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#### World TVET Database Netherlands

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## World TVET Database Netherlands

August, 2012

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# Abbreviations

| AOCs     | Agricultural training centres (Agrarische Opleidingscentra)                  |
|----------|--|
| BIO      | Professions in Education Act (Wet op Beroepen in het Onderwijs)              |
| BOL      | School-based full-time and part-time programmes with practical periods in    |
|          | companies ( <i>Beroepsopleidende Leerweg</i> )                               |
| CTVET    | Continuing TVET  |
| DUO      | Service Institute of Education ( <i>Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs</i> )        |
| ECQ      | European Qualification Framework   |
| HBO      | Higher Education and Scientific Research Act (Hoger Beroepsonderwijs)        |
| HBO      | Bachelor programmes ( <i>Hoger Beroepsonderwijs</i> )                        |
| ITVET    | Initial TVET   |
| KBBs     | Knowledge centres for TVET Trade and Industry (Kenniscentra Beroupsonderwijs |
|          | Bedrijfsleven)   |
| MBO      | Upper-secondary TVET ( <i>Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs</i> )                  |
| NCP-NLQF | National Coordination Point for NLQF (Nationaal Coordinatiepunt NLQF)        |
| NLQF     | Dutch Qualifications Framework   |
| NQF      | National Qualification Framework   |
| PRO      | Practice-oriented programme ( <i>Praktijkonderwijs</i> )                     |
| ROCs     | Multisectoral training centres (Regionale Opleidingscentra)                  |
| VMBO     | Lower-secondary general and pre-vocational education (Voorbereidend          |
|          | Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs)   |
| VMBO-BL  | Pre-vocational learning pathway- higher level (Laderberoepsgerichte Leerweg) |
| VMBO-GL  | Combined learning pathway ( <i>Gemengde Leerweg</i> )                        |
| VMBO-TL  | Theoretical learning pathway ( <i>Theoretische Leerweg</i> )                 |
| WEB      | General Adult Education and Vocational Education Act (Wet Educatie en        |
|          | Beroepsonderwijs)  |
| WSF      | Student Finance Act (Wet op de Studiefinanciering)                           |
| WVA      | Reduction of Wage Tax Contributions Act (Wet Vermindering Afdracht           |
|          | Loonbelasting)   |
| WVO      | Secondary Education Act (Wet op het Voortgezet Onderwijs)                    |

# **TVETipedia Glossary**

Below are listed TVET terms mentioned in this report. Click on a term to read its definitions on the UNESCO-UNEVOC TVETipedia glossary.

Access and equity Labour market
Access/Admission criteria Lifelong Learning

Adult education National Qualifications Framework

Apprenticeship Non-formal education
Assessment Pre-vocational education

Assessment of competence Qualification

Competency-based qualifications Quality

Continuing TVET Quality Assurance
Curriculum Social Partners
Demand-driven TVET Stakeholder
Dropout Teacher

Employment Teacher In Vet

European qualifications framework for lifelong

learning Tertiary Education

Further education Trainer
General Education TVET

Higher Education TVET provider

Informal Learning Upper secondary education
In-service training Vocational qualification

Internship Work experience

Job

# **Netherlands**

Population: 16,925,000 (2015)
Youth population<sup>1</sup>: 2,017,000 (2015)
Median population age: 42.7 (2015)
Annual population growth (2010–2015)<sup>2</sup>:



Data © OpenStreetMap Design © Mapbox

# 1. TVET mission, strategy and legislation

## **TVET** strategy

The TVET system in the Netherlands is clearly defined and well-integrated into the general educational system. Differentiated study paths within TVET provide participants with possibilities to enter the labour market upon graduation, to pursue further studies in general education and to have open access to lifelong learning.

The main objectives of the Dutch TVET system are:

- To raise the educational level of the population and to reduce the number of dropouts;
- To improve TVET provision as a part of the lifelong learning strategy;
- To improve the image of TVET and make it more attractive for participants and stakeholders:
- To prevent shortages of teachers and trainers and to match their education and training with current developments in relevant fields;
- To enhance the provision of innovative learning methods and promote science and technology education; and
- To monitor the developments of the labour market in order to match the training provided to the needs of the market.

# TVET legislation

There is no one single legislation act providing regulations for the Dutch TVET system. A broad framework of laws is in place embracing all aspects of TVET at different levels, covering "access and accessibility, design procedures and procedures concerning the determination of qualifications, curricula and examinations, quality assurance procedures, regulations about the administration of publicly financed VET suppliers, procedures with regard to the recognition of private commercial VET suppliers, and financing" (CEDEFOP, 2010).

