



## **Netherlands**

### **Overview of the Vocational Education and Training System**

**2008**

**eKnowVet – Thematic Overviews**



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**Abstract:**

This is an overview of the VET system in the Netherlands. Information is presented according to the following themes:

1. General policy context - framework for the knowledge society
2. Policy development - objectives, frameworks, mechanisms, priorities
3. Institutional framework - provision of learning opportunities
4. Initial vocational education and training
5. Continuing vocational education and training for adults
6. Training VET teachers and trainers
7. Skills and competence development and innovative pedagogy
8. Accumulating, transferring and validating learning
9. Guidance and counselling for learning, career and employment
10. Financing - investment in human resources
11. European and international dimensions, towards an open area of lifelong learning

This overview has been updated in 2008 and its reference year is 2007. The latest versions can be viewed from October 2009 onwards at:

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where more detailed thematic information on the VET systems of the EU can also be found.

**Keywords:**

training system; training policy, initial training, continuing vocational training, training of trainers, skill development, vocational guidance, recognition of competences, validation of non formal learning; financing of training

**Geographic term:**

Netherlands

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## 1 GENERAL POLICY CONTEXT

### 1.1 POLITICAL CONTEXT

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy and has a parliamentary system with two Chambers. Central government is the highest layer of administration. However, a trend towards decentralization began many years ago and is still under way. Tasks and responsibilities are progressively being transferred to lower levels of government: provinces and especially municipalities; but also to societal interest groups as for instance associations of schools and/or school boards of governors. The Netherlands has 12 provinces with their own tasks and responsibilities – although minimal in educational policy. The Netherlands counts 443 municipalities at this moment. Municipalities have more involvement in education and training: they are for instance responsible for (a) certain aspects of publicly financed schools in primary and secondary education, (b) for the introduction of measures to reduce early school leaving and to counteract (potential) underachievement by kids and youngsters from approximately three years, and (c) for the planning of general adult education.

### 1.2 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHICS

The number of people living in the Netherlands is 16.4 million (2008). The country size is 41,526 square kilometers; 486 inhabitants to a square kilometer.

Since 2005 the population growth is 0.2 percent annually. In 2007 the green demographic burden was 39.4 percent (number of persons younger than 20 years as percentage of the number of 20 to 65 year-olds). The grey burden was 23.6 percent in 2007.

The population forecast is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Population forecast by age, demographic burden and native origin/ x 1,000 or in percentages				
	2010	2020	2030	2050
<b>POPULATION</b> <b>x 1,000</b>	16,433	16,748	16,976	16,797
<b>YOUNGER THAN 20 YRS</b> <b>%</b>	23.7	22.0	21.4	21.6
<b>20 TO 65 YRS</b> <b>%</b>	61.0	58.4	55.4	54.8
<b>65 YRS OR OLDER</b> <b>%</b>	15.3	19.6	23.3	23.6
<b>GREEN BURDEN</b> <b>%</b>	38.9	37.6	38.6	39.4
<b>GREY BURDEN</b> <b>%</b>	25.2	33,5	42.0	43.1
<b>NATIVE DUTCH</b> <b>%</b>	80.1	78.3	76.4	71.4
<b>FOREIGN WESTERN BACKGROUND</b> <b>%</b>	8.9	9.5	10.2	12.5
<b>FOREIGN NON-WESTERN BACKGROUND</b> <b>%</b>	11.0	12.2	13.4	16.0

Source: CBS, Statistical yearbook 2008.

Table 1 shows that the population growth can be disregarded. However, the composition of the population will change because of the demographic burden. The green burden remains relatively stable; the grey burden will increase during the next decades with about 70%. Also in another way the composition of the

population will change: native Dutch or foreign background. The number of persons with a foreign – non-western and western – background will increase with about 20% till 2030 and will rise further till 2050; this refers to the first and second generation of immigrants.

### 1.3 ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS

The Dutch economy and labour market consists for almost 80% out of the delivery of services (see table 1).

Table 1: Employment in % per sector			
	2000	2005	2007
<b>AGRICULTURE AND FISHERY</b>	3.5	3.3	3.1
<b>MANUFACTURING AND CONSTRUCTION</b>	19.4	17.5	17.3
<b>COMMERCIAL SERVICES</b>	47.0	46.4	47.0
<b>NON-COMMERCIAL SERVICES</b>	30.2	32.9	32.5

Source: CBS, Statistical yearbook 2008.

The employed labour force rose in 2007 to nearly 7.3 million people (net participation rate: see table 2). Since 2001 employment rose in the elderly age segment(s) of the labour force because of the situation on the labour market and the partial removal of arrangements for early retirement; and more women were entering the labour market.

Table 2: Net labour participation by sex, age and native origin; 15-64 years in % (employed labour force as a % of the population).			
	<b>2001</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	65.0	63.2	66.2
<b>SEX</b>			
<b>MEN</b>	76.8	73.3	75.1
<b>WOMEN</b>	52.8	53.0	57.2
<b>AGE</b>			
<b>15 TO 25 YRS</b>	45.9	37.7	40.4
<b>25 TO 35 YRS</b>	82.0	80.5	83.6
<b>35 TO 45 YRS</b>	78.4	77.8	81.2
<b>45 TO 55 YRS</b>	70.6	73.3	76.6
<b>55 YEARS AND OVER</b>	33.7	38.2	42.8
<b>NATIVE ORIGIN</b>			
<b>NATIVE DUTCH</b>	66.7	65.2	68.1
<b>FOREIGN WESTERN</b>	62.5	62.1	64.3
<b>FOREIGN NON- WESTERN</b>	52.7	49.2	54.0

Source: CBS, Statistical yearbook 2008.

As a result only 4.5% of the labour force were unemployed in 2007 (see table 3). Above this average of 4.5%: women (5.8%); groups aged 15-25 years (9.2%) and 55-65 years (5.4%); persons with a foreign background, especially non-western; and persons with at most qualifications at ISCED level 2. Persons with a bachelor's degree have the best chances to be employed on the labour market – even better than persons with a master's degree.

The situation on the Dutch labour market was very positive in 2007. The prospering economy pushed up employment. The demand for labour increased substantially. The number of job vacancies hit a record level in the course of the

year 2007: 226.000 job vacancies. And the unemployment labour force dropped sharply to 344.000 persons. The prognostication (end 2008) about unemployment is that it will rise on account of the economic crisis. The preliminary prognostication for 2010 is an unemployment percentage of about 9% as an impact of the economic crisis.

Table 3: Unemployment (as % of the labour force) by native origin and education level of 15-64 year-olds

	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	6.5	4.5
<b>NATIVE ORIGIN</b>		
<b>NATIVE DUTCH</b>	5.2	3.8
<b>FOREIGN WESTERN</b>	7.9	5.6
<b>FOREIGN NON-WESTERN</b>	16.4	10.2
<b>EDUCATION LEVEL</b>		
<b>PRIMARY EDUCATION</b>	12.7	9.1
<b>SECONDARY EDUCATION – STAGE 1</b>	9.0	7.5
<b>SECONDARY EDUCATION – STAGE 2</b>	6.2	4.3
<b>BACHELOR</b>	3.9	2.6
<b>MASTER/DOCTORATE</b>	5.0	3.3

Source: CBS, Statistical yearbook 2008.

The public and private expenditure for publicly funded education (excl. subsidies for college and university fees) was in the year 2000 5.1% of the general domestic product (GDP); in 2006 5.6%. Funding by government – as part of the GDP – in those years: 4.8% (2000) and 5.2% (2006). Government funding on senior secondary VET in particular has risen in recent years.

## 1.4 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF POPULATION

A cause of the changes in educational attainment of the population between 2000 and 2006 (see table 1) is that young people with qualifications of higher levels of formal education enter the labour force, while older generations with lower levels gradually leave.

Table 1: Educational level of population aged 25-64 yrs in %		
LEVEL	2000	2006
<b>PRIMARY EDUCATION</b> <b>ISCED LEVEL 1</b>	11.1	8.1
<b>SECONDARY EDUCATION</b> <b>ISCED LEVEL 2</b>	23.6	20.5
<b>(POST-)SECONDARY EDUCATION</b> <b>ISCED LEVELS 3 AND 4</b>	40.2	41.7
<b>BACHELOR</b> <b>ISCED LEVEL 5</b>	15.8	17.9
<b>MASTER/DOCTOR</b> <b>ISCED LEVELS 5 AND 6</b>	8.8	11.1

Source: OCW, Key figures 2003-2007.

The increase in the educational level of the population is most marked among young people. In 2006 34% of 25-34 year-olds had a higher education qualification (ISCED level 5 or 6); 21% bachelors and 13% masters or doctors within this age group.

The percentage of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training was in 2002 15% in the Netherlands; in 2007 the percentage was 12%, a decrease of twenty percent since 2002 – a little bit better than the EU-average of 14.8% (Eurostat – EU Labour Force Survey). This group is mentioned ‘early school leavers’. There is a big difference in the labour market situation for young people with basic

qualifications (at least ISCED level 3C) and those without them (at most ISCED level 2; early school leavers). For example, only 65% of the total group of early school leavers aged 15 to 22 found work in 2007 versus 81% of young people with basic qualifications. Some two-thirds of dropouts with a qualification at ISCED level 2 (aged 15 to 22) found a job; less than half of young people with only primary education found work.

## 2. POLICY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE VET SYSTEM

### 2.1 OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

The main objectives to which the VET system has to contribute, are nowadays:

- to raise the educational level of the population;
- to embed the VET system in a lifelong learning strategy; and
- to make the VET system more attractive – for the participants and for stakeholders on the labour market and in society.

The present VET priorities connect with these objectives.

Related to the raise of the educational level of the (future) labour force population and also to a lifelong learning strategy for instance:

- to reduce the number of early school leavers with 50% between 2002 and 2012;
- to attune different types and levels of IVET to each other by realizing a 'vocational education column' which includes pre-vocational education (ISCED level 2), senior secondary vocational education (ISCED levels 3 and 4) and a more differentiated higher professional education (ISCED level 5);
- to match better the demand and supply side of CVET and to promote CVET, for instance through realizing regional or local one-stop-shops for information and guidance and possibly further support for unemployed persons, employees, self-employed people and employers.

Related to the improvement of the attractiveness of VET for instance:

- to implement a competence based qualification structure for senior secondary vocational education. This new qualification structure contains a description of competences for work, (further) learning and citizenship as central issues to prepare future employees for the requirements of modern society. This structure gives more freedom to educational institutions to adopt innovative pedagogical and didactical methods. Implementation is aimed at 2010;

- to introduce innovative learning arrangements in VET schools at different levels and to improve regional co-operation with different stakeholders (incl. stakeholders on the labour market);
- to promote science and technology education in the entire education system, in order to increase the attractiveness of technical programmes and the quantitative growth of the number of science graduates.

Further: an important priority among the rest is the prevention of a shortage of VET teachers in the near future. A lot of VET teachers – belonging to the ‘baby boom’ generation directly born after 1945 – will retire in the period till 2015.

### 3. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK – PROVISION OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

**Note of the author:** *it's recommendable to read paragraph 4.1 before the reader starts with chapter 3; par. 4.1 presents the Dutch education and training system in a bird's eye view.*

#### 3.1 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Educational laws in the Netherlands mainly provide a broad framework outlining the most important elements such as: general aims and objectives of VET; access and accessibility; procedures about design and determination of qualifications, curricula and examinations; procedures about quality assurance; regulations about the administration of publicly financed IVET suppliers; procedures about the recognition of private, commercial IVET suppliers; financing. In Orders in Council (AMVB – *Algemene Maatregelen van Bestuur*) which can be updated more easily, the central government can formulate more detailed arrangements.

