
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
AND TRAINING IN EUROPE
NETHERLANDS

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION



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 - Practical labour market-oriented programmes for students with learning difficulties (PRO - praktijkonderwijs, EQF 1) is available.
 - Entry level upper secondary vocational education programmes leading to EQF level 1, ISCED 254 (MBO 1 – entreeopleiding middelbaar beroepsonderwijs).
 - Basic level upper secondary vocational education programmes leading to EQF level 2, ISCED 353 (MBO 2 – basisberoepsopleiding middelbaar beroepsonderwijs).
 - Professional upper secondary vocational education programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 353 (MBO 3 – vakopleiding middelbaar beroepsonderwijs).
 - Middle management upper secondary vocational education programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (MBO 4 – middenkaderopleiding middelbaar beroepsonderwijs).
 - Specialising programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 453.
 - Associate degree (AD) programmes (short-cycle higher education programmes) leading

to EQF level 5, ISCED 554.

- Higher professional bachelor programmes leading to EQF level 6, ISCED 655 (HBO).
- Professional master's programmes leading to EQF level 7, ISCED 757.
- References.

CHAPTER 1.

Summary of main elements and distinctive features of VET

VET in the Netherlands comprises the following main features:

- the employment rate of 20- to 34-years-old VET graduates is 85.4%, above the EU average (79.5%)
- Higher professional education is an important component of Dutch tertiary education; in 2017, almost half of all tertiary education graduates attained a tertiary VET qualification
- The share of early leavers from education and training is well below the EU28 average and in 2017 was for the first time below the national objective for 2020.
- the Netherlands is among the EU countries with the highest share of lifelong learning participation

Distinctive features (1) :

The heterogeneous and multifunctional nature of upper secondary VET in the Netherlands is unique. Key distinctive features are:

- most publicly funded VET is provided by large multi sectoral regional training centres (ROCs) with an average student population of 12 000. Sector-specific schools and agricultural training centres also provide VET programmes. ROCs provide VET for young people and adults (IVET) and general education for adults. They are also active on the continuing VET market, with privately funded programmes. Government-regulated IVET programmes are also offered by private providers under certain conditions;
- school-based and dual pathways in upper secondary VET lead to the same diplomas. Participation in each corresponds to the economic cycle stages: in periods of economic boom, the number of students in the dual pathway increases, while it decreases in the school-based pathway; the opposite happens during an economic recession;
- education institutions have a relatively high degree of freedom to shape VET provision. The VET law only provides a broad framework outlining key elements at system level; institutions receive a lump sum for their tasks;
- the Netherlands promotes a culture of evidence-informed VET policy and practice and encourages innovation. Recent initiatives include providing VET schools regularly with up-to-date regional labour market information and early school leaving data, and implementing plan-do-check-act mechanisms as a basis for organisation and programme development. To reduce the gap between research and practice in education, research and intelligence are increasingly used to improve VET quality and effectiveness, not only by involving professional researchers, but also by encouraging teachers to engage in research activities. To encourage knowledge sharing, VET teachers have opportunities to present their research projects and findings to a wide VET audience, for instance during teacher days.

CHAPTER 2.

Main challenges and policy responses

The main challenges for the coming years in upper secondary VET are described and agreed in the administrative agreement (2018-22) (2) between upper secondary VET schools and the Education Ministry. According to this agreement, upper secondary VET schools will set goals together with their regional partners. Issues to work on are:

- improvement of labour market outcomes of upper secondary VET and cooperation with regional partners;
- equal opportunities in education (e.g. accessibility of upper secondary VET, transfer to a higher level in upper secondary VET or transfer to higher education);
- young people in a vulnerable position e.g. reducing early school leaving, preparing young people in MBO (3) level 1 and 2 (EQF 1 &2) for labour market.

[2] <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/convenanten/2018/02/07/bestuursakkoord-mbo-2018-2022-trots-vertrouwen-en-lef>

[3] MBO: upper secondary vocational education programmes.

CHAPTER 3.

External factors influencing VET

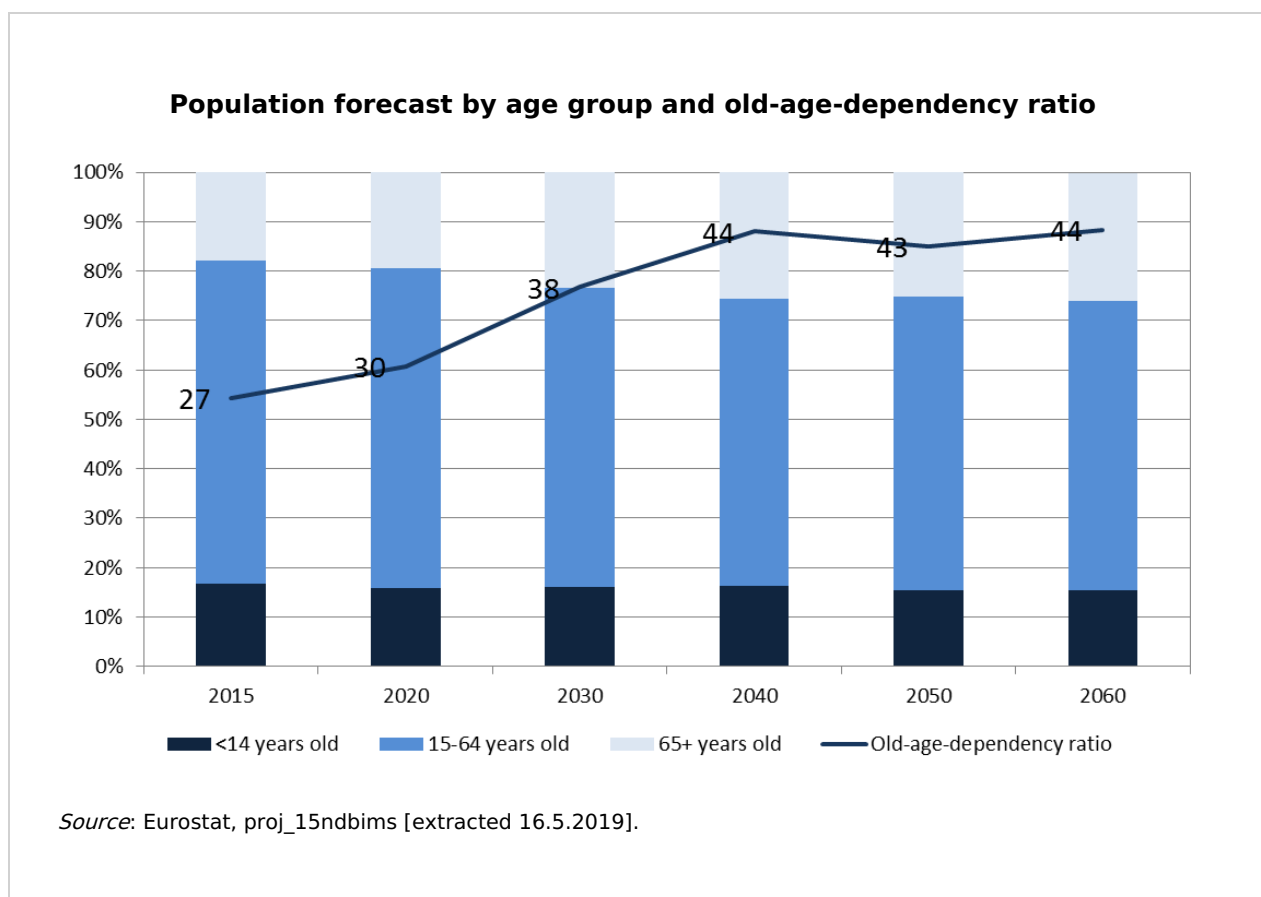
3.1 Demographics

Population in 2018: 17 181 084 (4)

It increased since 2013 by 2.4% due to positive natural growth and immigration (5) .

As in many other EU countries, the population is ageing.

The old-age dependency ratio is expected to increase from 27 in 2015 to 44 in 2060 (6)



Demographic changes have an impact on VET.

The expectation is that student numbers in VET will decrease from 2020 onward, due to population development and reduction of study duration of many of the MBO (7) level 4 courses from 4 to 3 years [(8)].

The education ministry and the schools for upper secondary VET have agreed [(9)] that all VET schools should be aware of the future decline in student numbers in relation to the concentration and distribution of the range of study programmes on offer in the Netherlands.

Not applicable

3.2 Economics

Most companies in the Netherlands are micro, small and medium-sized; employing 64% (10) of employees. Since 2007 the number of self-employed has doubled from 625,000 to 1.2 million in 2017 (11) .

The Dutch economy is open and relies heavily on foreign trade. The contribution of exports to GDP is close to a third (12) .

Main economic sectors are (in number of people employed):

- business services,
- healthcare,
- trade,
- industry.

Compared to 1997, there has been a major shift in the employment structure. The importance of industry, but also agriculture and construction industry, has become smaller. In contrast, the service sector has grown considerably. The biggest risers are healthcare and business services. In 1997, healthcare and industry had roughly the same number of jobs. Healthcare now has almost twice as many jobs as industry (13) .

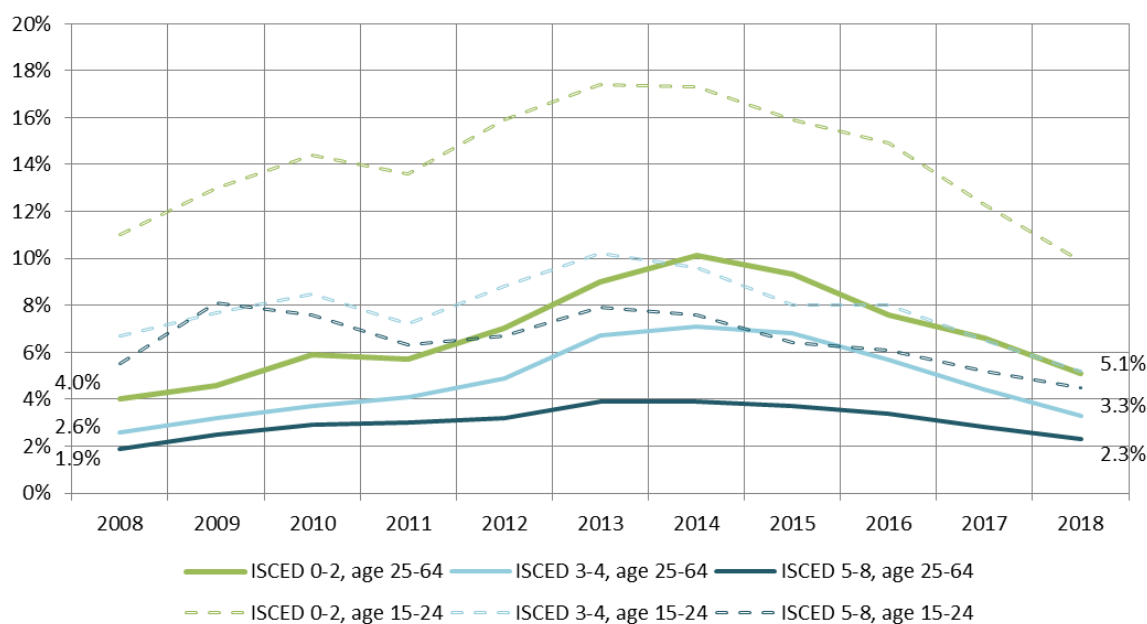
3.3 Labour market

A limited number of occupations/professions are regulated.

The labour market is considered flexible.

Total unemployment (14) (2018): 3.2% (6.0% in EU28); it increased by 0.5 percentage points since 2008 (15) .

Unemployment rate (aged 15-24 and 25-64) by education attainment level in 2008-18



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series.

ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education.

ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.

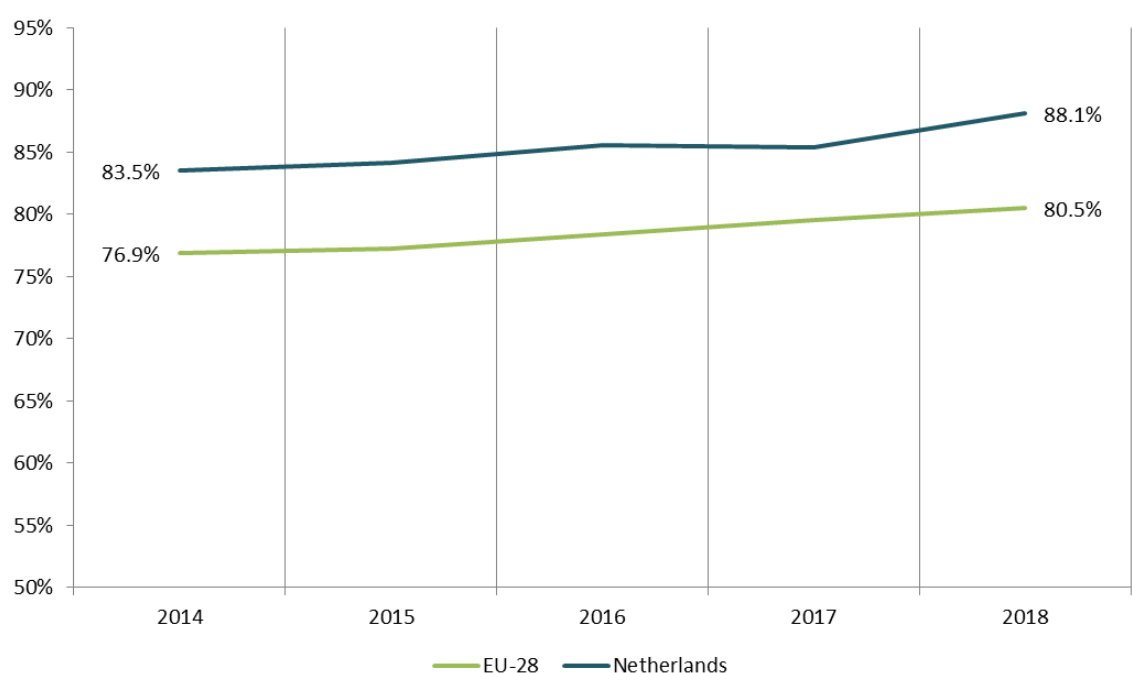
ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education.

