

Making up the Gap

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Migrant Education in the Netherlands

Lex Herweijer



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Contents

Preface	7
Summary	9
1 Background of migrant pupils	9
2 Participation in education and educational achievement	10
3 Education policy for migrant pupils	13
1 Introduction	19
1.1 Review on migrant education	19
1.2 Structure of the Dutch education system	20
1.3 Freedom of education, free school choice and school autonomy	23
1.4 Financial accessibility of education	24
1.5 Definition of migrants	25
Annex to chapter 1	26
2 Background of migrant pupils	27
2.1 Number of non-Western migrants and migration motives	27
2.2 Concentration and segregation of non-Western migrants	32
2.3 Family background of migrant pupils	35
3 <i>Participation and learning outcomes</i>	40
3.1 Early childhood education and care	40
3.2 Differentiation and segregation in primary education	41
3.3 Achievement level in primary education	44
3.4 Educational career in secondary education	49
3.5 Participation in higher education	56
3.6 Achievement of first and second-generation migrants	59
3.7 Gender disparity among migrant pupils and students	61
3.8 Success factors and constraining factors	64
4 <i>School policies and practices</i>	68
4.1 School choice, admission and financial accessibility	68
4.2 Induction programmes for newly arrived migrants	71
4.3 Testing and monitoring of achievements	71
4.4 Evaluation of teachers and teaching practices	73
4.5 Outreach to parents	74
4.6 Cooperation with other schools and agencies outside education	74
4.7 Language policy and textbooks	76

4.8	Teachers and teacher training	79
4.9	Student guidance and counselling	80
5	<i>Government policy and approaches</i>	82
5.1	National integration policies	82
5.2	Policy approach to immigrant students	84
5.3	Agencies involved in educational policies for migrant students	85
5.4	Programmes for disadvantaged pupils supported by national funding	85
5.5	Funding and funding strategies	87
5.6	Evaluation of interventions	90
5.7	Comprehensive policies	94
	Annex to chapter 5	97
	<i>References</i>	98
	<i>Publications of the SCP in English</i>	103

Preface

The integration of non-Western migrants into Dutch society is not without its problems. Many non-Western migrants are in a weak position in terms of income, employment and housing, and are at a disadvantage compared with the indigenous population. There are also more problems with crime among non-Western migrants than in the native population. Set against this, however, is a growing group of non-Western migrants who do integrate successfully into Dutch society. Education and training play a key role in this process.

A great deal of policy has been implemented in the Netherlands in recent decades aimed at improving the educational achievement of the growing number of students with a non-Western background. This report describes the position of young people with a non-Western background in the Dutch education system. How do pupils from this group perform in primary school? What is the position as regards their participation in secondary and higher education? What about school dropout? Do young members of non-Western ethnic minorities succeed in making up the gap relative to their native Dutch peers? The report also gives a description of Dutch education policy for students and pupils with a non-Western background. How does the Dutch education system deal with the influx of non-Western migrant students, and what policy does the government pursue in order to improve the educational achievement of these students? What can be said about the effects of that policy?

The education of non-Western migrants is receiving special attention in many European countries. In 2008-2009, the OECD is conducting a thematic review of migrant education in six European countries, including the Netherlands. At the request of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP wrote a Country Background Report on migrant education in the Netherlands for this review. The present report is an adapted version of that Background Report. In publishing it in adapted form, SCP is seeking to make the information in the Country Background Report accessible to a wider international readership. The contents and conclusions of this report do not differ from those of the earlier Country Background Report.

Prof. Paul Schnabel
Director, Netherlands Institute for Social Research/SCP

Summary

The number of young people in the Netherlands with a non-Western background has increased considerably over recent decades. This report sketches an outline of the educational careers of young migrants in the Dutch education system. In addition, it presents a broad outline of Dutch education policy with regard to migrant pupils and students.

1 Background of migrant pupils

Demographic data

In 2008 16% of young people (aged 0-20 years) in the Netherlands were migrants from non-Western countries. The four major groups of non-Western migrants in the Netherlands (Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, Antilleans), represent roughly 70% of young people from non-Western ethnic minorities. In the youngest age group (0-10 years), the vast majority of children from these four main groups were born and raised in the Netherlands (second generation). Among teenagers the percentages of second-generation migrants are lower, though have also increased in recent years.

Non-Western migrants tend to live in the west of the Netherlands, especially in the major cities, where they often live in deprived areas. The proportion of non-Western ethnic minorities in the large cities has risen sharply in recent decades, partly as a result of the exodus of the indigenous population from the cities. More than one in three inhabitants of the three biggest cities is of non-Western origin, and among the young this proportion is even higher (50%).

Socioeconomic position of non-Western migrants

The socioeconomic position of non-Western migrant families is generally weaker than that of native Dutch families. The average family income is considerably lower than that of native households and the income of migrant households much more often lies below the poverty line. The educational level of migrant parents – especially those of Turkish and Moroccan origin – is also well below that of indigenous parents, and a substantial proportion of Turkish and Moroccan parents moreover have problems with speaking, reading and writing Dutch. As a corollary to their low educational level, the participation in paid employment by Turkish and Moroccan parents is considerably lower than among native Dutch parents. Those Turkish and Moroccan parents who are in paid employment are often employed in unskilled or low-skilled jobs. A high proportion of Antillean and Surinamese pupils grow up in a single-parent family.

Considerable language disadvantage in primary education

At the start of their primary education, pupils from non-Western migrant groups already lag a long way behind native Dutch pupils, especially in the area of language. Since the difference in initial level persists as the primary school career progresses, at the end of primary education Turkish, Moroccan and Antillean pupils have a language disadvantage of approximately two years. The language disadvantage of Surinamese pupils is less than that of the other three major non-Western ethnic minority groups. The differences are much smaller when it comes to arithmetic: the disadvantage at the end of primary education translates into roughly half a school year. In addition to their lower achievement level in primary education, migrant pupils are also more often referred to special education

The low socioeconomic status of non-Western migrants is a key reason for the often poor educational achievement of their children, though this weak achievement cannot be attributed to this entirely; the high percentage of single-parent families in some migrant groups is also a risk factor.

Improvement in achievements in primary education

While migrant pupils lag a considerable way behind their native peers, then, they have reduced the gap since the late 1980s. The arithmetic skills of migrant pupils have shown particular improvement, but they have also made progress on the language front. The disadvantage of Turkish and Moroccan pupils in the final year of primary school in arithmetic has improved by around 50%, and in language by around 33-45%. The achievements of Surinamese and Antillean children have also improved, though the progress of Antillean pupils has not been so marked.

Segregation in primary education reinforced by free school choice

As a result of the high proportion of migrants in the major cities in the Netherlands, many schools in the major cities have a student population consisting mainly of migrant pupils. The segregation between native Dutch and migrant pupils is reinforced by the system of free school choice, which enables parents to send their children to a school outside their own residential area. Nearly 40% of the primary schools in Amsterdam and Rotterdam have a pupil population that consists of over 80% pupils of non-Western origin. Research has demonstrated that the disadvantage of these 'ethnic primary schools' (i.e. the disadvantage caused by having many fellow-pupils from migrant groups) in terms of learning achievement is not great in primary education, and has moreover weakened in recent years.

Migrant pupils underrepresented in the highest tracks of secondary education

Students in secondary education are distributed over different levels. Children of non-Western origin are found much more frequently at the lower levels, and are underrepresented in the two highest tracks, which provide direct access to higher

education. Whereas 47% of native Dutch pupils follow the two highest tracks, the figure for Turks and Moroccans is less than half this (22%). Students of Surinamese and Antillean origin occupy a midway position, with between 30% and 32% participating in these tracks.

The distribution across different levels in secondary education is based on the recommendation given by primary schools and on the score in the CITO test that is held in the last grade of most primary schools. In line with their lower results in this test, migrant pupils generally receive a lower recommendation than native Dutch pupils. National data show that migrant pupils are slightly more often than native Dutch pupils given a recommendation below their CITO test achievement level. These differences are, however, more or less cancelled out by the actual school choice which follows the recommendation.

More repeat years and higher drop-out rates among migrant students in secondary education

In addition to being overrepresented in the lower educational tracks in secondary education, migrant students also more often repeat years than native Dutch pupils. Moreover, migrant students also have much higher drop-out rates than native Dutch students at the different levels of secondary education. As a result, the percentage of early school-leavers in the 15-24 age group in 2006 was much higher among non-Western migrants (16.8%) than among native Dutch students (11.2%).

Only limited deferral of selection in secondary education

In secondary schools with transitional classes, selection for the different educational levels can be deferred to the second or, occasionally, the third year of secondary education. Although the number of pupils who begin secondary education in transitional classes increased in the 1990s, the deferral is in fact only limited. The number of schools where all levels of secondary education are offered is small and there is a still marked segregation between the provision of pre-vocational programmes on the one hand and the two highest tracks on the other. As a consequence, potential late developers run the risk of being locked into a programme that does not do justice to their abilities in the slightly longer term.

Accumulation of qualifications and the vocational route are corrections to early selection

One way of correcting the early selection in secondary education is through 'accumulation of programmes' in secondary education, enabling students to move up to a higher level of secondary education after completing a programme at a lower level. This accumulation of secondary qualifications lost a lot of popularity in the 1990s, but in recent years it has been increasing again. Migrant students often make use of this possibility to move up through the general secondary education system. Students who were initially selected for the lower (pre-vocational) tracks in secondary education may also move up to higher professional education after completing

senior vocational education. This alternative route to higher education via senior vocational education constitutes a second correction to the early selection in secondary education. The drawback is that students who qualify for higher education via the vocational route lag behind in arithmetic and language skills.

Growing participation by migrants in higher education

Although proportionally few non-Western migrant secondary school students are selected for tracks that provide direct access to higher education (*havo/vwo*), the number of migrant students in higher education has increased markedly in the last decade. Nearly all migrant *havo/vwo* graduates go on to higher education. Moreover, many migrant students make use of the alternative route to higher education via senior vocational education. In 2006 about 50% of Turkish, Moroccan and Surinamese students in higher professional education had come through the secondary vocational route, whereas the figure among native Dutch students was much lower (about 30%).

Migrant students are less successful in higher education

Non-Western migrant students are less successful in higher education than native Dutch students; they more often experience delays or even drop out without obtaining a degree. Whereas around 70-73% of native Dutch students graduate after seven years, only 50-55% of non-Western migrant students graduate in the same period. Differences in preliminary training (academic route versus vocational route) only partly account for these differences. While it is true that students who qualify for higher education via the vocational route are less successful in terms of graduation and drop-out than students who qualify via the academic secondary tracks, even when there is no difference in preliminary training migrant students are still less successful than native Dutch students.

Second-generation migrant pupils are generally more successful than the first generation

Migrant pupils and students from the second generation (born and raised in the Netherlands) are generally more successful in their educational achievement than those from the first generation. The increase of the number of second-generation migrants will thus have a positive impact on the educational achievements of migrant pupils. Despite this, the gap between second-generation migrants pupils and native Dutch students is still wide.

Migrant girls and young women are more successful than boys and young men

Girls and young women from migrant groups are more successful in education than boys and young men. In secondary education girls are more often found in the highest tracks, while the drop-out rates among boys are higher than for girls. In addition, migrant boys are more often referred to special education than girls. In higher education, too, young women from the migrant groups have a lead over

young men. A higher percentage of young women from migrant groups embark on higher education courses, and they are moreover more successful in higher education than young men from these groups. Native Dutch boys and young men also lag behind their female counterparts, but in some respects (drop-out) the gap is deeper in the migrant groups than in the native population.

3 Education policy for migrant pupils

Government policy has shifted towards general disadvantage policy

Providing equal opportunities is a key objective of Dutch education policy. A number of arrangements are in place aimed at removing financial obstacles and guaranteeing the accessibility of education for children from low-income families (free access up to the age of 18 years, grants for low-income families to cover study costs, study finance from the age of 18 years to cover tuition fees and other costs). In addition, there are policies aimed at improving the achievements of children from disadvantaged families. In recent years the ethnic background of pupils has become a less important criterion in these policies. In primary education the target group for disadvantage policy is now based exclusively on the education level of parents. In secondary education, too, the criterion of country of origin has been dropped. Secondary schools now receive disadvantage funding based on the number of students who live in deprived areas. The argument for seeking to deal with disadvantage in socioeconomic terms is that this is more in line with the actual disadvantage suffered.

Disadvantage policy in primary education: the weighting system

Dutch educational disadvantage policy focuses to a considerable extent on primary education. Since the 1980s a 'weighting system' has been in operation in primary education. In calculating the budget to which a school is entitled, pupils whose parents have a low or very low education level are assigned a greater weight. Spending on the weighting system amounted to EUR 314 million in 2008, about half of total government spending on educational disadvantage.

Given the universal nature of the weighting system, it is hard to determine the effectiveness of the additional funding. Since the prevalence of disadvantage in primary education initially did not appear to be reducing, doubts were cast on its effectiveness. These doubts were exacerbated by the finding that schools were not using the additional funding in a very focused way. Later on it transpired that the disadvantage of migrant pupils was after all gradually reducing. Firm statements on the effectiveness of the weighting system cannot be made, however. The abandonment of the criterion of country of origin has led to a shift of funding, away from schools with large numbers of migrants to schools with native Dutch disadvantaged pupils.

Effectiveness of preschool and early school programmes seems to be affected by implementation problems

In recent years preschool and early-school programmes have become an important focus area in the educational disadvantage policy for young children. The programmes are provided through collaboration between preschool playgroups and primary schools and begin in the preschool group when children are aged 2.5 years and continue during the first two years of primary school. By 2011, the aim is that all young children in the target group of the policy must have been reached by this initiative. Evaluations of preschool and early-school programmes in the Netherlands show a variable picture. Some evaluations of specific projects show modest positive outcomes, but large-scale research on nationally gathered data show only very limited effects.

Problems with the implementation of this policy may play a role. The goal of rapidly increasing the number of children reached by the programmes increases the risk that their implementation will be rushed and quality standards will not be met (e.g. two leaders per group, sufficient sessions per week, a continuous line between preschool and early-school phases). Another problem is that children from outside the target group also benefit from the provisions, leading to leakage of resources.

First experiences with induction classes in primary education are tentatively positive

The 'induction class' is an intervention that was introduced recently in primary education. Pupils with a language disadvantage are placed in a separate group and receive intensive language teaching for a full year in order to bring their language skills up to a pitch that enables them to be educated at a level that matches their capabilities. A variant of this is a class in which children spend an extra year at the end of primary school receiving additional teaching to prepare them better for the transition to secondary education. The intention is to increase the number of induction classes to around 600 in the coming years. First experiences with both variants are tentatively positive. Pupils in induction classes appear to make more progress than children in mainstream classes, while the performance level of children who spend an extra year in primary education is increasing, enabling them to transfer to a higher track of secondary education.

New policy aimed at combating and reducing segregation

Combating and reducing segregation between native Dutch and ethnic minority pupils is another policy focus in migrant education. Since 2006 school boards, municipal authorities and childcare providers have been required to consult with each other with a view to achieving a more balanced distribution of pupils across schools. The number of local authorities developing policy in this area has increased since the introduction of this legal requirement. In addition, the government is supporting pilots in seven cities intended to identify effective interventions at a local level to reduce segregation. It is still too early to observe the effects of this new policy at the level of pupils and schools.

In the past, agreements were made between school boards in some municipalities on a maximum percentage of ethnic-minority pupils per school. In some cases these policies were initially successful, but foundered after a few years. In other cases there were no visible effects. The various parties involved (parents, schools, school boards) regard segregation as undesirable, but have difficulty making the necessary concessions and accepting constraints with regard to free school choice and school admission policies.

Disadvantage funding in secondary education

In terms of spending, disadvantage policy in secondary education is of minor importance (EUR 72 million in 2008). In 2007 the disadvantage funding based on ethnic background of students was replaced by funding on the basis of the number of students who live in deprived areas. The new criterion for funding soon proved too unfocused, since some schools with a mainly privileged student population received substantial additional funding on the basis of the area where those students lived. There is no research evidence to support the effectiveness of disadvantage funding in secondary education.

Combating school drop-out

Reducing school drop-out by 50% in 2012 is a key policy priority in secondary education. This policy applies to all students in secondary education irrespective of social background or ethnic origin, but the high drop-out rates among migrant students mean that the policy is of particular relevance for them. In order to reduce drop-out rates, attention is being given among other things to creating a smoother transition between the successive phases of secondary education, improving student and career guidance, better care through collaboration between education establishments and other agencies. The available data indicate that progress has been made in recent years. Between 2004/05 and 2007/08 the number of school drop-outs decreased from 60,500 to 48,800 (the latter figure corresponds to approximately 25% of an educational cohort).

In 2008 covenants were signed between the government and all 39 regional partnerships in order to further reduce the number of school drop-outs. A new element included in the covenants is a performance incentive for schools (financial bonus). An evaluation of covenants signed with fourteen forerunner regions found no effect of this incentive. However, since the design of the new covenants differs from the covenants with the fourteen forerunner regions, the new covenants cannot be labelled ineffective in advance.

Student support in higher education

In order to increase the number of migrant students entering higher education and to enhance their study achievements, in 2005 the Ministry of Education and 21 higher education institutions agreed a number of targets in this area.

Language policy: termination of funding of minority language teaching

For a long time Dutch primary schools provided teaching in the language of the country of origin for the main migrant groups. The objectives of this teaching changed over time. Initially it was aimed at maintaining contact with the country of origin; later on combating educational disadvantage and the independent cultural function of teaching minority languages were stressed. Given its constantly shifting objectives and the doubts about its effectiveness, the funding of teaching in the students' own language was terminated from 2004. The emphasis in language policy in primary education has now come to lie completely on learning Dutch. The induction classes that were recently introduced in primary education are an example of this.

Recognition of diversity of cultural backgrounds

Intercultural education has been compulsory in Dutch primary schools since 1985. The objective was that pupils must learn to live alongside other population groups and that prejudice and discrimination had to be combated. In practice, intercultural education did not really get off the ground, partly because of the lack of common vision on what form intercultural education should take. Attention shifted in the 1990s towards combating disadvantage among migrant pupils.

Since 2006, the requirement to take account of cultural diversity in society has been placed in the broader context of the need to stimulate active citizenship and social integration. In primary and secondary education, a statutory requirement has been introduced to promote active citizenship and social integration. Pupils and students should have a knowledge of and make acquaintance with the different backgrounds and cultures of their peers. Most schools have developed a vision for the promotion of citizenship, but in terms of content this vision often goes no further than general formulations and global objectives. However, since the introduction of the statutory requirement to promote active citizenship, there has been an increase in the number of schools with a detailed vision and specific objectives in this area.

Increasing the involvement of parents

Parents from the migrant groups are generally more difficult to reach and less involved in the education of their children. This is partly because of a lack of knowledge and skills, as well as a deficient command of the Dutch language. The Dutch government is committed to increasing parental involvement, especially among parents from migrant groups. A special 'Ethnic Minority Parents Platform' has been created which takes initiatives to foster the involvement of migrant parents. In addition local platforms were set up in 30 large municipalities to promote activities designed to reach migrant parents at local level (e.g. home visits by teachers, parent rooms, parent information points in the school).

Cooperation with agencies outside education

To combat educational disadvantage, schools are increasingly cooperating with agencies outside education (welfare, social work, health care, youth care, police, cultural and/or sports associations). The purpose of this cooperation in extended schools is to offer pupils and students help where necessary with problems at school or in their home setting, as well as to promote their development by offering additional activities (culture, sport) with which they normally have little contact. In secondary education the help to students with problems is increasingly being provided by 'Care and Advice Teams' in which schools work together with agencies in other fields (youth care, police, etc.). The number of schools with a Care and Advice Team is increasing. By 2011 all secondary education facilities should have a Team in place.

Beneficial comprehensive policies

Some general educational policies are particularly beneficial to non-Western migrant students. Promoting transfer to higher education through the vocational education route is an example of this, as is providing opportunities for the accumulation of qualifications in secondary education. By offering a 'second chance' to students who were initially not selected for secondary education tracks that prepare for higher education, both options constitute a correction to the early selection in Dutch secondary education. Combating school drop-out is a third example of a beneficial general policy.

An issue that has recently moved higher up the policy agenda is the strengthening of the teaching of Dutch language and arithmetic. Reference levels are to be introduced which specify the minimum level that pupils and students ought to attain in both subject areas. Since migrant pupils and students often lag well behind their native peers, especially in Dutch language, the introduction of reference levels is of particular importance for them.

1 Introduction

1.1 Review on migrant education

Migrant education is an important issue in the Netherlands. As in many other European countries, the number of non-Western migrant pupils and students has increased steadily over recent decades. Although the vast majority of migrant pupils in Dutch education today were born and raised in the Netherlands, there is still a considerable participation and performance gap between non-Western migrant and native pupils and students. Since providing equal opportunities to pupils from different backgrounds is a key objective of Dutch education policy, a great deal of effort has been invested reducing the educational disadvantage of non-Western migrant pupils over recent decades.