#### THE MAIN LEGISLATION WHICH REFERS TO INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IVET) IS:

- for junior secondary general and pre-vocational education (VMBO – *voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*) as part of general secondary education (see par. 4.1): Law on Secondary Education (WVO – *Wet op het Voortgezet Onderwijs*; 1968 with adaptations later on).
- for senior secondary vocational education (MBO – *middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*; see par. 4.1): Law on General Adult Education and Vocational Education (WEB – *Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs*; 1996 with adaptations later on).
- for higher professional education (HBO – *hoger beroepsonderwijs*; see par. 4.1): Law on Higher Education and Scientific Research (WHW – *Wet op het Hoger Onderwijs en Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek*; 1993 with adaptations later on).

In chapter 4 (general outline of VET type), 7 (development of qualifications), 8 (examinations) and 10 (financing) we'll pay attention to some of the legislative arrangements for VMBO, MBO and HBO.

For IVET the following laws are important too:

- Law on Regional Registration (of early school leavers) and Coordination (RMC: *Regionale Meld- en Coördinatiewet*; 2001). Goal: reduction of early school leaving.

- Law on Grants for Students (WSF – *Wet op de Studiefinanciering*; for 18 year-olds and over in fulltime education).
- Law on Reduction of Wage Tax Contributions (WVA – *Wet Vermindering Afdracht Loonbelasting*). Goal: financial support of enterprises which make places for apprentices available.
- Law on Professions in Education (Wet BIO – *Wet op Beroepen in het Onderwijs*; 2006). Valid for primary, secondary and general adult education and for IVET at senior secondary level: regulates the minimal requirements for teachers.

#### LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR CVET:

- IVET legislation when IVET functions as CVET for the individual; and
- tax deduction measures for individuals to facilitate training and APL-procedures.

In collective labour agreements (CAO's – *collectieve arbeidsovereenkomsten*) social partners can formulate aims and arrangements for CVET and apprenticeship training. The regulations differentiate per branch of industry or labour market sector. Collective labour agreements are declared legally binding for all the enterprises in a certain branch or sector of the labour market; this declaration is issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment.

### 3.2 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (IVET)

There are mainly two or three organizational levels in the Dutch initial vocational/professional education system:

- national level;
- sectoral level (especially in senior secondary VET);
- regional/local or school level.

We distinguish several functions and roles in the system of VET: legislation and financing; development of qualifications; development of curricula; examination; quality assurance – internal and external; promotion of interests.

In table 1 the levels of organization (incl. the relevant organizations or bodies) are combined with these functions and roles.

Table 1: Organizational levels and functions/roles within initial vocational/professional education			
<b>FUNCTION</b>	<b>VMBO (ISCED-2)</b>	<b>MBO (ISCED-3/4)</b>	<b>HBO (ISCED-5)</b>
<b>LEGISLATION/FINANCING (PAR. 3.1 AND CHAPTER 10)</b>	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science/ Ministry of Agriculture	The same as VMBO	The same as VMBO
<b>DEVELOPMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS (CHAPTER 7)</b>	Design: national level  Validity: national	Design: sectoral level by Knowledge Centres VET – Trade and Industry (social partners & VET).  Validity: national	Design: school level  Validity: national
<b>DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULA (CHAPTER 7)</b>	School level	School level	School level
<b>EXAMINATION (CHAPTER 8)</b>	Partly central/national; partly school exams	School exams; external contribution of trainers in enterprises	School exams
<b>QUALITY ASSURANCE (CHAPTER 8)</b>	Internal  External: Inspectorate	Internal  External: Inspectorate; special attention: exams	Internal: self-evaluation.  External: accreditation of HBO-programmes by NVAO*. European level: use of Dublin level descriptors.
<b>PROMOTION OF INTERESTS BY ASSOCIATIONS OF SCHOOLS**</b>	VO Council ( <i>VO Raad</i> )	MBO Council ( <i>MBO Raad</i> :schools); <i>Colo</i> (association of sectoral knowledge centres)	HBO Council ( <i>HBO Raad</i> )

\*NVAO = Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organization ( *Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie*).

\*\*PAEPON promotes the interests of private, non-subsidized VET providers which have been legally recognized by the Ministry of Education to offer regulated MBO- and HBO-courses.

### 3.3 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CVET)

There's no institutional framework for CVET in the Netherlands. It's market driven with a lot of suppliers (including publicly financed IVET suppliers which can offer private, commercial contract activities). Social partners can stimulate CVET by their branch-specific Training and Development Funds (*Opleidings- en ontwikkelingsfondsen*).

CVET can be divided into:

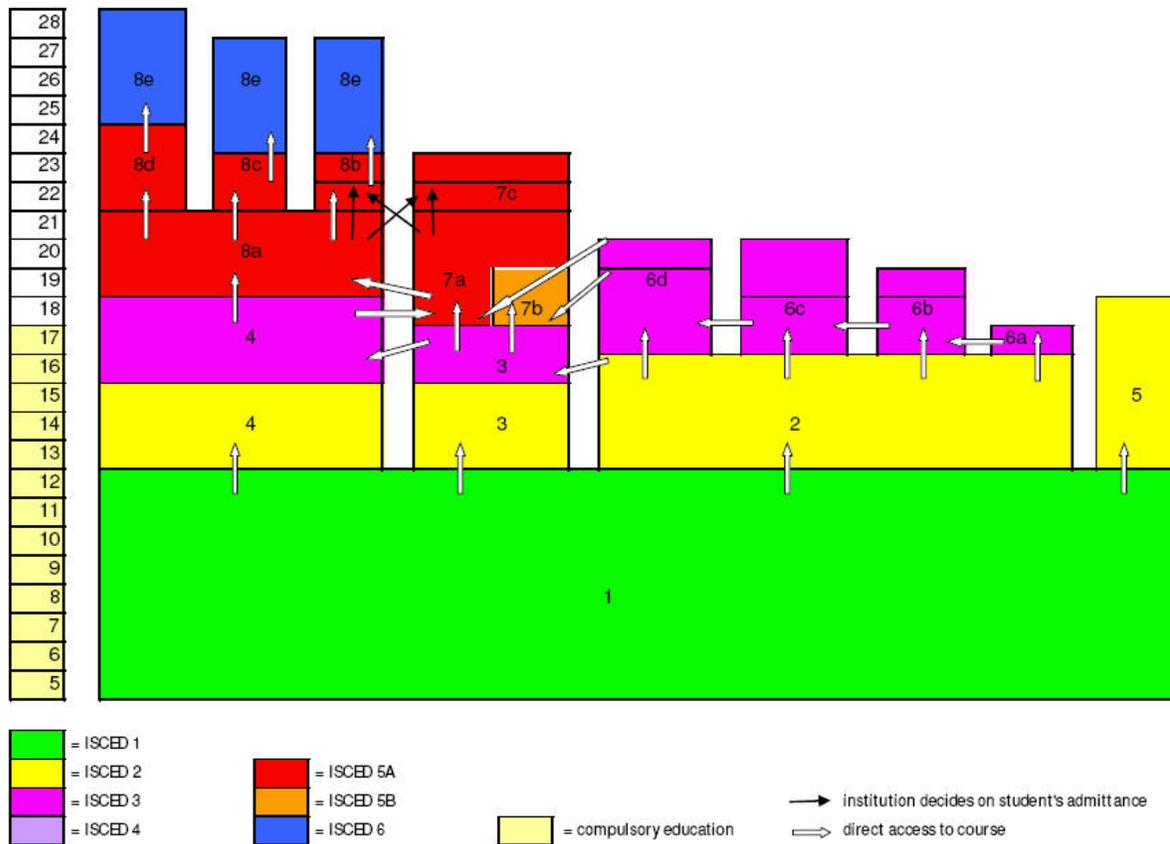
- legally regulated and publicly financed part-time/dual IVET, that functions as CVET for individuals;
- specific training for unemployed and job-seeking persons offered by a lot of providers;
- private, not government funded training for employees, self-employed people and employers.

There are various forms of training provision:

- The part-time equivalents of regular fulltime/school-based vocational/professional education and the dual pathways within senior secondary vocational education and higher professional education.
- Private correspondence courses and e-learning activities, which are primarily vocational in nature.
- Private oral education, which again comprises primarily vocational courses; training courses given outside the company.
- In-company training, off-the-job and on-the-job.

#### 4. INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Figure 1: Diagram Of The Dutch Education System (Incl. Progression And Transfer Routes). Eurydice – the Netherlands (2007).



	Legend
1	primary education (PO)
2	pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO)
3	senior general secondary education (HAVO)
4	pre-university education (VWO)
5	practical training (PRO)
6a	secondary vocational education - training to assistant level (MBO – level 1): ½-1 yr
6b	secondary vocational education - basic vocational training (MBO – level 2): 2-3 yrs
6c	secondary vocational education - professional training (MBO – level 3): 2-4 yrs
6d	secondary vocational education - middle management training (MBO – level 4): 3-4 yrs
7a	higher professional education (HBO-bachelor)
7b	associate degree (HBO)
7c	higher professional education (HBO-master): 1-2 yrs
8a	university (WO-bachelor)
8b	university (WO-master): 1-2 yrs
8c	university (WO-dentistry): 2 yrs (total: 5 yrs)
8d	university (WO-medicine/veterinary/pharmacy): 3 yrs (total: 6 yrs)
8e	PhD: 4 yrs

N.B.: Not visible in this figure special education (see par. 4.1), MBO-specialist training (ISCED-level 4; see par. 4.3 and 4.5) and CVET.

## 4.1 BACKGROUND: THE DUTCH EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEM IN A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

The Dutch education and training system comprises six elements: (a) primary education, (b) special education, (c) secondary education, (d) senior secondary vocational education and general education for adults, (e) vocational courses and training for adults (CVET), and (f) higher education.

In figure 1 (par. 4.0) the diagram of the Dutch system of education is shown.

Education is compulsory for pupils in the age of 5 till 16. Formerly the law did require 16/17-year-olds – on August 1 of any year – to attend education at least one or two days a week. Since August 2008 a 'qualification duty' for 16 and 17-year-olds exists, when they have not yet attained a general or vocational qualification at senior secondary level (the numbers 3, 4 and 6b in the diagram in par. 4.0: at least ISCED 3C – diploma of MBO-level 2; or ISCED-3C – diploma of HAVO or VWO). This new arrangement has been introduced due to the necessity to reduce the number of early school leavers.

Primary education (ISCED level 1; Dutch abbreviation: PO – *primair onderwijs*): for pupils between 4 and 12 years; it lasts eight consecutive years.

Special education at primary and secondary level (Dutch abbreviation: SO/VSO – *speciaal onderwijs/voortgezet speciaal onderwijs*): for pupils in the age of 3 to 20 years with learning or behavioral problems and/or with mental, sensory or physical handicaps.