Source: Eurostat, Ifsa_urgæd [extracted 16.5.2019].

Unemployment is distributed unevenly between those with low- and high-level qualifications. The gap has increased during the crisis as unskilled workers are more vulnerable to unemployment. In 2018, unemployment rates have decreased for all educational attainment levels, reaching unemployment rates comparable with those of 2009 and 2010. Youth (<25) unemployment is 7.2% in 2018 and is below the EU average, which stood at over 15.2% in 2018.

Employment rate of 20 to 34-year-old VET graduates increased from 83.5% in 2014 to 88.1% in 2018 (16) .

Employment rate of VET graduates (20 to 34 years old, ISCED levels 3 and 4)



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; breaks in time series.
 ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.
 Source: Eurostat, edat_lfse_24 [extracted 16.5.2019].

The increase (+4.6 pp) in employment of 20-34 year-old VET graduates in 2014-18 was lower compared to the increase from 81.7% to 86.8% in employment of all 20-34 year-old graduates (+5.1 pp) in the same period in the Netherlands (17) .

For more information about the external drivers influencing VET developments in the Netherlands please see the case study from Cedefop's changing nature and role of VET in Europe project [(17a)]

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- [4] NB: Data for population as of 1 January. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 16.5.2019].
 - [5] NB: Data for population as of 1 January. Eurostat table tps00001 [extracted 16.5.2019].
 - [6] Old-age-dependency ratio is defined as the ratio between the number of persons aged 65 and more over the number of working-age persons (15-64). The value is expressed per 100 persons of working age (15-64).
 - [7] MBO: upper secondary vocational education programmes.
 - [8] <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2018/09/18/referentieraming-ocw-2018>
 - [9] <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/convenanten/2018/02/07/bestuursakkoord->

[mbo-2018-2022-trots-vertrouwen-en-lef](#)

- [10] https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/performance-review_en
- [11] <https://mkbstatline.cbs.nl/#/MKB/nl/dataset/48015NED/line?dl=30B3>
- [12] <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/faq/specifiek/hoeveel-verdient-nederland-aan-de-export->
- [13] <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/visualisaties/dashboard-arbeidsmarkt/banen-werkgelegenheid/toelichtingen/werkgelegenheidsstructuur>
- [14] Percentage of active population, 25 to 74 years old.
- [15] Source: Eurostat, une_rt_a [extracted 20.5.2019].
- [16] Eurostat table edat_lfse_24
- [17] NB: breaks in time series. Eurostat table edat_lfse_24 [extracted 16.5.2019].

CHAPTER 4.

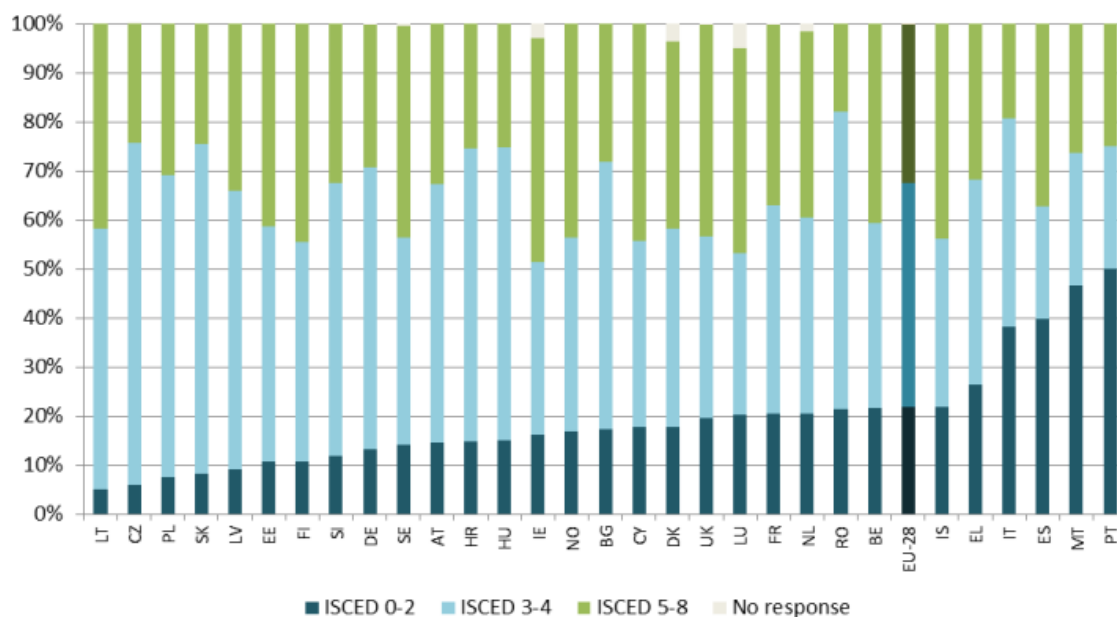
Education attainment

4.1 Share of high, medium and low level qualifications

In 2018, the share of the population aged up to 64 with higher education (37.7%) was higher in the Netherlands than the EU average. The share of those with low or without a qualification was 20.6% (slightly lower than the EU average).

In 2018, tertiary attainment among 30-34 year olds was 49% and well above the EU and national targets (both 40%) set for 2020. Female higher education attainment has risen faster than male tertiary attainment.

Population (aged 25 to 64) by highest education level attained in 2018



NB: Data based on ISCED 2011; low reliability for 'No response' in Czech Republic, Iceland, Latvia and Poland.
ISCED 0-2 = less than primary, primary and lower secondary education.
ISCED 3-4 = upper secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education.
ISCED 5-8 = tertiary education.
Source: Eurostat, Ifsa_pgaed [extracted 16.5.2019].

For more information about VET in higher education in the Netherlands please see the case study from Cedefop's changing nature and role of VET in Europe project [(17b)]

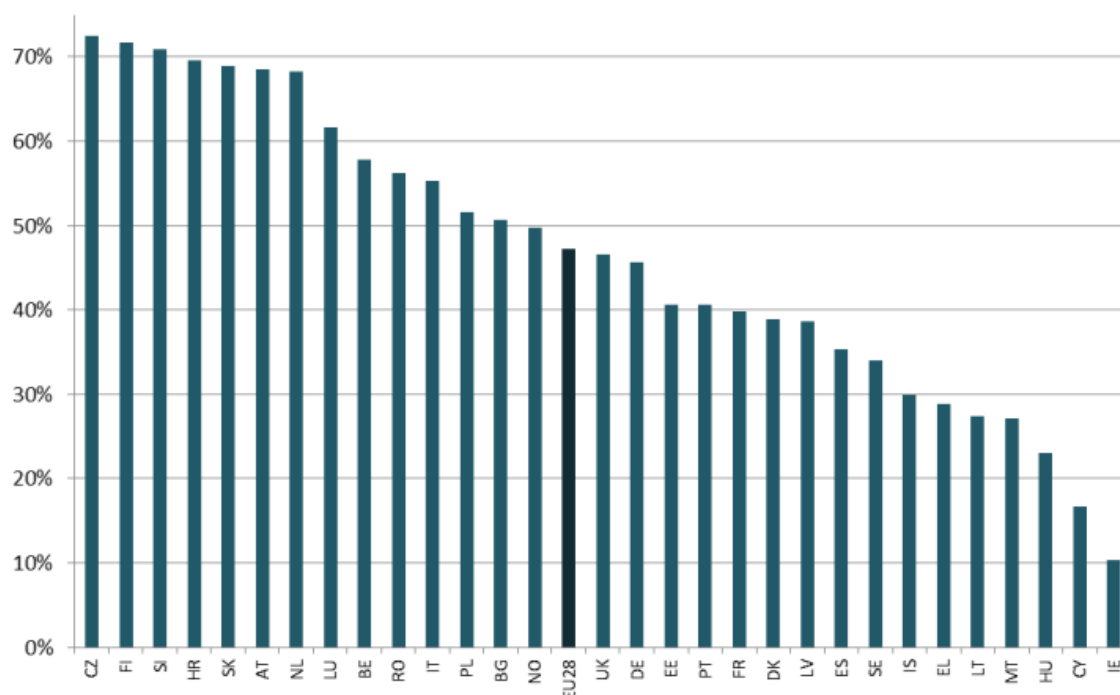
4.3 VET learners by level

Share of learners in VET by level in 2017

lower secondary	upper secondary	post-secondary
5.9%	68.2%	not applicable

Source: Eurostat, educ_uoe_enrs01, educ_uoe_enrs04 and educ_uoe_enrs07 [extracted 16.5.2019].

Share of initial VET learners from total learners at upper-secondary level (ISCED level 3), 2017

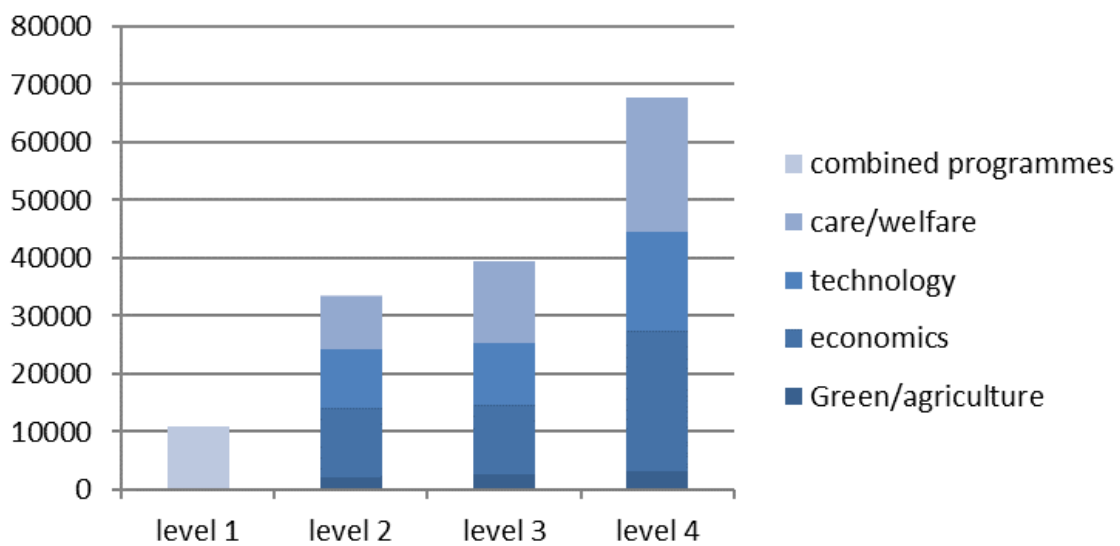


NB: Data based on ISCED 2011.

Source: Eurostat, educ_uoe_enrs04 [extracted 16.5.2019].

At upper secondary level, in 2017/18, most VET graduates completed a level 4 programme leading to EQF4. At this level, economics (18) and care/welfare programmes are the most popular choices.

Upper secondary VET graduates by level and area of study, 2017/2018



NB: Provisional data.

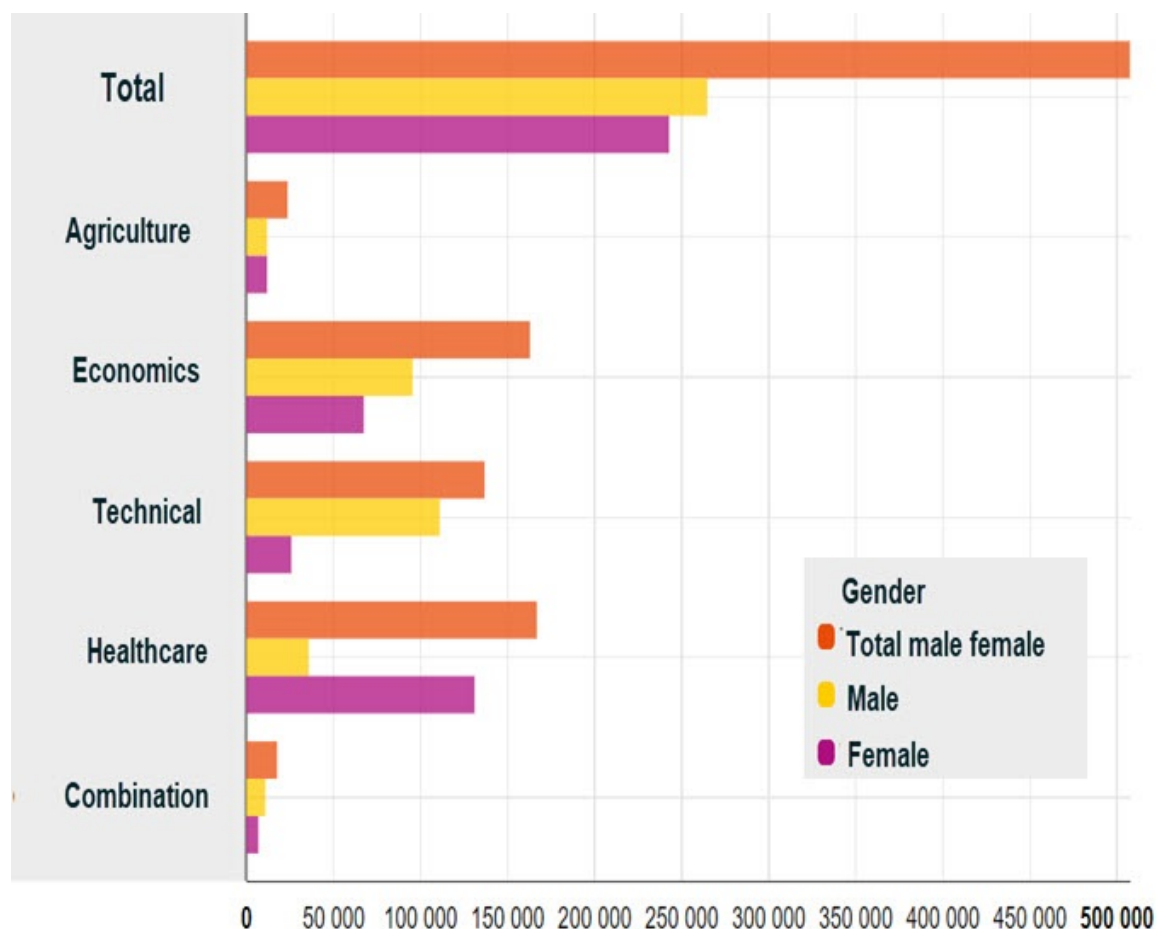
Source: CBS Statline. <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/83896NED/table?dl=F448>
[extracted 17.6.2019].