The purpose of this report is to draw a picture of the educational careers of non-Western migrant pupils in Dutch education and to outline migrant education policy. This report is an adaptation of the Country Background Report on Migrant Education in the Netherlands that was prepared by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research | SCP for the 2008- 2009 OECD thematic review on migrant education. The aim of Country Background Reports is to provide facts and existing evaluative information on migrant education in the countries under review. The reports focus on three major areas: access, participation and learning outcomes. Data on the educational careers of migrants must be presented and policy issues in migrant education must be discussed.

The range of topics covered in this report is determined by the OECD guidelines for Country Background Reports. It therefore does not offer a full description and analysis of migrant education in the Netherlands. The main issues and topics are covered, however, except for the education of adult migrants (the ‘civic integration courses’ for newcomers).

Content of this report

This first chapter provides a short introduction to Dutch education for foreign readers. The structure of Dutch education and some other relevant characteristics are briefly discussed. The chapters that follow focus on demographic and socio-economic characteristics of migrants that are relevant for education (chapter 2), participation and achievement of migrant pupils and students (chapter 3), school policies and practices with regard to migrant education (chapter 4) and government approaches and migrant education policies (chapter 5).

1.2 Structure of the Dutch education system

Primary education

Primary education starts at the age of four and lasts eight years. Although education is compulsory from the age of five, virtually all four year-old children are enrolled in primary schools. Prior to this, preschool programmes are available for children from deprived backgrounds.

In addition to mainstream primary education there are various forms of education aimed at children with special needs (*special primary education* aimed at children in primary school age (4-12 years) with moderate learning difficulties and/or minor behavioural problems, and *special schools* aimed at children aged 4-18 years with physical, sensory or learning disabilities and children with serious behavioural difficulties). Admission to special primary education or to special schools entails a referral by an independent committee. Parents of children with an indication for special education can also opt to send their child to a mainstream school with support from additional facilities (personal budget system).

Secondary education: general and pre-vocational programmes

At the age of twelve pupils move over to secondary education. The secondary education system is divided into several tracks (figure 1.1). After the transitional class (*brugklas*) pupils are distributed across secondary education programmes at varying levels. The higher levels (senior general secondary education – *havo* – and pre-university education – *vwo*) last five or six years (including the transitional year) and provide direct access to higher education. The programmes at the lower levels (pre-vocational secondary education (*voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs* – *vmbo*) are shorter (four years including the transitional class) and prepare students for vocational training programmes in senior vocational education (*mbo*). Pre-vocational secondary education offers programmes at four levels:

- basic vocational track (*basisberoepsgerichte leerweg*)
- advanced vocational track (*kaderberoepsgerichte leerweg*)
- combined vocational-theoretical track (*gemengde leerweg*)
- theoretical track (*theoretische leerweg*)

Students that complete the highest level of pre-vocational education (theoretical track) may move-up to the second phase of senior general secondary education (*havo*), instead of transferring to senior vocational education (*mbo*). The weakest pupils in pre-vocational secondary education are eligible for extra support (*leerwegondersteuning*) when certain criteria are met (low achievement level at the end of primary education or emotional problems such as emotional instability or fear of failure). Schools are additionally funded for pupils that meet the criteria for *leerwegondersteuning*.

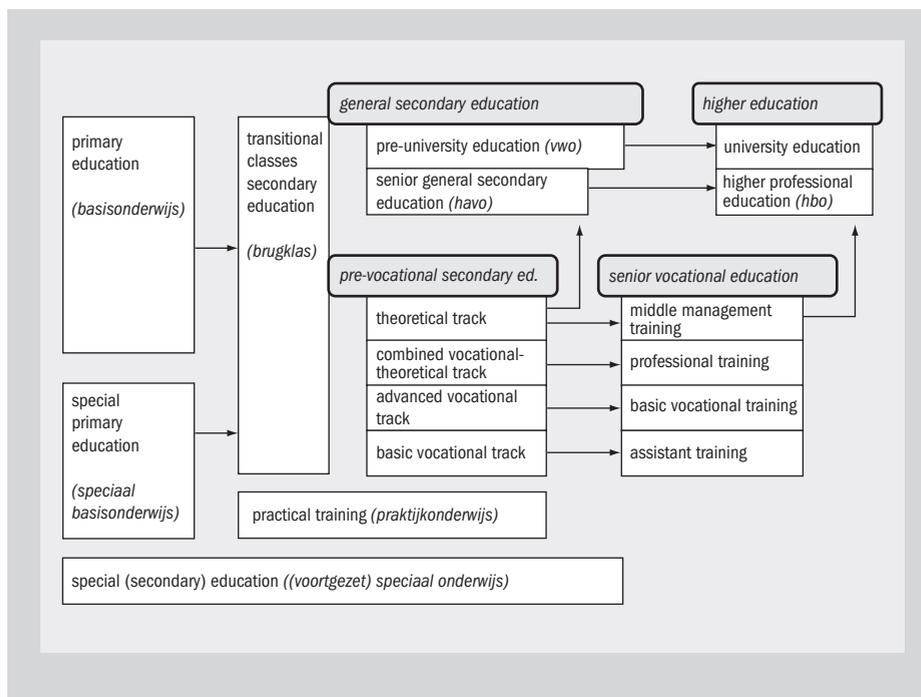
Besides the four pre-vocational tracks there is practical training (*praktijkonderwijs*) for pupils who for reasons of limited intellectual capacities are deemed unlikely to

obtain a qualification in pre-vocational education. Practical training prepares for labour market entry at a basic level.

As well as in primary education, special schools provide education for young people with special needs at secondary level.

Figure 1.1

Structure of Dutch education system (Dutch names in italics)



Senior vocational education

Senior vocational education (*middelbaar beroepsonderwijs – mbo*) provides programmes at four different levels:

- assistant level (level 1: *assistentenopleiding*)
- basic vocational training (level 2: *basisberoepsopleiding*)
- professional training (level 3: *vakopleidingen*)
- middle management training / specialist training (level 4: *middenkaderopleidingen, specialistenopleiding*).

At the lowest level programmes last one year, at the second level two or three years, while the programmes at the highest levels last three or four years.

There are two ‘pathways’ in senior vocational education: vocational training (*beroepsopleidende leerweg -bol*) where practical training takes up between 20% and 60% of the course, and day release (*beroepsbegeleidende leerweg -bbl*), comparable to appren-

ticeship) where practical training takes up more than 60% of the course. Senior vocational education prepares students for entry into the labour market. Students that complete a higher level programme may, however, also transfer to higher professional education.

Higher education

Dutch higher education has a dual structure and comprises higher professional education (*hoger beroepsonderwijs- hbo*) and university education (*wetenschappelijk onderwijs - wo*). In 2002 the bachelor/master system was introduced in Dutch higher education. Higher professional education provides bachelor programmes that last four years. At universities the bachelor programmes take three years; the subsequent university master programmes take one or two years. Bachelors from higher professional education may move up to a university master programme (in general a transition course is required for admission of *hbo* bachelors to university master programmes).

Annex I.1 shows the ISCED level codes for the various levels in Dutch education.

Compulsory education and minimum qualification standard

In Dutch education policy the ‘basic qualification’ is considered a minimum requirement for successful labour market entry. A basic-qualification is obtained by completing a programme in upper secondary education (senior general secondary education, pre-university education, senior vocational education level 2, 3 or 4, i.e. completed ISCED 3). Young people who leave education without a basic qualification are labelled early school-leavers.

Compulsory education in the Netherlands starts at the age of five, and, until some years ago, ended at the age of 16. In order to reduce early school leaving, with effect from 2007/08 the upper age limit of compulsory education has been raised from 16 to 18 years for young people without a basic qualification.

Right to employment or training (leerwerkrecht)

In addition, a new scheme (*leerwerkrecht*) will be introduced in the near future aimed at offering employment or training to young people aged up to 27 years who are not in education and also not in employment. Under the scheme, local authorities will be required to invest in integrating these young people into the employment process. The aim is to make them economically active and reduce their dependency on benefits. The scheme guarantees the right of young people to the offer of an appropriate job or training, but does not compel them to accept the offer, except in the case of young people on benefit, for whom acceptance of the offer will be mandatory.

1.3 Freedom of education, free school choice and school autonomy

Freedom of education

'Freedom of education' is one of the key features of Dutch education. Freedom of education is guaranteed under article 23 of the Constitution and implies the right to found schools and provide education with funding from public resources according to the same criteria as state schools (provided a sufficient number of pupils may be expected and there is no school of similar denomination available within a reasonable distance). Privately run (independent) schools often base their teaching on a religious or ideological belief or special educational philosophy. Independent schools have to meet the same quality standards as public (state) schools. The majority of schools (70-75%) in primary and secondary education are independent schools.

Free school choice

Free school choice is another major element of the Dutch education system. Free school choice is connected to the freedom of education. In principle, the choice of primary and secondary school is a free one, in that it is not dependent on catchment areas or school districts.

Admission of pupils

Public (state) schools are universally accessible, which means that in principle they must admit all pupils. Schools can however deviate from this rule when they are full. Independent schools can restrict the admission of pupils by imposing requirements based on their ideological or religious identity. In practice, however, the main strands in independent primary and secondary education (Roman Catholic and Protestant schools) operate largely as universally accessible primary schools which accept pupils from all religious and ideological milieus. Independent schools representing smaller strands and with a strongly religious or ideological profile occupy a different position, mainly or even exclusively attracting pupils (and parents) who feel at home with that profile. Examples are the orthodox Protestant and Islamic schools. Since segregation between native Dutch and migrant pupils is reinforced by free school choice, in some cities pilot projects have been started to encourage parents to send their children to a school in their neighbourhood.

Free school choice in primary and secondary education thus has its limits and is not a guarantee for admission to the preferred school. In practice, however, the majority of parents do not experience serious barriers and most pupils are admitted to the preferred school.

School choice and admission of pupils are discussed in further detail in chapter 4.

High degree of school autonomy

Traditionally decision-making in the Dutch education system is characterised by functional decentralisation. As a result Dutch schools enjoy a considerable degree of autonomy. The government sets the framework and boundary conditions

(educational structure, educational goals), but schools can make their own choices with regard to the organisation of education, choice of educational tools and books, recruitment of staff, etc.

In the last decade a further increase of school autonomy was one of the aims of the government's education policy. The idea behind this policy is that a large degree of autonomy enables schools to adapt to local conditions and to the diverse needs of their pupils. Block grant funding has for instance been introduced in secondary and primary education, in order to give schools more freedom in terms of spending.

According to an international OECD survey on decision-making in education, Dutch schools enjoy a large degree of autonomy in comparison with schools in many other countries (OECD 2008). As a consequence of this rather high degree of school autonomy, the government has limited scope to influence decision-making at school level, other than changing the framework or boundary conditions for schools.

1.4 Financial accessibility of education

Several arrangements have been put in place to remove any financial obstacles to participation in Dutch education. These arrangements guarantee the financial accessibility of education at all levels. There is also no difference in the accessibility of state and independent schools (the number of schools operating without government funding and with high school fees is very small). At higher education level, there are no differences in the accessibility of different institutions.

Up to the age of 18 education in the Netherlands is free. In primary education the school has traditionally provided textbooks and teaching materials. In secondary education parents were until recently responsible for purchasing textbooks. Those on low incomes were eligible for full or partial grants from the government for this, depending on the level of their income. With effect from the school year 2008/09, textbooks for courses in pre-vocational and general secondary education are also free for all students. As regards the school fees in secondary education other than for books, parents from the lower income groups can apply for financial support.

From age 18 onwards, students in senior vocational education pay tuition fees, the amount of which is fixed by law. In higher education students also pay a uniform tuition fee that is fixed by law.

From the age of 18 years, students in secondary vocational education and higher education are entitled to student finance from the central government, which is designed not only to cover the costs of tuition fees and textbooks, but also to go some way to meeting maintenance costs. Student finance consists of a basic grant that is the same for all students (regardless of parental income), a transport facility for all students (public transport pass) and a supplementary grant for students from lower income groups. Provided students obtain adequate study results, the basic grant and supplementary grant are non-repayable; if not they must be repaid. In addition, students can borrow additional funding from the government, which must

be repaid after completion of their studies. The arrangements intended to further the accessibility of Dutch education are described in more detail in chapter 4.

1.5 Definition of migrants

This report is concerned with migrants of non-Western origin; migrants from other Western countries (Europe, North America, and also Japan) are thus left out of consideration. In the Netherlands, migrants from these Western countries originate largely from surrounding EU member states. Although little information is available on the position of the children of Western migrants in the Dutch education system, there are no indications that they are at a disadvantage or in a weaker position than native Dutch children. This might not apply to migrants from the new eastern European EU member states. Since migrants from the new EU member states are not yet covered by Dutch educational research and statistics, they are left out of consideration.

It is usual in the Netherlands to describe migrants using the term *allochtoon* (lit.: ‘allochthonous’). This term separates them from the indigenous or *autochtoon* (‘autochthonous’) population. The frequent use of the paired concepts *autochtoon* – *allochtoon* in the public debate appears to be a typically Dutch phenomenon; this distinction is not made, or made to a much lesser extent, in other countries. According to some critics, the frequent use of the term *allochtoon* places too much emphasis on the separate position and identity of migrants, whereas what is needed is commonality and connection between the ‘autochthonous’ and ‘allochthonous’ populations. The wide availability of statistical material and research among non-Western ethnic minorities in the Netherlands is a by-product of the use of the term *allochtoon*.

Among non-Western migrants, we draw a distinction in this report between the four ‘traditional’ ethnic groups in the Netherlands – Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilleans/Arubans – and a collective group of ‘other non-Western migrants’. Roughly 70% of young people from non-Western ethnic minorities belong to one of the four traditional groups. Although the collective group of ‘other non-Western migrants’ contains a number of important groups, for example Iraqis and Iranians, it is generally not possible to break down this collective category into specific groups in the education statistics.

Children from mixed marriages (one parent born in a non-Western country, the other born in the Netherlands) are counted as non-Western migrants in the Dutch statistics. This deviates from the OECD definition, which places children from mixed marriages in the category ‘native’.

Annex to chapter 1

ISCED levels in Dutch education (Dutch names in italics)

ISCED 0/1	primary education, schools for special primary education, special schools (<i>basisonderwijs, speciaal basisonderwijs, speciaal onderwijs</i>)
ISCED 2	pre-vocational secondary education, senior general secondary education/pre-university education first stage (grades 1-3), senior vocational education-level 1, special schools secondary education (<i>vmbo leerjaar 1-4, havo/vwo leerjaar 1-3, middelbaar beroepsonderwijs-niveau 1, voortgezet speciaal onderwijs</i>)
ISCED 3	senior general secondary education/pre-university education second stage (grades 4-5/6), senior vocational education level 2-4 (<i>havo/ vwo leerjaar 4-5/6, middelbaar beroepsonderwijs niveau 2-4</i>)
ISCED 4	senior vocational education level 4, specialist training (<i>middelbaar beroepsonderwijs niveau 4, specialistenopleiding</i>)
ISCED 5	higher professional education, university education) (<i>hoger beroepsonderwijs, wetenschappelijk onderwijs</i>)

2 Background of migrant pupils

2.1 Number of non-Western migrants and migration motives

In 2008 out of a population of 16.4 million, there were roughly 1.77 million migrants from non-Western countries in the Netherlands (10.6% of the population). The main groups of non-Western origin, in order of numerical importance, are Turks (373,000, 2.3% of the population), Surinamese (336,000, 2.1% of the population) Moroccans (335,000, 2.0% of the population) and Antilleans (132,000, 0.8% of the population). In addition to these four 'traditional groups', there are also smaller groups of migrants originating from countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran. Their number increased rapidly in the 1990s, but a strict admissions policy has halted that increase in recent years (Garssen & Wageveld 2007).

The arrival of Turkish and Moroccan labour migrants in the second half of the 1960s marked the starting point for the settlement of these groups in the Netherlands. However, employment has long ceased to be the dominant migration motive for Turks and Moroccans coming to the Netherlands. After the middle of the 1970s, the flow of labour migrants dried up; official recruitment was ended in 1973 and the weak economic situation meant that labour migration was no longer a realistic option. Moreover, as the opportunities for immigration were curbed greatly by tighter regulations, family reunification and marriage became the only opportunities for Turks and Moroccans to enter the Netherlands. This took place on a massive scale, and from the second half of the 1970s onwards, these motives constituted the main reasons for migrating to the Netherlands.

This picture is confirmed in table 2.1, which shows family reunification and marriage to be the two most important reasons for Turks and Moroccans to migrate. In addition, a substantial proportion of first-generation migrants moved to the Netherlands with their parents (note that the data in table 2.1 are collected in 2006 and relate to a cross-section of migrants who arrived in different periods; Moroccan and Turkish labour migrants arrived in the late 1960s and early 1970s; later on family reunification and formation became the main migration motives for Moroccans and Turks).

The presence of people of Surinamese and Antillean origin stems from the colonial ties of the past. Surinamese and Antillean migrants clearly have different migration motives compared with Turks and Moroccans. For example, there are relatively few labour migrants in these groups, while pursuing a course of study is cited as a reason for coming to the Netherlands considerably more often. This applies in particular for Antilleans living in the Netherlands, for whom following a course of study has been a reason for migrating to the Netherlands since as long ago as the 1950s and 60s. This is still the case, although over the last 10 to 20 years this migrant group has been dominated by poorly educated Antilleans.

Table 2.1

Migration motives, by ethnic group, first generation, 15 years and older, four 'traditional groups', 2006 (in percentages)

	Turks	Moroccans	Surinamese	Antilleans
Work	16	20	5	10
Study	1	2	11	36
Political situation	2	0	7	1
Family reunification	30	28	12	5
Marriage, family formation	29	18	6	3
Came with parents	17	28	34	20
Other reasons	5	4	25	25

Source: SCP (SIM'06)

It is important to bear in mind that Antilleans belong to the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and may therefore settle freely in the Netherlands and return to the Antilles again as they choose. Family reunification and family formation are cited relatively infrequently by Surinamese and Antillean migrants as a reason for moving to the Netherlands, especially in comparison with Turks and Moroccans. A quarter of Surinamese and Antillean migrants cite 'other reasons', including the social security system in the Netherlands, Dutch medical provision and the future of their children.

The 'new' ethnic minority groups in the Netherlands have different migration motives. The vast majority came to the Netherlands as refugees (table 2.2). Chain migration is also common, in the form of migration for family reunification and family formation.

Table 2.2

Migration motives, by ethnic group, first generation, 15 years and older, 'new' ethnic minority groups, 2003 (in percentages)

	Afghanis	Iraqis	Iranians	Somalis
Work	0	0	0	0
Study	1	0	3	1
Political situation	78	74	71	88
Family reunification	10	15	10	3
Marriage, family formation	4	4	6	2
Came with parents	6	5	7	3
Other reasons	1	2	3	3

Source: ISEO/SCP (SPVA'03)

First and second-generation migrants

Between 40 and 50% of migrants from the four main groups are of the second generation. In the youngest age group, however, the vast majority of migrant children were born and raised in the Netherlands; in 2007 only 4.4% of all four year-olds – the age at which primary school begins – were first-generation migrants. The figures are even smaller for children of Turkish, Moroccan and Surinamese origin (table 2.3). In the higher age groups (12 and 18 years, the ages at which secondary and tertiary education, respectively, begin), the percentage of young members of non-Western ethnic minorities in the first generation is higher, but in these higher age groups, too, the percentages of non-Western ethnic minority young people from the first generation have declined rapidly in recent years.

Table 2.3

Percentage of young first-generation members of non-Western ethnic minorities, at three ages, 1996-2007

	4 years	12 years	18 years
1996			
Turkish	3.8	17.5	48.1
Moroccan	5.8	29.8	66.4
Surinamese	5.2	20.6	47.0
Antillean	14.3	44.0	55.3
other non-Western	23.4	48.3	69.7
total non-Western	10.4	30.6	57.7
2000			
Turkish	3.9	18.2	25.3
Moroccan	3.9	20.6	42.3
Surinamese	2.8	16.4	23.5
Antillean	23.5	41.6	55.8
other non-Western	18.1	51.1	67.3
total non-Western	9.8	29.5	43.6
2007			
Turkish	2.6	6.8	17.9
Moroccan	2.0	6.5	21.3
Surinamese	1.8	7.6	18.9
Antillean	6.3	33.2	45.1
other non-Western	8.3	36.7	58.4
total non-Western	4.4	17.4	31.7

Source: Statistics Netherlands (Statline)

Not only are more and more members of non-Western ethnic minorities born in the Netherlands, but the immigration figures for the various age groups have also been falling steadily since 2000.

As mentioned earlier families from the Netherlands Antilles may settle freely in the Netherlands and return to the Antilles again as they choose. As a result, at the age of 18 or 19 years a relatively large number of them come to the Netherlands in order to study, but at the same time there is also an influx of poorly educated young Antilleans with poor prospects. As a result the percentage of first-generation young migrants from the Netherlands Antilles at this age is much higher than in the younger age groups. This is less the case in the group ‘other non-Western ethnic minorities’.

Based on these trends, the expectation is that young people from non-Western ethnic minorities will in future increasingly be born in the Netherlands. However, partly in view of the influx of asylum-seekers, there will still be a group of young migrants from the first generation in the future – though the influx of asylum seekers has diminished in recent years.

