV Schoolleiders **Mr Harry Blume**)

- 11.00-11.50 Meeting with parents' associations' representatives (Ouders en COO **(Ms Gerda Valstar, Mr Harry van der Molen)**, Platform Allochtone Ouders **(Mr Zeki Arslan, Ms Meral Nijenhuis, Ms Annet Hermans)**
- 12.10-13.00 Education Inspectorate **(Leon Henkens, Chief Inspector Primary Education, Anne Bert Dijkstra, Inspector)**
- 13.00-13.50 Association of Dutch Municipalities (VNG) **(Mr Siewert Pilon, Department Head for Education, Care and Welfare)**

Afternoon (Amsterdam):

- **TIES Conference (Mr Maurice Crul, researcher, University of Amsterdam)**

Wednesday 13 May

Morning (The Hague):

- 10.00-11.00 Experts on teacher training / teacher curriculum **(Mr Frank Jansma, Foundation for Professional Quality of Teachers**, **Ms Maaike Hajer, Utrecht Teacher Training College)**
- 11.00-11.30 Director for Youth, Education and Care **(Mr Fons Dingelstad)**
- 12.00-13.00 Executive of Private School Board **(Mr Peter Warnders, representative of VBS)**

13.00 - 13.30 **Mr Koos van der Steenhoven, Secretary-General (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science) and Ms José Lazeroms, Director-General for Primary and Secondary Education (Ministry of Education, Culture and Science)**

Afternoon (The Hague):

- 14.00-15.00 Education Advisory Council **(Mr Paul Zoontjens, Council Member)**
- 15.00-16.00 Executive Representatives Ministries of Employment (SZW) **(Ms Renske Jongsma)**, Integration (WWI) and Youth (J&G) **(Ms Cynthia van Rijbroek)**
- 16.00-17.00 Director for Primary Education **(Mr René Bagchus)**
- 17.00-18.00 Department head Secondary Education **(Mr Eric Stokkink)**

Thursday 14 May

Morning (Amsterdam):

- 9.00-12.00 *Expert Meeting* with prominent Researchers from various institutes, organized by TIER Institute **(**In alphabetical order: **Mr Lex Borghans, Mr Roel Bosker, Mr Reyn van Ewijk, Mr Joop Hartog, Mr Hessel Oosterbeek, Mr Herman v.d. Werfhorst, Mr Aslan Zorlu)**

Afternoon (The Hague):

- 13.00-14.00 Deputy Director General for Higher Education, Vocational Education and Emancipation **(Mr Ron Minnée)**
- 15.30-16.30 Director of Vocational and Adult Education **(Ms Jeannette Noordijk)**
- 16.30-18.00 Director of Unit to Combat School Drop-out **(Mr Fred Voncken)**

Friday 15 May

Morning (Rotterdam):

- 9.30–10.30 Meeting with **Mr Leonard Geluk**, Education Councillor / Alderman) of Rotterdam
- 11.00-12.30 President of a Major Centre for Vocational Education **(Mr Piet Boekhoud, Albeda College)**

Afternoon (The Hague):

- 14.00-15.00 Presentation of OECD findings to Steering Group
- 15.00-15.30 Wrap-up Meeting

NOTES

[22] "Ouders en Coo" is the Parents' Association. "Platform Allochtone Ouders" is the Platform for Migrant Parents.

[23] The APS is the "Algemeen Pedagogisch Studiecentrum" (General Pedagogical Knowledge Centre).

[24] The KPC is the "Katholiek Pedagogisch Centrum" (Catholic Pedagogical Centre).

[25] The CPS is the "Christelijk Pedagogisch Studiecentrum" (Protestant Pedagogical Knowledge Centre).

[26] VNG is: "Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten" (Association of Dutch Municipalities); NICIS Institute is the Knowledge and Research Institute of the municipalities.

[27] VBS is the "Verenigde Bijzondere Scholen" (Association of Privately Administered Schools).

[28] The "Besturenraad" is the Association of Protestant-Christian School Boards.

[29] The "Vereniging voor Openbaar Onderwijs" is the Association of Publicly Administered Schools.

[30] AOB is the General Teachers' Union.

[31] OCNV is the Christian Teachers' Union.

[32] The PO-Raad is the "Primair Onderwijs Raad" (facilitates synergy between schools for primary education).

[33] The VO-Raad is the "Voortgezet Onderwijs Raad" (facilitates synergy between schools for secondary education).

[34] The MBO-Raad is the "Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs Raad" (facilitates synergy between schools for medium vocational education).

[35] The SLO is the "Stichting Leerplanontwikkeling" (Foundation for Curriculum Development).

[36] National Steering Group: Mr Sipke Boorsma (directorate Drop-out Prevention), Mr Cees Buis (directorate Primary Education), Ms Katie Hangelbroek (directorate Teachers), Lex Herweijer (The Netherlands' Institute for Social Research/SCP), Mr Coen de Jong (directorate Drop-out Prevention), Ms Janneke Koch (directorate Secondary Education), Ms Trinh Ngo (directorate Higher Education), Mr Hans Ruesink (directorate Teachers), Mr Aad van Tongeren (directorate Child Care), Mr Roy Tjoa (directorate Vocational Education), Ms Liesbeth van Welie (Chair; National Coordinator), Ms Marjan Zandbergen (directorate Youth, Education, Care).