Higher professional education (HBO) is an important component of Dutch higher education. In 2017, almost half of all higher education graduates attained a bachelor degree in higher professional education (19) . Most higher professional education graduates studied economics, teacher training, social work or engineering.

4.4 Female share

There are more males (52%) in upper secondary VET than females. Males prefer technology education and economics, while females often enrol in health/welfare or economics.

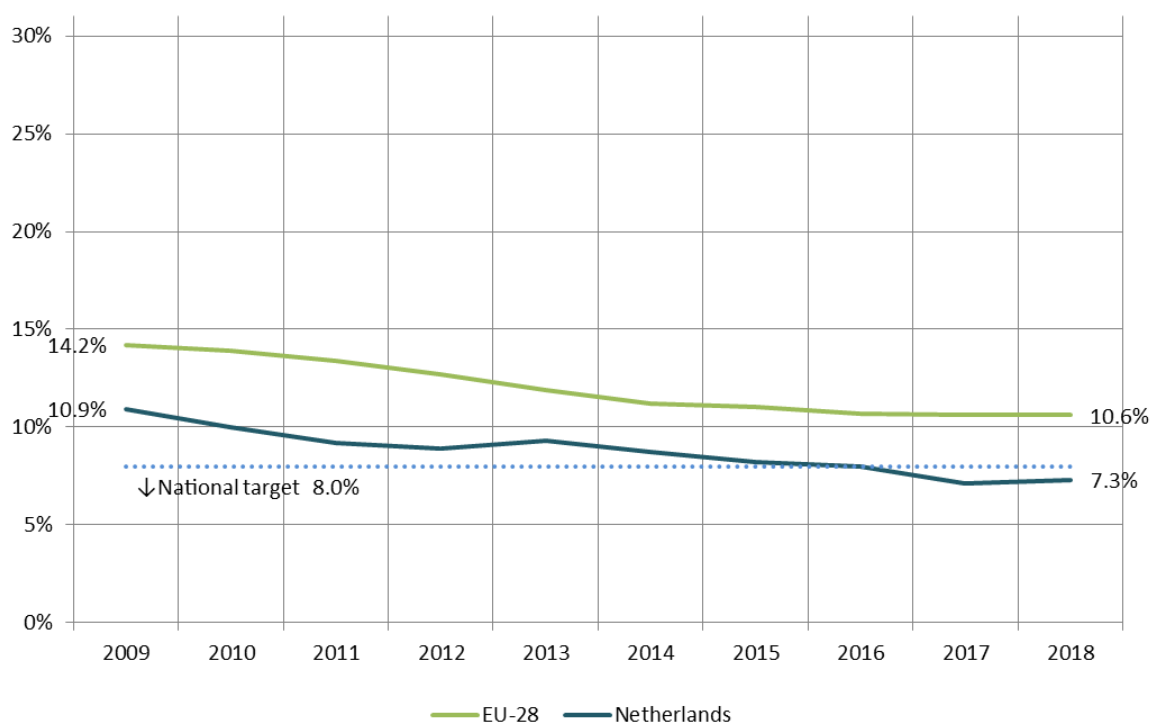
Male/ female students per sector in upper secondary VET ([(20)])



4.5 Early leavers from education and training

The share of early leavers from education and training has decreased from 10.9% in 2009 to 7.3% in 2018. It is well below 10.6%, the EU28 average. For the second year in a row is below 8.0%, the national objective for 2020.

Early leavers from education and training in 2009-18

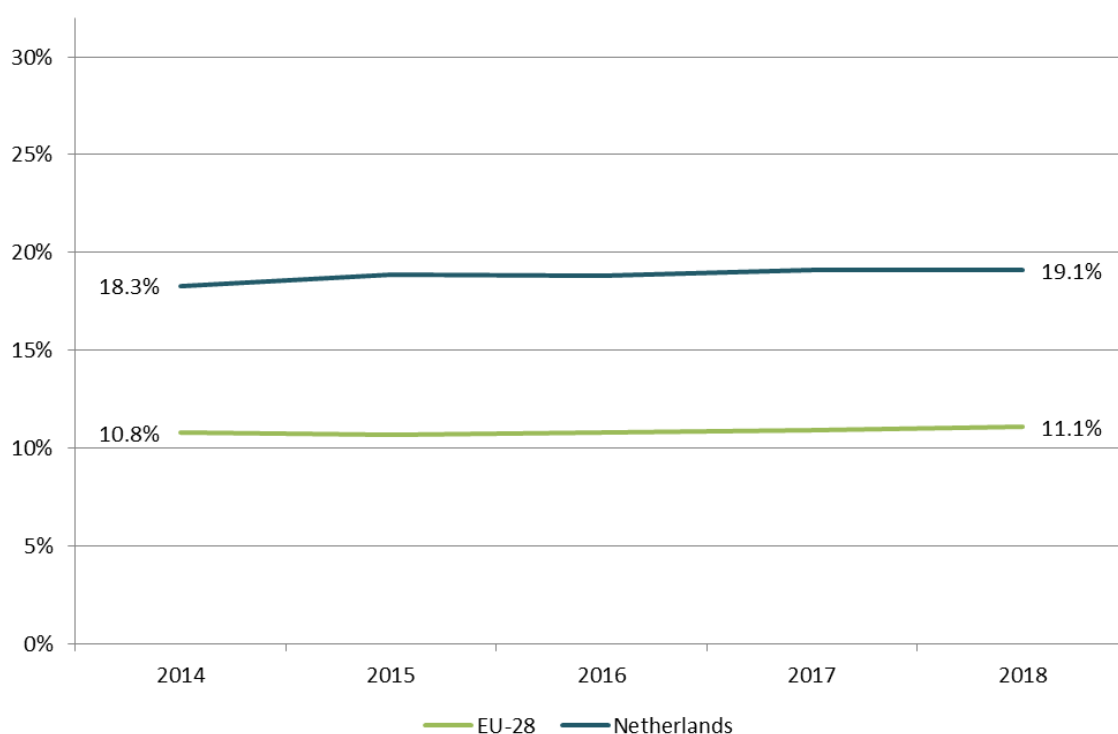


NB: Share of the population aged 18 to 24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training; break in series *Source:* Eurostat, edat_ifse_14 [extracted 16.5.2019] and European Commission: https://ec.europa.eu/info/2018-european-semester-national-reform-programmes-and-stability-convergence-programmes_en [accessed 14.11.2018].

The dropout-rate in upper secondary VET in 2017/2018 is 5.5% (21) . The number of dropouts in upper secondary VET has increased from 18 574 in school year 2016-17 to 19 980 in the school year 2017-18 (22) .

4.6 Participation in lifelong learning

Participation in lifelong learning in 2014-18



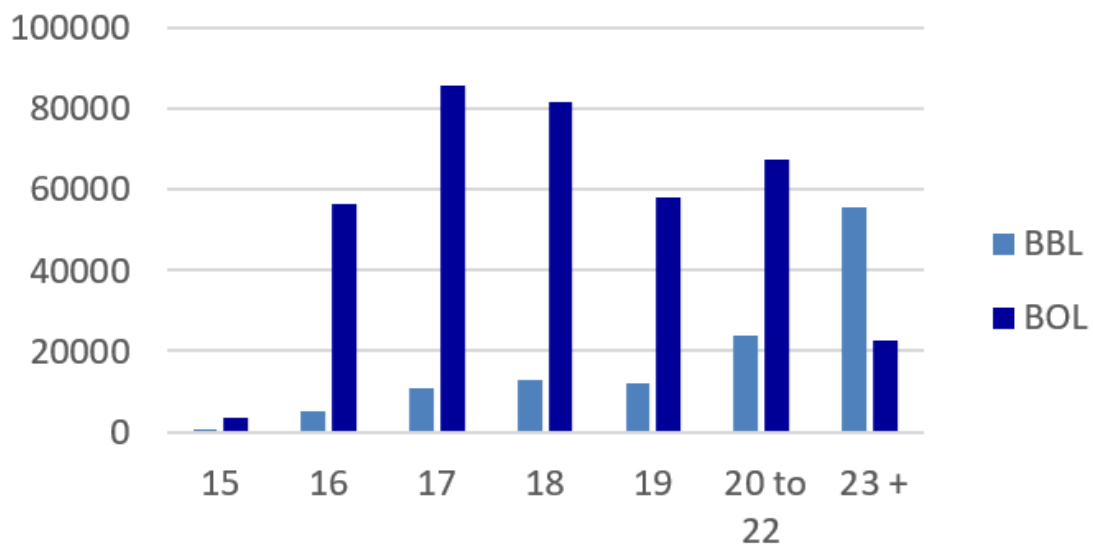
NB: Share of adult population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training.
 Source: Eurostat, trng_ifse_01 [extracted 16.5.2019].

Eurostat data show that the Netherlands is among the EU countries with the highest lifelong learning rates (EU28 average 11.1 in 2018). Already since 2000, more than 15% of adult population (25-64) has been involved in education or training (participation was 19.1% in 2018). The country has met the Education and Training 2020 (ET2020) 15% benchmark since long.

However, training participation is significantly below average among workers over 55 (11.8% in 2017), the low-skilled (9.5% in 2017), workers with a temporary contract, migrants and people with a migrant background from non-western countries, and people not having participated in training in the past (23) . The gap in training participation between highly educated people and those with low skills has widened between 2004 and 2017 (24) .

4.7 VET learners by age

VET learners by age and track 2018



NB: School-based (BOL) and dual track (BBL). Numbers in thousands.
 Source: DUO 2018.

Participants in the school-based track are mainly youngsters, while most learners (46%) of those following the dual track are 23 or over; this is because this track is also used by companies to upgrade their employees (25) .

-
- [18] The area economics in upper secondary VET includes programmes in administration, logistics, retail, secretarial support, tourism, ICT, facility management and public order and security.
 - [21] <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/71292ned/table?ts=1549610111391>
 - [22] Letter to Parliament, 22 February 2019:
<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2019/02/22/kamerbrief-blijvende-aandacht-voor-voortijdig-schoolverlaten-nodig>
 - [24] http://roa.sbe.maastrichtuniversity.nl/roanew/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/ROA_R_2018_4-1.pdf
 - [25] Source: DUO 2018: <https://www.onderwijsinijfers.nl/kengetallen/mbo/studenten-mbo/aantallen-studenten-mbo> [accessed 9.5.2019].

CHAPTER 5.

VET within education and training system

The education and training system comprises:

- preschool education (ISCED level 0); to combat educational disadvantages at an early stage, preschool education is available for toddlers (2.5 to 4 years old) (26) ;
- primary education at ISCED level 1 is for four- to 12-years-old learners;
- general secondary education integrates lower and upper secondary general education programmes (ISCED level 2 & 3);
- lower secondary pre-vocational school-based programmes (ISCED 2);
- upper secondary vocational education programmes (ISCED 2 & 3);
- post-secondary education (ISCED level 4);
- higher (or tertiary) education has a professional education and a general (academic) strand (ISCED levels 5 - 8).

Pre-school education is not compulsory and intended for two-and-a-half to four-year-old learners at risk of educational disadvantage. It is generally provided at childcare institutions.

Primary education starts at the age of four; it includes eight years of basic education until the learner reaches age 12.

Education is compulsory for learners from age five to 16. 16 and 17 year-olds without a general or basic vocational qualification at upper secondary level are required to continue learning, the so-called 'qualification duty' (kwalificatieplicht). This arrangement was introduced in 2008 to reduce early leaving from education and training.

General secondary education includes:

- integrated lower and upper secondary programmes (pre-university education) lasting six years and leading to EQF4 (ISCED 244 after three years; ISCED 344 after six). It prepares learners for higher education at research universities and higher professional education at universities of applied sciences (age: 12-18, also accessible to adults);
- integrated lower and upper secondary general education programmes lasting five years and leading to EQF4 (ISCED 244 after three years; ISCED 344 after five). They lead to higher professional education. Upon completion, transfer to the fifth year of pre-university education is possible (age: 12-17, also accessible to adults);
- two general programmes (the theoretical and mixed pathway) within lower secondary pre-vocational education (VMBO) (27) .

Scientific/university education offers bachelor programmes lasting three to four years (ISCED 6) and one to two year Master's degree programmes (ISCED 7) to adult learners. After completing a master degree programme, learners can continue in PhD programmes (ISCED 8).

The main legislation for initial VET (IVET) is:

- the Secondary Education Act (for lower secondary general and pre-vocational);
- the Adult Education and Vocational Education Act (for upper secondary vocational education)
- the Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (for higher professional education).

The vocational track of the education system starts in lower secondary pre-vocational education with transfer possibilities to upper secondary vocational education. Upper secondary vocational education is the backbone of this track providing labour market access. Graduates at EQF level 4 can continue their studies in higher professional education.

There is no institutional framework for continuing vocational education and training (CVET). Provision is market-driven with many suppliers. CVET comprises a range of vocational or more general courses for jobseekers, the unemployed, employees, self-employed people, and employers. There are three types of CVET:

- upper secondary IVET programmes which also function as CVET;
- training for unemployed and jobseekers, financed by the public employment service;
- private, non-government-funded training for employees, self-employed people and employers.

The backbone of the VET system is upper secondary VET, which serves both as IVET and as CVET. IVET/CVET programmes are offered either as a school based or a dual track. The school based track comprises 20 to 60% workplace learning, while the dual track comprises 60 to 80% workplace learning.

The responsibility for curriculum development and assessment is in the hands of upper secondary VET schools. Various curricula and learning environments exist even for programmes related to the same profession. Apart from internships taking place in a company, teacher teams have freedom to develop curricula and may include e.g. lectures, project based learning, practical simulations, in school mini-enterprises, hybrid learning environments.