Table 2.4 and table 2.5 provide further data on migration. Table 2.4 shows the age at which young people from the various non-Western migrant groups arrived in the Netherlands. In the higher age groups –12 and 18 year-olds – a substantial number of young people, especially Antilleans and members of the other non-Western ethnic minorities, arrived in the Netherlands at a later age.

Table 2.4

Young members of non-Western ethnic minorities, by age, generation and age of arrival of first-generation migrants, 2007 (in percentages)

	born in the Netherlands	first generation	age of arrival first generation			
			0-2 years	3-4 years	5-12 years	13-18 years
4 years						
Turkish	97.4	2.6	2.0	0.5	-	-
Moroccan	98.0	2.0	1.6	0.4	-	-
Surinamese	98.2	1.8	1.2	0.6	-	-
Antillean	93.7	6.3	4.1	2.1	-	-
other non-Western	91.7	8.3	4.6	3.7	-	-
total non-Western	95.4	4.6	2.9	1.7	-	-
12 years						
Turkish	93.2	6.8	2.0	1.0	3.8	-
Moroccan	93.5	6.5	2.2	.9	3.4	-
Surinamese	92.4	7.6	.6	1.3	5.8	-

Table 2.4 (continued)

	born in the Netherlands	first generation	age of arrival first generation			
			0-2 years	3-4 years	5-12 years	13-18 years
Antillean	66.8	33.2	4.2	6.4	22.6	-
other non-Western	63.3	36.7	5.1	7.5	24.0	-
total non-Western	81.6	18.4	3.0	3.5	11.9	-
18 years						
Turkish	82.1	17.9	3.4	2.1	8.1	4.3
Moroccan	78.7	21.3	6.6	2.7	7.1	4.9
Surinamese	81.1	18.9	2.4	2.9	8.1	5.5
Antillean	54.9	45.1	7.5	3.7	17.3	16.5
other non-Western	41.6	58.4	4.5	3.7	29.3	20.9
total non-Western	66.6	33.4	4.5	3.0	15.2	10.8

Source: Statistics Netherlands (Statline) SCP treatment

Table 2.5 shows the average duration of stay of young first-generation migrants. In 2007 the 17% of 12 year-old members of non-Western ethnic minorities who were not born in the Netherlands spent an average of 6.1 years in the Netherlands. As expected, the duration of stay of first-generation Turkish and Moroccan migrants in the higher age groups is longer than among the younger age categories. For Antilleans and other non-Western ethnic minorities there is little difference between the average duration of stay of 12 year-olds and 18 year-olds; this is due to the immigration of teenagers from these groups.

Table 2.5

Average duration of stay in the Netherlands by young members of non-Western ethnic minorities from the first generation at three ages, 2003 -2007 (in years)

	4 years	12 years	18 years
2003			
Turkish	2.3	6.3	8.4
Moroccan	2.5	6.8	10.3
Surinamese	1.7	6.0	8.7
Antillean	2.0	4.8	6.4
other non-Western	1.6	4.7	4.3
total non-Western	1.8	5.2	6.2

Table 2.5 (vervolg)

	4 years	12 years	18 years
2007			
Turkish	2.6	6.5	10.0
Moroccan	2.7	7.1	11.0
Surinamese	2.1	5.0	9.3
Antillean	2.2	6.3	7.9
other non-Western	2.0	5.9	7.8
total non-Western	2.1	6.1	8.6

Source: Statistics Netherlands (Statline) SCP treatment

2.2 Concentration and segregation of non-Western migrants

The geographical distribution of migrants throughout the Netherlands is characterised by concentration and segregation. Non-Western ethnic minorities tend to live in the west of the country, and especially in the four major cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht). Just under half the total population of the Netherlands live in the west of the country, compared with two-thirds of the non-Western ethnic minority population (table 2.6). People of Moroccan and Surinamese origin, in particular, often live in the west of the country. This is reflected in their strong representation in the four major cities (also in the west of the country); 52% of Surinamese migrants live in one of the four major cities; the figure for Moroccans is 47%. This proportion is much lower for the population of the Netherlands as a whole (13%).

Table 2.6

Distribution of members of non-Western minorities across regions and proportion living in the four largest cities, 2008 (in %)

	north	east	south	west	4 major cities
Turks	2	21	16	60	35
Moroccans	1	10	16	72	47
Surinamese	3	12	6	78	52
Antilleans	6	14	14	66	34
total non-Western ethnic minorities	4	15	14	67	39
total population in the Netherlands	10	21	22	47	13

Source: Statistics Netherlands

More than one in three inhabitants of the three biggest cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague) are of non-Western origin (table 2.7). The proportion of ethnic minorities in Utrecht is smaller (21%), but still much higher than the proportion in the Netherlands as a whole. Among the young the percentage is even greater: around 50% of the population of the major cities aged up to 20 years are of non-Western origin.

Table 2.7

Non-Western migrant populations in the four major cities, 2008 (in percentages)

	total population	share of non-western migrants					
		Turks	Moroccans	Surinamese	Antilleans	other	total
Amsterdam	747,100	5.2	9.2	9.2	1.5	9.6	34.6
Rotterdam	583,000	6.4	6.4	8.9	3.4	9.5	36.0
The Hague	475,700	5.4	5.4	9.7	2.3	8.3	32.7
Utrecht	297,700	4.4	8.8	2.6	0.8	4.4	21.0
Netherlands	16 405,400	2.3	2.0	2.0	0.8	3.6	10.8

Source: Statistics Netherlands

The proportion of non-Western ethnic minorities in the large cities has risen sharply in the last ten years, especially in Rotterdam. This trend is partly related to the relocation patterns of the native population; their exodus from the cities – known as the ‘white flight’ – has been under way for many years and has contributed to the further increase in the proportion of ethnic minorities in neighbourhoods where they were already highly concentrated.

Members of non-Western ethnic minorities who live in the major cities often live in deprived areas, characterised by specific features of the housing stock (such as a high proportion of social rented housing, few single-family dwellings), high concentrations of migrants and income poverty. The number of neighbourhoods with high concentrations of migrants has increased further since 2000 (Kullberg 2007).

Amsterdam is the municipality with the highest (absolute) number of residents of non-Western ethnic origin (258,000, i.e. 34.6% of the total population). Non-Western migrants are unevenly distributed across the districts of Amsterdam: the highest percentages are found in the districts outside the city centre, some of them on the periphery of the city. Districts where 75% or more of young people are of non-Western ethnic origin are found mainly in the districts of Slotervaart, Bos- en Lommer, Geuzenveld-Slotermeer, Osdorp and Zuidoost. The city centre itself numbers relatively few residents of non-Western origin (see O & S 2008: 41).

The geographical concentration in a limited number of areas, combined with the increase in the ethnic minority population in the cities, has boosted the statistical

probability of migrants meeting someone from their own ethnic group, with a concomitant reduction in the chance of meeting a member of the native Dutch population (table 2.8); in each of the four major cities, the chances of Turks, Moroccans, and Surinamese and Antilleans meeting native Dutch citizens declined in the period 1998-2007.

Table 2.8

Chances of meeting members of own ethnic group and members of the native population, 1998, 2003 and 2007

	Amsterdam			Rotterdam			The Hague			Utrecht		
	1998	2003	2007	1998	2003	2007	1998	2003	2007	1998	2003	2007
Turks												
own group	8.4	9.6	10.2	14.4	14.6	14.9	15.2	16.4	17.3	7.9	8.6	8.7
natives	50.5	44.8	42.7	42.5	38.0	37.2	39.4	35.4	32.8	62.7	58.0	56.2
Moroccans												
own group	12.6	14.9	16.2	9.6	10.4	11.1	10.3	11.2	12.4	14.6	17.4	18.0
natives	51.0	45.4	43.4	44.2	40.0	39.1	41.1	36.2	33.5	62.0	56.5	55.0
Surinamese												
own group	17.6	17.6	17.8	10.8	10.7	10.6	15.6	14.7	14.4	3.6	3.4	3.4
natives	46.7	42.6	41.1	52.4	47.8	47.2	47.4	44.6	42.6	67.7	65.9	64.6
Antilleans												
own group	3.7	3.7	3.2	3.3	5.0	4.7	2.1	3.3	3.4	0.9	1.0	1.0
natives	44.6	41.3	41.5	55.5	49.8	48.9	52.8	47.9	44.5	71.1	68.5	67.4

Source: Statistics Netherlands, Population statistics (1998, 2003, 2007)

The probability of meeting a member of their own ethnic group has increased over the years for Turks and Moroccans. For Surinamese residents, the chances of meeting members of their own group has remained stable or even fallen slightly, while for Antilleans this is also the case in Amsterdam and Utrecht.

Musterd & De Vos (2007) have shown for Amsterdam that the continuing 'white flight' from neighbourhoods with high ethnic concentrations is the main factor reinforcing the clusters of Turks and Moroccans in that city, as well as the lower fertility of the remaining native Dutch and Western ethnic minority population.

Reasons for geographical concentration

What are the reasons for the geographical concentration of non-Western ethnic minorities? Is it mainly the result of their own choices or is it due mainly to other factors? Recent research (Kullberg, Vervoort & Dagevos, 2009) suggests that the strong representation of migrants in deprived areas with high concentrations of migrant residents can be partially ascribed to the characteristics of the household, such as composition and income, and to characteristics of urban housing markets,

where the chance of living in such neighbourhoods is greater than in other parts of the Netherlands. However, these factors do not explain all of the difference compared with the native Dutch population. Discrimination on the housing market appears to be of subordinate importance (see also Bolt 2001; Kullberg 2002). There are however clear indications that the preference of members of ethnic minorities themselves to live in ‘concentration neighbourhoods’ plays a role; many Turks and Moroccans feel a bond with these neighbourhoods because of the availability of their own provisions and amenities and – most important of all – the presence of other family members. The attraction of ‘white neighbourhoods’ in the suburbs is further dampened by fears of not being accepted in such residential settings.

2.3 Family background of migrant pupils

The socioeconomic position of migrant families is generally weaker than that of native Dutch families. This manifests itself in income levels, education level, being employed or unemployed and occupational status. Migrants also score less well on a number of other characteristics, such as number of single-parent families and language skills. Educational research has amply demonstrated the impact of family background on educational success, so the educational disadvantage of migrant pupils will at least partly be attributable to their weaker socioeconomic position.

Income level

The average income of non-Western ethnic minority households is considerably below that of native households (table 2.9; the table contains information on all households, as data are not available on the incomes of households with school-age children). The average household income for native Dutch households is approximately EUR 21,000 per annum, whereas the average for non-Western ethnic minority households is just under EUR 15,000 per annum (these are standardised incomes, i.e. corrected for household size and composition).

Table 2.9
Average disposable household income^a, 2005 (* EUR 1,000)

Native Dutch households	21.2
Non-Western ethnic minorities	14.7
Turks	14.1
Moroccans	14.2
Surinamese	16.3
Antilleans	14.5
other non-Western	14.2

a standardised, i.e. corrected for differences in household size and composition.

Source: Statistics Netherlands (Statline)

Surinamese households have the highest average income among non-Western ethnic minorities, while Turkish, Moroccan and other non-Western ethnic minority households have lower incomes on average.

Poverty rate

The percentage of migrant households having to make ends meet from an income that is around the guaranteed minimum income is accordingly greater than among native Dutch households.

In 2005, 6.4% of all Dutch households had an income below the poverty line. The poverty line in the Netherlands is derived from the budget that a household needs to meet basic needs plus modest additional expenditure items (the ‘modest but adequate’ variant). The household income of migrants is much more often below this poverty line than that of native households (table 2.10).

Table 2.10
Households with an income below the poverty line^a, 2005 (in percentages)

native Dutch	5.1
non-Western ethnic minorities	18.2
Turks	17.9
Moroccans	17.7
Surinamese	12.3
Antilleans	17.6
other non-Western	23.7

a budget-related poverty line, ‘modest but adequate’ variant.

Source: Vrooman et al. (2007: 34-35)

For further details on poverty in the Netherlands, see Vrooman et al. (2007).

Educational background

The educational distribution of parents of pupils from the main non-Western migrant groups differs sharply from that of parents of native pupils. Whereas the highest educated parent of four out of five native Dutch primary school pupils has completed an education to at least upper secondary level (ISCED level 3), the educational distribution of Turkish and Moroccan parents is still concentrated around the lowest level (maximum primary education; ISCED level 1). This is despite the gradual increase in the education level among these groups. A proportion of Turkish and Moroccan parents who have been allocated to the lowest category have in fact not received any education at all in their country of origin. Surinamese and Antillean parents are better educated than Turkish and Moroccan parents, but still lag well behind native Dutch parents (table 2.11).

Table 2.11

Parents of primary school children, by ethnic origin and educational level, 2004 (in percentages)

	primary	pre-vocational/ junior general secondary (<i>vbo/ mavo</i>)	senior general secondary/ pre-university/senior secondary vocational (<i>havo/vwo/mbo</i>)	higher professional/ university (<i>hbo/wo</i>)	total
Turkish	41	31	22	6	100
Moroccan	52	24	16	8	100
Surinamese	11	32	45	12	100
Antilleans	13	39	37	11	100
other ethnic minority	32	24	23	22	100
native Dutch	1	19	44	36	100
total	12	21	37	29	100

Source: ITS/SCO/NWO(Prima 2004) SCP treatment

Slightly older figures for secondary education show a comparable picture: the vast majority of parents of pupils of Turkish and Moroccan origin have attained no more than primary education level; only 10 - 15% have completed a secondary or higher education.

Paid employment and occupational status

As a corollary to their low education level, the participation in paid employment by parents from the non-Western migrant groups – especially Turkish and Moroccan parents – is considerably lower than among native Dutch parents. No more than half of them are in paid work (table 2.12). This low activity rate is partly due to the small number of mothers in paid employment, but the employment rate among fathers from the non-Western migrant groups is also substantially lower than in the native Dutch population. Turkish and Moroccan parents who are in paid employment are often employed in unskilled or low-skilled jobs.

Table 2.12

Participation of parents^a in paid employment and occupational level, by ethnic origin, 2006 (in percentages)

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinamese	Antillean	native Dutch
participation in paid work					
working labour force	54	47	76	71	81
unemployed	10	8	8	12	5
non-labour force	36	45	16	16	14
total	100	100	100	100	100
occupational status of employed					
elementary	37	32	7	14	7
junior	31	33	30	30	25
middle-ranking	25	27	38	36	39
higher/academic	7	8	25	19	29
total	100	100	100	100	100

a parents of children aged 0-16 years.

Source: SCP (SIM '06)

Single-parent families

Growing up in a single-parent family has a negative influence on a child's school career: pupils from single-parent families perform less well in secondary education and are at greater risk of school drop-out (Herweijer 2008a). Financial problems may play a role here; a quarter of children in single-parent families grow up in poverty, compared with 7.5% of children from families with two parents. If a single-parent family arises from a separation or divorce, the tensions and conflicts preceding the split can have a negative influence on the children.

Approximately 15% of secondary school students grow up in a single-parent family (Herweijer 2008a), but for students with a non-Western ethnic background the figure rises to almost 30% (Statistics Netherlands, Statline). When broken down into the different migrant groups it emerges that migrants of Antillean and Surinamese origin, in particular, often form single-parent households (table 2.13).

Table 2.13

Single-parent household as a percentage of all households with children, 2006

	Turks	Moroccans	Surinamese	Antilleans	native Dutch
two parents	81.7	83.4	55.3	49.8	83.6
one parent	18.3	16.6	44.7	50.2	16.4
total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Garssen en Wageveld (2007)

Language skills

The low socioeconomic status of migrant parents is a key reason for the often poor educational achievement of their children. Other factors also appear to play a role, however; one such factor is the poorer command of the Dutch language by parents of migrant pupils. A high proportion of Turkish and Moroccan parents, in particular, have problems with speaking, reading and writing the Dutch language; this is the case slightly more often for Turks than Moroccans (table 2.14). Surinamese and Antillean parents are more familiar with the Dutch language thanks to the historical colonial ties, and have far fewer problems in this area (see also Turkenburg & Gijsberts 2007).

Table 2.14

Command of the Dutch language by parents^a from the four largest migrant groups, 2006 (in percentages)

	Turks	Moroccans	Surinamese	Antilleans
problems speaking Dutch				
frequent problems/speak no Dutch	24	16	0	5
sometimes	39	35	3	11
problems reading Dutch				
often	25	21	1	2
sometimes	35	26	4	10
problems writing Dutch				
often	35	28	1	4
sometimes	28	24	3	11

a parents of children aged 0-16 years.

Source: SCP (SIM '06)

3 Participation and learning outcomes

3.1 Early childhood education and care

Dutch children begin primary school at the age of four years. Prior to this, a number of provisions are available, including childcare facilities for working parents and preschool playgroups. The primary purpose of childcare is to enable parents to perform paid work or follow a training or education course. Preschool playgroups are less about childcare per se, but are educational provisions where children learn to interact with other children on one or two half days per week in a play-oriented environment where their development is encouraged.

More recent are the preschool and early-school education programmes. These programmes aim to stimulate the development of young children from deprived backgrounds, including many children of migrant parents. These programmes are provided through collaboration between preschool playgroups or – less often – childcare centres and primary schools in areas with large numbers of children from deprived backgrounds. They begin in the preschool playgroup when children are aged 2.5 years, and continue in the first two years of primary school.

Children of migrants – and especially Turks and Moroccans – have traditionally attended preschool playgroups less often than native children, though in recent years this discrepancy has been partly eliminated, as evidenced by figures from successive editions of the PRIMA cohort study (table 3.1).

Preschool and early-school education programmes have a fairly wide reach among children of migrants, especially among the groups with the greatest educational disadvantage (Turkish and Moroccan children). The somewhat variable trend in the participation figures shown in table 3.1 is probably due to the fact that the figures are based on sampling (the PRIMA cohort study).

According to a survey of local authorities in 2006, preschool and early-school education programmes reached just over half (53%) of children in the target group of the policy on disadvantage in the preschool phase. In the early-school phase, almost seven out of ten children in the target group were reached (69%; Jepma, Kooiman & Van der Vegt 2007).

Preschool and early-school education is a core focus of the disadvantage policy. The aim for the coming years is to increase the reach among the target group, so that by 2011 all children in the target group are offered a place (National Budget for Education, Culture and Science 2009). We will look in more detail at preschool and early-school education programmes in chapter 5.

Table 3.1

Participation in early childhood education and care by ethnic origin, 1996-2004 (in percentages)

	Turkey	Morocco	Surinamese/ Antilles	native Dutch low ^a	native Dutch high ^b
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
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

a highest educated parent has completed an education to a maximum of ISCED level 2 (vmbo).
b highest educated parent has completed an education to ISCED 3 or higher (havo/vwo/ mbo or higher education).

Source: ITS/SCO/NWO (Prima '96-'04) SCP treatment

3.2 Differentiation and segregation in primary education

Mainstream versus special education

In addition to mainstream primary (and secondary) education, there are various forms of education aimed at children with special needs. For children of primary school age (4-12 years) there are two types of special education. Schools for special primary education focus on children with moderate learning difficulties and/or minor behavioural problems, while special schools are aimed at children of all ages with physical, sensory or learning disabilities and children with behavioural difficulties. Admission to special primary education entails a referral by an Independent Regional Committee (*Permanente Commissie Leerlingenzorg, PCL*); these committees are attached to local partnerships of mainstream and special primary schools. Admission to a special school requires an indication from another independent committee (*Commissie van Indicatiestelling, CVI*); these committees are attached to regional expertise centres. Parents of children with an indication for special education can also opt to send their child to a mainstream school with support from additional facilities (personal budget system). Some children are referred to special primary education or to a special school immediately at the start of primary education. Others are referred later on, after it has become clear that mainstream education is not a feasible option. Participation reaches a maximum level at the age of 11, when nearly 8% of all pupils

are enrolled in special educational facilities in the Netherlands (Herweijer & Bronneman 2007).

Comparing the percentage of pupils with a non-Western background in special educational facilities with the corresponding percentages in mainstream education makes clear that children with a non-Western ethnic background are overrepresented in the various forms of special education, both in primary education (ISCED levels 0/1) and in secondary education (ISCED level 2; table 3.2).

Table 3.2

Pupils in mainstream and special education, by ethnic origin, 2006/07 (in percentages)

	non-Western ethnic minorities	native Dutch pupils ^a	total
ISCED 0/1			
mainstream primary education	15.3	84.7	100
special primary schools	19.0	81.0	100
special education (Expertise Centres Act - WEC)	17.2	82.8	100
ISCED 2			
mainstream secondary education	15.4	84.6	100
special secondary education (Expertise Centres Act - WEC)	19.1	80.9	100

a including Western migrants.

Source: Statistics Netherlands (Statline) SCP treatment

In view of the continuing growth in participation in special education, attempts have been made since the beginning of the 1990s to stem the influx of pupils, among other things by offering provisions for children with special needs within mainstream schools. This also increases the freedom of choice for special needs children, allowing them to choose between attending a mainstream school with additional support or attending a special school. No specific policy is pursued in this regard for non-Western ethnic minority pupils, even though in practice pupils from these ethnic groups are referred to special needs schools more often.