General secondary education (ISCED levels 2 and 3; Dutch abbreviation: AVO – *algemeen voortgezet onderwijs*) includes three types of education:

- pre-university education (ISCED level 2 after three years and further on level 3; Dutch abbreviation: VWO – *voorbereidend wetenschappelijk onderwijs*). The duration is six years and it prepares for further study in higher education: research universities and higher professional education/universities of applied sciences. Age: 12-18 year-olds.
- senior general secondary education (ISCED level 2 after three years and further on level 3; Dutch abbreviation: HAVO – *hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs*): the duration is five years and it prepares for further study in higher professional education. Transfer to the fifth year of VWO is also possible. Age: 12-17 year-olds.
- junior general secondary and pre-vocational education (ISCED level 2; Dutch abbreviation: VMBO – *voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*): the

duration is four years and it prepares for further study in senior secondary vocational education (and partly in HAVO). Age: 12-16 year-olds. We pay attention to this type of education as part of VET further on in this overview.

Connected with VMBO is a separate practical, labour oriented programme called PRO for pupils who are not able to attain a diploma of lower secondary/pre-vocational education (PRO = *praktijkonderwijs*). Age: 12-18/19 year-olds.

Senior secondary vocational education (ISCED levels 2, 3 and 4) and general adult education (ISCED levels 1 to 3). Dutch abbreviation: BVE – *beroepsonderwijs en volwasseneneducatie*.

- The first part is senior secondary vocational education with a lot of programmes in four sectors of the labour market; at four levels with different duration. As part of the Dutch VET system we'll pay attention to this type of education further on in this overview. Dutch abbreviation: MBO – *middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*. Age: from the age of 16.
- The second part is general adult education: basic education (ISCED level 1; Dutch terminology: *basiseducatie*) and general secondary education for adults (ISCED levels 2 and 3; Dutch abbreviation: VAVO – *voortgezet algemeen volwassenenonderwijs* – *VMBO-TL/HAVO/VWO-diplomas*). Age: from the age of 18 (but 16/17 year-olds can attend this type of education under certain conditions too).

CVET comprises a lot – or maybe better a 'jungle' – of vocational or more general courses for job-seekers and unemployed persons, for employees and self-employed people, and for employers. IVET-programmes can also function as CVET for participants.

Higher education (ISCED level 5) as a binary system has two components:

- higher professional education: the duration is four years (mainly bachelor's degree; also: associate degree and master's degree). Supplier: 'universities of applied sciences'. As part of the VET system we'll pay attention to this type of education further on in this overview. Dutch abbreviation: HBO – *hoger beroepsonderwijs*. Age: from the age of 17/18.
- scientific/university education (ISCED level 5; and 6 for doctorates): the duration is four years and for technology studies five years (bachelor/master's degree). Dutch abbreviation: WO – *wetenschappelijk onderwijs*. Age: from the age of 18.

The Open University as part of (scientific) adult education – with a modular programme structure – does have an open access.

The system can mainly be divided into two ‘columns’ or tracks (see also figure 1):

(a) the general education track starts in general secondary education (HAVO/VWO) with direct transfer possibilities towards higher education and

(b) the vocational education track starts in junior secondary pre-vocational education (VMBO study year 3) with transfer possibilities towards senior secondary vocational education (MBO); MBO-4 graduates can continue their study in higher professional education (HBO). Senior secondary vocational education is the pivot in the latter column. For some students, it is regarded as the end of initial vocational education, completed with an initial qualification. For others, it is regarded as an alternative route to higher professional education: nowadays more than 50% of the MBO-4 graduates continue their study in HBO and that number is still increasing.

Most pupils at the age of 14 follow the VMBO (and afterwards MBO) pathway although HAVO/VWO is viewed as a superior path towards higher education (see table 1 in section 0402). Improving parity of esteem between the two tracks is a policy priority.

## **4.2 IVET AT LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL**

IVET at lower secondary level is part of secondary education (see par. 4.1).

The destination of 14-year-olds within the system of secondary education (study year 3 in secondary education) is shown in table 1. The table shows a growth of the number of pupils in the ‘higher’ segment of secondary education (HAVO/VWO) since 1990; and that’s the case too for pupils who need extra support in the ‘lower’ segment (VSO – PRO – LWOO=*leerwegondersteunend onderwijs*). The ‘middle’ segment of secondary education (VMBO – excl. VMBO with extra support via LWOO) has decreased rapidly since 1990.

Table 1: Participation in different types of secondary education – 14 year-olds; in %.			
	1990	2000	2007
<b>VSO (15 YEAR-OLDS)</b>	0.9	1.6	2.6
<b>PRO (15 YEAR-OLDS)</b>	1.6	1.9	2.7
<b>VMBO - LWOO</b>	7.3	9.5	12.0
<b>VMBO (EXCL. LWOO)</b>	58.3	48.8	40.4
<b>HAVO</b>	17.0	20.8	22.2
<b>VWO</b>	15.4	17.5	20.0

Source: Key figures 2003-2007; OCW. See par. 4.1 for abbreviations.

VSO and PRO: special types of secondary education – usually not leading to a diploma ISCED-level 2.

VMBO: IVET at lower secondary level leading to a diploma ISCED-level 2. (LWOO = *leerwegondersteunend onderwijs*: extra support for pupils within VMBO).HAVO and VWO: general secondary education as preparation for higher education.

Pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO – *voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*) lasts 4 years. The first two years consists only of general subjects as is the case in HAVO/VWO. VMBO in the study years 3 and 4 is characterized by three system elements:

- a. pupils can receive extra support in the different VMBO-programmes (see above: LWOO);
- b. pupils choose a sector (agriculture; technology; economics; health and welfare) and further specialities within a sector (see table 2).

The subjects for the examinations are: two obligatory subjects for all the pupils (languages Dutch and English); two sector-specific subjects (limited choice) and

two other subjects (different options). The vocationally oriented subjects can be more wide or narrow in nature.

The programmes lead to nationally recognized qualifications/diplomas; examinations are partly centrally/nationally organized and for the other part the exams are a responsibility of the schools.

Table 2: Choice of sector within VMBO study year 3 in VMBO BL/KL; in %. Exclusive VMBO-TL and VMBO-GL; only more vocationally oriented programmes.		
SECTOR	2000	2007
GREEN EDUCATION	12.4	13.1
TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION	35.7	26.7
ECONOMY AND BUSINESS	25.8	26.1
HEALTH CARE/WELFARE	26.1	28.1
COMBINATION OF SECTORS		6.1

Source: CBS. Statistical yearbook education/2008.

- c. pupils choose a 'learning path' characterized by 'level differentiation', programmatic orientation and different transfer possibilities in the education system.

The four learning pathways are:

- Theoretical learning pathway (VMBO-TL – *theoretische leerweg*). The graduates from the theoretical learning pathway can transfer to MBO (especially long courses on the highest levels of senior secondary VET – MBO-levels 3 and 4) or continue their education in the fourth year of HAVO. The content of the programme is not directly vocational.
- Mixed learning pathway (VMBO-GL – *gemengde leerweg*). This is similar to the theoretical learning pathway but a little bit more vocationally oriented.
- Pre-vocational learning pathway (VMBO-KL – *kaderberoepsgerichte leerweg*): preparation for long MBO courses – MBO-levels 3 and 4.
- Pre-vocational learning pathway (VMBO-BL – *basisberoepsgerichte leerweg*): preparation for short MBO courses – MBO-level 2. Within this pathway some

pupils can participate in a dual trajectory in which learning and working are combined. And further some experiments have been started in 2008: integration of VMBO-BL and MBO-level 2 programmes in co-operation between VMBO- and MBO-providers (making a 'smooth' progression route without a break halfway).

Table 9: Participation in VMBO-learning pathways; in %.		
LEARNING PATH WITHIN VMBO	2007 (100)	% LWOO-PUPILS IN A LEARNING PATH (2007)
VMBO - BL	24	55
VMBO - KL	26	20
VMBO - GL	10	5
VMBO - TL	40	3

Source: Key figures 2003-2007; OCW. Compilation of data.

In addition, there is a specific practical pathway for low-achievers, which is geared towards preparation for the labour market; see par. 4.1. about *PRO (praktijkonderwijs)*. Some of these pupils do also make the transfer to senior secondary VET (MBO-level 1; see par. 4.3).

Unqualified VMBO-pupils can enter senior secondary VET: MBO-programmes at level 1 (which can also be offered in VMBO-schools in co-operation with MBO-schools) and under certain conditions entering MBO-level 2 programmes.

#### 4.3 IVET AT SENIOR SECONDARY LEVEL

In senior secondary education 68% of the school population participates in a vocational programme (MBO – *middelbaar beroepsonderwijs*) and 32% in general education (HAVO and VWO). The number of participants in VET is high; not only youngsters attend MBO but adults too, so that the numbers don't represent the division in an age cohort.

The age of the participants in senior secondary vocational education ranges from 16 year-olds to 35 and over. The average age of senior secondary VET

participants is even slightly higher than in higher education; MBO fulfills by that an emancipating function.

The subsidized programmes in IVET at senior secondary level are offered by 43 regional, multisectoral training centres (ROC's – *regionale opleidingscentra*), 13 specialist trade colleges (*vakscholen*: specific for a branch of industry), 11 agricultural training centres (AOC's – *agrarische opleidingscentra*) and four other schools. The AOC's are separately financed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality. Next to it private, non-subsidized providers can offer MBO-programmes, if their programmes are recognized by the Ministry. So, the MBO is an open system. The subsidized educational institutions can offer contract educational activities – paid by employers/employees – too: these activities have a volume of about four percent of their running costs.

The system elements in senior secondary VET are:

a. Two learning pathways: school based fulltime or parttime programmes with practical periods in enterprises (BOL – *beroepsopleidende leerweg*) and a dual pathway (apprenticeship training) in which learning and working are combined (BBL – *beroepsbegeleidende leerweg*). In the BOL-pathway the practical period in companies is at least 20% of the study time and at most 59%; in the BBL-pathway training takes place in a company during at least 60% of the study time. Both pathways function in the state of the market as communicating vessels; one can attain the same qualifications/diplomas via both pathways. The BOL-pathway is attended more than the other pathway, especially by youngsters (see tables 10 and 11); the BBL pathway is attended for 40% by 25-year-olds and over (see table 11; and par. 4.5).

Table 10: Participation in MBO: learning pathways				
	1995	2000	2005	2007
<b>TOTAL NUMBER</b>	436,000	452,000	483,000	513,000
<b>% BOL PATHWAY</b>	73	66	72	69
<b>% BBL PATHWAY</b>	27	34	28	31

Source: CBS, Yearbook educational statistics, 2008.

Table 11: Participation in MBO: age and learning pathway, 2007; in %.		
	<b>BOL PATHWAY</b>	<b>BBL PATHWAY</b>
<b>16-20 YRS</b>	71	32
<b>20-25 YRS</b>	25	28
<b>25-30 YRS</b>	2	10
<b>30-35 YRS</b>	1	7
<b>35 YRS AND OVER</b>	2	23

Source: CBS, Yearbook educational statistics, 2008.

b. Programmes at four levels with different access criteria and transfer possibilities for further learning.

- MBO-level 1 ‘assistant training’ (*assistentenopleiding*) lasts a half to one year. It prepares participants to carry out simple executive tasks (ISCED level 2 in Dutch/international statistical information; in figure 1 of Eurydice it has level 3C-short).

Access: without thresholds.

Progression possibility: programmes at MBO-level 2.

There are a few sector-specific programmes; next to it a more broad labour oriented programme called AKA for vulnerable groups (labour market qualified assistant – *arbeidsmarktgekwalificeerde assistent*). The programmes at this level have been intended for youngsters who probably can’t attain a minimum starting qualification at MBO-level 2.