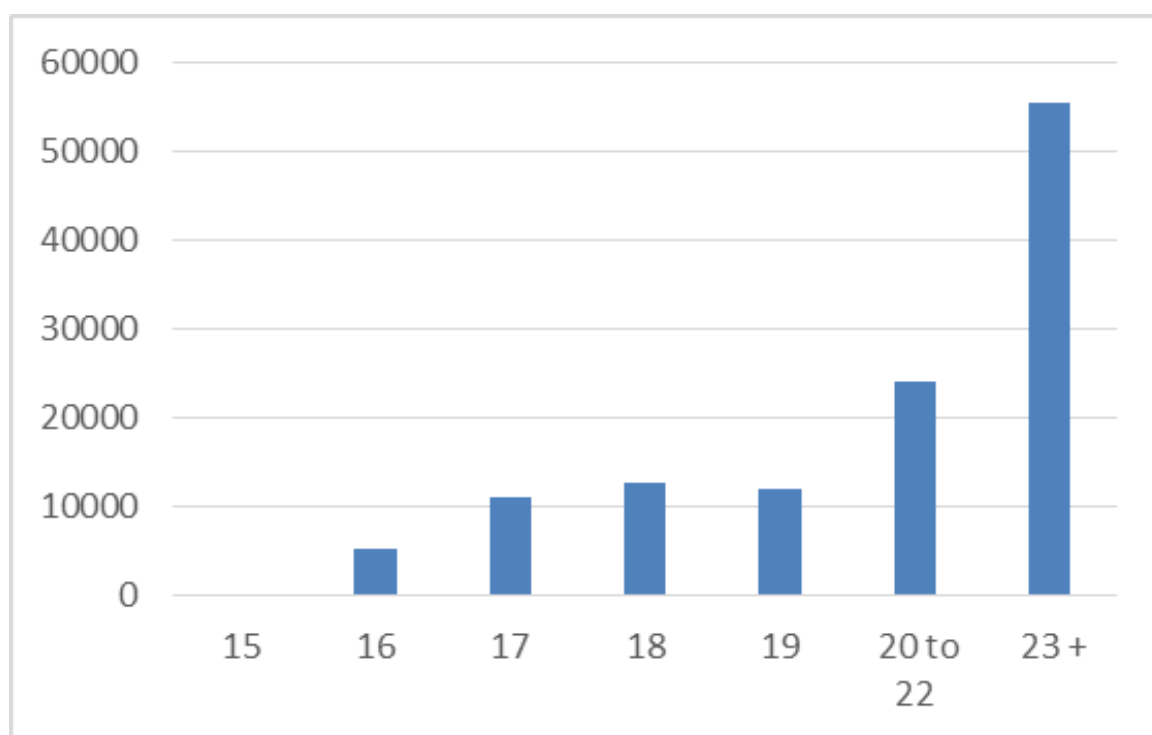
CHAPTER 6.

Apprenticeship

Upper secondary VET offers two equivalent pathways: a school-based (BOL) and a dual (BBL) leading to the same diplomas. In the dual pathway (apprenticeship), students combine work-based learning (at least 60% of study time) with school-based instruction; this often involves learning at work four days a week and one day at school. To enrol in the dual track a contract (an employment contract in most cases) with a firm is mandatory.

The target group of the dual pathway are young people (16 year old), but also older people. Most students in the dual pathway are older than students in the school based pathway. 46% of those following the dual track are 23 years old or over; this is because this track is also used by companies to upgrade their employees (28) .

Number of student in dual track (BBL) by age



Source: DUO 2018 (29) .

[26] Source: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/voorschoolse-en-vroegschoolse-educatie/voorschoolse-educatie> [accessed 9.5.2019].

[27] See relevant section for further details (#1 VET BOX - Lower secondary pre-vocational

school-based programmes).

- [28] Source: DUO 2018: <https://www.onderwijsincijfers.nl/kengetallen/mbo/studenten-mbo/aantallen-studenten-mbo> [extracted 9.5.2019].
- [29] <https://www.onderwijsincijfers.nl/kengetallen/mbo/studenten-mbo/aantallen-studenten-mbo> [extracted 20.6.2019].

CHAPTER 7.

VET governance

One of the principles underlying the education system in the Netherlands is freedom of education. This means there is freedom to establish schools, freedom to organise teaching and to determine the principles on which education is based (freedom of conviction).

Freedom to organise teaching means that both public and private schools are free to determine – within legal boundaries – what is taught and how. The education ministry sets quality standards such as the subjects to be studied, the number of teaching days/hours per year and the required teacher qualifications; they apply to both public and government-funded private education.

There are three organisational levels in the Dutch VET system: the national level, the sectoral level (especially in upper secondary VET) and the regional/local (or school) level.

In the institutional VET framework, the Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven – SBB) has a key role. SBB optimises the links between VET and the labour market to deliver well-qualified professionals. The organisation is responsible for maintaining the qualifications for upper secondary VET, for accrediting and coaching companies offering work placements, and collecting suitable labour market information. Representatives from vocational education and social partners work together on the VET qualifications system, examinations, work placements, the efficiency of programmes and more. SBB also works on themes with a cross-regional and cross-sector focus.

Organisational levels and functions/roles in initial VET

Function	VMBO (ISCED-2)	MBO (ISCED-3/4)	HBO (ISCED-5)
Legislation/ financing	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Education/
Qualification development	Design: national level Validity: national	Design: sectoral level by Sector Chambers (social partners & VET) within the Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (SBB). Validity: national	Design: school level Validity: national
Curricula development	School level	School level	School level
Examination	Partly central/national; partly school exams	School exams; external contribution of trainers in enterprises Central examination of Dutch language and basic maths (August 2015 onwards)	School exams
Quality assurance	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
Promotion of interests by associations of schools***	VO Council	MBO Council	Association of Universities of Applied Sciences

VMBO: lower secondary pre-vocational school-based programmes.

MBO: upper secondary vocational education programmes.

HBO: higher professional education.

NVAO: Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie).

NRTTO: Dutch Council for Training promoting interests of private, non-subsidised VET providers that have been legally recognised by the education ministry to offer regulated VET courses at upper secondary and tertiary level.

The adult and vocational education act regulates the governance of upper secondary VET schools and grants them ample space for policy making. Schools have full control over deployment and continuing professional development of teaching staff, programme offer, regional industry-specific training portfolios, organisation of learning, and choice of cooperation partners. School management is also responsible for deciding how to allocate the annual lump sum grant from the ministry to personnel costs, materials, housing and reservations for future investments. Yearly auditing reports provide insight into how the grant is spent.

Governance has an internal, vertical and a horizontal dimension. The internal dimension refers to the organisation of internal management and control; the vertical dimension stands for the accountability relations between schools and the government; the horizontal dimension captures the (accountability) relations between a school and its local stakeholders.

CHAPTER 8.

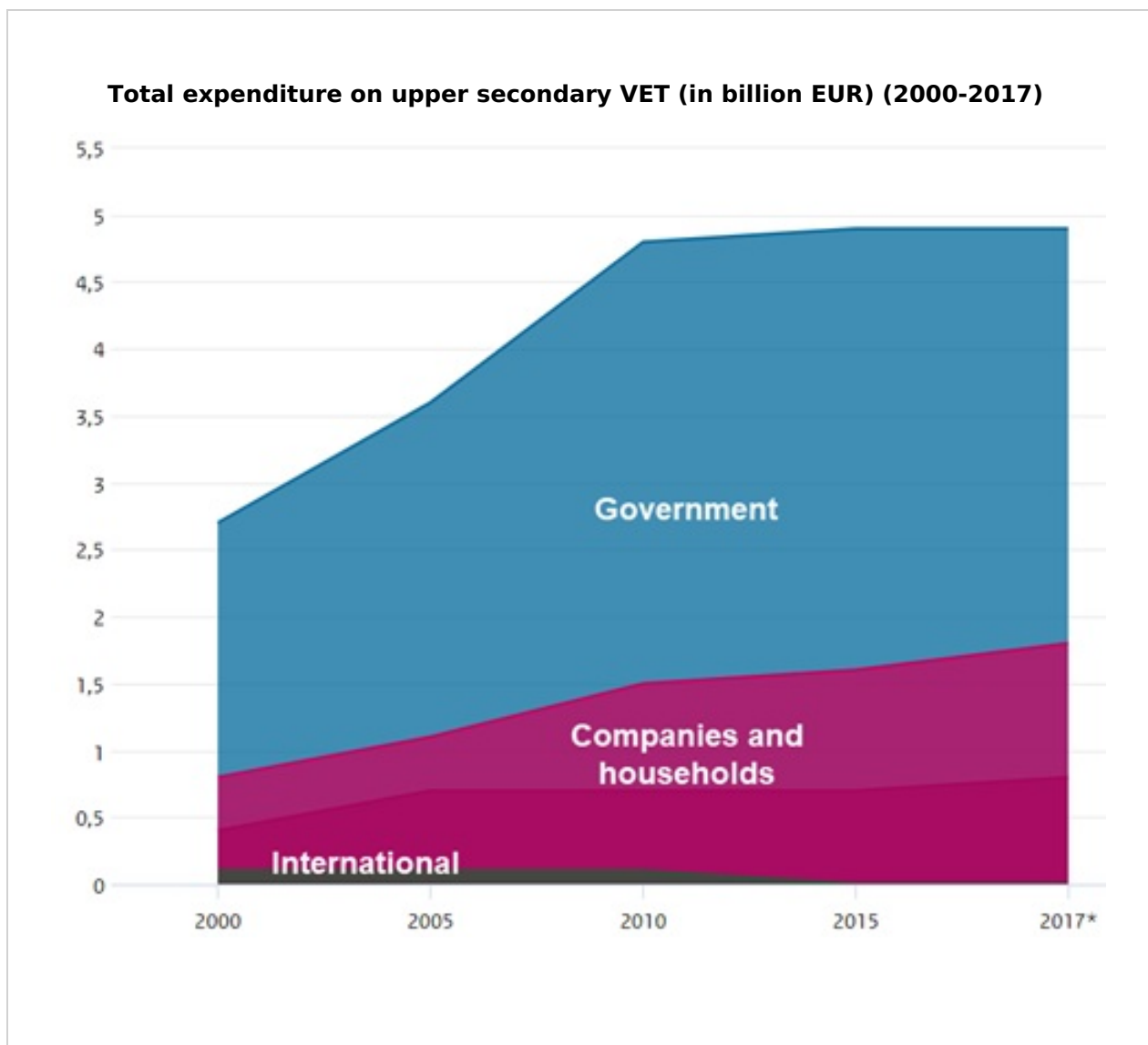
VET financing mechanisms

Total expenditure on education by the government, households, enterprises and non-profit organisations made up 6.0% of GDP in 2016. Government expenditure on education is 5.4% of GDP in 2016 (30) .

In 2018 expenditure by the Education Ministry is EUR 8 200 per learner per year in upper secondary VET (31) .

In 2017 government expenditure represented 66% of all spending on upper secondary VET. Companies and households pay the rest (34%) (32) .

Total government expenditure on VET is 0.8% of GDP, when households and enterprises are included total spending is 1.0% of GDP. These percentages are stable since 2010 (33) .



The funding arrangements for VET are as follows:

- in prevocational education and training (VMBO) the funding principle is block grant funding. It gives schools considerable freedom in deciding how to spend available resources. They receive a fixed amount per student plus a fixed amount per school. Part of funding rewards good performance based on national targets agreed on sector level with governing bodies. There are also extra financial incentives for students at risk;
- in upper secondary VET (MBO) the principle is block grant funding based in part on the number of students per course/learning track and in part on number of certificates awarded per institution. In addition to block grant funding, performance based funding was introduced in 2014 (34) to reward individual schools for their good performances. This introduction was part of the quality agreements concluded between all VET colleges and the education ministry. These bilateral agreements aim to facilitate a rapid and comprehensive implementation and to encourage colleges to increase their performance in terms of equal access, qualify vulnerable youth and greater responsiveness to labour market developments (35) . VET colleges have other funding sources as well, for instance from contracted activities for companies and individuals, from municipalities for providing civic integration training courses for adults, and from student fees. Additionally there is a subsidy scheme for companies to cover their costs when offering learning places in dual tracks (BBL);
- in higher professional education (HBO) funding is partly fixed and partly based on number of enrolled participants and output/outcome results (number of diplomas). Part of funding is performance based and rewards achievements towards targets set by providers themselves. Contracted activities paid by enterprises and or individuals/employees and income from tuition fees paid by students are other sources of funding. Companies benefit from subsidies when offering learning places in dual higher VET.

The Ministry of Education administers almost all central government expenditure on education through a specialised agency (DUO - Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs). DUO plays a key role in administration and financing state-regulated VET. There is a complex but direct financing relationship between DUO and schools for upper secondary vocational education. Funds are channelled either directly to schools or indirectly through municipalities. Municipalities fund special projects (e.g. to reduce early leaving from education and training).

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- [30] CBS (2018). Statline database:
<https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/80393ned/table?dl=102B2> [accessed 21.8.2018].
- [31] OCW (2018). <https://www.onderwijsincijfers.nl/kengetallen/onderwijs-algemeen/uitgaven/uitgaven-ocw> [accessed 23.5.2019].
- [32] OCW (2018): <https://www.onderwijsincijfers.nl/kengetallen/onderwijs-algemeen/uitgaven/uitgaven-ocw> [accessed 17.6.2019].
- [33] CBS (2018). Statline database:
<https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/80393ned/table?dl=102B2> [accessed 21.8.2018].
- [34] <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0035923/2016-07-20>
- [35] <https://www.kwaliteitsafsprakenmbo.nl/documenten/publicatie/2018/06/15/regeling-kwaliteitsafspraken-2019-2022>

CHAPTER 9.

Teachers and trainers

9.1 VET teacher types

In VET, there are:

- teachers
- teaching assisting jobs, i.e. teacher assistant, instructor;
- in-company trainers (supervisors or tutors).

In upper secondary vocational education teachers cooperate in teams in which tasks are divided among team members, e.g. assessment, study- and career guidance, expert teacher, educational designer. The extent to which these roles are implemented differs per school. There are no fixed roles within teams, besides the role of teacher leader (36) .