Segregation between native Dutch and migrant pupils

The concentration of migrants in specific districts of the major cities (see chapter 2.2) is also reflected in the education system. Many schools in the major cities have a student population consisting mainly of non-Western ethnic minorities. Nearly 40% of primary schools in Amsterdam and Rotterdam are schools where more than 80% of the pupils are of non-Western origin (Herweijer 2008b). These 'ethnic schools' are often located in districts where the majority of children have a non-Western background. 'Ethnic' primary schools also occur in districts with a lower percentage of children of non-Western origin, however, while some schools in districts with large

numbers of migrants are attended by a majority of native Dutch children. This stems from the system of free school choice which enables parents to select a school that meets their views on education. Parents are not forced to choose for their children a school in the area where they live, and some native Dutch parents prefer to send their children to more distant schools with a lower ethnic concentration. In addition, the founding of faith schools which propagate the religious or ideological identity of migrant groups (Islamic and Hindu schools, for example) also lead to segregation.

Islamic schools

Islamic schools are a relatively new phenomenon (i.e. in comparison to other religious schools) in the Netherlands, and are the subject of much discussion. Opponents put forward the argument that Islamic schools worsen the segregation between native and migrant pupils and thus hinder the integration of the latter pupils. Advocates of Islamic schools, by contrast, argue that the model of 'emancipation within the own group' has in the past proven to be effective for other religious minorities as well (e.g. Roman Catholics).

In terms of levels of achievement, the Islamic schools do not live up to the expectations of their proponents: just like in other 'ethnic' schools the achievements of pupils on Islamic schools lag considerably behind the achievements of pupils on the average school, albeit that the pupils in some respects perform slightly better than pupils in other 'ethnic' schools (Driesssen 2008). Seclusion within their own (religious) group cannot compensate for the low educational level of the parents of many pupils in Islamic schools. Moreover, about half of the Islamic primary schools have been labelled as underperforming or seriously underperforming school by the Inspectorate (Inspectie 2008b). The overall percentage of (seriously) underperforming primary schools is 10.6% (1.2% seriously underperforming plus 9.4% underperforming, Inspectie 2008c).

To see things in the right perspective, it should be mentioned that the number of Islamic schools is not large: there are 44 Islamic schools for primary education in the Netherlands. Six out of these 44 Islamic schools have been labelled as seriously underperforming (www.onderwijsinspectie.nl); the absolute number of underperforming schools is probably about 15. Only 6% of all Moroccan and Turkish pupils are enrolled in Islamic primary schools (Herweijer 2008b).

In section 3.7 the effect of segregation on educational achievement is discussed. The policy to reduce segregation is discussed in chapter 5.

Independent schools with a specific educational approach

There are also some independent schools which adopt a specific educational approach (e.g. the Montessori Method) and which therefore attract a select public consisting of often better-educated parents. The relatively high financial parental contribution levied by some of these schools can also put off parents from less well-to-do backgrounds (although the contribution cannot in principle be made compulsory). There are often waiting lists for these kinds of schools in the major cities.

3.3 Achievement level in primary education

Migrant pupils lag a long way behind at an early age

Primary-school children from non-Western migrant groups already lag a long way behind at an early age. This is shown by a long-term research project (the PRIMA cohort study and its successor the COOL 5-18 cohort study) that is being carried out in Dutch primary schools. The research programme is designed, among other things, to map the educational achievement of pupils. As part of this study, the language and arithmetic skills of pupils are measured at different phases in their primary school career. Since language and arithmetic teaching have not yet really begun, the comprehension and sequencing skills of pupils are measured in year group 2, when the pupils are 5-6 years old. In year groups 4, 6 and 8 the pupils' skills are measured using tests from the pupil monitoring system devised by the National Institute for Educational Measurement (CITO), which is used by many primary schools to track the progress of pupils.

Table 3.3

Score on comprehension and sequencing test in year group 2 of primary school, by ethnic group, 1994-2004

	Turkey	Morocco	Suriname	Antilles	native Dutch low ^a	native Dutch high ^b
comprehension						
1994/'95	36.5	39.0	44.6	41.9	48.8	52.4
1996/'97	36.9	40.3	44.7	40.9	48.8	52.7
1998/'99	37.5	39.3	44.6	40.4	48.6	52.5
2000/'01	38.6	40.4	46.9	40.2	48.7	52.3
2002/'03	37.3	42.7	43.0	41.1	48.6	52.8
2004/'05	39.1	42.2	45.0	43.5	48.7	52.6
sequencing						
1994/'95	41.1	41.8	45.0	44.7	48.1	52.5
1996/'97	41.4	42.7	45.3	43.4	47.9	52.4
1998/'99	42.1	41.4	45.5	42.3	47.7	52.1
2000/'01	42.3	42.3	47.8	43.1	47.4	52.0
2002/'03	42.6	44.0	44.6	42.8	47.7	52.4
2004/'05	43.7	45.0	45.2	45.4	48.0	52.0

a highest educated parent has completed an education to a maximum of ISCED level 2.

b highest educated parent has completed an education to ISCED 3 or higher.

Source: Gijsberts & Herweijer (2007)

Table 3.3 shows the scores on the comprehension and sequencing test in year group 2 (age 5 years). To facilitate comparison over time, the scores have been standardised (average = 50, standard deviation = 10).

Table 3.3 shows that children from the migrant groups already lag a long way behind at an early age, not just relative to native pupils whose parents have a secondary or higher education background, but to a lesser extent also relative to native pupils from a low-education background. Their educational disadvantage is greater in the comprehension test than the sequencing test, which makes fewer demands of their language skills. Turkish and Moroccan children have traditionally been at a greater disadvantage than Surinamese and Antillean children, though this difference has narrowed over the last decade as the achievements of Turkish and Moroccan children have improved more rapidly than those of Surinamese and Antillean children.

Initial disadvantage continues as the primary school career progresses

The difference in the initial level continues as the primary school career progresses: migrant pupils are also at a disadvantage in year group 4, year group 6 and year group 8 (children aged 7, 9 and 11 years). If the achievement scores in year groups 4, 6 and 8 are placed on a continuous scale, it becomes apparent that the language skills of migrant pupils in year group 6 are not much better than those of native pupils in year group 4, while in year group 8 they have achieved the standard that native pupils attain in year group 6 (table 3.4). Turkish, Moroccan and Antillean pupils thus have a language disadvantage of approximately two years at the end of their primary school careers (the scale enables the skill levels of pupils in different year groups to be compared with each other, in themselves, the scale values have no significance). The language disadvantage of Surinamese pupils is less than that of the three other traditional non-Western ethnic minority groups.

The differences are much smaller when it comes to arithmetic: the disadvantage at the end of primary school translates into roughly half a school year.

Migrant pupil's results on the CITO test are also lower

The result obtained in the 'CITO-eindtoets' – the national test set at the end of primary school by the National Institute for Educational Measurement (CITO) – plays an important role in the transition from primary school to secondary school, and largely determines which track of secondary education pupils will follow (in addition to the recommendation given by the primary school). The test is held at 85% of Dutch primary schools. The results achieved by migrant pupils are lower than those of native pupils. Pupils with a Surinamese or Antillean background score markedly better in language than Turkish and Moroccan pupils. In arithmetic and mathematics, however, there are no marked differences between the main migrant groups (table 3.5).

Table 3.4

Average scores in language and arithmetic tests in primary school year groups 4, 6 and 8, by ethnic group, 2004/'05

	Turkey	Morocco	Suriname	Antilles	native Dutch low ^a	native Dutch high ^b
language						
year group 4	1008	1022	1036	1026	1042	1056
year group 6	1050	1061	1068	1065	1073	1090
year group 8	1086	1094	1100	1092	1108	1127
arithmetic						
year group 4	1058	1058	1059	1055	1068	1081
year group 6	1143	1142	1144	1138	1150	1164
year group 8	1215	1214	1213	1203	1215	1229

a highest educated parent has completed an education to a maximum of ISCED level 2.

b highest educated parent has completed an education to ISCED 3 or higher.

Source: Gijberts & Herweijer (2007)

Migrant pupils in households where Dutch is the normal language of communication perform better in language and in arithmetic and mathematics (arithmetic and mathematics only in the case of Surinamese and Antillean pupils) than pupils who use the language of their country of origin at home.

Table 3.5

Percentage of correct answers in the CITO test, by gender and ethnic origin, 2006/'07

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinamese	Antillean	native Dutch
language					
Dutch used at home	62	63	67	70	-
Dutch not used at home	57	60	58	58	-
arithmetic and mathematics					
Dutch used at home	63	62	63	67	-
Dutch not used at home	63	61	54	53	-
total score ^a					
Dutch used at home	63	63	66	69	-
Dutch not used at home	60	60	57	56	-

a the total score includes the third part of the test (study skills).

Source: CBS (2008)

Improvement of migrant pupils' achievement in primary education

While migrant pupils thus lag a considerable way behind their native peers when it comes to language skills, they have reduced the gap since the early 1990s. The arithmetic skills of children of migrants have shown particular improvement, but they have also made progress on the language front. Based on standardised scores, Gijsberts & Herweijer (2007) calculate that the disadvantage of Turkish and Moroccan children in arithmetic has improved by more than 50% since the end of the 1980s. The improvement on the language front is slightly less, but even here the achievements of the different migrant groups show steady improvement. The achievements of Surinamese and Antillean children have also improved, though the progress of Antillean children has not been so marked (table 3.6). The achievements of native Dutch pupils with low-educated parents have gradually worsened since the late 1980s.

Table 3.6

Score in the language and arithmetic test in primary school year group 8, by ethnic origin, 1988-2004

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinamese	Antillean	native Dutch low ^a	native Dutch high ^b
language						
1988	34.3	34.7	41.7	38.7	48.7	52.4
1994	36.4	38.8	42.1	40.9	48.1	53.4
1996	37.6	39.2	43.6	40.3	48.0	52.8
1998	37.2	40.5	44.2	40.1	47.6	52.8
2000	38.8	40.8	44.9	40.5	47.3	52.9
2002	39.3	42.0	45.7	40.7	47.5	52.6
2004	40.3	42.8	44.4	41.9	47.1	52.5
development gap vs. 'native Dutch high' 1988-2004 (in %)						
	-33	-45	-25	-23	44	-
arithmetic						
1988	40.7	39.6	42.0	40.8	48.3	52.3
1994	42.8	42.5	42.6	41.5	47.7	52.8
1996	44.7	43.2	44.1	39.2	47.6	52.4
1998	45.1	44.1	44.6	42.3	47.1	52.2
2000	46.0	44.6	45.8	41.6	46.8	52.2
2002	45.7	44.7	44.0	42.2	46.6	51.9
2004	46.1	45.7	45.4	41.5	46.3	51.8
development gap vs. 'native Dutch high' 1988-2004 (in %)						
	-51	-52	-38	-10	38	-

a highest educated parent has completed an education to a maximum of ISCED level 2.

b highest educated parent has completed an education to ISCED 3 or higher.

Source: Gijsberts & Herweijer (2007)

Migrant pupils' scores on the CITO test have also improved

The scores achieved by Turkish and Moroccan children in the CITO test have also improved in recent years; the scores of Surinamese children have remained more or less unchanged, while those of Antillean pupils have deteriorated slightly. Partly because the scores of native pupils have also deteriorated slightly, the gap between migrant children and native pupils in the CITO test has reduced by between a quarter and a third. Antillean pupils are once again the exception: the gap between this group and native pupils has not diminished (Gijsberts & Herweijer 2007).

Neutral recommendation?

In addition to the score in the CITO test, the recommendation given by primary schools plays an important role in the distribution of pupils across the different levels of secondary education. In line with their lower level of achievement, migrant pupils generally receive a lower recommendation than native pupils. In the past, migrant pupils were given higher recommendations for the same level of achievement, because their lower language achievement carried less weight than their performance in arithmetic (Tesser & Iedema 2001). The effect of the relatively high recommendations on the school careers of migrant pupils is not entirely clear-cut; on the one hand, the relatively high recommendations given for migrant pupils meant that they were often found to be the weakest pupils in the class, with a concomitant greater risk of repeating years and school drop-out. (Herweijer 2003). On the other hand, there is also a group of migrant pupils whose secondary school performance justifies their relatively high recommendation (Hustinx 1999).

This 'over-recommending' of non-Western ethnic minority pupils became less common in the 1990s and the recommendations given for migrant pupils are now more or less in line with their achievements (Driessen 2006). In fact, recent data from Amsterdam suggest that migrant pupils who perform well at primary school are actually given a relatively low recommendation for secondary school level, being indicated for senior general secondary/pre-university education (*havo/vwo*) less often than native pupils (Babeliowsky & Den Boer 2007). This could mean that talent is being lost unnecessarily because pupils are wrongly referred to a low secondary education level. Figures for the Netherlands as a whole confirm this picture to some degree, but the differences in recommendation levels between native and non-Western ethnic minority pupils with the same achievement level are small (table 3.7).

Moreover, differences in recommendation are more or less corrected by the actual school choice which follows the recommendation: apparently migrant pupils are slightly more often enrolled at a higher level than recommended (Stroucken et al. 2008).

Table 3.7

Teacher recommendation for secondary education compared with Cito achievement level, 2005 (in percentages)

	recommendation below Cito achievement level	recommendation equal to Cito achievement level	recommendation higher than Cito achievement level	total
all Cito achievement levels				
native Dutch	9	77	14	100
non-Western migrants	8	76	16	100
Cito achievement level vmbo basic/advanced				
native Dutch	-	71	29	100
non-Western migrants	-	76	24	100
Cito achievement level vmbo combined/theoretical				
native Dutch	9	74	16	100
non-Western migrants	12	73	15	100
Cito achievement level havo				
native Dutch	14	79	7	100
non-Western migrants	16	78	6	100
Cito achievement level vwo				
native Dutch	15	85	-	100
non-Western migrants	18	82	-	100

Source: Stroucken et al (2008)

3.4 Educational career in secondary education

The Dutch secondary education system is divided into several tracks. On the transition from primary to secondary education, students are distributed across secondary education programmes at varying levels (they are then aged 12 years). In schools with transitional classes ('brugklassen') selection can however be deferred to the second year or, occasionally, the third year of secondary education.

Secondary education is differentiated into six different levels (see also chapter 1). The higher levels (senior general secondary (*havo*) and pre-university (*vwo*) education) last for five and six years, respectively (including the second stage of *havo* and *vwo*, which are classified as ISCED 3), and provide direct access to higher education (higher professional and university education, respectively, both long programmes at level ISCED 5). The programmes at the lower levels are shorter (four years) and prepare students for vocational training programmes at secondary level (ISCED 3).

Deferring selection: transitional classes and basic secondary education

The selection process for secondary education has traditionally taken place at an early age in the Netherlands, with students being allocated across the different levels of secondary education – often provided in different schools – as soon as they transfer from primary to secondary school. A debate has been ongoing since the 1970s on deferring the selection moment until students are older. An important argument used in favour of this deferral is that early selection too often leads to a school choice that does not match the capabilities of the children concerned. In particular, it is argued, early selection is disadvantageous for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, including many migrant children.

In the early 1990s the ongoing discussion on the design of the first phase of secondary education was resolved with the introduction of ‘basic secondary education’, a general foundation course for the first three years of secondary education. The basic secondary education curriculum was introduced as a renewal of the educational content within the existing secondary education structure. In this sense it formed a compromise between proponents and opponents of integrated secondary education; the hierarchical structure of secondary education remained intact.

Only limited deferral of selection in secondary education

At the same time as the introduction of basic secondary education, the creation of combined schools was also promoted. Students at combined schools can defer their selection by first being placed in a transitional class (*‘brugklas’*) which incorporates several different levels. Following the school mergers in the 1990s, students now more often go straight into a transitional class from primary school, deferring their selection of secondary school stream, usually for a year. In 1999 about 70% of pupils in secondary education started in transitional classes, whereas in 1989 50% of pupils started in these classes. The deferral is in fact only limited: although the number of schools offering just one level of secondary education has reduced, the number of schools where all levels of secondary education are offered is still small (17%, CBS 2005, the percentage of pupils in these schools will be larger because of the large size of these schools) and the segregation between the provision of pre-vocational programmes on the one hand and the two highest tracks (*havo/vwo*) on the other, is still marked. The way in which the provision of the different levels of secondary education is distributed across schools inevitably sets limits on the ability to defer selection by means of transitional classes.

Broad-based combined schools also increasingly use ‘narrow’ transitional classes combining only two levels of secondary education. ‘Broad’ transitional classes, incorporating three or more levels of secondary education, are increasingly the exception (Bronneman-Helmerts et al. 2002; Borghans et al. 2007).

The common curriculum for basic secondary education which was introduced in the 1990s has had no influence on the timing of the selection of secondary education type; the shape of the basic curriculum differed too much between lower and higher levels of secondary education. Moreover, completing the basic curriculum did not confer a right to transfer to further education programmes. When the actual course of school careers in the first phase of secondary education is examined, it is clear that selection in secondary education is just as dependent since the introduction of the basic education curriculum on the final level attained by pupils at the end of primary school. The correlation with the socioeconomic background of pupils has also not reduced (Bronneman-Helmers et al. 2002; Borghans et al. 2007).

Migrant pupils still underrepresented in the higher tracks in secondary education

In the third academic year of secondary education, the distribution of pupils across the various levels of secondary education has become clear. Table 3.8 shows the distribution of different groups of young people across the different levels. The level of secondary education followed correlates strongly with the background of the students: children of non-Western migrants are found much more frequently at the lower levels, and are still underrepresented in the higher (*havo/vwo*) tracks. In line with their overrepresentation at the lower levels of secondary education, a relatively high percentage of non-Western migrant pupils (20-25% of all migrant pupils in secondary education, as opposed to 8% of native Dutch pupils) are referred for extra support in pre-vocational education (*'leerwegerondersteuning'*).

Students of Turkish or Moroccan origin, in particular, are currently very underrepresented in the higher levels of (general) secondary education: whereas 47% of native Dutch young people follow senior general secondary (*havo*) or pre-university (*vwo*) programmes, the figure for Turks and Moroccans is less than half this (22%). Students of Surinamese and Antillean origin occupying a midway position, with between 30% and 32% participating in the two highest tracks. The collective group 'other non-Western ethnic minorities' do not lag very far behind, although the proportion of students from the first generation in these groups is higher than among Turkish, Moroccan and Surinamese students. This can be explained by the fact that the parents of students in these groups themselves often have a higher education level.

While participation by migrant students in the two highest secondary education tracks is low, then, it is gradually increasing. However, as the participation by native students in these educational tracks is also increasing, the gap between native and migrant students is narrowing only slowly.

Table 3.8

Students in year 3 of secondary education, by level and by ethnic origin, 2003/'04- 2007/'08 (in percentages)

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinamese	Antillean	other non-Western	native Dutch
2003/'04 ^a						
<i>pre-vocational secondary education</i>						
basic vocational track	38.1	38.2	27.6	36.3	25.4	15.0
advanced vocational track	17.0	18.8	16.2	15.6	13.5	13.5
combined vocational-theoretical and theoretical track	24.1	24.1	26.0	20.3	23.5	25.8
<i>general secondary education</i>						
senior general secondary education	12.6	10.9	15.5	12.7	16.9	20.9
senior general/ pre-university education	1.1	1.6	2.9	2.8	3.3	3.4
pre-university education	7.2	6.4	11.7	12.3	17.4	21.4
<i>total secondary education</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100
2007/'08						
<i>pre-vocational secondary education</i>						
basic vocational track	30.4	29.9	21.4	27.5	17.5	12.5
advanced vocational track	20.6	21.5	19.6	19.8	15.3	14.6
combined vocational-theoretical and theoretical track	27.0	26.2	27.2	23.2	25.6	26.1
<i>general secondary education</i>						
senior general secondary education	12.5	12.7	15.7	15.0	18.8	21.2
senior general/ pre-university education	1.9	2.0	2.9	2.4	3.4	3.2
pre-university education	7.6	7.6	13.2	12.1	19.4	22.5
<i>total secondary education</i>	100	100	100	100	100	100

a in 2003/'04 excluding agricultural education.

Source: Statistics Netherlands (Statline)

Migrant pupils more often repeat years

In addition to being overrepresented in the lower levels, migrant students also more often repeat years than native Dutch pupils (table 3.9). At the first stage of secondary education first-generation migrant students more often repeat years than second-generation migrants. In the general programmes at the second stage (*havo/vwo*) there is no difference between first and second-generation migrant students. No data are available on grade repetition in senior vocational education.

Table 3.9
Grade repetition rate in secondary education^a, 2005/'06 (in percentages)

	native Dutch	migrants		all students	
		total	first generation		second generation
secondary education pre-vocational education and general programmes first stage (ISCED 2)	3.2	5.1	6.8	4.6	3.6
secondary education general programmes second stage (ISCED3)	8.8	11.7	11.4	11.8	9.2
total secondary education	4.6	6.2	7.6	5.8	4.9

a pre-vocational education and senior general secondary/pre-university (*havo/vwo*) education, i.e. excluding senior secondary vocational (*mbo*).