- MBO-level 2 ‘basic vocational education’ (*basisberoepsopleiding*) lasts two or three years. It prepares people to carry out executive tasks (ISCED level 3C-short). This level is the ‘official’ level for a minimum qualification for the labour market; ‘official’ means that it is related to the definition of early school leaving and that this level – politically spoken – is seen as a desirable minimum for every citizen.

Access requirements: a diploma of at least VMBO-BL; completion of assistant training (MBO-level 1); under certain conditions without thresholds.

Progression possibility: MBO-level 3 (and sometimes level 4) programmes.

- MBO-level 3 ‘professional education’ ( *vakopleiding*) lasts three/four years (and two years after completion a MBO-level 2 programme). It prepares persons to carry out tasks completely independently (ISCED level 3C-long).

Access requirements: (1) a certificate/diploma of pre-vocational secondary education (VMBO-TL; VMBO-GL; VMBO-KL; and not VMBO-BL), or (2) proof that the first three years of senior general secondary education or pre-university education have been successfully completed.

Progression possibility: programmes at MBO-level 4; middle management training programmes as well as specialist training (see hereafter).

- MBO-level 4 ‘middle-management VET’ ( *middenkaderopleiding*) usually lasts four years. It prepares persons to carry out tasks completely independently and with more responsibility (ISCED level 3A).

Access requirements: the same as MBO-level 3.

Progression and transfer possibility: higher professional education (see par. 4.7).

- MBO-level 4 ‘specialist training’ ( *specialistenopleiding*) lasts one to two years (ISCED level 4).

Access requirements: completion of a programme at MBO-level 3 or 4.

Progression/transfer possibility: higher professional education, especially the dual or parttime trajectories.

Access requirements for senior secondary vocational education have been designed to ensure that all people can gain a minimum level of qualification regardless of their previous education and training achievements.

Table 12: Participation in MBO – levels and learning pathways, 2007; in %.		
	<b>BOL</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>BBL</b> <b>(100)</b>
<b>LEVEL 1</b>	3	7
<b>LEVEL 2</b>	19	41
<b>LEVEL 3</b>	23	33
<b>LEVEL 4 – MIDDLE MANAGEMENT</b>	55	16
<b>LEVEL 4 – SPECIALIST</b>	1	3

Source: CBS, Yearbook educational statistics, 2008.

c. The existence of a structure of qualifications that has been related to different branches of industry/business. MBO-programmes are offered in four sectors: green/agriculture; technology and engineering; economics/service; health/welfare. Every sector has various branches of industry/business.

A re-design of the qualification structure is going on. Originally the structure had about 700 qualifications, which had been drawn up by the Knowledge Centres VET-Trade and Industry (further KBB's – *Kenniscentra Beroepsopleiding Bedrijfsleven*); there are nowadays 17 KBB's. The new structure has 237 competence-based qualifications/diplomas with different exit differentiations (about 650). The latter means that the reduction of the number of VET-programmes is smaller than the qualification structure suggests. Every qualification describes the desirable output of programmes based on these qualifications: output related to the execution of a vocation/group of vocations, to citizenship and to further learning. This new structure is implemented during the next few years.

Assessment and examinations are a matter of the VET-providers; they have legally to involve the trainers within enterprises who have a responsibility for internships and apprentices in all the pathways.

Table 13: Participation in MBO – programme orientation and learning pathways, 2007; in %.		
	<b>BOL</b>	<b>BBL</b>
	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>
<b>GREEN/AGRICULTURE</b>	4.8	5.7
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>	22.5	45.3
<b>ECONOMICS/SERVICE</b>	36.6	25.6
<b>HEALTH/WELFARE</b>	35.6	22.9
<b>COMBINATION OF SECTORS</b>	0.5	0.4

Source: CBS, Yearbook educational statistics (2008).

#### 4.4 APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Apprenticeship training is a substantial part of senior secondary vocational education (see par. 4.3); in lower secondary VET (par. 4.2) and higher professional education (see par. 4.7) it plays a more modest role.

Normally apprentices have two contracts: a learning/educational agreement with the VET school (*onderwijsovereenkomst*) and an employee contract (*arbeidscontract*) with an organization/enterprise. The main learning place here is the workplace with a coverage of at least 60% of the study time. In practice, it means that students conclude also a 'practical learning agreement' (*praktijkovereenkomst*) with a company (and with their school) for normally four days a week, and attend school one day a week. However, there are a lot of variations on this manner of organizing.

The apprenticeship system becomes more and more attractive for (young) adults; more than for youngsters who prefer to choose for a more school-based programme with practical periods in their curriculum (see table 11 in par. 4.3). Within the dual part of the VET system technology studies are dominant (see table 13 in par. 4.3).

The school-based as well as the dual programmes within senior secondary vocational education are organized within the same administrative framework. The school has to be the linking pin between the lessons and workshops in school and the practical training component.

Furthermore, the already mentioned sectoral Knowledge Centres (*KBB's*) are important actors in this field. They check and assure the quality of the companies providing practical training places for the school based and dual programmes. This work has been laid down in legislation. In addition, they provide training for practical trainers and support to schools in order to improve the on-the-job elements of the dual and non-dual study programmes.

When entering the labour market, those with BBL qualifications can find work sooner (because of their high level of practical experience and mostly they had already a job), tend to find a permanent job sooner, and earn in the beginning of their career more than those coming from the more school-based learning pathway (BOL; see par. 4.3). BBL certificate holders are also much more focused on working and therefore choose to enroll in further education less often than BOL certificate holders.

#### **4.5 OTHER YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS**

The intention is that the regular system of VET does also have meaning for vulnerable groups. Therefore several measures have been taken to realize this intention. In par. 4.2 and 4.3 we did already mention some of them. The measures are:

- Extra support for pupils in lower secondary VET for pupils who have formally been indicated for such support via a rigorous procedure: PRO and VMBO-LWOO (see par. 4.2);
- The possibility that pupils in lower secondary VET and PRO who possibly/probably can't attain a VMBO-diploma can combine lower secondary VET with participation in an 'assistant training' programme' (see par. 4.2);
- The introduction of vocationally oriented assistant training programmes within senior secondary VET during the nineties and a more labour market oriented 'assistant training' programme for youth 'at risk' a few years ago (MBO-level 1; see par. 4.3);
- Extra support for all the participants in senior secondary VET at MBO-levels 1 and 2. Aim: preparatory activities in the sphere of orientation and reduction of learning deficiencies.

- The introduction of a 'personal budget for youngsters' who normally attend special (secondary) education; with this (extra) budget – received after a rigorous procedure (comparable with PRO, LWOO and special education) – the participants can 'buy' extra support in the regular system of education and VET at senior secondary level.

Next to it municipalities can take measures to reduce early school leaving and to integrate vulnerable groups in education and/or work. Then they make often use of the possibilities of the regular VET system at senior secondary level or sometimes they are designing own programmes often with support of regular VET providers and/or enterprises which offer work-based learning places. The regular VET system has explicitly three functions: an economic function related to the labour market, a social function targeted to 'inclusion' and citizenship and the function of personal development (including to make further learning attractive).

The political adage is: make the regular VET system accessible and attractive for everybody; consequence is to realize more flexibility within this system.

#### **4.6 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT POST-SECONDARY NON-TERTIARY LEVEL**

The most prevalent and most formal form of training at post-secondary non-tertiary level is the specialist training; in the Netherlands it is part of senior secondary VET, where it has already been described (see par. 4.3).

This is a programme which provides further vocational specialization (at ISCED level 4), and it is on top of the highest level of the qualification structure for senior secondary VET. This type of training usually lasts one to two years after completion of a programme at MBO-level 3.

Further learning in higher professional education is possible: then dual trajectories are the most right because many students in the specialist training programme combine already learning and working, so that they will not easily transfer to fulltime programmes in education.

#### **4.7 VOCATIONAL/PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT TERTIARY LEVEL**

There are two types of higher education: university education and higher professional education (see par. 4.1). The latter is the most professionally oriented and is outlined in more detail here; publicly financed providers are the universities of applied sciences. Non-subsidized providers can offer HBO-programmes too if their courses have been accredited.

These educational institutions offer bachelor programmes (that's their core business; degree: bachelor's degree). In addition, pilot projects with short cycle HBO ('Associate degree' or Ad, ISCED level 5B) have been introduced a few years ago in the Netherlands with the goal in mind to implement the Ad in the regular education system. The Ad-programme (120 ECTS; normative duration about two years) is an integral part of a bachelor's programme (240 ECTS; normative duration four years), so that further progression in higher education for graduates with an associate degree is possible; especially interesting for (adult) persons with a VET-background at senior secondary level. Next to it these organizations offer master programmes for bachelor graduates; the estimation is that the number will increase during the next decade. These organizations can also execute market-driven contract activities paid by employers and/or individuals/employees (activities: educational courses; applied research); in 2006 these activities did contain about 8% of their running costs.

Degrees will be awarded by the institutions themselves. Official recognition of the courses is granted on the condition that they obtain an accreditation from the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organization.

Higher professional education (ISCED level 5) is generally open to those who have obtained a diploma in VWO (pre-university education), HAVO (senior general secondary education) or the long courses of senior secondary vocational education (MBO-level 4). The number of entrants with a MBO- or VET-background is increasing (see table 14); an effect of the implementation of the Lisbon strategy in the Netherlands.

Progression routes: after completion of study year 1 of a bachelor programme entrance in university education is possible; with a (HBO-)bachelor's degree towards master programmes in HBO; and towards master programmes in university education often preceded by a bridging programme.

Table 14: First year HBO students by previous education *; in %.		
	<b>2002</b>	<b>2006</b>
	<b>(100)</b>	<b>(100)</b>
<b>DIRECT ENTRANCE: HAVO</b>	34	36
<b>DIRECT ENTRANCE: VWO</b>	6	5
<b>DIRECT ENTRANCE: MBO</b>	20	26
<b>DIRECT ENTRANCE: OTHERS</b>	3	4
<b>INDIRECT ENTRANCE</b>	37	29

Source: Key figures 2003-2007 (OCW).

\* The numbers don't include green education and non-subsidized HBO programmes.

There are 51 government-funded higher professional educational institutions. Higher professional education is provided at "*hogescholen*" ('universities of applied sciences') and is for students aged 17 and over. *Hogescholen* generally offer study programmes in one or usually more than one of seven fields of training: green/agriculture; technology; economics and services; health care; behaviour and society; culture and arts; training of teachers (see table 15).

Higher professional education provides education for professions which require both theoretical knowledge and specific skills. HBO courses are therefore almost always closely linked to a particular profession or group of professions and most programmes include a work experience placement. This type of education can also be attended part-time as a part of professionally oriented adult education; and in dual learning pathways (since ten years).

Table 15: HBO students by learning pathway and programme orientation; in %.

	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2007</b>
<b>TOTAL NUMBER</b>	313,000	357,000	374,000
<b>LEARNING PATHWAY:</b>			
<b>FULLTIME</b>			81
<b>PARTTIME</b>			16
<b>DUAL</b>			3
<b>SECTORS:</b>			
<b>EDUCATION</b>			18
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b>			16
<b>ECONOMICS</b>			36
<b>HEALTH</b>			9
<b>BEHAVIOUR/SOCIETY</b>			15
<b>CULTURE/ARTS</b>			4
<b>GREEN EDUCATION</b>			2

Source: CBS, Yearbook educational statistics (2008).

## 5. CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS

### 5.1 BACKGROUND

See paragraph 3.3: institutional framework of CVET.

See chapter 2: the realization of local/regional one-stop-shops for information, guidance and possibly further support related to jobs, employment and training. Target groups: unemployed people, employees whether or not threatened by unemployment, self-employed persons, employers.