The education professions act (Wet BIO, 2016) regulates competence standards for teachers and other educational staff in primary, general secondary, vocational secondary and general adult education. It requires schools to maintain a competence document for all teachers.

Teachers in upper secondary vocational education have to have either a first degree teaching license (Master), a second degree teaching license (Bachelor) or a teaching certificate (a higher education diploma is obligatory to obtain a teaching certificate).

In 2012 the education ministry, aiming to better train and raise the number of VET teachers, introduced:

- a distinct graduation track dedicated to VET in higher professional education (in place since 2016);
- quality criteria entering the teaching profession from another background.

Recently, requirements are introduced for instructors (teaching personnel responsible for the vocational skills training of learners). Instructors should also meet professional, didactic and pedagogical standards (37) .

Trainers responsible for in-company learning of upper secondary VET students (both in apprenticeship and in school based track) must be qualified at least at the same level for which he/she is supervising work-based learning. Furthermore, trainers must be able to share their expertise with students and are required to have pedagogical skills (validated by diplomas/certificates). The quality of the trainers is one of the criteria for accreditation of companies providing work-based learning. Accreditation is one of the legal tasks of the Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (SBB). Training for trainers is offered by private providers.

9.2 Continuing professional development of teachers/trainers

VET institutions have relative freedom in their approach of professional development of teaching staff. Teachers are entitled to 59 hours of training and professional development annually, complemented by additional training depending on the discipline of their expertise (38) . Teachers are also receiving a personal budget for professional development of 0.8% of their annual salary. The 2013 national technology pact foresaw increased funding for teacher training

focused on technology. Moreover, enterprises are offering short internships for VET teachers and trainers. VET teacher CPD is also promoted through regional partnerships between VET institutes and teacher training institutes. In addition, VET teachers have access to funding to help them acquire a Master qualification that corresponded to the subject they were teaching (39) .

More information is available in the Cedefop ReferNet thematic perspective on teachers and trainers (40) .

[37] <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/besluiten/2018/04/09/besluit-bekwaamheidseisen-onderwijspersoneel>

[38] In VET institutions teachers of different disciplines are working in teams responsible for delivering educational programmes to one or more subgroups of students

[40] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/country-reports/teachers-and-trainers>

CHAPTER 10.

Shaping VET qualifications

10.1 Anticipating skill needs

The set-up and governance of skill anticipation in the Netherlands can serve as an exemplar case. The Research Centre for Education and the Labour Market (ROA - Researchcentrum voor Onderwijs en Arbeidsmarkt) (41) is the institute in the Netherlands that specialises in labour market forecasting and skills anticipation. Its labour market forecasts aim to increase transparency and improve the match between education and the labour market. The work is financed and co-steered by key national education and labour market stakeholders.

Two approaches to skills anticipation can be distinguished: top-down and bottom-up. In the top-down approach, a general forecasting model covering the whole labour market uses national data sources to generate information relevant for policy makers and for guidance purposes. ROA publishes a report every second year, which includes an overview of education and labour market trends as well as analyses of expected labour market developments in the light of particular policy issues.

In the bottom-up approach, partial labour market forecast models are used, for example for a single sector or occupation or for a selection of them, with input from specific (ad hoc) data sources. This can be complementary to the top-down approach.

The national social security agency (UWV - Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen) is involved in cooperation with ROA and SBB (42) to match information on demand and supply in the labour market, at sectoral and regional level.

The generated labour market information caters to the needs of:

- youth and jobseekers, as they are able to base their education choices on the mid-term labour market perspectives of different education tracks;
- different groups of policy makers, as they are able to make informed decisions on whether to open new education tracks or amend existing ones;
- companies and their sector organisations, as it gives them a chance to act on expected skills shortages in the near future.
- public and private employment services, as they use the information to shape training policies for their beneficiaries.

SBB is responsible for labour market research focused on further developing the structure of qualifications in upper secondary VET. The nine sector chambers within SBB take on this task. Educational institutions are responsible for attuning their VET provision regionally. Regional training centres sometimes carry out their own market research to gain insight into expected labour market needs for qualified employees at regional level.

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

See also Cedefop's skills forecast (43) and European Skills Index (44)

10.2 Designing qualifications

The qualification design process differs between parts of the VET system:

- in lower secondary pre-vocational education: examination syllabi are laid down in a framework by the education ministry and developed by the Foundation for Curriculum Development in the Netherlands (Nationaal expertisecentrum leerplanontwikkeling – SLO);
- in upper secondary VET: the national qualification system (nationally referred to as ‘qualifications structure’) defines the desired output of qualifications. There are three steps:
 - social partners develop and determine/validate vocational/occupational standards. This process takes place in committees at sub-sectoral level referred to as ‘market segments’ in the national context;
 - social partner and VET representatives develop qualification profiles (educational standards as output), which are adopted by the education ministry. This is done within SBB (45) ;
 - VET colleges develop curricula in cooperation with training firms based on qualification profiles;
- in higher professional education (HBO) qualifications and programmes are developed by schools and accredited by the Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation. A curriculum is part of the accreditation request. The education ministry decides whether an accredited programme is to be publicly funded or not.

Qualification and curriculum development in upper secondary VET

The qualifications system for upper secondary VET comprises competence-based qualifications and contains occupational standards covering one qualification profile or several interrelated ones. They describe desirable learning outputs of VET programmes related to a specific vocation or group of occupations, to citizenship and further learning.

Since 2016 qualifications have been clustered for better transparency and functionality. Definitions of qualifications are broadened, with a general part (language-, numeracy-, citizenship- and career management skills), a basic vocational part applicable for all occupations in the qualification, several profile modules (specific for the profile within the qualification) and optional modules. Currently the qualification framework includes 179 qualifications, 491 profiles (specialisations within a qualification) and almost 1000 optional modules (46) . Broader definitions of qualifications and optional modules are expected to give VET colleges more leeway to adapt curricula to labour market needs. Companies and educational institutions jointly develop optional modules to quickly respond to innovations or emerging needs within their region. Regions will be also afforded some leeway to draft optional modules themselves to be able to respond to regional needs and/or to help learners progress through the education and training system.

The nine sector chambers within SBB are the link among sectoral education, labour market stakeholders and the executive branch of SBB; they also contribute in shaping general qualification policies, are responsible for keeping the qualification system up-to-date, promote the quality of learning in enterprises, and interpret and validate information on VET and the labour market.

Schools are primarily responsible for curricula and their modernisation. Authority with regard to learning arrangements is assigned to them by the constitution. This does not mean, however, national government remains completely aloof. It can stimulate developments and innovations that have consequences for the modernisation of curricula.

[41] <http://roa.sbe.maastrichtuniversity.nl/?portfolio=poa-project-onderwijs-arbeidsmarkt-2>

[42] Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven - SBB).

- [43] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/skills-forecast>
- [44] <https://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/en/indicators/european-skills-index>
- [45] Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven - SBB).
- [46] www.sbb.nl

CHAPTER 11.

Quality assurance

A national quality assurance approach and a methodology for internal and external evaluation are in place. So far upper secondary IVET and higher VET (HBO) have quality assurance systems, the first based on supervision and inspection, the latter based on self-evaluation, review and accreditation. A common quality assurance framework for VET providers is in place and applies also to workplace learning. For recognised CVET courses (in the official registry) offered by private providers the same rules apply as in IVET.

Quality assurance in upper secondary VET

The education ministry through the education inspectorate and VET providers themselves are responsible for quality assurance in upper secondary VET. The VET law mandates VET providers to set up a quality assurance system. They are relatively free to design and set up their systems, but have to ensure regular quality assessments that include the arrangements in place for teacher training. Upper secondary VET institutions' annual reports are the basis for external quality evaluation by the education inspectorate.

Internal monitoring and control: upper secondary VET colleges have small executive boards and internal supervisory boards. Middle management is accountable to the executive board. Participation of students, teachers and parents in decision making is regulated in the act on work councils.

Vertical monitoring and control: the education Inspectorate is in charge of the external supervision, checking whether statutory provisions are met and quality assurance is in place. The assessment framework covers five quality areas: (i) educational process; (ii) school climate; (iii) learning outcomes; (iv) quality assurance and ambition; and (v) financial management. Supervision is proportional in nature, meaning it is stricter where deficiencies are found, and the inspectorate follows up by monitoring whether required improvements have been put in place.

In 2017, the Inspection Framework for external supervision was renewed. One of the most important changes is to make a distinction between statutory requirements and quality factors defined by the schools themselves. Self-defined quality factors pertain to the objectives and ambitions set by the school itself above and beyond the basic quality level. In its reports, the Inspectorate will draw a clear distinction between judgements related to statutory requirements and the assessment of performances on the self-defined quality indicators above and beyond those enshrined in law.

Horizontal dialogue: Using self-chosen tools, the executive board of a VET college is expected to develop and sustain good relations with important local/regional stakeholders: employers, local governments and regional organisations.

Guidelines and standards promote a culture of continuous improvement. Stakeholders (including the inspectorate, VET providers, students/learners and teachers/trainers and VET expertise centres) have contributed to its development. Stakeholders take part in setting VET goals and objectives and their involvement in monitoring and evaluation has been agreed. An advisory committee consisting of all important VET stakeholders meets several times a year to discuss further developments. All EQAVET indicators are used (47) .

Quality, responsiveness and innovation capacity in upper secondary VET have been core policy priorities in the past few years. Extra (partly performance-based) funding is introduced to increase quality. The responsible minister has concluded quality agreements with all VET institutions, which makes them responsible and accountable for their performance. The quality

agreements are the basis for quality plans for 2015-2018 and again for 2019-2022 drafted by VET providers themselves. VET colleges should elaborate strategic plans to improve the quality of VET in line with regional needs and in close collaboration with regional stakeholders, young people in a vulnerable position and equal opportunities for all students.

[47] http://www.eqavet.nl/_images/user/Eqavet_Leaflet_NL.p_20131030151118.pdf

CHAPTER 12.

Validation of prior learning

Validation of prior, non-formal and informal learning is an instrument that has been promoted in the Netherlands for the last fifteen years. A comprehensive validation system that encompasses all education levels and sectors is in place.

In line with discussions and proposals made in the last few years, from 2016 onwards there are two formal validation procedures:

- Validation for the labour market: Recognition/ documentation of prior learning – a formal procedure for the employed and jobseekers that leads to the award of a validated skills portfolio (certificate). Validation is possible for sectoral, formal VET and HE qualifications. This type of validation is most used. The certificate offers no legal right for exemptions for learning or exams in formal VET or Higher professional education. For this procedure the National Knowledge Centre Validation of Prior Learning (48) is the implementing organisation for quality assurance of these certificates.
- Validation for education: Accreditation/ certification of prior learning (APL) – a formal procedure in which a candidate can get his/her learning outcomes assessed against a national qualification standard to obtain a formal qualification in VET or HE. Validation supports access to education and training at all levels. Although both VET and HE qualifications can in theory be obtained through validation, in practice this depends on demand and is currently most common in upper secondary VET. Validation in the educational route is supervised by the education inspectorate or NVAO (49) .

Individuals themselves or their employers have to pay for validation. Financial support is often provided by sectoral training funds (for employers), tax benefits (for individuals), or for people with occupational disability benefits – by the national social security agency (UWV).

For more information about arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning please visit Cedefop's European database (50) .

[48] <http://www.nationaal-kenniscentrum-evc.nl/>

[49] Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie).

[50] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-visualisations/european-database-on-validation-of-non-formal-and-informal-learning>

CHAPTER 13.

Incentives for learners

Student finance act

The student finance act of 2000 aims to cover the education costs of students over 18 in full-time education. The finance system for upper secondary VET students comprises 4 financing components: a basic grant, a supplementary grant (depending on the level of parental income), a free/discounted public transportation card and a loan. Learners do not have to refund the basic grant, the supplementary grant and their public transportation fees when they graduate within 10 years. Students in VET courses at level 1 and 2 are exempt from paying back the grants, as well as the loans.

From September 2015, the finance system for students in higher education has been changed. The most important change is the abolition of the basic grant. As a consequence the share of the loan has increased. By way of compensation, the repayment period is increased from 15 to 35 years. Furthermore, students do not have to refund the supplementary grant and public transportation fees when they graduate within 10 years.

Right of enrolment in VET

New legislation to 'ensure the right of enrolment in VET for all' was adopted in 2016 and came into effect on 1 August 2017. The main reason for the introduction of this legislation is to tackle problems in the transition from lower secondary education to upper secondary VET, as one third of the early school leavers drops out during the transition period for the following reasons: they regret their study choice or as a result of unclear, or confusing intake procedures in upper secondary VET colleges. The aim of this Act is to smoothen the transition from lower secondary to upper secondary VET. This has to be achieved by better (study) guidance facilities before and during the transition phase, by bringing forward the registration date (the first of April) for students leaving lower secondary education for upper secondary VET and by strengthening the position of students in the VET college intake procedures.

CHAPTER 14.

Incentives for enterprises to boost their participation in VET provision

Until 2014, tax deduction measures for employers encouraged them to offer training placements for students in VET. This tax facility has been replaced by a subsidy-system. This subsidy is meant to cover costs of learning places for students in the pre-vocational education, upper secondary VET, higher professional education and PhD students.

CVET is partly influenced by sectoral collective labour agreements. It can be financed through sectoral funds for training and/or research and development; There are about 85 of these funds, which are foundations governed by social partners. Most funds are financed by a payroll levy. Employers pay this levy to the training fund for their sector and can benefit from reimbursements for the cost of training their employees. Some funds limit their activities to the distribution of financial resources while others pursue active labour market policy. To stimulate participation in education and training, the funds use a variety of measures to cover the costs of training, training leave or examinations.

CHAPTER 15.

Guidance and counselling

Since 2011, career orientation and guidance (LOB) in VET was promoted through the project *Stimuleringsproject LOB in het MBO*. In this project, VET-schools cooperated in the development and implementation of career orientation and guidance systems. Since July 2017, a national expertise centre for career orientation and guidance (51) is operational. It operates cross-sectoral and supports pre-vocational education (VMBO), general secondary education (HAVO-VWO) and upper secondary VET (MBO) in improving the career orientation and guidance of pupils and students.