With regard to initial TVET (ITVET), the main legislation acts are:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Population aged 14-25

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> All statistics compiled from the United Nation's Population Division's *World Population Prospects, the* 2015 Revision (http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/DVD/)

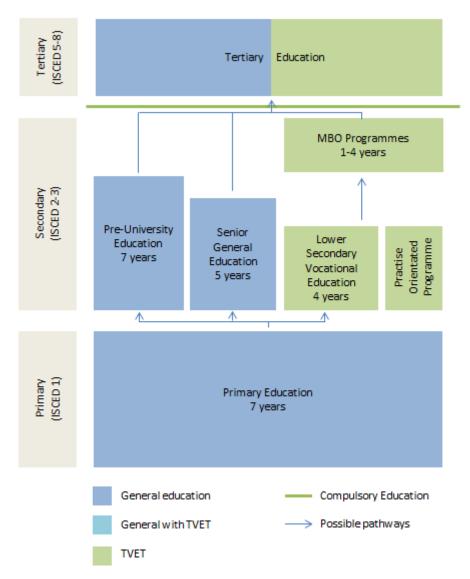
- The **Secondary Education Act** (*Wet op het Voortgezet Onderwijs*, WVO) adopted in 1968 (with later amendments) that provides regulations for lower secondary and prevocational education.
- The General Adult Education and Vocational Education Act (Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs, WEB) adopted in 1996 (with later amendments) that contains regulations on the functioning of upper-secondary vocational education.
- The **Higher Education and Scientific Research Act** (*Hoger Beroepsonderwijs*, HBO) adopted in 1993 (with later amendments) that concerns higher professional education.
- The **Student Finance Act** (*Wet op de Studiefinanciering*, WSF) adopted in 2000 and applied to students over the age of 18 and in full-time education.
- The **Reduction of Wage Tax Contributions Act** (*Wet Vermindering Afdracht Loonbelasting*, WVA) adopted in 1995 that introduces financial support for enterprises that provide places for apprentices and interns.
- The **Professions in Education Act** (*Wet op Beroepen in het Onderwijs*, BIO) adopted in 2006 that concerns minimum teacher requirements for primary, secondary and general adult education and for TVET at lower/upper secondary level.

When informal TVET functions as a provider for continuing TVET (CTVET) for individuals, the ITVET legislation can be applied. Other regulations regarding CTVET are formulated by social partners. Apprenticeship arrangements that take the form of Labour Agreements are also made by social partners and are legally binding for all businesses, in particular the respective branch or sector of the labour market.

#### Sources:

CEDEFOP Refernet (2010). Netherlands VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

# 2. TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems



Scheme compiled by UNESCO-UNEVOC from CEDEFOP Refernet (2010). Netherlands VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

The education system in the Netherlands consists of 6 components: primary education, special education, secondary education, upper-secondary vocational education and general education for adults, vocational courses and training for adults, and tertiary and higher education.

## Formal TVET system

VET comes into the system as one of the 3 tracks of secondary education and is referred to as lower-secondary general and pre-vocational education (*Voorbereidend Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs*, VMBO). A separate practice-oriented programme (*Praktijkonderwijs*, PRO) is

part of the same level and is addressed to students who are not able to participate in lower secondary/pre-vocational education.

VMBO normally lasts has a 4 years. The first 2 years are dedicated to general subjects; during the last two years students are offered one of the following paths:

- Theoretical learning pathway (*Theoretische Leerweg*, VMBO-TL). Upon graduation, students may proceed to upper-secondary vocational education or continue with general education.
- Combined learning pathway (*Gemengde Leerweg*, VMBO-GL). The study programme is more pre-vocationally oriented in comparison to the theoretical learning pathway, however, progression routes upon graduation are similar.
- Pre-vocational learning pathway higher level (*Laderberoepsgerichte Leerweg*, VMBO-BL). The programme is a preparation for long TVET courses at upper-secondary level MBO levels 3 and 4 (more information on MBO levels is provided below).
- Pre-vocational learning pathway- lower level (Basisberoepsgerichte Leerweg, VMBO-BL). The programme is a preparation for short TVET courses at upper-secondary level MBO level 2 (more information on MBO levels is provided below). As part of this pathway students may participate in a dual track combining learning and working.

Pupils are offered to choose a sector in their pre-vocational education: agriculture, technology, economics, health and welfare.

Students at upper-secondary vocational level vary in age, which ranges from 16 to 35. This is due to the fact that upper-secondary vocational education institutions also act as CTVET providers.

Programmes at this level are offered by "43 regional, multisectoral training centres (*Regionale Opleidingscentra*, ROCs), 12 specialist trade colleges (*Vakscholen*: specific for a branch of industry); 12 agricultural training centres (*Agrarische Opleidingscentra*, AOCs) and 4 other schools" (CEDEFOP, 2010). Private providers can also offer courses subject to their programmes being recognised by the authorities.