Source: Statistics Netherlands (Statline) SCP treatment

Migrant students have higher drop-out rates in secondary education

In line with the EU definition, departure from school without having completed a higher secondary education course (ISCED 3) is labelled as early school-leaving or drop-out in the Netherlands. Drop-out rates are much higher in senior vocational education than in pre-vocational and general secondary programmes. Until recently, many students in senior secondary vocational education were no longer subject to compulsory education, so there was no statutory obstacle to drop-out. For the same reason, students could also easily give in to the attraction of paid work as an alternative to education. Since the upper age limit of compulsory education was raised from 16 to 18 years with effect from 2007/08, a larger proportion of students in senior secondary education are now subject to compulsory education.

At nearly all levels of secondary education migrant students have higher drop-out rates than native Dutch students (table 3.10; the drop-out rates in table 3.10 were calculated in accordance with the EU definition of early school-leaving). The ISCED level 2 programmes in senior vocational education – assistant training – are the exception to this rule; the number of students in ISCED 2 senior vocational programmes is rather small, however. Some of those dropping out of ISCED 3 courses have completed a programme at level ISCED 2, but are counted as early school-leavers because they do not meet the requirement of having completed a programme at level ISCED 3.

Table 3.10

Drop-out rate in secondary education, 2005/'06 (in percentages)

	native Dutch	non-Western migrants		all students	
		total	first generation		second generation
secondary education pre-vocational education and general programmes first stage (ISCED 2)	1.8	3.2	5.3	2.5	2.2
secondary education general programmes second stage (ISCED3)	1.0	1.5	1.9	1.3	1.2
senior vocational education (ISCED 2)	41.0	33.4	32.4	34.3	38.4
senior vocational education (ISCED 3)	6.9	11.7	12.0	11.5	8.0
ISCED 2, all programmes	2.3	5.1	8.2	3.6	3.0
ISCED 3, all programmes	4.7	8.8	10.0	8.8	5.6

Source: OCW/CFI (Onderwijsnummerbestand) SCP treatment

As a result of the high drop-out rates, the percentage of early school-leavers in the 15-24 age group is much higher among non-Western migrants than among native Dutch students. Whereas 11.2% of the native Dutch population in this age group are labelled as early school-leaver, the figure is 16.8% among non-Western migrants. In the 25-34 age group, the difference between non-Western migrants and native Dutch students is even more pronounced (32.6% versus 16.3%). It should be noted, however, that the 25-34 age group (and to a lesser extent the 15-24 age group) includes first-generation migrants who were never enrolled in Dutch education, since they arrived in the Netherlands at a later age.

'Accumulating' educational qualifications as a correction for early selection

The selection in secondary education anticipates different follow-up options. For students in senior general secondary (*havo*) and pre-university (*vwo*) programmes, going on to higher education is the logical continuation path; similarly, students in pre-vocational secondary education (*vmbo*) are prepared for transition to a secondary vocational programme (ISCED 3) where they can attain an occupational qualification. Since transitional classes have only limited impact in terms of deferral of selection, Dutch secondary education is often described as a two-tier system.

One way of correcting the early selection is through the 'accumulating' of programmes, enabling students to transfer to a higher level of secondary education after completing a programme at a lower level. 'Accumulating' qualifications in this way enables late developers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds or from migrant groups to penetrate to the higher secondary education tracks. Of particular importance is the route from theoretical pre-vocational education (*vmbo theoretische*

leerweg) to the second phase of senior general secondary education (*havo*), which gives students direct access to programmes that prepare them for higher education and thus breaks through the twofold division in the secondary education system.

The ‘accumulation’ of secondary education qualifications lost a lot of popularity in the 1990s, partly because it was considered inefficient and partly because it was probably considered a less suitable option after the reform of the second phase of senior general education in the late 1990s (the introduction of the so-called *studiehuis* method, see further section 5.7). In recent years it has however been increasing again (TK 2007/2008a) and is now back at the same level as in the early 1990s. The figures show that Turkish, Moroccan and other non-Western migrant students in particular often make use of this possibility to move up through the secondary education system (from pre-vocational combined-theoretical/theoretical certificate – to senior general secondary education; see table 3.11).

Table 3.11

Progression of secondary education certificate-holders to further education, by ethnic origin, 2005 (in percentages)

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinamese	Antillean	other non-Western	native Dutch
vmbo basic vocational track certificate						
to senior vocational education	91	92	90	82	85	86
vmbo advanced vocational track certificate						
to senior vocational education	94	96	93	85	91	92
vmbo combined/theoretical track certificate						
to senior general education	21	22	13	14	24	14
to senior vocational education	74	75	80	80	67	81
senior general education certificate						
to pre-university education	7	4	4	7	7	4
to senior vocational education	-	-	-	-	3	4
to higher professional education	87	89	88	72	76	80
pre-university certificate						
to higher professional education	-	-	9	8	5	15
to university education	92	90	81	74	82	71

Source: Gijsberts and Herweijer (2007)

Moreover, non-Western ethnic minority students holding a certificate generally go on more often than native students to further education, and when they do so almost always opt for the highest possible track.

3.5 Participation in higher education

Growing numbers of migrants entering higher education

Although proportionally few migrant secondary school students are selected for the *havo/vwo* track, the number of young migrant students in higher education has nonetheless increased strongly in the last decade (table 3.12; the table relates only to students from the second generation, because the participation figures for first-generation migrants are distorted upwards by students from non-Western countries who came to the Netherlands specifically to follow a course of study). Despite this, the number of Turkish and Moroccan students entering higher education is still well below that of native students. Surinamese students are at less of a disadvantage in this regard than their Turkish and Moroccan counterparts, while the number of young people from other non-Western ethnic minorities entering higher education is equal to or even higher than that of native students.

Turkish and Moroccan and to a lesser extent Surinamese students are more often than native Dutch students enrolled in higher professional education (as opposed to university education). Higher professional education is the dominant form of higher education for all groups – migrant and native Dutch – this dominance is less marked for native Dutch students. This implies that differences in entry rates are more pronounced in university education than in higher professional education.

The high entry rate of Antillean students is typical of the two faces of this group: on the one hand they are strongly represented in the lowest levels of education and in the drop-out statistics, while on the other hand there is also a sizeable group of successful Antillean students.

Table 3.12

Students entering higher education as a percentage of the corresponding age group^a, by ethnic origin, 1995-2007

	Turkish ^b	Moroccan ^b	Surinamese ^b	Antillean ^b	other non-Western ^b	native Dutch
1995/'96	15.5	17.9	28.2	51.8	51.5	44.6
2000/'05	23.4	27.8	34.2	54.8	52.0	52.1
2005/'06	34.0	36.1	42.7	54.9	58.7	55.1
2006/'07	36.7	37.6	46.9	51.1	61.6	55.2
2007/'08	36.6	40.2	48.9	53.2	61.2	56.1

a number of first-year students as a percentage of the average number of 18, 19 and 20 year-olds in the population.

b second generation only.

Source: Statistics Netherlands (Statline) SCP treatment

Alternative route to higher education is important for migrant students

A certificate obtained at the highest level of secondary education (*havo* or *vwo*) is the traditional access route to higher education in the Netherlands. However, there is also an alternative route via the higher levels of senior secondary vocational education. In principle, these programmes prepare students for the labour market, but it is also possible to go on to higher professional education after completing a vocational programme at senior secondary level. This route to higher education constitutes a second correction to the early selection in secondary education, alongside the option of ‘accumulating’ qualifications within secondary education. This access route is relatively important for students with a low-education background (Herweijer 2006), and also for students from ethnic minorities. In 2006 48% of Turkish students, 54% of Moroccan students and 47% of Surinamese students in higher professional education had come through the secondary vocational route. The figure among native Dutch students was much lower (32%: Netherlands Statistics, Statline).

Although a substantial number of students end up in higher education via the vocational study route, there are drawbacks to this route. The chance that students who follow this route will leave education before reaching higher education is much greater than for those following the more ‘academic’ secondary education tracks (senior general secondary (*havo*) and pre-university (*vwo*) education). Naturally, this has to do with the focused nature of senior secondary vocational education, which is much more geared to producing people who are equipped for the labour market. Moreover, results from assessments indicate that students in higher professional education who qualify via the vocational route lag behind in arithmetic and language skills compared to students who qualify via the academic secondary education tracks (www.hbo-raad.nl). Finally, students who qualify via the vocational route are generally rather older when they begin their higher education career; the chance of them breaking off their study, for example in order to form a family, is then probably greater (Crul et al 2008).

More delay and drop-out in higher education

Migrant students in higher education more often experience delays during their courses, or even drop out of higher without obtaining a degree (table 3.13). Whereas about 70-73 % of native Dutch students graduate after seven years, only 50-55 % of non-Western migrant students graduate in that same period (higher education programmes last four years – higher professional education and most university programmes – or five years – some university programmes).

Table 3.13

Graduation in higher education by students who entered in higher education in 2000/01, by ethnic origin (in percentages)

graduation after:	3 years	4 years	5 years	6 years	7 years
higher professional education					
Turkish	5	26	39	48	53
Moroccan	7	28	43	50	55
Surinamese	6	23	37	46	51
Antillean	4	19	33	41	47
other non-Western	6	25	42	50	55
native Dutch	9	43	58	65	69
University education					
Turkish	7	18	33	44	55
Moroccan	7	15	30	41	51
Surinamese	6	15	30	41	55
Antillean	6	14	28	42	55
other non-Western	9	20	35	53	65
native Dutch	9	21	42	60	73

Source: Netherlands Statistics (Statline)

Students who qualify via the vocational route are somewhat less successful in higher education than students who qualify via senior general education: drop-out rates are higher and – in the case non-Western students – graduation rates lower (table 3.14).

Table 3.14

Graduation and drop-out of students who entered in higher professional education in 2000/01, by ethnic origin and preliminary training (in percentages)

	graduation after:			drop-out after:		
	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs
native Dutch students						
senior vocational education	60	65	67	27	27	28
senior general education	55	64	69	19	19	20
pre-university education	70	77	81	11	11	12
non-Western students						
senior vocational education	39	45	49	36	38	39
senior general education	37	47	54	23	24	26
pre-university education	50	61	66	17	19	21

Source: Netherlands Statistics (Statline)

At the same time table 3.14 demonstrates that differences in preliminary training do not fully account for differences in study success in higher education between native Dutch and migrant students. When there is no difference in preliminary training (e.g. senior general education) migrant students are just the same less successful than native Dutch students.

3.6 Achievement of first and second-generation migrants

In recent decades the share of first-generation migrant students has declined (see chapter 2). Today the vast majority of migrant pupils in primary education are from the second generation that was born and raised in the Netherlands. In the age range of secondary and higher education the share of first-generation migrants is higher, but has also declined in recent years. Since pupils from the second generation perform better than those from the first generation, the increase in the percentage of second-generation migrants will have a positive impact on the educational achievements of migrant pupils.

Research into the educational achievement of migrant pupils in primary education shows that pupils from the second generation in general perform better than those from the first generation, although second-generation pupils also lag behind native pupils. The analysis presented in Gijsberts (2006) shows for example that migrant pupils from the second generation have a higher score on the language and arithmetic tests in the PRIMA cohort study than first-generation migrant pupils (table 3.15, adapted from Gijsberts (2006), differences in parental educational level have been taken into account). In language the performance gap between first and second-generation pupils is larger than in arithmetic (this also applies to the performance gap between native Dutch and migrant pupils irrespective of generation).

Table 3.15
Scores^a in language and arithmetic tests in primary school year group 8, by ethnic group and generation 1988/'89-2002/'03

	language	arithmetic
ethnic group (native Dutch high ^b = reference category)		
Turks	-9.0	-3.0
Moroccans	-6.7	-3.0
Surinamese	-4.7	-4.4
Antilleans	-7.2	-5.6
native Dutch low ^c	-0.7	-1.0
generation (first generation = reference category)		
second generation	2.2	1.6

a average tests score = 50, standard deviation = 10, coefficients multilevel regression analysis (parental educational level, sex and percentage ethnic pupils in schools also included as explanatory variables).

b highest educated parent has completed an education to a maximum of ISCED level 2.

c highest educated parent has completed an education to ISCED 3 or higher.

Source: Gijsberts (2006)

The distribution of different ethnic groups of young people across the various tracks of Dutch secondary education shows a similar picture. Second-generation migrant pupils are less heavily overrepresented at the lowest pre-vocational tracks than first-generation migrant pupils, and are more often to be found in the higher general tracks (*havo/vwo*, table 3.16). Despite this, the gap between second-generation migrant pupils and native Dutch pupils is still wide.

Table 3.16

Students in year 3 of secondary education^a, by level and by ethnic origin and generation, 2004/05 (in percentages)

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinamese	Antillean	native Dutch
first generation					
pre-vocational secondary education					
basic and advanced vocational tracks	61	66	52	66	-
combined vocational-theoretical and theoretical track	20	17	25	19	-
general secondary education					
senior general secondary education	11	9	13	8	-
senior general/ pre-university education	2	3	2	2	-
pre-university education	7	5	8	5	-
total secondary education	100	100	100	100	-
second generation					
pre-vocational secondary education					
basic and advanced vocational tracks	53	53	44	39	28
combined vocational-theoretical and theoretical track	26	26	26	23	26
general secondary education					
senior general secondary education	13	12	15	17	21
senior general/ pre-university education	1	2	3	4	4
pre-university education	7	7	13	17	22
total secondary education	100	100	100	100	100

a excluding agricultural education.

Source: adapted from Gijsberts and Hartgers (2005)

3.7 Gender disparity among migrant pupils and students

As in many other countries, girls in the Netherlands have traditionally lagged behind boys in education, but have made good the shortfall during the last few decades and in fact overtaken boys. This phenomenon is not yet visible in primary education, where according to the scores in the tests set by the National Institute for Educational Measurement (CITO), boys are still achieving slightly better than girls at the end of their primary school career. Although girls perform better in language, this is not enough to make up their shortfall relative to boys in arithmetic and mathematics (table 3.17). It does however have to be borne in mind that a slightly higher proportion of boys follow special needs education rather than mainstream primary education, and are thus left out of consideration in the figures in table 3.17). The pattern of differences between boys and girls is more or less identical for migrants and native Dutch pupils.

Table 3.17
Percentage of correct answers in the CITO test, by gender and ethnic origin, 2006/'07

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surinamese	Antillean	native Dutch
language					
boys	58	59	65	64	70
girls	60	62	66	67	72
arithmetic and mathematics					
boys	67	65	65	64	73
girls	58	57	58	58	67
total score ^a					
boys	61	61	65	64	70
girls	59	60	63	64	69

a the total score includes the third part of the test (study skills).

Source: CBS (2008)

In secondary education migrant girls have overtaken boys

In the first stage of secondary education a reversal occurs. After all students are distributed across the different levels of secondary education in the third year, girls are found in the highest tracks (*havo/vwo*) more often than boys, while boys are overrepresented in the two lowest tracks of pre-vocational secondary education (*vmbo*). This pattern occurs to roughly the same degree among young people of native Dutch and non-Western ethnic origin. The differences are not exceptionally large – the participation rate of girls in the two highest tracks is three to four percentage points higher than that of boys – but the pattern is consistent across all ethnic groups (table 3.18).

Table 3.18

Students in year 3 of secondary education, by level, ethnic origin and gender, 2007/'08
(in percentages)

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surina- mese	Antillean	other non- Western	native Dutch
boys						
pre-vocational secondary education						
basic vocational track	32.4	31.8	23.4	29.4	18.9	14.2
advanced vocational track	20.1	20.4	19.8	19.6	15.7	15.5
combined vocational-theoretical and theoretical track	27.4	27.1	26.6	22.5	25.5	26.2
general secondary education						
senior general secondary education	11.7	12.0	15.1	14.7	18.9	20.9
senior general/ pre-university education	1.7	1.7	2.8	2.9	3.4	2.9
pre-university education	6.7	7.0	12.3	10.8	17.6	20.3
total secondary education	100	100	100	100	100	100
girls						
pre-vocational secondary education						
basic vocational track	28.7	27.9	19.4	25.7	16.0	10.7
advanced vocational track	21.0	22.4	19.4	20.0	14.9	13.6
combined vocational-theoretical and theoretical track	26.9	25.5	27.8	23.8	25.8	25.9
general secondary education						
senior general secondary education	13.3	13.3	16.3	15.2	18.7	21.5
senior general/ pre-university education	1.8	2.4	3.0	1.9	3.3	3.5
pre-university education	8.3	8.5	14.1	13.3	21.3	24.8
total secondary education	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Statistics Netherlands (Statline) SCP treatment

The drop-out rates in secondary education present a comparable picture. The drop-out rate among boys is higher than that of girls among both native students and students from the different migrant groups. Among migrant groups, the difference is greater than among native students in senior secondary vocational education (*mbo*) in particular (table 3.19); boys of non-Western ethnic origin are without doubt the most problematic group in terms of secondary school drop-out (Herweijer 2008a).

Table 3.19

Early school-leavers in general secondary education and senior secondary vocational education, by gender and ethnic origin, 2005/'06 (in percentages of all students)

	Turkish	Moroccan	Surina- mese	Antillean	other non- Western	native Dutch
secondary education, pre-vocational and general programmes						
boys	2.3	2.5	2.1	3.2	3.1	1.0
girls	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.8	2.6	0.7
senior secondary vocational education						
boys	16.9	18.4	17.6	18.3	18.0	8.7
girls	9.4	9.7	10.6	11.7	11.9	6.7

Source: OCW/CFI (Onderwijsnummerbestand) SCP treatment

Migrant boys are overrepresented in special education

The disadvantage of boys relative to girls is thrown into even sharper relief when we include the different forms of special education in the comparison. The participation rates for special schools have increased sharply in recent decades. In some forms of special education, however, the growth has been halted thanks to measures designed to bring to an end the referral to special schools; in other types of special education, however, the growth continues unabated.

The overrepresentation of boys in special education is a given: between 65% and 70% of students in special schools are male, and in some specific provision types increases to above 80% (schools for young people with severe behavioural problems). This disparity between boys and girls occurs to the same degree among native students and students with a non-Western background; the referral of non-Western ethnic minority boys and girls to special needs schools thus follows the general pattern, though the referral of non-Western students is higher across the board than that of native students.

Migrant women are also more successful in higher education

In higher education too, finally, young women from the migrant groups have a lead over young men. A higher percentage of female students embark on higher education courses, and they are moreover more successful. Men study more slowly and less often complete their courses (Herweijer 2006, CBS 2008).

All in all, the comparison between boys and girls and young men and young women from the non-Western migrant groups turns out to the disadvantage of boys and young men. Migrants are not exceptional in this regard – native Dutch male students also lag behind their female counterparts – but the gap is deeper in some respects (drop-out) in the migrant groups than in the native population.

3.8 Success factors and constraining factors

Factors that influence the educational achievement of migrant pupils and students can be sought in various places: in and around the families where migrant students grow up, in education and in and around the schools attended by migrant students.

Factors in families

The educational disadvantage of young members of non-Western ethnic minorities is due in part to the socioeconomic status of their families: many Turkish and Moroccan parents, in particular, have themselves had little education. Moreover, some of them have a poor command of the Dutch language (see chapter 2) and are unfamiliar with the Dutch education system. To a large extent, therefore, the educational disadvantage of migrant pupils is a reflection of the impact of socioeconomic differences on educational success, though cannot be attributed entirely to this. The high percentage of single-parent families in some migrant groups (Antilleans, Surinamese) is also a risk factor for the school careers of young people: students who grow up in lone-parent families perform less well in education and are at greater risk of school drop-out.

Apart from parents, brothers and sisters or other people in the social networks of young migrants can have a positive influence on their educational success. The accounts of migrants who do succeed in the Dutch education system reveal that they have received support from older brothers or sisters or others in their networks who have themselves pursued a successful educational career (Crul 2000. Crul et al 2008).

Mentoring projects

'Mentoring projects' build on the understanding that support from their networks can have a positive influence on the school careers of migrant students. In these projects, ethnic minority secondary school students receive support from a mentor, often a higher education student or other person from their own ethnic group, who acts as a role model. The support provided by mentors includes socio-emotional support, support with studies and/or help in choosing further courses. The envisaged benefits of mentoring include reduced school drop-out and more students going on to further education. A few years ago, the number of mentoring projects in the Netherlands was estimated at 25 (Crul & Kraal 2004). The experiences with mentoring projects are positive, with good results being achieved particularly in the area of social skills and behaviour of ethnic minority 'risk students' (students in the lowest tracks of pre-vocational secondary education – *vmb0*), though the impact on school drop-out also appears to be positive. To gain a better insight into the effects of mentoring programmes, control groups would need to be used.

'Ethnic' schools

Children of migrants in large cities often attend 'ethnic schools' (schools with a high proportion of migrant pupils) and there is considerable debate about whether the concentration of migrants in these schools has a harmful effect on their educational opportunities. However, data from the PRIMA cohort study referred to earlier suggest that the disadvantage of ethnic schools in primary education in terms of learning achievement is not great. Multilevel analysis of these data by Gijsberts and Hartgers (2005) demonstrates that after taking into account the background of pupils, only a small part of the differences (variance) in achievement level is attributable to the school level (approximately 8% of variance in language achievement level and 12% of variance in arithmetic achievement level). Furthermore only a minor part of school level differences is related to the ethnic composition of schools (10% of school level differences in language achievement level and 4% of school level differences in arithmetic achievement level).