Labour market information caters to the needs of learners from pre-vocational education (VMBO) and upper secondary VET (MBO) and jobseekers. This information should help them to make a considered choice for an education program; based on the labour market perspectives of the different options. For students looking for work-based placements in both VET tracks (school-based and dual) in an 'accredited work placement company', SBB (52) provides information via a portal (53) . SBB also provides information on mid-term job prospects for all upper secondary VET programmes and supports pre-vocational and VET schools to inform learners about job prospects (54) .

Please also see:

- guidance and outreach the Netherlands national report (55) ;
- Inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices - Netherlands (A2) ;
- Cedefop's labour market intelligence toolkit (56) ;
- Cedefop's inventory of lifelong guidance systems and practices (A1) .

[51] <https://www.expertisepuntlob.nl/>

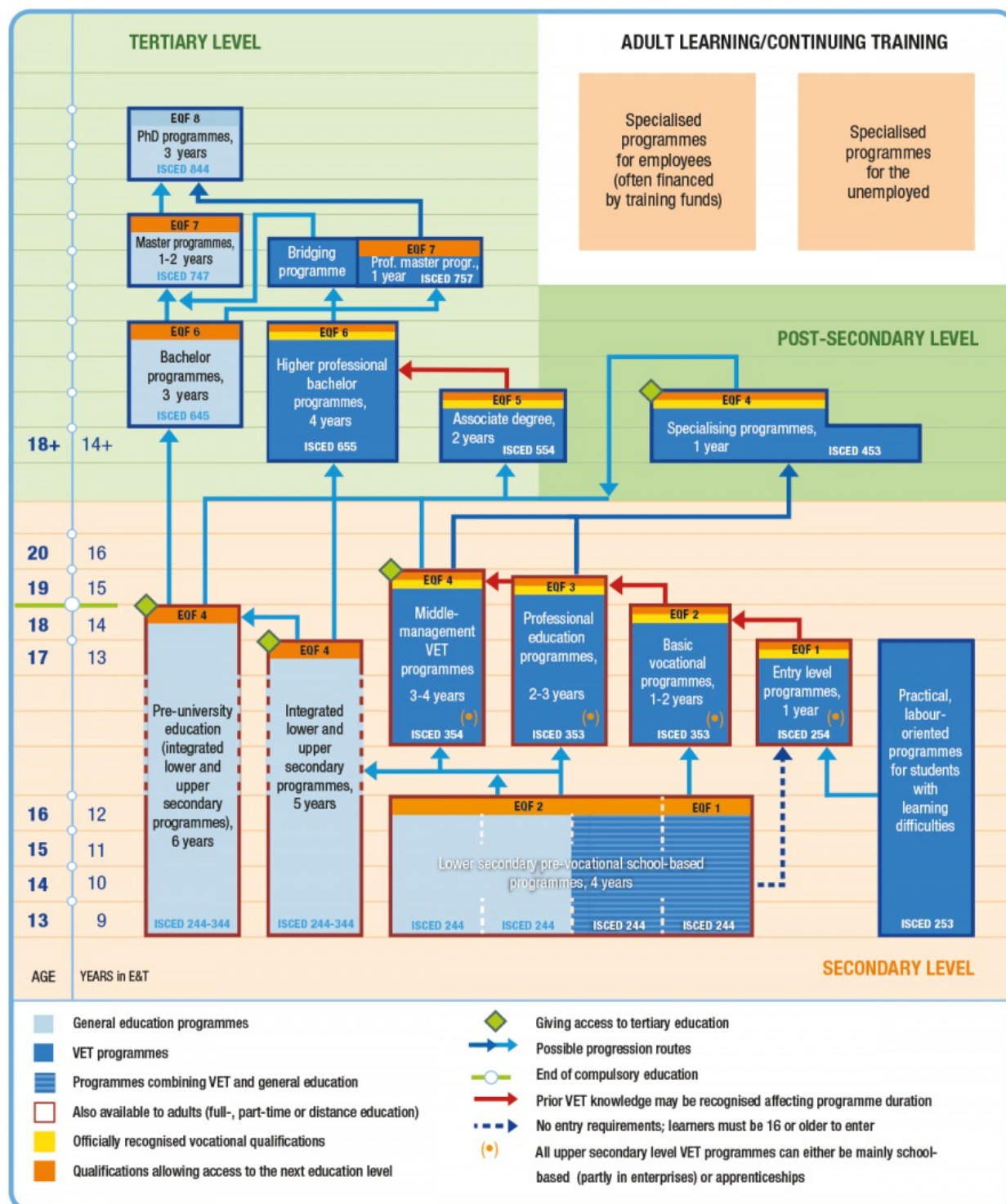
[53] <https://www.stagemarkt.nl/Zoeken>

[54] <https://www.s-bb.nl/onderwijs/studie-cijfers>

[55] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/events-and-projects/networks/refernet/thematic-perspectives/guidance-outreach>

[56] <http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/toolkits/resources-guidance/toolkit/where-can-you-find-more-information-in-your-country-and-elsewhere>

Vocational education and training system chart



NB: ISCED-P 2011.

Source: Cedefop and ReferNet Netherlands, 2019.

VET Programme Types

EQF 1 or 2
Lower secondary
pre-vocational
school-based programmes,
4 years
ISCED 244

Lower secondary pre-vocational school-based programmes . Within lower secondary pre-vocational education four tracks exist: two general programmes, the theoretical and the combined pathway (to be merged into one new pathway in 2021) leading to EQF 2 (ISCED 244) (VMBO- theoretische leerweg and gemengde leerweg). In the mixed pathway 4 hours a week are VET oriented.; Two VET oriented programmes, the basic level vocational learning pathway and the advanced level vocational pathway leading to EQF 1 or 2 (ISCED 244). (VMBO - voorbereidend middelbaar beroepsonderwijs - basisberoepsgerichte or kaderberoepsgerichte leerweg), In these programmes 12 hours a week are VET oriented.

EQF level	1 or 2	ISCED-P 2011 level	244
Usual entry grade	9	Usual completion grade	12
Usual entry age	13	Usual completion age	16
Length of a programme (years)	4		

Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✓ Education is compulsory for learners from five to 16 years old. 16- and 17-year-olds without a general or basic vocational qualification at upper secondary level are required to continue learning, the so-called 'qualification duty' (kwalificatieplicht).	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✓	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✓	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits Information not available

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)

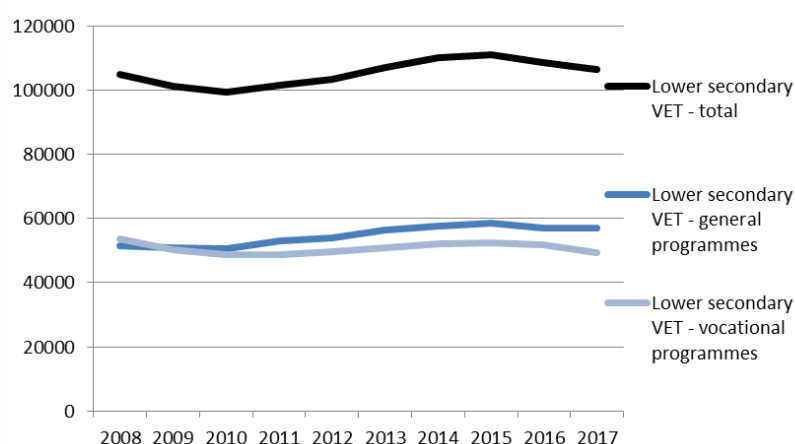
These programmes offer both vocational and general programmes. The first two years consist of general subjects. In years three and four, learners choose a learning pathway characterised by 'level differentiation', programme orientation and transfer possibilities in the education system. The four learning pathways are:

- theoretical learning pathway; those graduating from it can proceed to upper secondary vocational education, especially long courses at highest levels of upper secondary or continue in the fourth year of upper secondary general education. Programme content is general in character;
- Combined learning pathway; similar to theoretical learning pathway, apart from 10 to 15% of study time dedicated to vocational subjects. Progression routes in upper secondary VET are the same as for theoretical learning pathway;
- advanced level vocational learning pathway; preparation programme for long courses in upper secondary VET with mostly vocational subjects;
- basic level vocational learning pathway (EQF 1); preparation programme for short courses in upper secondary VET with mostly vocational subjects. Within this pathway, pupils with learning difficulties can follow a dual track, combining learning and working.

In the third year of VMBO, learners in vocational programmes have to make a choice between the 10 vocational profiles.

Whereas the vocational pathways were most popular in the past, since 2011 most learners in the third year of secondary education were in one of the general pathways.

Learners in third year of VMBO by programme orientation (2008/9 - 2017/18)



Main providers Secondary education schools

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies information not available

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)

- practical training at school
- in-company practice

Main target groups Programmes are available for young people

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age) Entry in pre vocational education is based on the advice given by the primary education school.

Assessment of learning outcomes Central, national examinations and school examinations are held, which are important for obtaining the diploma. The education inspectorate supervises quality of school exams

Diplomas/certificates provided Lower secondary pre-vocational diplomas have no labour market currency as learners are expected to continue in upper secondary VET or in general education.

Central examinations in Dutch language and basic maths have been introduced. Passing the exam in Dutch language is compulsory to obtain a diploma. For basic maths this is not yet the case.

Examples of qualifications Agriculture, building, mobility and transport, economy and business, health and welfare.

Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Those who complete lower secondary pre-vocational school-based programmes can continue in upper secondary VET or general education. They are not expected to enter the labour market, as their diplomas do not have such value. To facilitate progression from lower secondary pre-vocational education to upper secondary VET, pre vocational education schools cooperate with VET schools to smoothen transition.
Destination of graduates	In 2019 89% of graduates directly progress to upper secondary vocational education programmes (57) .
Awards through validation of prior learning	
General education subjects	 The first two years consist of general subjects. Dutch language and basic maths.
Key competences	information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	information not available
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	information not available In 2017 54% of the students in the third year of lower secondary education are in pre vocational education. 25% of students in third year of secondary education are in the two vocational tracks in pre-vocational education.

[57] www.onderwijsincijfers.nl own calculations 2018 [extracted 24.4.2019].

Practical labour-oriented
programmes for students
with learning difficulties
ISCED 253

Practical labour market-oriented programmes for students with learning difficulties (PRO - praktijkonderwijs, EQF 1) is available

EQF level	Not applicable	ISCED-P 2011 level	253
Usual entry grade	9	Usual completion grade	13
Usual entry age	13	Usual completion age	17
Length of a programme (years)	5 years		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 Education is compulsory for learners from five to 16 years old. 16- and 17-year-olds without a general or basic vocational qualification at upper secondary level are required to continue learning, the so-called 'qualification duty' (kwalificatieplicht).	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?	 Secondary education	Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	 Information not available	Is it available for adults?	
ECVET or other credits	Not applicable		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	Information not available		
Main providers	Provided by individual schools for practice oriented education (praktijkscholen) or as a part of comprehensive secondary education schools.		

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	Information not available
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• practical training at school • supervised internship
Main target groups	Programme is available for young people not able to enter pre vocational education (VMBO). It prepares learners for participation in the labour market and society. For each student a personal development plan is drawn up, including both practical and theoretical subjects, self-reliance training with assignments such as shopping, cooking, doing odd jobs around the house and traveling independently, personal empowerment and employee skills training.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Learners with learning deficits in reading, writing and/or numeracy skills, IQ between 50-88,
Assessment of learning outcomes	information not available
Diplomas/certificates provided	School diploma and/or branch-specific certificate. No formal qualification.
Examples of qualifications	Not Applicable
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates can progress to entry level upper secondary VET programmes (level 1).
Destination of graduates	Approximately 40% progress to entry level upper secondary VET programmes (level 1)
Awards through validation of prior learning	Information not available
General education subjects	Information not available
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	Information not available
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available Total number of learners in this programme is almost 30.000 (total number of learners in secondary education is close to one million) (58)

- [58] <https://www.onderwijsincijfers.nl/kengetallen/vo/leerlingen-vo/aantallen-leerlingen-in-het-vo> [extracted 23.5.2019].

EQF 1
Entry level
Programmes,
1 year
ISCED 254

Entry level upper secondary vocational education programmes leading to EQF level 1, ISCED 254 (MBO 1 - entreeopleiding middelbaar beroepsonderwijs)

EQF level	1	ISCED-P 2011 level	254
Usual entry grade	13	Usual completion grade	13
Usual entry age	16 to 17	Usual completion age	17
Length of a programme (years)	1 Within four months after starting an entry course youngsters over 17 are told whether they will be allowed to continue in the same study programme. This means that schools do not remain responsible for young people making insufficient learning progress.		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 Education is compulsory for learners from five to 16 years old. 16- and 17-year-olds without a general or basic vocational qualification at upper secondary level are required to continue learning, the so-called 'qualification duty' (kwalificatieplicht).		
Is it initial VET?	 Is it continuing VET? Upper secondary IVET programmes can also function as CVET.		
Is it offered free of charge?	A tuition fee is compulsory from the age of 18. For 2018/19 this fee is EUR 1155		
		Is it available for adults?	

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	These programmes offer two different learning pathways: • school-based; or • apprenticeship (dual pathway) School-based and dual tracks in upper secondary VET lead to the same diplomas; there is no reference to the track on the diploma. VET legislation mandates accreditation of companies offering work placements to VET students; accreditation has to be obtained for each qualification both for training places in the dual and the school-based track. SBB (59) is responsible for the accreditation process. Names and addresses of the accredited companies are available on a national website (60) .
Main providers	Subsidised VET programmes at upper secondary level are offered by 43 regional, multisectoral VET colleges (ROC – regionale opleidingscentra), 10 specialist trade colleges (vakscholen: specific for a branch of industry), 10 agricultural training centres (AOC – agrarische opleidingscentra) and one school for people with disabilities in hearing, language and communication. Private, non-subsidised providers can offer VET programmes as long as their programmes are accredited by the ministry.
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	In the school-based track (BOL – beroepsopleidende leerweg) practical periods in companies make up at least 20% of study time up to a maximum of 59%. The dual or apprenticeship track (BBL – beroepsbegeleidende leerweg), training takes place in companies at least 60% of study time.
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	• in-company practice (internship) is obligatory. The responsibility for curriculum development and assessment is in the hands of the upper secondary VET schools. Various curricula and learning environments exist even for programmes related to the same profession.
Main target groups	Programmes are available for young people and also for adults.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Admission is limited to school leavers from lower secondary education without a diploma, and to graduates of practical labour market-oriented programme
Assessment of learning outcomes	Assessment of learning results is the responsibility of schools. The law stipulates that companies providing work-based learning have to be involved. Qualification standards serve as benchmarks for assessments. The education inspectorate supervises quality of examinations (content, level and procedures at programme level). Central examinations in Dutch language and basic maths have been introduced but are not yet compulsory for qualification.