### 5.2 PUBLICLY PROMOTED CVET FOR ALL

Where IVET functions as CVET for individuals one can mention it 'publicly promoted (and financed) CVET for all'. In senior secondary vocational education especially the dual and parttime learning pathways are attended by adults: these programmes function as vocationally oriented adult education too (see table 11; and paragraph 4.3, 4.5 and 4.6). The same is the case in higher professional education, where the dual and parttime pathways are attended by almost 20% of the student population (see table 15 in paragraph 4.7).

The Open University (distance learning) belongs also to the category of 'publicly promoted CVET for all': 14,000 students in 2008; 30% for attaining a single certificate and 70% in a course leading to a diploma of higher education.

Publicly funded – (in)direct by the Ministry of Education – general education for adults has two components: basic education and secondary general adult education (the same diplomas as in general secondary education), both offered by the ROC's for senior secondary VET (see chapter 4.1; and chapter 10.2; legislative framework the Law on Senior Secondary VET and Adult Education (chapter 3.1)). Since 2007 civic integration courses for migrants have been privatized; ROC's are not the sole providers anymore. Providers have to tender and the municipalities decide about which providers can execute the educational tasks in civic integration (legislative framework: Law on Civic Integration – *Wet Inburgering*). For general adult education and for civic integration the central government gives a (fixed) budget to the municipalities, which are responsible for the planning of these components of general adult education.

Table 16: Participation in publicly financed (by the MoE) general adult education; x 1,000.				
	1995	2000	2006	2007
<b>BASIC EDUCATION *</b>	.	(125)	(99)	37
<b>SECONDARY ADULT EDUCATION **</b>	46	24	10	13

Source: Key figures OCW 2003-2007. \*Till 2006 including civic integration courses for migrants ('old' and 'new'); that makes clear the much lower number of participants in 2007. \*\*Especially *HAVO*-programmes as upper secondary education.

Next to it, the central government – via the Interdepartmental Project Directorate Learning and Working as a co-operation between the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment – promotes the 'accreditation of prior learning'. In 2008 a marketing campaign on television was started: *get your experience certificate*. Next to it this Directorate promotes lifelong learning by different strategies (see par. 5.4).

### 5.3 TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

Unemployed persons can apply for a job at the local/regional Centres for Work and Income (Employment Service); these organizations have been merged with the organizations for the payment of social security money for unemployed persons and for occupationally disabled persons. The municipalities are responsible for income support for persons without an income out of work or the social security/insurance system. These co-operating agencies try to help persons to find a job. Training can be part of the (re)integration into work. Private re-integration offices and a lot of private educational providers and 'public' providers (offering commercial contract activities and sometimes regular IVET programmes for the relevant target groups) have been involved in trajectories leading to work for beneficiaries of local income support and for unemployed/disabled persons/beneficiaries of social security support. The persons themselves can under certain conditions negotiate about the desirable route to work whether or not with a component of training (they have a voice in the choice of courses/programmes paid by these agencies).

To stimulate civic integration, participation in education and the labour market, a so called 'participation budget' will be introduced at municipality level. It's a clustering of three former budgets for social welfare and income support (Law on Work and Income Support – *Wet Werk en Bijstand*), employability education and civic integration. The aim is to decrease bureaucracy. The 'Participation Budget Law' is in the implementation stage since January 2009.

#### **5.4/5.5 CVET AT THE INITIATIVE OF ENTERPRISES/EMPLOYERS AND/OR OF SOCIAL PARTNERS AND/OR OF THE INITIATIVE OF INDIVIDUALS/EMPLOYEES**

In this paragraph non-formal , work-related CVET is described; sometimes it is 'formal' of character.

The training for employees is partly influenced by Collective Labour Agreements; these agreements are valid for a certain branche/sector of the labour market. Financial arrangements for CVET can be made through funds reserved for training and/or research and development (Training and Development Funds - *O&O fondsen: Opleidings- en Ontwikkelingsfondsen*). These sectoral or branch funds are filled by employers who pay an obligatory levy of the personnel costs to the fund and employers can benefit from refunds for the training of employees (especially offered by private providers which can be linked to an recognition/admission system of these funds) . There are about 140 of these funds; they cover 85% of the employees.

Further the initiative for training can come from the employer or from the employee.

A lot of training providers are active in this market of non-formal/formal continuing vocational training (off-the-job) for working people or employees: publicly funded VET providers offering contract activities paid by the contractor (about 12% of the courses), and especially private, commercial training providers (coverage of 88% of this training market). Informal learning on-the-job (workplace learning) is hardly represented in statistical information.

The biggest percentage of CVET is enterprise based.

In January 2007, a fiscal regulation was introduced to stimulate the recognition/accreditation of prior learning: Law on Tax Relief APL-procedures (accreditation of prior learning) – *Wet Vermindering Afdracht Erkenning Verworven Competenties*.

Regional agreements on working-learning arrangements and the use of APL-procedures have increased over the past few years, stimulated – amongst others – by the Interdepartmental Project Directorate for Learning & Working.

The task of this interdepartmental project unit was to take concrete steps forward , from 2005, with lifelong learning. The government will not carry out the project itself, but rather stimulate and facilitate employers, employees, citizens, trade and industry, employment services, educational providers, local governments and regions to realize these steps in practice. See also par. 2.1: realization of local one-stop-shops; and since the economic crisis ‘mobility centres’ with the same task – to guide persons from one job to another job. Not job security is the dominant way of thinking, but (nowadays) work security.

Participation:

Table 17 shows the number of enterprises (by size class) involved in training. Larger companies are more training-minded (CTSV-2/CTSV-3). Table 18 however is more interesting. It shows the number of employees in different sectors that has attended company training courses (off the job). The participation rate in the primary sector of the labour market (mining) and in the financial services sector are the highest.

The downward trend in the economic situation in 2003-2005 will have had a negative impact on participation. The rise needs to come from the small and medium sized enterprises, which are particularly sensitive for economic changes. A degree of training saturation is applicable within larger companies.

Table 17: Number of enterprises involved in training as % of all enterprises, by size class.		
	<b>1999</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>ALL</b>	88	75
<b>10 – 49 EMPLOYEES</b>	85	71
<b>50 – 249 EMPLOYEES</b>	96	88
<b>250 EMPLOYEES OR MORE</b>	99	96

Source: Key figures OCW, 2003-2007.

Table 18: Participation of employees in company training by size class and sector; in % of total number of employees. CTSV: 1, 2 and 3 resp. in 1993, 1999 and 2005.

	<b>1993</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	26	41	34
<b>10–99 EMPLOYEES</b>	15	37	24
<b>100–499 EMPLOYEES</b>	27	45	36
<b>500 EMPLOYEES OR MORE</b>	36	42	45
<b>MINING</b>	.	60	61
<b>INDUSTRY</b>	24	40	34
<b>POWER-/WATERWORKS</b>	37	47	44
<b>CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY</b>	24	58	40
<b>TRADE</b>	22	37	26
<b>CATERING</b>	16	32	22
<b>TRANSPORT/COMMUNICATION</b>	.	40	39
<b>FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>	46	65	54
<b>COMMERCIAL SERVICES</b>	20	36	35
<b>OTHER SERVICES</b>	.	39	30

Source: Key figures OCW, 2003-2007.

## 6. TRAINING VET TEACHERS AND TRAINERS

### 6.1 TYPES OF TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN VET

A distinction can be made in:

- Teachers in IVET as a regulated, publicly financed part of VET (even if it functions as CVET for individuals);
- Trainers in enterprises fulfilling a role within the school-based and/or dual pathways in IVET;
- Teachers and trainers in CVET as a market and demand driven part of VET.

#### TEACHERS IN IVET.

There are two important laws for the initial/continuing training of teachers in IVET.

Firstly: Law on Professions in Education (*Wet BIO – Wet Beroepen in het Onderwijs*).

Secondly: Teacher training courses are provided by institutions for higher professional education and universities, so the Law on Higher Education and Scientific Research is applicable (see chapter 3 and paragraph 4.7; see further on paragraph 6.2).

The *Wet BIO* – which entered into force on August 1, 2006 – regulates the standards of competence for both teachers and other people working in education-related jobs in schools of primary, general secondary, vocational secondary and general adult education. Training courses have to be based on these standards. The law enables schools to devise policy on maintaining the skills of their staff (see further paragraph 6.2).

All the possible roles of teachers can be fulfilled in senior secondary VET: instruction, guidance and assessment as 'generic' roles; and more 'specific' roles (whether or not as part of a job): curriculum development and innovation; assessment development; co-ordination tasks e.g. for internships; career guidance; quality assurance of certain aspects; applied research activities; monitoring activities; remedial teaching; and so on. Within a team of teachers the

possible and desirable roles are divided – in accordance with the management of the school.

### **TRAINERS IN ENTERPRISES WITHIN THE IVET SYSTEM.**

The 17 Knowledge Centres for VET – Trade and Industry (KBB's: *Kenniscentra Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven*) within senior secondary VET are intermediary bodies between the sectoral labour markets and the educational sector. Their legislative role implies firstly that the (training) needs of the labour market, laid down in vocational profiles, are translated into qualifications (see chapter 7 about qualification and curriculum development). Relating to practical training (training on the workplace) as part of the IVET courses, these institutions have also formulated criteria for the accreditation of companies providing practical training. That's the second task of these organizations laid down in legislation: to monitor and to improve the quality of learning in enterprises for students/apprentices. One of these criteria is that the practical trainers, who are responsible for guidance and training of the students/apprentices in the company, should have didactical skills: to instruct, guide, motivate and assess the students/apprentices. All KBB's provide (commercial) courses regularly to train these practical trainers in the various branches of industry.

## **6.2 TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN IVET**

Teacher training for various fields of vocational education (for general, technical and agricultural subjects) forms part of higher education and falls under the Law Higher Education and Scientific Research (*Wet op het hoger onderwijs en het wetenschappelijk onderzoek* – WHW).

Initial teacher training is provided by HBO institutions (higher professional education; see paragraph 4.7) and by universities.

HBO teacher training covers both subject training and aspects of teaching in general; it leads to a bachelor's degree (240 ECTS) as a second grade qualification for teachers. All the regulations for higher professional education are applicable. For secondary vocational education graduates from other HBO courses can also be appointed as teachers. The school decides whether the candidate meets the standards of competence for the subject in question. If not, the candidate is required to make up for the shortfall within two years and next to that to attain a certificate of competence in teaching (in a parttime or dual pathway). Candidates without an HBO qualification but who are considered

capable of functioning at HBO level on the basis of their education and work experience can also make use of this lateral-entry arrangement.

University graduates with a master's degree can take a postgraduate teacher training course with an average duration of one year (60 ECTS) leading to a grade one qualification for teachers; students can also begin and complete such a programme while they are still undergraduates.

Increasingly schools for secondary vocational education are training teaching staff themselves as part of a dual pathway within HBO teacher training, including students on training and employment contract, teaching assistants undergoing teacher training, and lateral-entry staff with a lot of work experience.

Schools for secondary vocational education have their own budgets for in-service-training for teachers. They decide – together with the teachers – about the content of courses and the institution that provides the training. Every school board is obliged to take measures and to introduce instruments to ensure that the staff to whom standards of competence apply can maintain their skills and knowledge (obligation via the Law Professions in Education).

Trainers in enterprises within IVET: see paragraph 6.1.