The negative 'ethnic school effect' – the disadvantage caused by having many fellow pupils from migrant groups – itself has weakened in recent years (table 3.20 shows the estimated achievement level in schools with different ethnic composition; characteristics at the individual level are taken into account (ethnic background, parental educational level, migration generation, pupils gender)).

Table 3.20

Achievement level^a in the final year of primary education, by ethnic composition of schools^b, 1988-2002

	1988	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002
language achievement level						
0-10% ethnic pupils	42.7	42.7	42.6	42.6	42.5	42.5
10-25% ethnic pupils	42.2	42.3	42.5	42.6	42.8	42.9
25-50% ethnic pupils	39.9	40.4	40.8	41.2	41.6	42.1
50-75% ethnic pupils	37.7	38.4	39.2	39.9	40.7	41.4
75-100% ethnic pupils	37.8	38.4	38.9	39.5	40.0	40.6
arithmetic achievement level						
0-10% ethnic pupils	44.8	44.8	44.7	44.6	44.5	44.5
10-25% ethnic pupils	44.7	44.7	44.7	44.7	44.7	44.6
25-50% ethnic pupils	44.0	43.9	43.8	43.8	43.7	43.6
50-75% ethnic pupils	41.3	41.7	42.2	42.6	43.0	43.4
75-100% ethnic pupils	41.8	42.2	42.6	42.9	43.3	43.7

a standardised scores (average = 50, standard deviation = 10).

b effect of ethnic composition estimated by multilevel regression analysis (parental educational level, pupils ethnic background, migration generation and pupils sex taken into account, changes in the effect of ethnic composition were estimated by allowing the effect of ethnic composition to change over time).

Source: adapted from Gijsberts and Hartgers (2005)

Although the achievements of pupils at 'ethnic schools' are well below those of pupils at mixed or 'white schools', therefore, this is largely due to the origin of the pupils. By tailoring their education to the pupil population, 'ethnic schools' are becoming increasingly successful in enabling comparable pupils to achieve comparable results. 'Ethnic schools' have thus made an important contribution to reducing the educational disadvantage of migrant pupils in primary schools (Gijssberts 2006).

In secondary schools, however, the concentration of migrant students at 'ethnic schools' in the major cities appears to have a negative impact in the specific area of school drop-out; the risk of drop-out at this type of school is greater than at more mixed schools (Herweijer 2008a, Traag & Van der Velden 2007).

The concentration of migrant students in certain districts of the major cities also appears to have a negative impact on their school careers. Young people living in deprived areas of the cities are at increased risk of drop-out from secondary school and senior secondary vocational programmes (Herweijer 2008a).

Effective schooling

There is a degree of consensus in the international literature on the effective tackling of educational disadvantage (Tesser & Iedema 2001, Ledoux & Overmaat 2001). According to this consensus, students in disadvantaged groups benefit from a structured curriculum with a good deal of direct instruction and attention for basic skills. Empirical research in Dutch primary education provides little in the way of clear support for this, however: schools that are successful with ethnic minority pupils tend towards a traditional approach, but the differences in their approach compared with less effective schools are slight (Ledoux & Overmaat 2001).

In chapter 5 we look in more detail at the contribution of specific intervention programmes to the learning achievements of migrant pupils and students (pre-school and early-school education programmes, 'induction' classes).

Early selection in secondary education

The Dutch system of selecting the type of secondary school programme at an early stage can work to the disadvantage of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, if they are given a recommendation from primary school that is too low and are consequently placed in a secondary education track that is below their capabilities.

As already stated, the number of ethnic minority students who receive a recommendation that is low in comparison with their achievements in the final stage of primary education, or who are selected for too low a strand of secondary education, is not great, and in fact hardly larger than for native students (Mulder et al 2007, Stroucken et al. 2008). The potential of late developers will however not yet be visible at the age of 11 or 12 years. This is borne out by the fact that a proportion of ethnic minority secondary school students ultimately attain a higher level in secondary education than that suggested by the recommendation they received from their primary school (Kuyper & Van der Werf 2007, Mulder et al. 2007). The numbers of

ethnic minority students involved are not large – 12-15% attain a higher level – but this does occur more often than among native students.

Although this does not emerge clearly from the analyses of the studies referred to, it seems reasonable to assume that the chance of transferring to a higher level of secondary education is greater in schools with a broad educational provision, where the student does not have to change schools in order to move up to a higher level. Mixed transitional classes which include a higher level than the recommended educational level also have an influence; research from the 1990s has shown that they offer a greater chance of moving up to a higher level of education than that recommended (Van der Werf et al. 1999).

Other phenomena which suggest that there are late developers among migrant students are the large numbers of secondary school students who ‘accumulate’ qualifications (moving through pre-vocational secondary education (theoretical track) to the second phase of senior general secondary education, *havo*) and the large number of ethnic minority students at universities of higher professional education who have come through the vocational education system. Deferring the choice of study in transitional classes and the ability to accumulate qualifications thus reduce the risk that potential late developers will be locked into a programme which in the slightly longer term fails to do justice to their ability.

Migrant students in higher education need extra support

Students from non-Western ethnic minorities are generally less successful in higher education than native students: they attain fewer credits, drop out more often and less often complete their courses (see once more table 3.13 and table 3.14). In programmes which provide high levels of care for students, the differences in the success rates between students with a non-Western ethnic background and native students are smaller or even absent.

Students from non-Western ethnic groups are more dependent on their learning environment than native students; native students find it easier to manage on their own, while ethnic minority students need an environment which requires them to be less independent. They need small-scale organisation of the study programme, with short blocks of study and intensive support where they spend a lot of time studying along with other students and with the lecturer (Severiens et al 2006).

4 School policies and practices

4.1 School choice, admission and financial accessibility

Free school choice is a major element of the Dutch education system. In principle, the choice of primary and secondary school is a free one, in that it is not dependent on catchment areas or school districts. However, free school choice is not a guarantee of admission to the preferred school. Free school choice and possible admission restrictions may reinforce the segregation between native Dutch and non-Western migrant pupils.

School choice and admission in primary education

Public (state) primary schools are universally accessible, which means that in principle they must admit all pupils. Schools can however deviate from this rule when they are full. In addition, in view of the policy of encouraging children to go to school in their own residential area, constraints may be applied in state schools in which pupils from the local area are given priority. This sometimes happens in the major cities (e.g. Amsterdam).

Independent schools (operated under private law but with full state funding) can also impose requirements based on their ideological or religious identity. In practice, however, the main strands in independent education (Roman Catholic and Protestant schools) operate largely as universally accessible primary schools which accept pupils from all religious and ideological milieus. This is apparent from the large number of pupils with different (e.g. Islamic) or no religious background who attend these schools. Roman Catholic and Protestant schools are no longer exclusively oriented towards the religious communities from which they originally emanate. Independent schools representing smaller strands and with a strongly religious or ideological profile occupy a different position, mainly or even exclusively attracting pupils (and parents) who feel at home with that profile. Examples are the orthodox Protestant and Islamic schools.

There are also some independent schools which adopt a specific educational approach (e.g. the Montessori Method) and which therefore attract a select public consisting of often better-educated parents. The relatively high financial parental contribution levied by some of these schools can also put off parents from less well-to-do backgrounds (although the contribution cannot in principle be made compulsory). There are often waiting lists for these kinds of schools in the major cities.

Choice and admission in secondary education

In secondary education there is also a distinction between public (state) and private (independent) schools, with independent schools being able to impose requirements in connection with their ideological or religious identity. Perhaps to an even greater extent than primary schools, secondary schools representing the major religious and ideological strands offer a universally accessible basic education provision.

More important in secondary education is the differentiation between programmes of different levels. At the higher levels, conditions are imposed in respect of the achievement level of students for admission to both public state and independent schools. The admissibility of students is assessed on the basis of the recommendation given by their primary school and their score in a national test (CITO test or another test) at the end of primary school. Schools are free to determine the required achievement levels for admission to the different educational levels in secondary education; there are no central guidelines for this. Popular schools may impose more selective conditions than less popular schools. If the number of applicants still exceeds the capacity, additional procedures may be employed (e.g. first come, first served, selection by drawing lots, priority for pupils with elder brothers or sisters at school). Since the lower and higher tracks of secondary education are often offered in different locations, the level differentiation in secondary education brings about segregation between migrant and native Dutch pupils.

Admission to programmes in senior vocational education requires a certificate from a previous education programme. In the lower tracks of senior vocational education (the 'assistant' training programmes and basic vocational training) students are also admitted who do not hold a pre-vocational (ISCED 2) certificate. This encourages the transition from pre-vocational education to follow-on courses in senior vocational education, but the drawback is that students without a pre-vocational qualification are at increased risk of dropping out of the senior vocational programmes (Herweijer 2008a).

Choice and admission in higher education

In principle higher education (ISCED 5) programmes are universally accessible to students who meet the admission requirements (in terms of certificates and subjects). An exception are higher education programmes which have limited capacity (e.g. medical training programmes), for which lots are drawn in a system where candidates with the best grades have the best chance of being admitted, and arts and sports programmes where aptitude is an additional selection criterion.

Tuition fees

Primary and secondary education in the Netherlands is free up to the age of 18. From age 18 onwards, students in senior vocational education pay tuition fees, the amount of which is fixed by law (EUR 975 per school year in 2007/08: table 4.1). In higher education the tuition fee is 1,538 EUR per school year (2007/08).

Table 4.1
Annual school fee, 2007/'08 (in EUR)

	primary education	pre-vocational education and general second- ary education	senior vocational education	higher education
up to 18 years	0	0	0	1,538
18 years and older- fulltime	-	0	975	1,538
18 years and older- part-time	-		202 - 491 ^a	^b

a depending on the level of senior vocational education.
b tuition fee for part-time higher education is not subject to central regulations .

Source: Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

In primary education (ISCED 0/1) the school has traditionally provided textbooks and teaching materials. In pre-vocational and general secondary education (ISCED 2 and 3), parents were until recently responsible for purchasing textbooks. Those on low incomes were eligible for full or partial grants from the government for this, depending on the level of their income. With effect from the school year 2008/09, textbooks for courses in pre-vocational and general secondary education are free for all students (this does not apply to senior vocational education).

Voluntary contribution

Primary and secondary schools often ask parents for a contribution towards extra activities. This contribution is not compulsory and pupils cannot be excluded from parts of the regular school programme if their parents do not pay it. According to a survey (Herweijer & Vogels 2004) parents contributed EUR 30 per annum in primary education and EUR 85 per annum in secondary education. At a small number of schools a higher voluntary contribution is levied.

Financial support in secondary education

As regards the other school fees, parents from the lower income groups can apply for a grant which, depending on their financial position, ranges from a maximum of EUR 286 (ISCED 2), to EUR 386 (ISCED 3 general education) and EUR 995 (ISCED 3 vocational education) per annum.

Student finance in higher education

From the age of 18 years, students in secondary vocational education (ISCED 3) and higher education (ISCED 5) are entitled to student finance from central government, which is designed not only to cover the costs of tuition fees and textbooks, but also to go some way to meeting maintenance costs. Student finance consists of a basic grant that is the same for all students, a transport facility for all students (public transport pass) and a supplementary grant for students from lower income groups.

Provided students obtain adequate study results, the basic grant and supplementary grant are non-repayable; if not they must be repaid. In addition, students can borrow additional funding from the government, which must be repaid after completion of their studies.

4.2 *Induction programmes for newly arrived migrants*

In the youngest age group the vast majority of migrant children were born and raised in the Netherlands. In the older age groups the percentage of migrant youngsters in the first generation is higher. In municipalities with large numbers of newcomers, a number of primary and secondary schools have set up special newcomers' classes (induction classes for initial reception in primary schools and international induction classes in secondary schools). Pupils in these classes follow a modified programme which devotes a great deal of attention to learning the Dutch language. The aim is that newcomers should then go on to a mainstream education programme. The government makes available additional funding for secondary schools for this initial reception of newcomers (less than two years in the Netherlands).

The parents of newly arrived students must follow a mandatory 'civic integration' course. This course is compulsory for all newcomers from non-Western countries aged between 18 and 65 years and includes modules on knowledge of Dutch society and teaching of the Dutch language (see Klaver & Odé 2007). Newcomers are expected to meet the language standards set at level A2 of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Newcomers have to pass the examination of the civic integration course within five years; if not sanctions may be imposed.

Initial reception centres for asylum-seekers provide education for young people of school age. This education has a bridging function to help them move into mainstream education. It focuses on goals which are related to those for mainstream education.

4.3 *Testing and monitoring of achievements*

A knowledge of the achievements of pupils is a precondition for the promotion of equal opportunities for pupils from different population groups.

Testing and monitoring in primary education

It is not standard practice in Dutch education to use entrance tests in primary education. After entrance primary schools need to have an insight into the progress made by their pupils. This is part of the quality assurance system. Progress is measured at intervals using a 'pupil monitoring system'; the exit level achieved at the end of primary school is often measured by means of a test. Many schools use the pupil monitoring system and test devised by the National Institute for Educational Measurement (CITO), but are in fact free to select their own pupil monitoring system and test.

Some primary schools feel that the CITO test is too one-sided (too much emphasis on knowledge) and do not use it. This means that comparable data are not available for all schools and pupils: roughly 85% of primary schools use the CITO test. In addition, some schools do not allow the poorest performing pupils to take the test. The CITO institute has made available an adapted version of the test for poorly performing pupils. The aim is to remove the objection that taking the test is too frustrating an experience for these pupils.

The results of the exit level test are used mainly for individual pupils and their allocation to the different levels of secondary education. Schools which administer the test also receive a report of the average score for that school. The score achieved by primary schools in the final test is one of the starting points for the opinion issued by the Education Inspectorate on primary school performance. The Inspectorate uses a relative standard for this: are the learning achievements of a school in line with the performance of other schools with a comparable pupil population (e.g. schools with large numbers of migrant pupils or schools with mainly native pupils)?

Until recently it was not possible to break down the results in the most widely used test (the CITO test) by ethnic origin of the pupils (native Dutch versus migrant), but new administrative techniques (linking information on ethnic origin from the population records to the test results) mean this is now possible. The performance of migrant pupils in the CITO test has been compared with that of native pupils in scientific publications (Hartgers 2008, see also chapter 3).

At national level, the learning achievements in the various primary school subject areas (e.g. Dutch language, arithmetic/mathematics, English) are monitored in more detail via a system of Periodic Assessment of Educational Achievement (PPOA). These assessments are held at intervals of several years in different subject areas, and attention is also devoted to the performance of different groups of pupils (native pupils, non-Western ethnic minority pupils).

The government also (indirectly) finances a number of longitudinal research programmes in primary and secondary schools which track the learning achievements and socio-emotional functioning of pupils (formerly the PRIMA cohort study and VOCL cohort study, now the COOL 5-18 cohort study). These studies play an important role in monitoring the success of the educational disadvantage policy, and the learning achievements of migrant pupils form an important element in that exercise.

Testing and monitoring in secondary education

Schools in secondary education do not administer an entrance test themselves. The admission of pupils to the different educational tracks is based partly on the national exit level test (the CITO test) that is taken by most pupils at the end of primary school. Pupils who leave school with a substantial educational disadvantage may be referred for extra help and support at secondary school ('*leerwegondersteuning*'). Eligibility for this is assessed by a regional referral committee, which applies specific standardised criteria relating to learning disadvantage, intelligence and/or social/emotional problems. No distinction is made between migrants and other

pupils in the national test at the end of primary school, nor when referring students for extra support at secondary school.

Students are admitted to senior vocational programmes on the basis of certificates attained in pre-vocational education (with an exemption for the two lowest levels of senior vocational education where students without a pre-vocational certificate can be admitted). In addition, senior vocational programmes often involve an intake interview to assess whether the prospective student has made the right choice and/or has knowledge gaps.

National examinations are used to measure student performance in pre-vocational and general secondary education. Beyond this, there are no separate tests which provide an insight into the progress of individual students. The participation by migrant students in the different tracks of secondary education, combined with their pass rates in the examinations and the marks they achieve in the examination, provide a picture of the educational achievement of migrant students in secondary education. The examination results of native students and migrant students are published in the annual reports of the Dutch Education Inspectorate and by Statistics Netherlands (CBS).

To date there are no national examinations in senior secondary vocational education. However, the introduction of national examinations for Dutch language and mathematics in this educational track has recently been announced.

4.4 *Evaluation of teachers and teaching practices*

The Dutch Education Inspectorate supervises the quality of the education in Dutch schools. That supervision does not extend to individual teachers, but is focused on the school as a whole. Assessing the functioning of individual teachers is an internal school matter.

If the Inspectorate feels that the quality of teaching at a school is below par, it will make agreements with the school on improvements and will later verify whether those improvements have been realised. The Inspectorate publishes its opinion on individual schools on its website, so that parents and students can obtain information, address concerns to the schools concerned and take the assessments into account when choosing a school.

The Education Inspectorate subjects schools with quality problems to more intensive supervision, but in general there are no consequences for the level of funding if a school is underperforming. A number of years ago, however, a programme was launched to improve the results of underperforming schools with a large proportion of disadvantaged pupils ('educational opportunities policy'). Schools selected for this programme received additional funding to improve their quality, in addition to the regular funding for disadvantaged pupils. About 400 schools were selected, mainly in primary education.

In theory, the government can in extreme cases block the funding of a school entirely (this applies for both state and independent schools), but in practice this

does not occur. The emphasis is on improvement via supervision, guidance and counselling.

4.5 Outreach to parents

The Dutch government is committed to increasing the involvement of parents in primary and secondary education. Special attention is devoted to parents from the migrant groups, who are generally more difficult to reach and are less involved in the education of their children. This is partly because of a lack of knowledge and skills, as well as a deficient command of the Dutch language.

In 2005 the government reached agreement with organisations of school heads, staff associations, school boards, parents and students aimed at increasing parent involvement (among other things by providing information on good practices aimed at increasing parental involvement). A special 'Ethnic Minority Parents' Platform' was created which takes initiatives to foster the involvement of migrant parents. In addition to the national platform, local platforms were set up in 30 large municipalities. The initiatives to increase the involvement of ethnic minority parents have to be developed at local level; central government plays no more than a facilitating role.

Specific examples of activities to reach ethnic minority parents include home visits by teachers, creating a room for parents in the school, possibly in combination with the provision of courses for parents (e.g. language courses), and the creation of parent information points in the school.

A study by Smit et al. (2007) suggests that primary schools with a high proportion of migrant pupils have almost always developed a vision and a policy aimed at promoting contact with parents, with a view to encouraging parents to support their children's education. Involving ethnic minority parents in organisational activities in the school or as partners in the formulation of school policy is much less well-developed than in schools where native Dutch parents with a secondary or higher education background dominate.

Schools with a high proportion of ethnic minority pupils mostly take account of their specific situation when communicating with parents (adapted method of communication). Schools experience a number of obstacles in contacts with ethnic minority parents, such as a poor command of the Dutch language and insufficient knowledge of the education system. Ethnic minority parents often feel incapable of contributing to their children's education, nor do they see it as their task to involve themselves in it; they see education more as a task for the school. There is also frequently less consensus in the views on upbringing and education between the school and ethnic minority parents than is the case with native Dutch parents.

4.6 Cooperation with other schools and agencies outside education

To combat educational disadvantage, primary and secondary schools are increasingly collaborating with other schools and with agencies outside education.

At municipal level, there is compulsory liaison between school boards, childcare organisations and the municipal executive within the context of the 'Local Education Agenda' (LEA). Regular issues discussed at these meetings are combating segregation between native Dutch and ethnic minority pupils and students and promoting integration; combating educational disadvantage; coordinating the school admission procedures in order to arrive at a balanced distribution of pupils/students with an educational disadvantage; and ensuring a continuous line from preschool to early-school education (the preschool and early-school modules are provided by different organisations and funded in different ways, but must together form a unified whole).

Many of the themes which figure in the Local Education Agenda discussions (preschool and early-school education programmes, care in and around the school, broad-based schools, coordination between successive educational phases, combating school drop-out, and transitional classes, Oberon 2008) are directly or indirectly concerned with combating educational disadvantage.

Some themes are concerned mainly with cooperation between education and other provisions. Other topics, such as making agreements on admission, the distribution of disadvantaged pupils/students and continuous learning pathways between successive educational phases, are focused primarily on cooperation within the education sector, i.e. between schools.

Extended schools

The cooperation between schools and other agencies takes various forms. Schools with disadvantaged students often describe themselves as 'extended schools' (also known as community schools). Characteristic of these schools is the cooperation between the school and agencies in the fields of welfare, social work, health care, police, culture and/or sport. The purpose of this cooperation is to promote children's development by offering them help where necessary with problems at school or in their home setting, as well as by offering additional activities (culture, sport) with which they normally have little contact. The precise nature of extended schools differs depending on the type of pupils they accommodate: some schools place the emphasis on combating disadvantage by deploying several disciplines, while in others the emphasis is more on offering after-school childcare combined with extra activities in the field of culture or sport. Roughly 1,000 of the more than 7,000 primary schools and 350 of the 1,200 secondary schools in the Netherlands had extended school status in 2007 (Oberon 2007). The aim is to increase the number of extended schools further.