Diplomas/certificates provided	VET learners receive an entry level qualification (EQF 1). Diplomas are recognised by the education and training and labour authorities.
Examples of qualifications	Upper secondary VET programmes are offered in four different areas of study (nationally referred to as 'sectors'): green/agriculture, technology, economics, and health/welfare. Examples of entry level qualifications: assistant construction, living and maintenance worker, assistant service and care worker, assistant installation and construction technology worker.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Entry level courses are aimed at qualifying youngsters to entering programmes at the next level (basic level upper secondary VET programmes), as well as guiding youngsters not capable to make this step, to work.
Destination of graduates	information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	 It is possible to acquire an entry level diploma by validation of prior learning.
General education subjects	
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	Information not available
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	3% of learners in upper secondary VET programmes (61)

[59] Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven - SBB).

[60] <http://www.stagemarkt.nl>

[61] <https://www.onderwijsincijfers.nl/kengetallen/mbo/studenten-mbo/aantallen-studenten-mbo>

EQF 2
Basic vocational programmes
1-2 years
ISCED 353

Basic level upper secondary vocational education programmes leading to EQF level 2, ISCED 353 (MBO 2 - basisberoepsopleiding middelbaar beroepsonderwijs)

EQF level	2	ISCED-P 2011 level	353
Usual entry grade	13	Usual completion grade	14
Usual entry age	16 to 17	Usual completion age	18
Length of a programme (years)	1 to 2		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 Individuals who have left education before obtaining a diploma at MBO 2 level (or equivalent) are defined as early school leavers. Education is compulsory for pupils from age five to 16. 16 and 17 year-olds without a general or basic vocational qualification at upper secondary level are required to continue learning, the so-called 'qualification duty' (kwalificatieplicht). This arrangement was introduced in 2008 to reduce early leaving from education and training	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	 Upper secondary IVET programmes can also function as CVET.

Is it offered free of charge?	A tuition fee is compulsory from the age of 18. For 2018/19 this fee is EUR 1 155	Is it available for adults?	
ECVET or other credits	Information not available		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	These programmes offer two different learning pathways: • school-based; or • apprenticeship (dual pathway) School-based and dual tracks in upper secondary VET lead to the same diplomas; there is no reference to the track on the diploma. Most learners take part in the school based track, which also appears to be gaining popularity. Between 2008 and 2015 the share of learners in apprenticeship has decreased due to the economic recession. However more structural reasons like upward mobility and growing preferences from youngsters and employers for school based education, could not be excluded. In the last two years the share of learners in the dual track has increased slightly, due to the increased enrolment of adults. VET legislation mandates accreditation of companies offering work placements to VET students; accreditation has to be obtained for each qualification both for training places in the dual and the school-based track. SBB (62) is responsible for the accreditation process. Names and addresses of the accredited companies are available on a national website (63) .		
Main providers	Subsidised VET programmes at upper secondary level are offered by 43 regional, multisectoral VET colleges (ROC – regionale opleidingscentra), 10 specialist trade colleges (vakscholen: specific for a branch of industry), 10 agricultural training centres (AOC – agrarische opleidingscentra) and one school for people with disabilities in hearing, language and communication. Private, non-subsidised providers can offer VET programmes as long as their programmes are accredited by the ministry.		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	In the school-based track (BOL – beroepsopleidende leerweg) practical periods in companies make up at least 20% of study time up to a maximum of 59%. The dual or apprenticeship track (BBL – beroepsbegeleidende leerweg), training takes place in companies at least 60% of study time.		
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	in-company practice (internships) The responsibility for curriculum development and assessment is in the hands of the upper secondary VET schools. Various curricula and learning environments exist even for programmes related to the same profession.		

Main target groups	Programmes are available for young people and also for adults (16-35). Participants in the school-based track are mainly youngsters, while most learners in the dual track are 23 or over, this is because this track is also used by companies to upgrade their employees.
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Access requirements are at least a basic pre-vocational education diploma, a completed entry level upper secondary VET programme, or proof of successful completion of the first three years of upper secondary general education or pre-university education. To enrol in the dual/apprenticeship track a contract (an employment contract in most cases) with a firm is mandatory. There is no such obligation for the school-based track.
Assessment of learning outcomes	Assessment of learning results is the responsibility of schools. The law stipulates that companies providing work-based learning have to be involved. Qualification standards serve as benchmarks for assessments. The education inspectorate supervises quality of examinations (content, level and procedures at programme level). Passing central examinations in Dutch language is compulsory to obtain a diploma. Central examination in basic maths is not yet compulsory.
Diplomas/certificates provided	VET learners receive a basic level upper secondary VET qualification (EQF 2). Diplomas are recognised by the education and training and labour authorities.
Examples of qualifications	Upper secondary VET programmes are offered in four different areas of study (nationally referred to as 'sectors'): green/agriculture, technology, economics, and health/welfare. Examples: bricklayer, assembly mechanic, security officer, care and well-being assistant,
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Progression to professional upper secondary VET programmes (MBO 3) and (for some students to) middle management upper secondary VET programmes (MBO 4) is possible. It is the 'official' minimum qualification level for the labour market. The term 'official' implies that it is the minimum desirable education level for every citizen.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓ It is possible to acquire a basic level upper secondary VET diploma by validation of prior learning.
General education subjects	✓ Dutch language and basic maths
Key competences	Information not available

Application of learning outcomes approach	Information not available
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	17% of learners in upper secondary VET programmes

[62] Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven - SBB)

[63] <http://www.stagemarkt.nl>

EQF 3

Professional education

Programmes,

2-3 years

ISCED 353

Professional upper secondary vocational education programmes leading to EQF level 3, ISCED 353 (MBO 3 - vakopleiding middelbaar beroepsonderwijs)

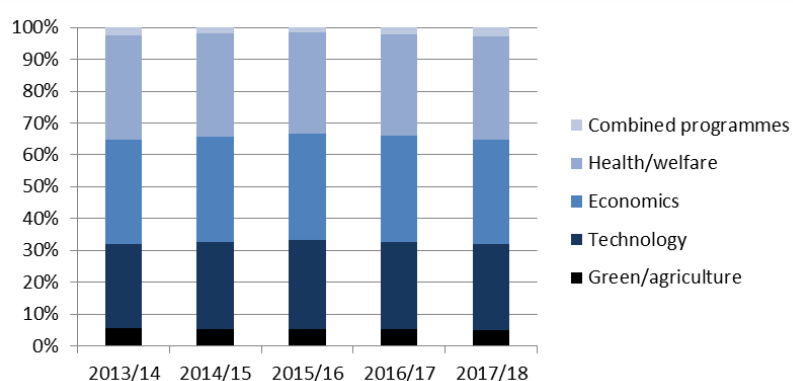
EQF level	3	ISCED-P 2011 level	353
Usual entry grade	13	Usual completion grade	15
Usual entry age	16 to 17	Usual completion age	19
Length of a programme (years)	2 to 3		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 Education is compulsory for pupils from age five to 16. 16 and 17 year-olds without a general or basic vocational qualification at upper secondary level are required to continue learning, the so-called 'qualification duty' (kwalificatieplicht). This arrangement was introduced in 2008 to reduce early leaving from education and training.	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	 Upper secondary IVET programmes can also function as CVET.
Is it offered free of charge?	A tuition fee is compulsory from the age of 18. For 2018/2018 this fee is EUR 1155	Is it available for adults?	

ECVET or other credits Information not available

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	These programmes offer two different learning pathways: • school-based; or • apprenticeship (dual pathway) School-based and dual tracks in upper secondary VET lead to the same diplomas; there is no reference to the track on the diploma. Most learners take part in the school based track, which also appears to be gaining popularity. Between 2008 and 2015 the share of learners in apprenticeship has decreased due to the economic recession. However more structural reasons like upward mobility and growing preferences from youngsters and employers for school based education, could not be excluded. In the last two years the share of learners in the dual track has increased slightly, due to the increased enrolment of adults. VET legislation mandates accreditation of companies offering work placements to VET students; accreditation has to be obtained for each qualification both for training places in the dual and the school-based track. SBB (64) is responsible for the accreditation process. Names and addresses of the accredited companies are available on a national website (65) .
Main providers	Subsidised VET programmes at upper secondary level are offered by 43 regional, multi sectoral VET colleges (ROC – regionale opleidingscentra), 10 specialist trade colleges (vakscholen: specific for a branch of industry), 10 agricultural training centres (AOC – agrarische opleidingscentra) and one school for people with disabilities in hearing, language and communication. Private, non-subsidised providers can offer VET programmes as long as their programmes are accredited by the ministry.
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	In the school-based track (BOL – beroepsopleidende leerweg) practical periods in companies make up at least 20% of study time up to a maximum of 59%. The dual or apprenticeship track (BBL – beroepsbegeleidende leerweg), training takes place in companies at least 60% of study time.
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	in-company practice (internships) The responsibility for curriculum development and assessment is in the hands of the upper secondary VET schools. Various curricula and learning environments exist even for programmes related to the same profession.
Main target groups	Programmes are available for young people and also for adults (16-35). For upper secondary VET (level 1 to 4): participants in the school-based track are mainly youngsters, while 46% of those following a dual track are 23 or over, this is because this track is also used by companies to upgrade their employees.

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Access requirements are: • a pre-vocational secondary education certificate/diploma; or • proof of successful completion of the first three years of upper secondary general education or pre-university education. To enrol in the dual/apprenticeship track a contract (an employment contract in most cases) with a firm is mandatory. There is no such obligation for the school-based track.
Assessment of learning outcomes	Assessment of learning results is the responsibility of schools. The law stipulates that companies providing work-based learning have to be involved. Qualification standards serve as benchmarks for assessments. The education inspectorate supervises quality of examinations (content, level and procedures at programme level). Central examinations in Dutch language and basic maths have been introduced. Passing the exam in Dutch language is compulsory to obtain a diploma. For basic maths this is not yet the case.
Diplomas/certificates provided	VET learners receive a professional upper secondary vocational education qualification (EQF 3). (MBO 3 – vakopleiding middelbaar beroepsonderwijs) Diplomas are recognised by the education and training and labour authorities
Examples of qualifications	Upper secondary VET programmes are offered in four different areas of study (nationally referred to as ‘sectors’): green/agriculture, technology, economics, and health/welfare. Examples: all-round carpenter, care provider disability care, financial administrative assistant.

Participation (%) in upper secondary VET (level 1-4) by area of study (2013-2017)



Source: DUO 2018 (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs - Service Institution Education).

Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Progression to middle management upper secondary vocational education programmes (MBO 4) is possible, as well as to specialising programmes at post-secondary level.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	 It is possible to acquire a professional upper secondary VET diploma by validation of prior learning.
General education subjects	 Dutch language, basic maths
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	Information not available
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	25% of learners in upper secondary VET programmes

[64] Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven - SBB).

[65] <http://www.stagemarkt.nl>

EQF 4

Middle management

VET programmes,

3-4 years

ISCED 354

Middle management upper secondary vocational education programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 354 (MBO 4 - middenkaderopleiding middelbaar beroepsonderwijs)

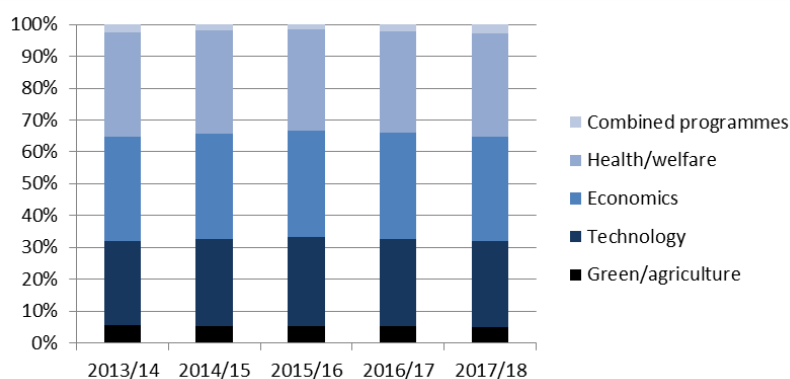
EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	354
Usual entry grade	13	Usual completion grade	15
Usual entry age	16 to 17	Usual completion age	19 or 20
Length of a programme (years)	3 to 4		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	 Education is compulsory for pupils from age five to 16. 16 and 17 year-olds without a general or basic vocational qualification at upper secondary level are required to continue learning, the so-called 'qualification duty' (kwalificatieplicht). This arrangement was introduced in 2008 to reduce early leaving from education and training.	Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	 Upper secondary IVET programmes can also function as CVET.
Is it offered free of charge?	A tuition fee is compulsory from the age of 18. For 2018/2018 this fee is EUR 1155.	Is it available for adults?	