### **6.3 TEACHERS AND TRAINERS IN CVET**

There is no information available about initial/continuing training of teachers/trainers in CVET. CVET is a demand-driven market with its own, very differentiated market mechanisms concerning almost fully open admission to this market, quality recognition, customer satisfaction, marketing strategies, and so on. There doesn't exist a more general framework for the training of teachers/trainers in CVET as is the case for IVET.

## 7. SKILL NEEDS, COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGY

### 7.1 MECHANISMS FOR THE ANTICIPATION OF SKILL NEEDS

ROA, the Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market, is the institute in the Netherlands specialized in labour market forecasting and skills anticipation. The forecasts aim to increase transparency of the match between education and the labour market. Two approaches can be distinguished: top down and bottom-up. In the top-down approach, a general forecasting model for the whole labour market and data from national sources are combined to serve two main functions: policy and information. ROA publishes biennially the report '*The labour market by education and occupation in 20xx*' which includes analyses of expected labour market developments in the light of particular policy issues. The information function is primarily intended to assist and support vocational and educational guidance processes.

In the bottom-up approach, partial models of labour market forecasting are used, for example for just a selection of sectors or occupational classes, with input from specific (ad hoc) data sources. This can be complementary to the top-down approach.

The association of Knowledge Centres for VET and Trade and Industry (Colo) (see paragraph 3.2) – active in senior secondary VET – works together with ROA to make better use of the available data. Their cooperation has been signaled in a four year contract. These 17 respective branch-specific Knowledge centres publish results of 'education and labour market research' for their own sector, making use of ROA information and other resources. These documents contain information on the labour market by sector or branch, such as expected demand for qualified personnel and the expected availability of places in companies for practical training (as part of vocational education programmes), and qualitative developments related to changing and new employment. The educational institutions are subsequently responsible for attuning their provision of education at regional level. The regional training centres sometimes carry out their own market research to get insight into expected needs for qualified employees at regional level.

Social partners and educational institutions can both take the initiative to introduce new occupations or qualifications or renew existing qualifications. Furthermore, social partners have an explicit task to take the initiative to

incorporate new occupations or qualifications into the national qualification structure in senior secondary vocational education (see paragraph 7.3).

The centres for work and income (*Centrum voor Werk en Inkomen* - CWI), the social security agency (UWV) and the Council for Work and Income (RWI) are also involved in the cooperation between the ROA and *Colo* to match the information on demand and supply in the labour market, at sectoral and regional level. The CWI's and the offices of UWV have been merged since January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009: The Work Enterprise (*Het Werkbedrijf*).

Private, commercial training providers have their own marketing strategies (including market research), so that they can offer courses which are relevant for the potential target groups and for the labour market.

## **7.2 BRIDGING PATHWAYS AND NEW EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

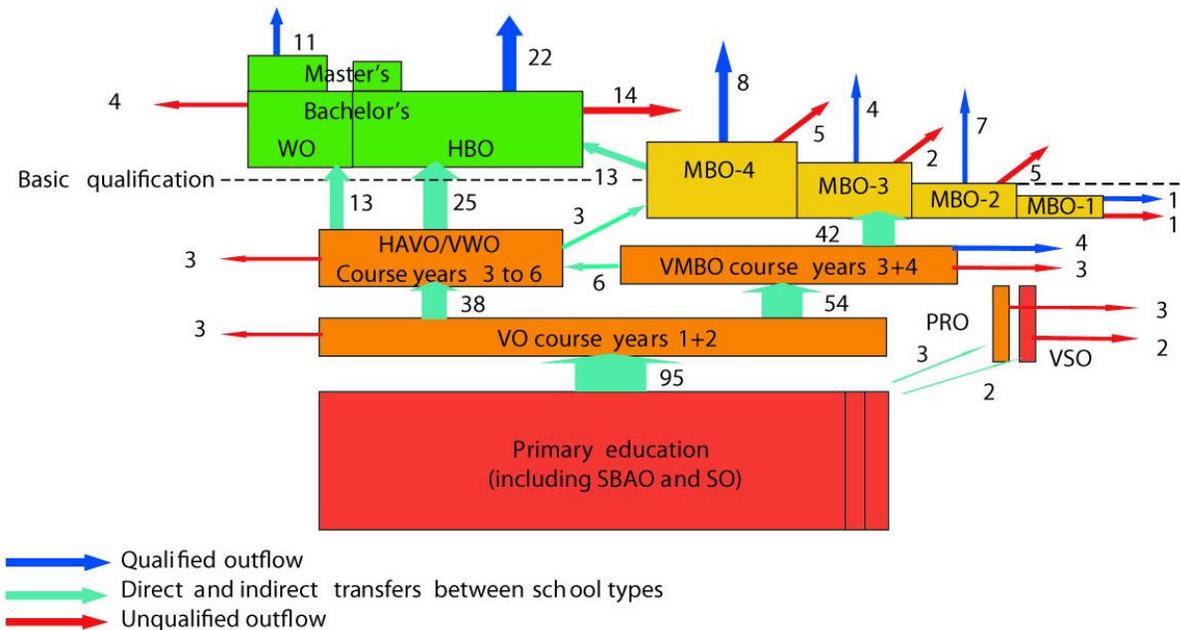
One of the main policy objectives is to smooth the transfer between the various vocational education sectors: from junior secondary vocational education to senior secondary vocational education and on to higher professional education. The progression routes and transfer possibilities have already been described in the paragraphs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.7. One can see them in figure 2 too.

Figure 2 shows the transfer estimations of pupils/students within the system; it refers to pupils leaving primary education in 2006. These estimations approximate the present reality.

Figure 2: Diagram of the Dutch education system; incl. transfer within the system.

## Movements in Dutch education

In percentages of a cohort of pupils leaving primary education, 2006



Source: Key figures 2003-2007 (Ministry OCW).

Basic qualification = at least a diploma of *VWO*, *HAVO* or *MBO-2*.

Explanation abbreviations: *WO* = wetenschappelijk onderwijs – scientific education; *HBO* = hoger beroepsonderwijs – higher professional education; *MBO* (4 levels)= middelbaar beroepsonderwijs – senior secondary vocational education; *VWO* = voorbereidend wetenschappelijk onderwijs – pre-university education; *HAVO* = hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs – senior general secondary education; *VMBO* = voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs – pre-vocational and junior general secondary education; *VO* = voortgezet onderwijs – (general) secondary education; *PRO* = praktijkonderwijs – labour oriented education; *VSO* = voortgezet speciaal onderwijs – secondary special education; *SBAO*= speciaal basisonderwijs – special primary education; *SO* = speciaal onderwijs – special education.

General adult education (basic adult education and general adult education related to *VMBO*, *HAVO* and *VWO* programmes/qualifications) and *CVET* are not shown in this figure.

In 2001 '*the transfer agenda for vocational education*' did appear. The spearheads are (see also paragraph 7.3):

- The career of the student is the central point for attention;
- Towards a 'new' pedagogy/didactics for VET;
- Co-operation between the different sectors/levels of vocational/professional education: realizing continuity via progressive learning lines within VET;
- Co-operation between schools and enterprises.

Sometimes, temporary organizations are created to stimulate modernization within IVET.

### **7.3 RENEWAL OF CURRICULA**

The term 'curriculum' has various meanings in the Netherlands. In relation to the term 'qualification', the best definition is: a document that relates to the desired implementation of an entire educational programme, leading to a diploma. The document always contains descriptions of the following: objectives – contents – educational structure – assessment/evaluation. The extent of detail can vary. The development of a curriculum is a matter for the individual schools within the legal frameworks as laid down in the constitution.

The legal framework is for:

- VMBO (lower secondary vocational education) : examination syllabi are laid down in a framework by the Ministry of Education. The framework is developed by the *Foundation for Curriculum Development* in the Netherlands.
- MBO (upper secondary vocational education) : the national qualification structure describes the desired output of the qualifications. Three steps can be distinguished:
  1. social partners develop and determine/validate vocational/occupational profiles;
  2. representatives of social partners and education develop the qualification profiles (output), which are appointed by the Ministry of Education/Agriculture. This development work is done within the 17 branch-specific Knowledge Centres for VET- Trade and Industry.
  3. on the basis of the qualification profiles schools develop curricula – in cooperation with the training firms.

- HBO (higher professional education): Qualifications and programmes – developed by the schools – are accredited by the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organization. A curriculum is part of the accreditation request.
- CVET is market driven and therefore unregulated, unless CVET = IVET.

The term ‘innovation’ is ambiguous: innovation as something totally new (never experienced before); because it is new to the users. Since the beginning of the decade (around 2001), a distinction has been made within vocational education between three renewal strategies linked to the method of financing and the character of ‘an alternative approach’:

- basic strategy: this strategy involves the changes that are made to keep education up to date and to make it attractive and more effective; ‘daily’ innovation is financed from the normal budget. Key term: adaptation.
- breadth strategy: implementing new working methods that have already been tested elsewhere; to make learning arrangements locally applicable and specific rather than just adopting innovations. Extra means have been earmarked for every institution of vocational education. Key term: renewal.
- depth strategy: this strategy consists of two different innovations: (a) something completely new and/or (b) something new for which the regulations can/may be set aside, and which will involve temporary additional project financing over several years, for which a critical assessment of the innovative idea will take place in advance. Only those ideas with truly innovative potential can be elaborated on in the project proposal that will be submitted for further approval. Key term: innovation.

Schools are primarily responsible for the modernization of their curricula. The authority with regard to learning arrangements is assigned to them; this is constitutionally regulated (‘state education’ has a negative ring to it in the Netherlands), which is to say that (most) ‘how questions’ are answered by the schools (for vocational education) themselves; there is a close collaboration with companies in the region. This does not mean, however, that the national government remains completely aloof. They can stimulate those developments and innovations that have consequences for the modernization of a curriculum.

In terms of vocational education, there are three organizations that are of current interest for the modernization of (parts of) IVET:

(1) the Science and Technology Platform: ensuring sufficient numbers of educated students in the technology sector,

(2) the Vocational Education Platform (collaboration between umbrella organizations for the schools providing vocational education at various levels and the national Labour Foundation (social partners)): innovation arrangements associated with the above mentioned 'transfer agenda', and

(3) Process management MBO 2010: the introduction of a competence based qualification structure in senior secondary vocational education.

These organizations have an array of tasks: to stimulate modernization; to distribute additional government resources for modernization; to disseminate knowledge concerning good and best practices; to monitor the progress of modernization; to organize 'knowledge consortia'.

The spearheads that can be observed in the modernization of vocational education are:

(1) a turn towards competence based learning in multiple forms;

(2) more active forms of work, which call for greater levels of independence and self-regulation amongst participants in vocational education programmes;

(3) the introduction of a larger variety in practical learning with emphasis on the practical applicability of knowledge: workplace learning; simulation companies; carrying out assignments for companies; et cetera

(4) the development of longitudinal learning strands that transcend the different types of vocational education;

(5) the introduction of different forms of supporting participants: coaching, mentoring (also peer mentoring), career guidance, et cetera;

(6) the introduction of more varied means of assessment, including the simulation of an aptitude test.

Schools providing vocational education make their own choices when it comes to the finer points of modernization.

## 8. ACCUMULATING, ACCREDITING AND VALIDATING LEARNING

### 8.1 RELATED TO FORMAL LEARNING

In the Netherlands, the mechanisms to recognize formal learning are as follows:

#### IN IVET:

##### **Lower secondary vocational education:**

Lower secondary vocational education has both central, national examinations and school examinations; both are important for gaining a diploma. The Inspectorate of Education supervises the quality of the school exams.