Little research has to date been carried out on the effectiveness of the extended school approach in Dutch education. The evaluation by Claassen et al. (2008) could hardly reveal any effects of the approach, either on the cognitive or the socio-emotional front. This might be due to the fact that various characteristics of the extended approach were also observed in the control group (the evaluation used a quasi-experimental design). Those involved in the development of the extended school approach

often do not in any event consider effects on the cognitive front as decisive for the success of the approach.

Care and advice teams

The help provided to students with problems in secondary schools is increasingly being provided by 'Care and Advice Teams', in which schools work together with agencies in the fields of youth health care, welfare, youth care, compulsory schooling and safety. The support provided by the Care and Advice Teams can be focused on students with emotional, behavioural, developmental or learning difficulties, but can also be targeted at their families and the school. Addressing problems at an early stage via Care and Advice Teams is one of the building blocks of the policy designed to reduce school drop-out. The number of schools with a Care and Advice Team is increasing, with more than 90% of general secondary schools now having one. They are less widespread in secondary vocational education, where 72% of establishments have a Care and Advice Team. The aim is that all secondary education facilities, both general and vocational, should have a Team in place by 2011.

The agencies concerned are mostly positive in their opinions of Care and Advice Teams: appropriate help and support is arranged more quickly, problems are tackled more effectively, and agencies work together better (NJI/LCOJ 2007). Evaluations to establish the effects of the approach on students themselves have not yet been carried out.

4.7 *Language policy and textbooks*

Teaching in the language of the country of origin

For a long time, Dutch primary schools provided teaching in pupils' mother tongue and culture. This enabled people from the main migrant groups to follow lessons voluntarily for a number of hours per week in the language and culture of their country of origin. The purpose of providing these lessons changed over time. Initially the main aim was to maintain contact with the culture of the country of origin. When it became clear in the 1980s that most migrants would not be returning to their country of origin, more emphasis was placed on combating educational disadvantage. Later, in the 1990s, education in the mother tongue was not seen primarily as a means of eliminating disadvantage, but rather as a means of emphasising the independent cultural function. This latter shift was accompanied by a new name: 'Minority Language Teaching' (*Onderwijs in allochtone levende talen*, OALT).

In practice, the different functions continued to exist alongside each other; local authorities could choose to place the emphasis on the cultural function, but could also decide to use teaching in the mother tongue as a means of supporting the acquisition of the Dutch language. In the latter case the prime objective was to combat educational disadvantage; this was the main objective in most municipalities (Turkenburg 2002). Depending on the objective chosen, Minority Language Teaching

was either provided during school hours (combating disadvantage) or outside school time (cultural function).

Given the constantly shifting objectives, the problems with deciding on the subject content and doubts about its effectiveness, teaching in the students' own language has long been the subject of debate. This debate ultimately led to cessation of the funding for Minority Language Teaching from 2004, though private initiatives have been developed since then so that teaching in students' own language and culture is still offered on a modest scale after school hours. In secondary education Turkish and Arabic can be offered as optional modern foreign languages, in addition to the traditional options French, German and Spanish (English is compulsory).

Teaching in Dutch as a second language

Since the ending of Minority Language Teaching, the emphasis in the language policy in primary schools has come to lie entirely on learning Dutch. Primary and secondary schools can apply for additional funding from the government to speed up the integration of newcomers into the mainstream education programme. Methods have been developed in the past for acquiring Dutch as a second language (NT2), both for newcomers and for toddlers and migrant pupils who have resided in the Netherlands for some time. In-service training is also offered for teachers.

Doubts have been expressed about the effectiveness of teaching Dutch as a second language; it was observed several years ago that the deployment of NT2 teachers, lessons and teaching aids was not being translated into better language skills among migrant pupils (Emmelot et al. 2001). Schools today prefer a more integrated approach, with less focus on specific NT2 methods and with language teaching to migrant pupils forming part of a broader approach for pupils with weak language skills (Emelot & Van Schooten 2003).

A new element in the approach to language disadvantage involves the induction classes which have been in use in primary schools for a number of years. Pupils with a language disadvantage are placed in a separate group and receive intensive language teaching for a full year in order to bring their language skills up to a level that enables them to follow be educated at a level that matches their capabilities. The first evaluation findings are cautiously positive (see also section 5.6.). The intention is to increase the number of these classes to around 600 throughout the country in the coming years.

Recognition of diverse cultural backgrounds in curricula and textbooks

In order to fully reflect the cultural diversity in the Netherlands, intercultural education has been compulsory in primary schools since 1985. The official objective was to ensure that 'pupils learn to deal with correspondences and differences relating to ethnic and cultural background characteristics' (TK 2003/2004: 325). Later, a further objective was added stating that pupils must learn to live alongside other population groups and that prejudice and discrimination had to be combated. Right from the start there was a good deal of debate as to precisely what form intercultural

education should take; some argued for a cognitive approach which emphasised knowledge of other cultures, while others called for an approach based on moulding 'attitude', with a focus on respect, understanding and mutual communication. In practice, intercultural education did not really get off the ground, partly because of this lack of a common vision. Attention shifted in the 1990s towards combating disadvantage among migrant pupils, and the objectives of intercultural education faded to the background (TK 2003/2004: 327).

Promotion of active citizenship and social integration

Since 2006, the requirement to take account of cultural diversity in society has been placed in the broader context of the need to stimulate active citizenship and social integration. The laws governing primary and secondary education stipulate that education must:

- be based on the premise that pupils and students grow up in a pluralistic society;
- be directed towards promoting active citizenship and social integration;
- be directed towards ensuring that pupils and students have a knowledge of and make acquaintance with the different backgrounds and cultures of their peers.

The attainment targets for primary education also state that pupils must acquire a knowledge of the religions that play a role in a multicultural society and must learn to respect differences in people's views.

The Education Inspectorate (Inspectie van het Onderwijs 2008c) has investigated how the statutory requirement to focus on active citizenship is given form in practice. Most schools (80-90%) have developed a vision for the promotion of citizenship, but a quarter of primary schools and between 10% and 20% of secondary schools have not worked up that vision into specific policy. Those that have, have in many cases not introduced any differentiation based on subject area or school year, for example. In terms of content, the vision often goes no further than general formulations and schools mainly set themselves only global objectives. Compared with other aspects of citizenship, getting to know other cultures, beliefs and lifestyles does not occupy a prominent place, though most schools do use separate teaching material for this.

Since the introduction of the statutory requirement to promote active citizenship, there has been an increase in the number of schools with a detailed vision of how to do this and in the number of schools that have formulated specific objectives in this area. Schools also use separate teaching material for active citizenship more often than in the past.

In order to promote active citizenship and social consciousness, 'social apprenticeships' will be introduced in secondary education. (e.g. voluntary work in a sports club, in a community centre, in a home for the elderly, etc). As of 2011/12 a social apprenticeship of 72 hours will be compulsory for all pupils in secondary education.

4.8 Teachers and teacher training

Teachers with a migrant background

School boards are responsible for staff recruitment. The aim is to increase the number of teachers with non-Western ethnic backgrounds, but there are no firm agreements or quotas for this. To date, relatively few ethnic minority teachers are employed in primary and secondary education, even in major cities such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam, where half or more of the children at primary and secondary school are of non-Western ethnic origin (figures for Rotterdam suggest that 7% of teachers are of ethnic origin).

One of the reasons for the small number of ethnic minority teachers is the shortage of ethnic minority students on teacher training programmes. Only 7% of students on primary school teacher training programmes are of non-Western ethnic origin; the figure for secondary school teacher training programmes is 11%, while the total figure for higher professional education is 14% (OCW 2008). Initiatives to increase the number of non-Western ethnic minority students entering teacher training have so far had no impact: the number of ethnic minority students has remained stable since 2000. Moreover, the drop-out rate from teacher training courses is higher among ethnic minority students than native students.

The sparse research that has been carried out on ethnic minority teachers appears to suggest that they bring added value: according to school managers and ethnic minority teachers themselves, their presence makes the school recognisable for ethnic minority pupils; they also find it easier to build bridges between the school and ethnic minority parents and have an inspirational and exemplary function for ethnic minority pupils (Autar & Moeniralam 2002)

Language support teachers

There are special teaching centres in the major cities where newcomers aged between six and 18 years receive language instruction. After one or two years they transfer into mainstream education. Migrant students who have lived in the Netherlands for some time receive mainstream language instruction in their year group. This may be done using methods specially developed for children for whom Dutch is not their first language (NT2 methods). The extent to which specifically trained NT2 teachers are deployed is not known.

In the past, schools with large numbers of migrant students recruited teachers for Minority Language Teaching. These teachers were often deployed to support ethnic minority students. Minority Language Teaching was abolished in 2004 (see section 4.7).

Teacher training programmes for migrant education

Primary and secondary school teacher training programmes offer subsidiary modules which prepare students for teaching in multicultural pupil populations in the large urban centres. Students learn to deal with and make allowance for pupils

with diverse cultural backgrounds. Further information on the content of these programmes or on the number of participants is not available.

Courses in dealing with cultural diversity/intercultural education may also form part of in-service training programmes for current teachers. As schools themselves are responsible for the training for incumbent staff, no information is available on whether teachers attend such courses, and if so, how many.

Courses qualifying students to teach Dutch as a Second Language are offered as postgraduate programmes at a number of universities of professional education. The courses are aimed at teachers who have completed a teacher training programme and who are currently working or wish to work as teachers of Dutch as a second language. Teachers of Dutch as a second language are often employed in teaching Dutch to adult migrants. This language teaching forms part of the civic integration course and is provided by regional training centres and private training institutes.

Training programmes for school managers

A wide range of training programmes are available for school managers in the Netherlands. Courses are provided by various institutes (universities of professional education, organisations of school managers, trade unions, commercial training institutes) and the goals, content and intensity vary widely (Bal & De Jonge 2007). The skill requirements set for school managers serve as a starting point for the provision of training. It is unknown whether specific training programmes are available for managers of schools with migrant students; if these do exist, participation is not compulsory.

4.9 *Student guidance and counselling*

Schools provide guidance to students in the transition between successive phases of their educational careers: from primary to secondary education and from secondary education to vocational training or higher education. In the transition from primary to secondary education, the focus is on ensuring that students are placed at the right level; providing guidance in the transition from secondary education to further education (vocational training or higher education) is also concerned with the choice of study discipline and, by extension, choice of occupation. The guidance is there for all students, both Dutch natives and migrants.

Mentoring projects for migrant students

In addition to this regular student guidance, mentoring projects operate at several places throughout the country, specifically targeting ethnic minority students. In these projects, ethnic minority secondary school students receive guidance and support from a student in higher education or another person from an ethnic minority group who can serve as a successful role model. Mentors provide different kinds of support: socio-emotional support, study guidance and exploration of further education courses. The latter is also the goal of projects in which higher educa-

tion institutions contact secondary schools containing large numbers of migrant students, with the aim of encouraging those students to make the transition to further education and to help them in their choice of study. Organisations representing ethnic minority students in higher education sometimes play a role in providing guidance and support for secondary school students.

5 Government policy and approaches

5.1 National integration policies

Cabinet responsibility for the integration policy rests primarily with the Minister for Housing, Communities and Integration, who has overall responsibility for housing and civic integration. The Minister is responsible for the vision and cohesion of the government's integration policy. The main objectives of the Dutch government and the cooperative relationships that exist between the different ministries are described in broad terms below.

Objectives of integration policy

The integration policy is concerned with social emancipation and social integration. Social emancipation relates to acquiring a social status and prestige through civic integration. Social integration is about breaking through the ethnic, cultural and religious/ dividing lines. At the heart of social integration is active citizenship, whereby citizens work to achieve common goals in society and feel part of that society.

The civic integration policy plays an important role in the integration policy of the Minister of Housing, Communities and Integration. A civic integration plan has been formulated for this, aimed at raising the quality and outcomes of the civic integration programme. In the policy of the Minister of Housing, Communities and Integration, the neighbourhood is a key starting point for encouraging social emancipation. This has been given tangible form in an action plan for 40 of the most deprived neighbourhoods (*Actieplan Krachtwijken*). The creation of a varied housing stock is intended to contribute to social participation and social advancement and to combat social segregation.

When it comes to combating educational disadvantage, the Minister of Housing, Communities and Integration collaborates with the Minister of Education, Culture and Science. Some of the fruits of this collaboration are discussed in this report (e.g. increasing the reach and quality of preschool and early-school education, broad-based schools, reducing school drop-out rates). The improvements in labour market position must be reflected in a higher employment rate in the coming years. Turkish and Moroccan women are a particular focus of attention here.

Under the responsibility of the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, a government-wide 'integral diversity policy' has been formulated with the objective of increasing the percentage of ethnic minorities working within the government service. Fighting labour market discrimination is a responsibility of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. The Ministry of Economic Affairs is concerned with promoting self-employment among non-Western ethnic minorities. Together with the Minister for Youth and Families, the Ministry implements the Diversity Action

Plan in youth policy, aimed at improving the reach and effectiveness of support for young migrants.

In general, the government adopts the standpoint that a specific policy is not needed for individual groups in society. However, an exception is made for young Antilleans and Moroccans, who are overrepresented in the crime statistics. Responsibility for reducing recidivism lies with the Ministry of Justice. The more preventive approach is the responsibility of the Minister of Housing, Communities and Integration and the Minister for Youth and Families. The Diversity Action Plan in youth policy mentioned above is intended to contribute to this. In addition, 'Antillean municipalities' have been designated which attempt to reduce the problems of Antilleans at local level.

Promoting active citizenship is achieved among other things through the civic integration programme. This is designed more than in the past to encourage interaction between newcomers and other people. The Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations is responsible for formulating a charter for responsible citizenship. In addition, attention is devoted to responsible citizenship in the naturalisation ceremony, for which the Minister of Housing, Communities and Integration is responsible.

Responsibility for the antidiscrimination policy is shared across a number of ministries (Justice; Social Affairs and Employment; Interior and Kingdom Relations; Education, Culture and Science; Health, Welfare and Sport; and Housing, Communities and Integration). The latter ministry is responsible for the antiracism policy and municipal antidiscrimination provisions. The aim is to introduce a national network of antidiscrimination provisions.

The Minister of Housing, Communities and Integration, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science and the Minister of Health, Welfare and Sport have set themselves the goal of promoting participation in voluntary work by ethnic minority women. They also wish to increase the number of self-employed ethnic minority businesswomen, partly through the use of micro credits.

Promoting intercultural dialogue takes place at local level through the organisation of familiarisation and meeting activities. The 'Room for contact' incentive scheme has been created for this.

Reducing 'honour violence' is being tackled among other things by investing in increasing the knowledge of professionals in recognising honour-related violence and intervening adequately.

The Polarisation and Radicalisation Action Plan 2007-2011 is intended to reduce polarisation and radicalisation as far as possible. Efforts to achieve this will involve raising susceptible people's resistance to radicalisation and strengthening their ties to Dutch society. In addition, administrators and professionals must be adequately equipped to identify radicalisation tendencies at an early stage. The Ministers of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Justice, Housing, Communities and Integration, Education, Culture and Science, Social Affairs and Employment, Foreign Affairs, Youth and Families and Health, Welfare and Sport are all involved in this Action Plan.

5.2 Policy approach to immigrant students

Providing equal opportunities for young people from different sections of the population is a key objective of Dutch education policy. A number of arrangements are in place aimed at removing financial obstacles and guaranteeing accessibility of education for children from low-income families (free access up to the age of 18 years, grants for low-income families to cover study costs, study finance from the age of 18 to cover tuition fees, study costs and maintenance costs; see chapter 4).

In addition to this, there are policies to promote the educational achievements of children from disadvantaged families. In the past these policies aimed at both native Dutch disadvantaged pupils and migrant pupils. In primary education for example two different groups were targeted: native Dutch disadvantaged pupils and migrant pupils with poorly educated parents. Extra funding per qualifying pupil was much higher for migrant pupils than for native Dutch pupils (90% and 25% more funding, respectively, per qualifying pupil). In secondary education a system was in place only to help students with a non-Western ethnic background, native Dutch pupils from disadvantaged families were not targeted at the secondary level. For them, general support for poorly performing pupils – regardless of socioeconomic or ethnic background – was available.

Shift towards general educational disadvantage policy

In recent years the ethnic background of pupils has become a less important criterion in the policies aimed at combating educational disadvantage. In primary education the country of origin of the pupils has for some years no longer played a role in the allocation of extra funding to primary schools. The target group of the disadvantage policy in primary education is now based exclusively on the education level of the parents. In practice, a high percentage of pupils with a non-Western ethnic background still fall within the target group of the policy, though there has been a change of perspective. The argument for seeking to deal with disadvantage in socioeconomic terms is that this is more in line with the actual disadvantage suffered (see TK2004/2005b). Another consideration was the need to make more resources available for schools with native Dutch disadvantaged pupils, as it became apparent that their education level was not improving (the new system leads to a shift of funding).

In secondary education, the criterion of country of origin has also been abandoned. Secondary schools now receive ‘disadvantage funding’ based on the number of students who live in deprived areas. As in primary education, the aim was to achieve a better match with the actual disadvantage. Furthermore there was also a desire to reflect the accumulation of problems confronting some schools (TK 2004/2005a).

5.3 Agencies involved in educational policies for migrant students

Agencies at different levels (state, local authorities, school boards) are involved in designing educational policies for migrant pupils and students.

At state level the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science has primary responsibility for the education policy aimed at the integration of migrant students. In specific areas such as the preschool and early-school education programmes and the Care and Advice Teams in secondary schools and vocational training institutes, the Ministry of Education collaborates with the Ministry for Youth and Families. Liaison also takes place with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Integration which is primarily responsible for national integration policy (see 5.1).

At local level, school boards and municipal executives are key players. In the context of the 'Local Education Agenda', school boards and the municipal executive discuss topics that are of particular importance, including for migrants. Other stakeholders involved in educational activities that are important for migrant students are youth welfare and youth health care organisations. As part of their safety policy, schools work together with the police.

In secondary vocational education, collaboration with employers is important in order to ensure sufficient internships are available (migrant senior secondary vocational students have more difficulty finding the compulsory internship placements).

There are also organisations that are concerned with promoting integration of ethnic minorities by providing advice, setting up projects, etc. (the Forum organisation is an example of this).

5.4 Programmes for disadvantaged pupils supported by national funding

As indicated earlier, in recent years Dutch government has mainly pursued a general educational disadvantage policy. Nonetheless, the policy does reach many migrant children because they are disproportionately represented in the target groups of the various measures. By way of indication, in 2005 about 55% of the target group of the disadvantage policy in primary schools were migrant pupils; the rest were native Dutch disadvantaged pupils.

Primary education: weighting system, preschool and early-school programmes, induction classes

In terms of spending, the emphasis in educational disadvantage policy is on primary education. Since the 1980s a *weighting system* has been in operation in primary education. In calculating the budget to which a school is entitled, pupils whose parents have a low or very low education level (there are two gradations) are assigned a greater weight than pupils whose parents have a secondary or higher education level. Within the framework of combating educational disadvantage, school boards may use the additional funding as they see fit.

In recent years preschool and early-school education have been important focus area in educational disadvantage policy for young children. The aim is to stimulate the development of young children from deprived backgrounds, including many children of migrant parents. The programmes are provided through collaboration between preschool playgroups or – less often – childcare centres and primary schools in areas with large numbers of children from deprived backgrounds. They begin in the preschool playgroup when children are aged 2.5 years, and continue in the first two years of primary school. Preschool and early-school programmes, in addition to disadvantaged pupils, also attract considerable numbers of participants who do not form part of this target group (Jepma, Kooiman & Van der Vegt 2007). By 2011, the aim is that all young children in the target group of the policy must have been reached by this initiative.

In addition to this quantitative target, discussions are also under way as to the best configuration for preschool and early-school education. The present structure involves different parties that are funded in different ways (see further section 5.6).

The ‘induction class’ is another intervention that was recently introduced. Pupils with a language disadvantage are placed in a separate group and receive intensive language teaching for a full year in order to bring their language skills up to a level that enables them to be educated at a level that matches their capabilities. The intention is to increase the number of these classes to around 600 throughout the country in the coming years. Induction classes are in principle aimed at all pupils from deprived backgrounds (both native Dutch and ethnic minority). In practice, however, the induction classes contain mainly ethnic minority pupils (90%, Mulder et al. 2008).

Unlike in mainstream primary education, additional funding based on ethnic origin (‘non–native speakers’) is still in operation in special primary education and special education.

Secondary education: additional funding for pupils from disadvantaged districts

In secondary education schools also receive additional funding to support pupils who live in deprived areas. The scheme only applies to pre-vocational and general secondary education (not to senior vocational education). As in primary education, secondary school boards may use the funding as they see fit, within the framework of reducing disadvantage.