ECVET or other credits Information not available

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	These programmes offer two different learning pathways: • school-based; or • apprenticeship (dual pathway) School-based and dual tracks in upper secondary VET lead to the same diplomas; there is no reference to the track on the diploma. Most learners take part in the school based track, which also appears to be gaining popularity. Between 2008 and 2015 the share of learners in apprenticeship has decreased due to the economic recession. However more structural reasons like upward mobility and growing preferences from youngsters and employers for school based education, could not be excluded. In the last two years the share of learners in the dual track has increased slightly, due to the increased enrolment of adults. VET legislation mandates accreditation of companies offering work placements to VET students; accreditation has to be obtained for each qualification both for training places in the dual and the school-based track. SBB (66) is responsible for the accreditation process. Names and addresses of the accredited companies are available on a national website (67) .
Main providers	Subsidised VET programmes at upper secondary level are offered by 43 regional, multi sectoral VET colleges (ROC – regionale opleidingscentra), 10 specialist trade colleges (vakscholen: specific for a branch of industry), 10 agricultural training centres (AOC – agrarische opleidingscentra) and one school for people with disabilities in hearing, language and communication. Private, non-subsidised providers can offer VET programmes as long as their programmes are accredited by the ministry.
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	In the school-based track (BOL – beroepsopleidende leerweg) practical periods in companies make up at least 20% of study time up to a maximum of 59%. The dual or apprenticeship track (BBL – beroepsbegeleidende leerweg), training takes place in companies at least 60% of study time.
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	in-company practice (internships) The responsibility for curriculum development and assessment is in the hands of the upper secondary VET schools. Various curricula and learning environments exist even for programmes related to the same profession.
Main target groups	Programmes are available for young people and also for adults (16-35). Participants in the school-based track are mainly youngsters, while 46% of those following a dual track are 23 or over, this is because this track is also used by companies to upgrade their employees.

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Access requirements are: • a pre-vocational secondary education certificate/diploma; or • proof of successful completion of the first three years of upper secondary general education or pre-university education. To enrol in the dual/apprenticeship track a contract (an employment contract in most cases) with a firm is mandatory. There is no such obligation for the school-based track.
Assessment of learning outcomes	Assessment of learning results is the responsibility of schools. The law stipulates that companies providing work-based learning have to be involved. Qualification standards serve as benchmarks for assessments. The education inspectorate supervises quality of examinations (content, level and procedures at programme level). Obligatory central examinations in Dutch language, English and basic maths have been introduced. Passing the exam in Dutch language and English is compulsory to obtain a diploma. For basic maths this is not yet the case.
Diplomas/certificates provided	VET learners receive a middle management upper secondary VET qualification (EQF 4). (MBO 4 -middenkaderopleiding middelbaar beroepsonderwijs). Diplomas are recognised by the education and training and labour authorities.
Examples of qualifications	Upper secondary VET programmes are offered in four different areas of study (nationally referred to as 'sectors'): green/agriculture, technology, economics, and health/welfare. Examples: planner installations, dental nurse, catering manager.

Participation (%) in upper secondary VET (level 1 to 4) by area of study (2013-2017)



Source: DUO 2018 (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs - Service Institution Education).

Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Progression is possible to: • higher professional education; • two-year associate degree programmes (short-cycle higher education, EQF 5); • to specialising programmes at post-secondary level.
Destination of graduates	39% of graduates of middle management upper secondary VET programmes enter Higher professional bachelor programmes, while 61% of them enter the job market.
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓
General education subjects	✓ English, Dutch language, basic math
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	Information not available
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	54% of learners in upper secondary VET programmes

[66] Cooperation Organisation for Vocational Education, Training and the Labour Market (Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven - SBB).

[67] <http://www.stagemarkt.nl>

EQF 4
Specialising programmes, 1 year ISCED 453

Specialising programmes leading to EQF level 4, ISCED 453

EQF level	4	ISCED-P 2011 level	453
Usual entry grade	16	Usual completion grade	16
Usual entry age	20	Usual completion age	20
Length of a programme (years)	1		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✗	Is it continuing VET?	✓
Is it offered free of charge?	A tuition fee is compulsory from the age of 18. For 2018/2019 this fee is EUR 1155	Is it available for adults?	✓

ECVET or other credits Information not available

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance) These programmes offer two different learning pathways:

- school-based; or
- apprenticeship (dual pathway)

School-based and dual tracks in upper secondary VET lead to the same diplomas; there is no reference to the track on the diploma.

Main providers Subsidised VET programmes at upper secondary level are offered by 43 regional, multi sectoral VET colleges (ROC – regionale opleidingscentra), 10 specialist trade colleges (vakscholen: specific for a branch of industry), 10 agricultural training centres (AOC – agrarische opleidingscentra) and one school for people with disabilities in hearing, language and communication. Private, non-subsidised providers can offer VET programmes as long as their programmes are accredited by the ministry.

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	In the school-based track (BOL – beroepsopleidende leerweg) practical periods in companies make up at least 20% of study time up to a maximum of 59%. The dual or apprenticeship track (BBL – beroepsbegeleidende leerweg), training takes place in companies at least 60% of study time.
Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	in-company practice (internships) The responsibility for curriculum development and assessment is in the hands of the upper secondary VET schools. Various curricula and learning environments exist even for programmes related to the same profession.
Main target groups	Professional and middle management upper secondary VET programmes graduates
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Access requirements are a completed professional or middle management upper secondary VET programme (MBO 3 or 4).
Assessment of learning outcomes	Assessment of learning results is the responsibility of schools. The law stipulates that companies providing work-based learning have to be involved. Qualification standards serve as benchmarks for assessments. The education inspectorate supervises quality of examinations (content, level and procedures at programme level). Obligatory central examinations in Dutch language, English and basic maths have been introduced. Passing the exam in Dutch language and English is compulsory to obtain a diploma. For basic maths this is not yet the case.
Diplomas/certificates provided	VET learners receive a specialist upper secondary VET qualification.
Examples of qualifications	Manager team/department/project, instructor upper secondary vocational education
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Progression to higher professional education, especially dual or part-time tracks, is possible.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓
General education subjects	✓ Dutch language, English, basic math
Key competences	Information not available

Application of learning outcomes approach	Information not available
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	Information not available

EQF 5

Associate degree,

2 years

ISCED 554

Associate degree (AD) programmes (short-cycle higher education programmes) leading to EQF level 5, ISCED 554

EQF level	5	ISCED-P 2011 level	554
Usual entry grade	14+	Usual completion grade	15+
Usual entry age	18 for upper secondary general education 20+ for upper secondary VET graduates	Usual completion age	19+
Length of a programme (years)	2		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?		Is it part of formal education and training system?	
Is it initial VET?		Is it continuing VET?	
Is it offered free of charge?	 A tuition fee is compulsory. For 2018/19 this fee is EUR 2 060. For students starting for the first time in higher professional education tuition fees are reduced by half.	Is it available for adults?	
ECVET or other credits	120 ECTS (68) points		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	Information not available		
Main providers	Universities of applied sciences (hogescholen) providing these programmes are publicly financed providers. Non-subsidised, private providers can offer similar programmes if they have appropriate accreditation.		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	The responsibility for curriculum development and assessment is in the hands of the universities of applied science. Various curricula and learning environments exist even for programmes related to the same profession.		

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	Information not available
Main target groups	AD programmes are of particular interest to those with a VET qualification from professional or middle management upper secondary VET programmes (MBO 3 or 4).
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Access requirements are a completed professional or middle management upper secondary VET programme (MBO 3 or 4). Access is also possible to graduates of upper general secondary education.
Assessment of learning outcomes	The responsibility for assessment is in the hands of the universities of applied science. The Dutch-Flemish accreditation body (NVAO) accredits the programmes once every six years. Higher professional bachelor degrees are awarded by the institutions themselves. Official recognition of programmes is granted as long as they are accredited by NVAO.
Diplomas/certificates provided	Associate degree (AD) diploma.
Examples of qualifications	Information not available
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Graduates can continue to higher professional bachelor programmes; their remaining study load is subject to exemptions granted by each programme.
Destination of graduates	
Awards through validation of prior learning	Information not available
General education subjects	
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	Information not available
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	2.4% of students in higher professional education (AD, professional bachelor and professional master programmes) are in Associate Degree programmes (69) .

[68] European credit transfer and accumulation system.

[69] 2018: <https://www.onderwijsin cijfers.nl/kengetallen/hbo/studenten-hbo/aantallen-ingeschrevenen-hbo> [extracted 23.5.2019].

EQF 6
Higher professional bachelor programmes 4 years ISCED 655

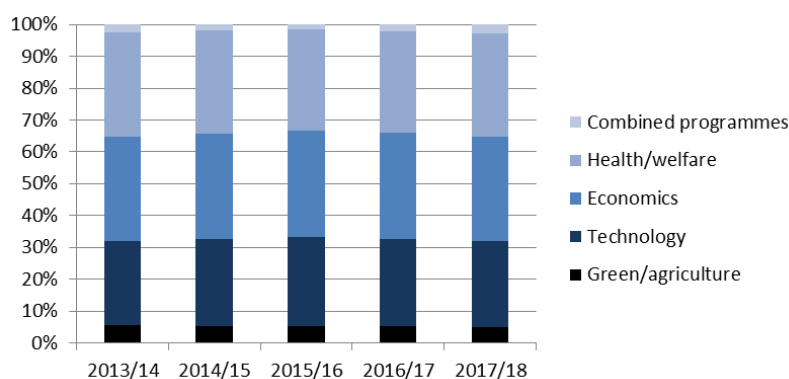
Higher professional bachelor programmes leading to EQF level 6, ISCED 655 (HBO)

EQF level	6	ISCED-P 2011 level	655
Usual entry grade	14+	Usual completion grade	
Usual entry age	18 for upper secondary general education 20+ for upper secondary VET graduates	Usual completion age	21+
Length of a programme (years)	4		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✗	Is it continuing VET?	✗
Is it offered free of charge?	✗ A tuition fee is compulsory. For 2018/2019 this fee is EUR 2060. For students starting for the first time in higher professional education tuition fees are reduced by half.	Is it available for adults?	✓
ECVET or other credits	240 ECTS (70) points		

Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)

Higher professional education provides programmes for professions requiring both theoretical knowledge and specific skills. They are almost always closely linked to a particular profession or group of professions and most programmes include an internship. Higher professional education can also be attended part-time as part of professionally oriented adult education, and, for the last 10 years, in dual learning tracks.

Students (in 1 000s) in higher professional education, 2014-18



Source: www.onderwijsin cijfers.nl [extracted 17.6.2019].

Main providers

Higher professional bachelor programmes are provided by publicly financed universities of applied sciences (hogescholen). Non-subsidised, private providers can offer similar programmes if they have appropriate accreditation.

Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies

The responsibility for curriculum development and assessment is in the hands of the universities of applied science. Various curricula and learning environments exist even for programmes related to the same profession.

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)

- internships
- dual learning

Main target groups

Higher VET programmes are open to learners aged 17 or older.

Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)

Admission requires an upper secondary general or vocational education qualification. Some bachelor programmes apply additional admission criteria relating to the subjects learners studied in prior studies. Generally, these criteria do not apply to middle management upper secondary VET (MBO 4) graduates, as they currently have a legal right to enter Higher professional programmes. However, by law universities of applied science can apply stricter admission criteria also for MBO 4 graduates for specific programmes.

Assessment of learning outcomes	The responsibility for assessment is in the hands of the universities of applied science. The Dutch-Flemish accreditation body (NVAO) accredits the programmes once every six years. Higher professional bachelor degrees are awarded by the institutions themselves. Official recognition of programmes is granted as long as they are accredited by NVAO.
Diplomas/certificates provided	Learners can receive a Higher professional bachelor degree upon successful completion of their studies.
Examples of qualifications	The programmes cover one or more of seven areas of study: 'green'/agriculture, technology, economics and services, health care, behaviour and society, culture and arts, and teacher training.
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	A professional bachelor degree gives access to professional master degree programmes in higher professional education and university master degree programmes. A bridge programme for professional bachelor graduates often precedes their entry into an academic master programme. After completing the first year of a professional bachelor's programme, entrance to university bachelor programme is possible.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	✓
General education subjects	✗
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	Information not available
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	95% of all students in higher professional education (AD, professional bachelor and professional master programmes) are in professional bachelor programmes (71) .

[70] European credit transfer and accumulation system.

[71] 2018: <https://www.onderwijsin cijfers.nl/kengetallen/hbo/studenten-hbo/aantallen-ingeschrevenen-hbo> [extracted 23.5.2019].

EQF 7

Professional master's
programmes

1 year

ISCED 757

Professional master's programmes leading to EQF level 7, ISCED 757

EQF level	7	ISCED-P 2011 level	757
Usual entry grade		Usual completion grade	
Usual entry age	21+	Usual completion age	22+
Length of a programme (years)	1		
Is it part of compulsory education and training?	✗	Is it part of formal education and training system?	✓
Is it initial VET?	✗	Is it continuing VET?	Information not available
Is it offered free of charge?	✗ A tuition fee is compulsory. For 2018/2019 this fee is EUR 2 060.	Is it available for adults?	✓
ECVET or other credits	Information not available		
Learning forms (e.g. dual, part-time, distance)	information not available		
Main providers	Professional master's programmes are provided by publicly financed universities of applied sciences (hogescholen). Non-subsidised, private providers can offer similar programmes if they have appropriate accreditation.		
Share of work-based learning provided by schools and companies	The responsibility for curriculum development and assessment is in the hands of the universities of applied science. Various curricula and learning environments exist even for programmes related to the same profession.		

Work-based learning type (workshops at schools, in-company training / apprenticeships)	information not available
Main target groups	Higher professional bachelor programmes graduates
Entry requirements for learners (qualification/education level, age)	Access is provided to holders of a higher professional bachelor degree.
Assessment of learning outcomes	The responsibility for assessment is in the hands of the universities of applied science. The Dutch-Flemish accreditation body (NVAO) accredits the programmes once every six years. Higher professional bachelor degrees are awarded by the institutions themselves. Official recognition of programmes is granted as long as they are accredited by NVAO.
Diplomas/certificates provided	Professional master's degree
Examples of qualifications	Information not available
Progression opportunities for learners after graduation	Those who complete a Professional master's degree can enter a Ph.D. programme.
Destination of graduates	Information not available
Awards through validation of prior learning	Information not available
General education subjects	
Key competences	Information not available
Application of learning outcomes approach	Information not available
Share of learners in this programme type compared with the total number of VET learners	2.7% of all students in higher professional education (Associate Degree, professional bachelor and professional master programmes) are in professional master programmes (72) .

[72] 2018: <https://www.onderwijsin cijfers.nl/kengetallen/hbo/studenten-hbo/aantallen-ingeschrevenen-hbo> [extracted 23.5.2019].

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