##### **Senior secondary vocational education:**

In vocational education at senior secondary level, the assessment of learning results is a matter for the school; within senior secondary vocational education, the law stipulates that the learning company has to be involved in this testing process. The qualifications formulated (see paragraph 7.3) are the standards that serve as benchmarks for the assessments. The Inspectorate of Education supervises the quality of the examinations (content, level and procedures at programme level).

##### **Higher professional education:**

Schools are responsible for the examinations in accordance with the teaching and assessment regulations which have been designed by the provider; these regulations are part of the accreditation request for a recognized HBO-programme (see chapter 4.7 and 7.3).

All the diplomas/certificates in IVET do have value at national level; see chapter 4 and paragraph 7.2 for transfer and progression routes; chapter 3 for the legislative frameworks; chapter 7.3 for qualification and curriculum development.

#### IN CVET

Own regulations, unless there's supply of IVET programmes functioning as CVET for individuals. Sometimes certain measures or legal regulations, e.g. compulsory

further training for medical personnel or BHV (emergency response officer), in the transport sector, and so on.

## **8.2 RELATED TO NON-FORMAL AND INFORMAL LEARNING**

Accreditation of prior learning (APL of non-formal/informal learning) is an instrument that is promoted in the Netherlands since about ten years.

The institutional structure for can be divided into:

- a. APL in accordance with/conform the national qualifications/standards in IVET at especially senior secondary vocational and higher professional level. Accreditation is laid down in the form of a diploma or a course certificate; or granting exemptions for parts of a regular VET programme. The school or other training providers play an important role in making use of APL procedures; they apply them. Free access to examinations did already exist in the Netherlands: in different laws on education the possibility of participation by external candidates or outsiders is mentioned.
- b. Other standards like the Microsoft MCSD. These kind of standards are demand/market driven and there's little structure.

In 2000 the APL Knowledge Centre was established, financed by three ministries: Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Education, Culture & Science and Ministry of Social Affairs & Employment. The initiative enjoys the support of the social partners, the employment services and educational umbrella organizations in the public and private sector. This temporary Knowledge Centre for APL is the institution that is responsible for the stimulation of the development and implementation of APL in the Netherlands.

The aim is to work towards more transparency in the APL market. Therefore the APL Knowledge Centre has developed an APL quality code in collaboration with the Inspectorate of Education, the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organization, APL providers and other stakeholders that can be applied to all APL initiatives (e.g. quality procedures; quality of assessors).

The APL Knowledge Centre studies, accumulates and distributes information on every imaginable aspect of APL, such as national and international information pertaining to APL projects, procedures, instruments, financing, yield and legislation. Incidental bottlenecks in the sphere of legislation and regulations are surveyed and discussed with the responsible authorities.

The implementation of APL in the Netherlands started in a small number of sectors and settings, but its application is broadening quickly. The main challenge for the coming years is to change the character of APL from a process found mainly in projects with a limited time span to a lasting one firmly embedded in all relevant institutions. Other challenges include raising APL accessibility, improving assessor quality and strengthening the relationship with career guidance for job seekers and employed persons.

### **8.3 IMPACT OF EU POLICY CO-OPERATION**

In the Netherlands, the Europass has been implemented. Diploma supplements and certificate supplements are issued. For a recognition of a period of training abroad of Dutch students, the Europass is in use. The bachelor-master system has been implemented, including the ECTS.

The implementation of EQF in the Netherlands is not yet ready; there has been made some progress in which the public and private sector of VET have been involved. For an eventual, successful implementation of ECVET the implementation of EQF is seen as a necessary condition.

### **8.4 FACILITATING EU MOBILITY**

The National Contact Point (NCP) for professional recognition can give information to people looking to practice their profession in another country. If the profession is a regulated profession as set out in Directive 2005/36/EC, the NCP will be able to refer people eligible for professional recognition to the authority responsible for the profession in the other state. The NCP can give advice on professional recognition procedures and supports individuals, for example, by issuing an 'NCP declaration'.

The Dutch National Contact Point is a partnership between Nuffic and Colo.

Colo is the Association of 17 Knowledge Centres VET – Trade and Industry, acting in the field of senior secondary vocational education. Colo's Centre for International Credential Evaluation (IDW: *Internationale Diplomawaardering*) has the knowledge and information needed to assess foreign qualifications and awards for preparatory secondary vocational education (VMBO), secondary professional education and adult education in terms of the Dutch qualifications framework. This is provided as a statutory service.

Nuffic is the Dutch Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education. Nuffic can help by answering questions about application of the new Directive in the Netherlands and in other states. Nuffic does this on behalf of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

## 9. GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR LEARNING, EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER

### 9.1/9.2 STRATEGY AND PROVISION/TARGET GROUPS AND MODES OF DELIVERY

The organization of study and career orientation and guidance in the Netherlands has three components:

1. Study and career orientation and guidance has been integrated in the educational sector – in general education and vocational education. The provision is embedded within the curriculum and/or alongside the curriculum of a school.
2. It is part of the services provided for unemployed job seekers.
3. Other facilities.

Ad 1. Career guidance is an integral part of schools and training centres in general secondary education and senior secondary vocational education. It is a special task for teachers who are known in this context as student counselors/coaches. In this case, career guidance is a task of the school. Information about study and employment possibilities, more active forms via visits (schools and enterprises) and 'participatory learning' can be integrated within the curriculum and/or organized alongside the curriculum. Schools decide how they offer career orientation and counseling. Private offices for career guidance (e.g. Advice Centres for Training and Employment; ) can be contacted by schools or individuals for (paid) advice and for specialized purposes.

Ad 2. Unemployed persons and job seekers can consult the Centres for Work and Income (Employment Services) for career planning and guidance where specialized advisors help them to find new work. Modes of delivery: individual scans of competences; information about work and vacancies; work experience projects; and so on.

Ad 3. The last sector is career guidance and orientation for employed persons. The relevant institutions are mainly private advice centres active in this field with outplacement and guidance of employed persons as their speciality (assessment of competences is an important task of those organizations) . Next to it some sectoral Training and Development Funds (see par. 5.3) have career projects for employees in their sector who want to make a career change: regional-sectoral career advisors support these employees.

On national level, the Interdepartmental Project Unit for Learning & Working aims at realizing functioning, regional learning-working desks which provide employed persons and jobseekers with low-threshold access to advice on careers, competencies and training opportunities; the function of this Project Unit is to stimulate lifelong learning. (And since the economic crisis such learning-working desks are also mentioned 'mobility centres'.) Spearheads are youngsters without a starting qualification (not yet attained of at least an ISCED 3C level) and low qualified unemployed persons. The term learning-working desk refers to an accessible point of contact where all citizens (job seekers, employees and employers) can obtain information, an overview of and tailor made advice on training, career counseling and assistance. If such a desk functions well, it supports people in undertaking activities when they want to start learning again or further.

### **9.3 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING PERSONNEL**

In general secondary education and in senior secondary vocational education the career counselors are mainly teachers who have been given extra training specifically for this purpose. Only in the last few years special training courses have become available for career advisors. Currently, courses are available at ISCED level 5 offered by some institutions of higher professional education.

In the other fields career counselors mostly have a relevant, higher educational background attained by study and/or work experience.

## 10 FINANCING: INVESTMENT IN HUMAN RESOURCES

### 10.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science administers almost all central government expenditure on education; an agency of the Ministry has been charged with this task (CFI). The Financing Services Institute (*Centrale Financiering Instellingen* - CFI) within the Ministry for Education, Culture and Science plays a key role in the administration and financing of IVET. There is a complex but direct financing relationship between the CFI and the schools for vocational/professional education.

The relationship between educational institutions and government is characterized by a high degree of institutional autonomy: government merely creates the right conditions. Schools qualify virtually automatically for funding, provided they meet the quality standards and funding conditions imposed by law for the school system as a whole.

Funds are channeled both directly to schools: or indirectly via municipalities (primary and secondary education for school accommodation; general adult education). Another source of funds are the statutory course and tuition fees paid to the institutions by the students themselves. Educational institutions can also generate income from other sources, e.g.: contract activities, extra funding from the municipal authorities for special projects (for instance: reduction of early school leaving).

Non-subsidized (vocational) education and non-formal vocational education activities can partly/wholly be paid by individuals/employees, by employers, by sectoral training funds governed by the social partners, by the employment services and re-integration offices, by municipalities; and/or by several measures such as making use of individual learning accounts, making use of tax arrangements for individuals and employers.

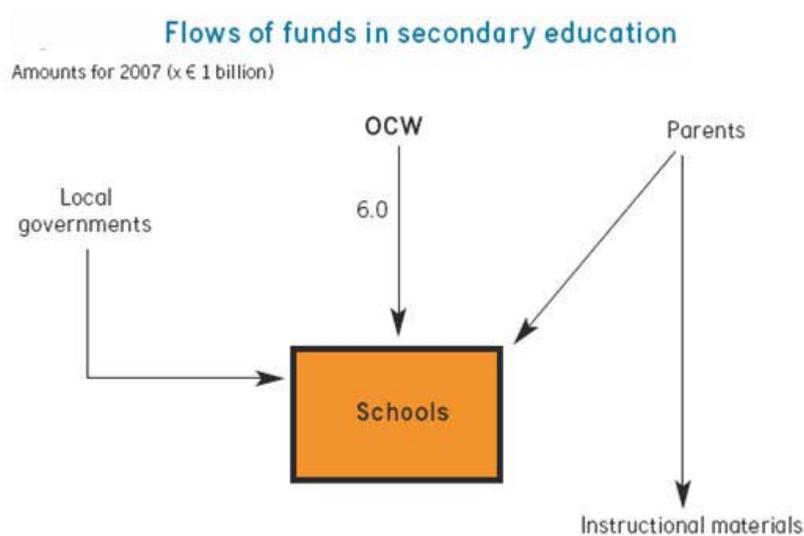
## 10.2 FUNDING IVET

### JUNIOR SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

The funding principle is block grant funding. It gives the competent authority a lot of freedom in deciding how resources are spent. Schools receive a fixed amount per pupil together with a fixed amount per school.

The flows of funds are shown in figure 3.

Figure 3: funds in secondary education, incl. junior secondary vocational education.



Source: Key Figures 2003-2007, Ministry OCW; (Note: pre-scientific education, senior secondary general education and pre-vocational (exclusive of agricultural) education together in this diagram).

## SENIOR SECONDARY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND GENERAL ADULT EDUCATION

There are various sources of funding in this sector:

- Government funding:

For vocational education block grant funding of schools within a macro budget at national level: the amount of money is partly based on the number of students per course/learning path and partly on the number of certificates awarded per institution.

Funding of the Knowledge Centres for VET-Trade and Industry.

For general adult education: money is allocated to the municipalities on the basis of the number of inhabitants over the age of 18, the number of ethnic minorities, and the number of adults with an educational disadvantage. The municipal authorities buy in adult education courses by concluding contracts with the VET-provider/ROC's.

For civic integration training the municipalities receive a budget too from the central government. This market is opened up since 2007, so that ROC's are'nt anymore the sole providers.

- Other income:

Contract activities for companies and individuals; and for municipalities in civic integration training.

- Students:

Students pay course fees to the institutions. Students on vocational education and training programmes (learning pathway *BOL* - see par. 4.3) pay fees to the government and are eligible for student finance when they are 18-years old and over (Law on Student Financing).