In recent years combating school drop-out has become an important element in Dutch education policy. This policy applies for all students in secondary education: their social background or ethnic origin plays no role. The high drop-out rates among migrant students do however mean that the policy is particularly important for them. In order to reduce drop-out, attention is being given among other things to creating a smoother transition between the successive phases of secondary education, improving study and career guidance, better pastoral care through collaboration between schools and other agencies in fields such as youth welfare, etc.

Higher education

In order to increase the influx of migrant students and to enhance their study success in higher education, in 2005 the Ministry of Education and 21 higher education institutions agreed on targets in this area. In 2008 a new covenant was signed by the Ministry of Education and five institutions for higher professional education in the western part of the country, where the majority of non-Western migrants live. As before, the aim is to promote the influx of migrant students and to improve their study success. The institutions for higher professional education will formulate ambitious targets for the period 2008-2014. As of 2011 university education will also participate in the covenant.

5.5 *Funding and funding strategies*

The allocation of funding to institutions to reduce disadvantage is based on various criteria. Some funding is paid direct to schools, while other funds flows are channelled via the local authority.

Funding in primary education

The funding of the preschool part of the preschool and early-school education programmes operates via local authorities. These receive a sum from central government to finance the programmes and have undertaken to seek to ensure that by 2011 all children who require a preschool place are offered one. Local authorities themselves determine which children are eligible for the preschool programmes; the target group is thus not explicitly defined in terms of socioeconomic or ethnic criteria. The funding of the early-school part of the programmes operates via the school boards.

The funding of induction classes also operates via local authorities. These classes are constructed by local authorities and school boards in mutual consultation.

The funding for the weighting system in primary schools is paid direct to school boards. School board also receive additional funding for pupils from disadvantaged families. In the past, a distinction was made between native Dutch and migrant pupils with poorly educated parents, with migrant pupils with poorly educated parents being assigned a considerably higher weight than native pupils with poorly educated parents. In the present scheme the extra funding is exclusively based on parental educational level (in two gradations, with respectively 40% and 120% extra funding); ethnic origin no longer plays a role. The result is that schools now receive less 'disadvantage funding' than in the past for some of their migrant pupils, because these no longer fall into the category carrying the greatest weight, or even no longer meet the criteria at all. A proportion of native Dutch pupils now carry a greater weight than in the past. The new system was thus accompanied by some redistribution of funding, away from schools with large numbers of migrant pupils to schools with native Dutch disadvantaged pupils. A transitional arrangement initially tempered the redistribution effects of this measure.

In the near future a further payment will be added for pupils whose parents meet the educational criteria and who live in areas with large numbers of low-income households and/or benefit recipients ('impulse areas').

Funding in secondary education

In *secondary education*, the budget for combating disadvantage is based on where students live and is also paid directly to school boards. This scheme was introduced in 2007 and replaces an earlier measure based on ethnic origin. In practice, the new measure proved too unfocused, since some schools with pupils mainly from middle-class and privileged families received substantial additional funding. The measure is therefore being adjusted. Among other things the possibility is being explored of moving to an individual indicator in the future rather than using the residential setting of students.

The policy on school drop-out incorporates several funds flows, some paid to local authorities, some direct to educational institutions. The ethnic origin of students plays no role in the allocation of funding. A new element in the school drop-out policy is the building in of a performance incentive: schools that succeed in reducing the number of drop-outs receive a financial bonus.

Funding in higher education

In higher education several institutions in the western part of the country have committed themselves to increasing the influx of migrant students and to improving their study results. An initial budget of EUR 4.5 million for pilot projects aimed at migrant students was made available in 2008 by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The budget will increase to EUR 20 million per year in 2011.

Table 5.1 presents a summary of government spending aimed at supporting the school careers of disadvantaged pupils and students in primary and secondary education. Total spending on combating disadvantage in 2008 amounted to EUR 612 million in 2008, excluding expenses for combating school drop-out. To put this amount in perspective, government spending on education at ISCED 0/1 level was approximately EUR 9 billion in 2008, while spending on ISCED 2 and ISCED 3 (pre-vocational and general secondary education, senior vocational education) amounted to around EUR 9.8 billion. Apart from some fluctuations, spending on combating educational disadvantage has not changed substantially since 2001. However, since inflation is not taken into account in table 5.1 (expenditure is at current prices) government spending on combating educational disadvantage has diminished in real terms.

The reduction in funding to local authorities ('municipal educational compensatory policy') was compensated by an increase in funding to schools. Funding of minority language teaching was abandoned in 2005.

Table 5.1

Government spending to combat disadvantage in primary and secondary education, 2001-2008
(x EUR million)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Weighting system disadvantaged pupils (primary schools)	267	280	286	280	294	305	316	314
Additional funding weighting system	0	0	0	0	2	12	12	13
Non-native speakers special primary education/special education	27	30	32	35	36	36	36	36
Municipal educational compensatory policy (preschool and early-school education programmes, induction classes)	184	213	191	218	191	155	171	171
Additional funding preschool and early-school education	0	0	0	0	1	12	11	0
Additional funding induction classes	0	0	0	1	4	1	2	2
Educational chances policy	9	9	9	9	8	3	0	0
Minority Language teaching primary/secondary education	67	72	75	47	0	0	0	0
'Learning plus' arrangement secondary education (formerly ethnic minorities), including spending for newcomers.	55	65	71	70	46	41	72	72
total spending to combat disadvantage ^{ab}	611	676	670	667	586	570	625	612
Combating school drop-out secondary education	52	89

a including a relatively small amount for various projects non specified
b spending for combating school drop-out not included.

Source: Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

The delineation between expenditure for combating school drop-out and regular expenditure for secondary education is not sharp. Using a more inclusive definition, the expenditure for combating school drop-out amounts to much more than EUR 89 million in table 5.1 (up to EUR 313 million in 2008 according to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science). The expenditure for combating school drop-out is therefore not included in the total spending. Spending on combating school drop-out will rise further in the years to come (up to EUR 109 million in 2011, or using the more inclusive definition up to EUR 400 million in 2011).

Table B5.1 (annex) summarises the main characteristics of the national programmes for combating educational disadvantage.

5.6 Evaluation of interventions

In recent decades a considerable amount of money has been spent on combating disadvantage in Dutch education. Evaluation programmes have been set up to monitor the performance of pupils from the policy target groups. Despite all the data that have been gathered, it is often difficult to determine the effectiveness of interventions because the design of the research does not allow causal inferences to be drawn (e.g. lack of a control group that is not exposed to the intervention, no random assignment of pupils to treatment and control group in quasi-experimental designs). The distinction between effective and ineffective interventions is therefore less than sharp.

Effectiveness of weighting system in primary education is hard to determine

The policy on educational disadvantage in primary schools is an example of an intervention for disadvantaged pupils for which it is difficult to determine the effectiveness. At the heart of this policy is a weighting system which ensures the allocation of additional funds for schools with pupils from disadvantaged groups. The universal nature of this policy means there is no control group with which the results of schools which receive extra funding can be compared. Since the prevalence of disadvantage did not appear to reduce in the period immediately following the introduction of this policy in the middle of the 1980s, doubts were cast on its effectiveness. Those doubts were exacerbated by the finding that schools did not use the additional funding in a very focused way. Quite often the additional funding was used to reduce class size, whereas the effectiveness of that strategy is controversial (Webbink & Hassink 2002).

Later – from the end of the 1990s – it emerged that the disadvantage of migrant pupils and students was after all gradually reducing (see chapter 3). This could be interpreted as an indication that the policy was ultimately having an effect. For example, the results obtained by pupils at ‘ethnic schools’ showed a particular improvement over time. It is unlikely that they would have done so without the additional resources received by those schools as part of the educational disadvantage policy. However, the lack of a control group means it is impossible to make firm statements about the effectiveness of the weighting system (Mulder 1996, Webbink & Hassink 2002).

Doubts about effects of preschool and early-school programmes

Comparison with a control group is by contrast possible for specific interventions that have not been introduced at all schools. Evaluations of *preschool and early-school education programmes* show a variable picture, however. In line with research in the United Kingdom and the United States, quasi-experimental research of specific preschool and early-school projects in the Netherlands shows modest positive outcomes (Doolaard & Leseman 2008). Large-scale research based on nationally gathered data in the Netherlands (from the PRIMA cohort study), however, shows

only very limited effects. The most recent example of such a study (Nap-Kolhoff et al. 2008) found a positive effect on learning outcomes from participation in preschool and early-school education programmes only in certain target groups (native Dutch and 'other non-Western' ethnic minority pupils with low-educated parents); most of the effects were found in arithmetic. No effects at all were found for Turkish and Moroccan pupils with low-educated parents – a key target group for the preschool and early-school education programmes. This may have to do with the design of the large-scale study (no reference measurements were carried out).

Implementation problems in preschool and early-school programmes

Doolaard & Leseman (2008) point out that problems with the implementation of the policy may also have played a role. The goal of rapidly increasing the number of children reached by these programmes increases the risk that their implementation will be rushed, with the risk that the quality criteria (e.g. two leaders per group, sufficient sessions per week, a continuous line between the preschool and early-school phases of the programme) will not be met or not met adequately. Another problem is that a substantial number of children from outside the target group benefit from the provisions, leading to 'leakage' of resources. Naphof et al. (2008) point to the possible negative impact of the different basis of funding for the preschool and early-school phases of the programmes. Since the resources for the early-school phase have for some time been included in the lump-sum funding for primary schools, stakeholders fear that criteria such as double staffing (i.e. two leaders per group) and limited group size may be less rigorously enforced because the early-school phase of these programmes has to compete with other priorities within primary schools.

Doolaard & Leseman (2008) conclude, partly on the basis of international research, that it is plausible that preschool and early-school education programmes can have positive effects provided they are implemented carefully. However, it would seem that the rushed introduction of programmes in recent years has had a dilution effect: more children receive less well implemented programmes, diminishing or even eliminating any positive effects (see also Van der Vegt et al. 2007).

In view of the above problems, it has been proposed in the past that the different provisions for children aged up to four years should be amalgamated and placed under a single regime (Onderwijsraad 2002). However, the government has opted for a more limited form of harmonisation, which leaves intact the distinction between childcare and preschool playgroups and between the preschool and early-school phase. On the other hand, the financial arrangements for parents using childcare and playgroup facilities are becoming more closely coordinated. The prospect has also been raised of investments to raise the quality and accessibility of preschool and early-school provisions (more attention for combined programmes for parents and children, training and in-service training for preschool and early-school group leaders, attention for continuity throughout the programmes; see also TK 2007/2008c).

First experiences with induction classes are hopeful

Initial findings of research on the effects of induction classes are tentatively positive (Mulder et al. 2008). These classes are intended to improve the language skills of primary school pupils. Pupils with a weak command of language spend a year in a separate class in which extra time and attention is devoted to improving their language skills. A variant of this is the 'kopklas' – a special class in which pupils spend a year at the end of primary school receiving additional teaching to prepare them better for the transition to secondary education. First experiences are hopeful: pupils in induction classes appear to make more progress in language than comparable pupils in mainstream classes, while the performance level of 'kopklas' pupils is increasing, often enabling them to transfer to a higher track of secondary education than would have been the case without the extra year spent in this class (Mulder et al. 2008). One reservation made by the researchers is that it is not yet clear how the school careers of pupils who have taken part in these classes will develop in the somewhat longer term.

Combating and reducing segregation

Combating and reducing segregation between native Dutch and ethnic minority pupils and students has become an important policy focus area in migrant education. Learning to live together in a multicultural society is an important consideration underlying the commitment to more mixed schools. Primary and secondary school boards, municipal executives and childcare providers have been required since 2006 to consult with each other with a view to achieving a more balanced distribution of pupils and students across the education system.

In 2008 the Ministry of Education tabled a policy document in Parliament to initiate several measures aimed at reducing segregation in primary education. The overall goal is to promote mixed schools and to foster contacts between pupils from different backgrounds. A 'knowledge-centre for mixed schools' has been established, and pilots have been started in seven cities to identify effective interventions on the local level to reduce segregation in education (e.g. fixed enrolment times, providing better information when parents are selecting a school).

The number of local authorities developing policy in this area has increased since the introduction of the aforementioned legal requirement (Peters et al. 2007). However, it is still too early to observe any effects of this statutory requirement at the level of pupils and schools (in the form of less segregation).

In the past some municipalities have developed initiatives aimed at reducing segregation. A notable example is the municipality of Gouda, where agreements were made between schools on the maximum percentage of ethnic minority pupils per school. This policy was initially successful, but foundered after a number of years when school boards failed to make new agreements after the number of ethnic minority pupils in the municipality had increased.

Ede and Tiel are two other municipalities which attempted through agreements between schools to reduce segregation in primary education. There was no

observable effect in Ede; in Tiel the policy appeared to be partially effective, though it was seen as a problem that the agreements were mainly targeted at ethnic minority pupils, whereas the ‘flight’ of native pupils continued to increase (Rutten & Peeters 2005). Agreements made in the Utrecht region in order to stem the ‘white flight’ from the city to secondary schools in surrounding municipalities proved a failure (Herweijer 2008b).

There are also examples of successful initiatives by groups of native Dutch parents who enrolled their children *en bloc* at an ‘ethnic school’. Given the limited scale of initiatives of this kind so far, however, no clear effects are visible in the figures for ‘ethnic schools’ in the major cities.

If segregation is to be reduced, the system of free school choice and school admission policies will have to be modified in some way. To date this has proved difficult to achieve; the various parties involved (parents, schools) regard segregation as undesirable, but have difficulty making concessions and accepting constraints in order to reduce segregation.

Reducing school drop-out

Reducing school drop-out by 50% in 2012 (measured over the school year 2010/11) is a key education policy priority. Because of a lack of comparable data, is not easy to track the trend in the number of school drop-outs over the longer term. The available figures nevertheless indicate that progress has been made since 2001, when the 50% reduction target was adopted (table 5.2).

Table 5.2
New school drop-outs, 2001/02 – 2010/11

	2001/02	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2010/11 ^a
new school drop-outs	70,500	60,500 ^b	54,100	52,700	48,800 ^c	35,000

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).
c preliminary figure.

Source: TK (2008/2009)

The covenants which the government signed in 2008 with all 39 regional partnerships of schools and local authorities are a central element in the policy to further reduce the number of school drop-outs. Since covenants signed with 14 forerunner regions appeared to be effective it was decided to scale up the covenants to all 39 regions. A recent evaluation (Van der Steeg et al. 2008) of the covenants signed with the 14 forerunner regions based on more exact drop-out data, however, found no effect on the probability of dropping out. The design of the new covenants with all 39 regions differs from the covenants with the 14 forerunner regions. For that reason the new covenants cannot be labelled ineffective in advance. Preliminary data

on the most recent full educational year (2007-2008) indicate that the number of new school drop-outs in the Netherlands was 3,900 less than in the previous year (2006-2007; table 5.3), whereas the previous reduction (between 2005/06 and 2006/07) amounted to only 1,400.

In 2009 and 2010 youth unemployment is likely to increase as a result of the economic recession. A lack of job opportunities will probably encourage youngsters to stay on at school (discouraged worker effect) and thus contribute to a further reduction in early school-leaving.

5.7 Comprehensive policies

Beneficial comprehensive policies

Promoting transfer to higher education through the vocational education route is an example of a general policy from which migrant students benefit. This route is encouraged partly in view of the government target of having 50% of young people completing higher education. The vocational education route is an alternative to the 'normal' route to higher education through senior general secondary (*havo*) and/or pre-university (*vwo*) education. Students who are initially placed in the lower tracks of secondary education (ISCED 2) can use this alternative to access higher education via senior secondary vocational education (*mbo*). As mentioned earlier (chapter 3) migrant pupils in particular make use of this 'second chance': in 2006 48% of Turkish students, 54% of Moroccan students and 47% of Surinamese students in higher professional education had come through the secondary vocational route. The figure among native students was much lower (32%).

A comparable argument applies for the 'accumulation' of secondary education qualifications (from pre-vocational secondary (*vmbbo*) to senior general secondary education (*havo*)); this again is a route which is used mainly by migrant students, thus mitigating the possible detrimental effects of early selection for migrant 'late developers'.

An issue that has recently moved higher up the policy agenda is strengthening the teaching of Dutch language and arithmetic. This fits in with the increased attention for educational quality (see the 'quality agendas' for primary and secondary education). 'Reference levels' are to be introduced for both subject areas which specify the minimum level that pupils and students ought to attain in the different phases of education (primary, secondary, secondary vocational). In senior secondary vocational education (*mbo*) (level ISCED 3), where there are currently no central examinations, central examinations are to be introduced for Dutch language and arithmetic. The government is making available extra money to strengthen language and arithmetic teaching. As indicated earlier, migrant pupils and students often lag well behind the native population, especially in Dutch language; the introduction of reference levels for language is thus of particular importance for them.

Comprehensive policies that failed to be effective for migrants

The renewal of the first phase of secondary education in the 1990s is an example of a general policy that failed to be effective for migrant pupils. With the introduction of basic secondary education, a common programme for the first phase of all types of secondary education was introduced. Its introduction marked the culmination of a long discussion on the structure of the first phase of secondary education. Key arguments for its introduction were the need to defer the selection of secondary education type, the promotion of equal opportunities and the promotion of common knowledge base. As described in chapter 3 however, the introduction of basic secondary education has not yet led to a deferral of the selection process, while the correlation between education level attained and the socioeconomic background of students has also not reduced. Critics of basic secondary education have argued that the common programme was in fact harmful for low-performing pupils, including many migrant pupils, because the content of the programme was too theoretical for them.

Unintended impacts of general policies

Some general policies may have had unintended negative impacts on migrant education. An example of this is the policy pursued by the government in the last decade designed to strengthen free parental school choice. By reducing the number of centralised rules, the government has also sought to allow more scope for differences between schools. The idea was that schools should project their individual identities more clearly and, in combination with a more conscious school choice by parents, it was hoped this would lead to a better match between educational supply and demand. This combination of a more sharply defined school offering and more scope for market forces in school selection can however lead to unintended effects, by reinforcing the existing segregation between pupils and students from different population groups, as schools begin focusing more on a specific segment of the 'student market' and like-minded parents tend to select the same type of education. This trend is at odds with the objective of combating segregation between native and migrant students.

One innovation which critics feared would have unintended negative effects for disadvantaged students was the introduction of the 'independent study centre' (*studiehuis*) in the second phase of senior general secondary (*havo*) and pre-university (*vwo*) education. Among other things, this method emphasises independence and collaboration between students (as opposed to a more traditional approach). Critics argued that it would be detrimental for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, because the instilling of values such as independence and autonomy apply mainly in the higher social echelons; students from the lower milieu, it was argued, would be less well equipped with the knowledge and skills they would be presumed to possess in the independent study centre (see also Dronkers 2007). Research by Blom & Severiens (2004) suggests that these fears are unfounded, however: migrant students in fact pursue independent learning strategies more often than native students.

This is explained by their high motivation. Students from the lower social milieus also stand out in a positive sense in this regard. The achievements of migrant students nevertheless lag behind those of native students in the 'studiehuis'.

Annex to chapter 5

Table B.5

1: Summary of national programmes supported by national funding

name	early childhood education	weighting system for primary education	induction classes	secondary education 'learning-plus' arrangement	school drop-out
policy objectives	elimination of disadvantage at an early age	better performance by pupils from disadvantaged groups	reduction of language disadvantage	customised care' improving learning achievement; reception of newcomers	reducing school drop-out
means	structured programmes for young children which are offered several times a week (preferably on four days per week)	extra funding for schools with disadvantaged pupils. Schools use the funding as they see fit.	pupils are placed in a separate group for a year in which they receive intensive language instruction	extra funding for schools with many students from disadvantaged areas/many newcomers. Schools use the funding as they see fit.	career guidance and orientation, pastoral care via Care and Advice Teams, customised teaching for students with a practical aptitude, combating absenteeism, more attractive education by offering sport and culture.
outputs	less disadvantage for children from disadvantaged groups at the start of their school career	higher achievement at the end of primary school by pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds; more transfers to senior general secondary / pre-university education (havo/vwo)	better performance in language in particular	better performance, less drop-out	more young people obtain a basic qualification
duration	since 2000 the programmes have been rolled out on a national scale	started in 1985; modified several times since	started in 2007	started in 2006 as a continuation of the programme for students from cultural minorities	early 1990s
target beneficiaries	children from disadvantaged groups; local authorities can define the target group more precisely	children from disadvantaged groups	disadvantaged pupils with weak language performance (esp. migrant pupils)	pupils from deprived areas at secondary school	all pupils in general and vocational secondary education
target level	increase in the percentage of pupils from the target group of the policy participating in preschool and early-school programmes to 70% by 2009 and 100% by 2011	reduction in the language disadvantage of pupils in primary school year group 8 who are the target group for the policy by 30% in 2008 and by 40% in 2011 compared with the initial level in 2000	increase in the number of induction classes to 600	not specified	maximum 35,000 new drop-outs in 2012 (level 2006/'07 53,000). EU targets: by 2010 85% of 20-24 year-olds have a basic qualification and a maximum of 8% of 18-24 year-olds leave school early

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