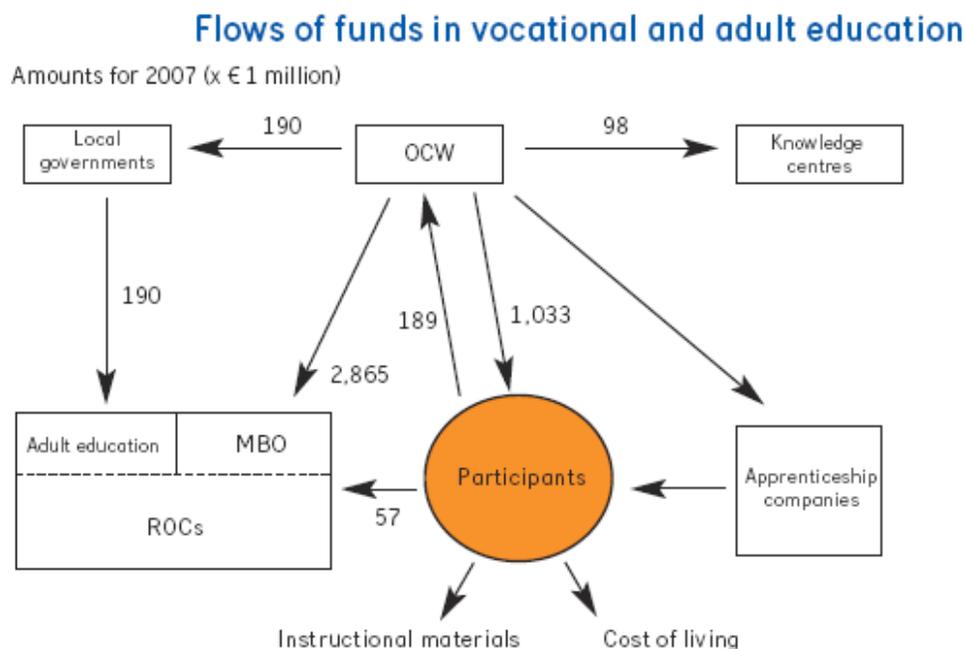
- Companies:

For companies offering learning places for apprentices/dual pathway: a tax facility for each taken place of €2,500. (€ 180 million per year).

Companies spend costs on 'guided learning activities': an average of €8,400 is spent on each participant in the dual system (senior secondary and higher VET level) and € 1,750 for students in practical learning periods within fulltime, school-based VET (2006).

The flows of funds are shown in figure 4.

Figure 4: flows of funds in senior secondary vocational education and general adult education



Source: Key figures 2003-2007, Ministry OCW- Education, Culture and Science; (Notes: mbo = senior secondary vocational education; ROCs = regional VET centres; Ministry of Agriculture and agricultural schools not included in the diagram). Other income for VET-providers is not shown in the diagram. The amount of money for civic integration training is not shown in the diagram; it is given to the municipalities/local governments by another Ministry.

### HIGHER PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

- Government funding:

The amount of money is within a macro-budget partly based on enrollment numbers of participants and partly on output/outcome results (number of diplomas).

- Private funding:

Contract activities paid by the contractor (enterprises and/or individuals/employees).

- Students:

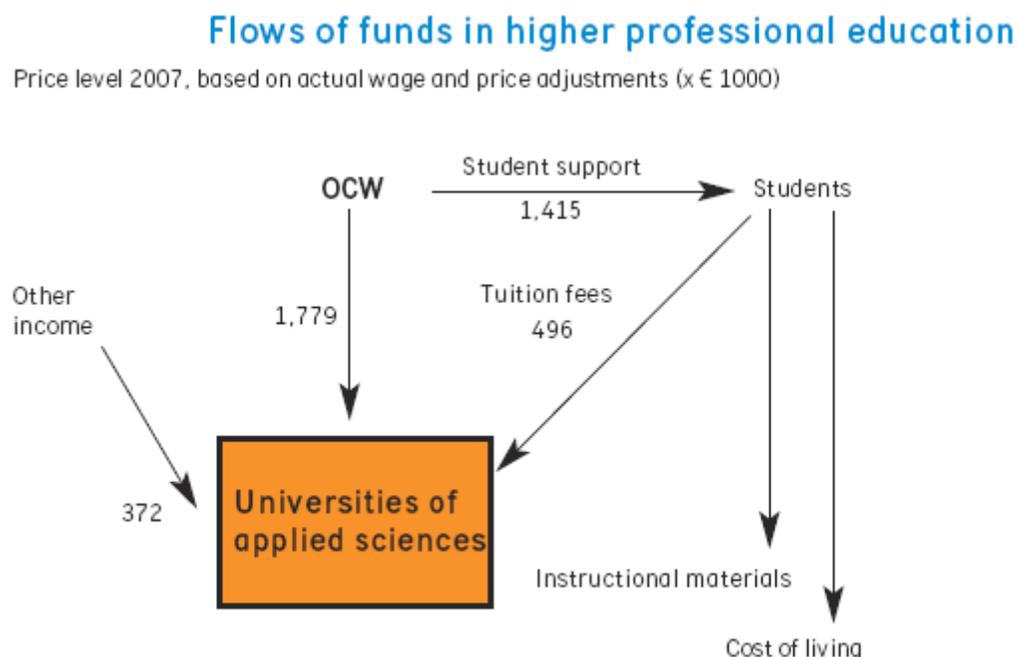
Fulltime students receive (via the Ministry of Education) financial support if they are 18-years old and over through the *Wet op de Studiefinanciering* (Law on Student Financing); and they have to pay tuition fees to the universities of applied sciences.

- Companies/enterprises:

Enterprises offering learning places in the dual pathway: tax deduction scheme comparable within senior secondary vocational education. Companies spend costs on guided learning activities.

The flows of funds are shown in figure 5.

Figure 5: flows of funds in higher professional education.



Source: Key Figures 2003-2007, Ministry OCW; (Note: Ministry of Agriculture and agricultural schools not included in the diagram). The flow of money for apprenticeship companies is not shown in the figure.

## 10.3 FUNDING CVET AND ADULT LEARNING

### PUBLIC FUNDING (GENERAL) ADULT EDUCATION

See paragraph 10.2: relationship between general adult education and senior secondary vocational education.

When publicly funded IVET functions as CVET for participants the financial regulations are the same: see par. 10.2 (especially in senior secondary vocational education and higher professional education): parttime pathways and dual pathways.

### FUNDING ENTERPRISE BASED CVET

Enterprise based CVET for employees is financed through companies, O&O funds (see hereafter), tax facilities (e.g. for APL procedures) and on individual initiative.

Enterprise-based arrangements for training are often made within the context of Collective Labour Agreements (*Collectieve Arbeidsovereenkomsten* - CAOs). These agreements are made within each sector of industry and are preceded by negotiations between employers and employees and last for a specified period of time (usually one or two years). Some of these sectoral arrangements might contain extra provisions to accommodate specific regional demands or circumstances. Financial arrangements in CAO's specifically pertaining to continuing training are made through funds reserved for training and/or research and development. The most prominent of these funds are the Training and Development Funds (*Onderzoek en Ontwikkelingsfondsen, O&O fondsen*). The funds were established as a means to create a more solid foundation for training and to ensure that training became embedded within the various sectors of our economy (and the individual companies within these sectors).

The total spending on company training courses by the business community are shown in table 19.

Table 19: Spending on company courses 1999 and 2005.		
	1999	2005
<b>ALL SECTORS: X €1 MILLION</b>		
INCL. WORKING HOURS	3.088	3.093
EXCL. WORKING HOURS	1.908	1.738
<b>PER EMPLOYEE IN EUROS</b>		
INCL. WORKING HOURS	810	810
EXCL. WORKING HOURS	500	450
<b>IN % OF LABOUR COSTS</b>		
TOTAL	2.8	2.0
SIZE 10-49 EMPLOYEES	1.6	1.1
SIZE 50-249 EMPLOYEES	2.5	1.2
SIZE 250 EMPLOYEES AND OVER	3.7	2.9

Source: Eurostat and CBS

#### 10.4 FUNDING TRAINING FOR UNEMPLOYED AND OTHER VULNERABLE GROUPS

Training for the unemployed and other vulnerable groups is available to those who are registered with the Employment Service (*Centra voor Werk and Inkomen- CWI*). The *Uitvoering Werknemersverzekeringen* (UWVs - Employee Insurance Scheme Implementing Body) are executive bodies of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the *Centra voor Werk en Inkomen* (CWI-Centres for Work and Income) are executive bodies for the local authorities. Both the CWIs and the UWVs are responsible for the (re-) integration of the unemployed; these agencies has been merged since January, 1- 2009. Part of the re-integration can be training paid by these agencies./agency

#### 10.5 PERSPECTIVES AND ISSUES

A 2005 evaluation of the IVET financing/allocation system concluded that the allocation system in general matched the administration, accessibility, efficiency

and effectiveness of the IVET system. The allocation system is of a facilitating nature and provides preliminary conditions for a qualitative good VET system.

Public-private cooperation within regions and sectors, the match of supply and demand in CVET and life long learning, ask for more coherent and flexible financing systems. In short, new forms of education ask for new concepts of financing and allocation of budgets.

## 11 EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS

### 11.1 NATIONAL STRATEGIES

See chapter 2.

### 11.2 IMPACT OF EUROPEANISATION AND INTERNATIONALISATION ON VET

In senior secondary vocational education curricula, the European Framework for Reference of Languages (European Council) is used for implementing foreign language education; moreover: this framework is also used in the Netherlands to create a similar framework for first language education.

There's some progress with the implementation of the EQF.

The Europass is also intended to enhance mobility within the European education and labour market.

Citizens of the European Union can use the Europass system to record their knowledge and skills in a uniform manner in a 'qualifications or competences passport', a standardised curriculum vitae.

Europass consists of five documents: Europass CV, Europass language passport (native language and foreign languages), Europass mobility, Europass diploma supplement (for higher education) and Europass certificate supplement (for vocational education and training).

The Europass was introduced in the Netherlands in 2005. Students can compile their portfolio using Europass documents. An eight-party consortium led by the Information Management Group is charged with the implementation of the Europass. The Information Management Group is an agency of the Ministry of Education that functions as the National Europass Centre.

The most important issue nowadays is to promote the use of Europass, for it is not well-known in the Netherlands.

There are two mobility programmes for senior secondary vocational education. The participation rates are relatively stable during the last years. About 0,5% of the students participate yearly in the Leonardo da Vinci programme, especially in the service industry, health care and welfare sector. Also, on average 125 students participate in a bilateral programme between Germany and the

Netherlands and about 3,5% of VET teachers travel abroad for a minimum of one week for study or internships. There are more than 500 active partners (companies and schools) abroad that are involved in these programmes. More than 50% of the Dutch VET schools are involved.

However, this doesn't yet give a clear picture. In addition to the registered mobility, there are the so called 'free movers', especially within the higher levels of VET and in certain fields e.g. tourism and the hotel and catering sector.

The participation of students in higher education is higher than in senior secondary VET. In 2004-2005 there were on estimate 41,000 students studying abroad; this estimation is not fully reliable. This group can be divided in two groups: 13,000 Dutch students registered for a diploma and 28,000 credit mobile students. About 14% of these students took part in the Erasmus and Tempus programmes. The graduated persons from higher professional education: 17% did also study abroad; in university/academic education the number is 33%.

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[www.hpbo.nl](http://www.hpbo.nl) HPBO = Platform VET (for innovation)

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