TVET at upper-secondary level takes the form of upper-secondary vocational education programmes in 4 sectors of the labour market. In Dutch these courses are referred to as MBO (*Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs*) levels 1, 2, 3 and 4, where each level has different access criteria and transfer possibilities. The levels are defined as follows:

- MBO level 1 Assistant Training (*Assistentenopleiding*). The programme has a duration of 6 months to 1 year and is intended for students who are not in the position to attain a minimum entrance qualification for MBO Level 2. The participants are taught to carry out simple executive tasks and upon graduation may pursue MBO Level 2.
- MBO Level 2 Basic Vocational Education (*Basisberoepsopleiding*). The programme lasts for 2 to 3 years and prepares students to perform executive tasks. In political terms this level is regarded as a desirable minimum for every citizen or in other words is the minimum qualification level for the entrance to the labour market.
- MBO Level 3 Professional Education (*Vakopleiding*). The programme lasts for 3–4 years (2 years with MBO Level 2 Diploma) and aims at preparing participants to carry out

tasks independently. Upon graduation, progression to MBO Level 4 programmes is possible.

- MBO Level 4 Middle-Management VET (*Middenkaderopleding*). The programme has a
  duration of 4 years and prepares students to perform tasks that require higher
  responsibility and independent work. Upon graduation progression to higher education
  is possible.
- MBO Level 4 Specialist Training (*Specialistenopleiding*). The programme lasts for 1–2 years. Progression or transfer to higher professional education is possible.

MBO students have the opportunity to choose one of two learning pathways:

- School-based full-time and part-time programmes with practical periods in companies (*Beroepsopleidende Leerweg*, BOL) where a practical period takes up between 20% and 59% of the study time;
- Apprenticeship training (dual pathway), where training within the company takes up at least 60% of the study time.

The same qualifications are awarded upon completion of either pathway.

Participants in the school-based pathway are mainly youngsters, while 40% of those following the dual pathway are aged between 25 and over (CEDEFOP, 2010).

Apart from being able to choose between two learning pathways, students of MBO programmes receive their qualifications depending on the orientation of the programme. Possible orientations relate to different industries/sectors and are divided as follows: green/agriculture; technology and engineering; economics/services; and health/welfare.

Assessment and examinations are the responsibility of the VET providers; they are legally required to involve the trainers in enterprises that are responsible for internships and apprentices in the various learning pathways (CEDEFOP, 2010).

Apprenticeship forms a substantial part of upper-secondary vocational education. An apprentice has to sign two contracts: a learning/educational agreement with the TVET school (Onderwijsovereenkomst) and an employment contract (*Arbeidscontract*) with the organisation/enterprise. Normally a student participates in practical learning in a company for 4 days a week and attends school for 1 day.

The apprenticeship system is very popular among young adults.

Due to practical experience gained during the training, it is easier for the graduates of apprenticeship programmes to find permanent employment. Participants of such programmes are more focused on finding a job upon completion instead of pursuing further education.

TVET at tertiary level is mainly represented by Bachelor programmes (*Hoger Beroepsonderwijs*, HBO) organised by Universities of Applied Studies. Short-cycle Associate degree programmes are becoming more popular. They are an integral part of Bachelor's programmes and provide the opportunity for further progression within higher education upon completion. Universities of Applied Sciences also offer Master programmes for Bachelor graduates.

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Progression to a Master's course at University level for a holder of Bachelor degree from Universities of Applied Sciences requires completion of an additional preparation year.

## Non-formal and informal TVET systems

TVET providers at upper-secondary level also function as CTVET providers for individuals. Adults usually opt for dual and part-time learning pathways at this level. These programmes function as vocationally oriented adult education.

Overall education for adults is divided into two components: basic education (mostly non-formal) and general secondary adult education which awards the same diplomas as in general secondary education and is provided by the same regional training centres offering upper-secondary TVET.

Training for the employees (non-formal training), which is regulated by Collective Labour Agreements and financed from sectorial funds composed of employers' obligatory payments, is organised mainly by private commercial training providers and in some cases by publicly funded TVET providers. (For more information on sectorial training funds see section 3: Governance and Financing).

#### Sources:

CEDEFOP Refernet (2010). Netherlands VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

# 3. Governance and financing

#### Governance

TVET in the Netherlands is governed at three levels: national, sectorial and regional. Roles and functions at each level are defined in accordance with the following categories: legislation and financing, development of qualifications, development of curricula, examinations, quality assurance (internal and external), and promotion of interests. The following table specifies how the Dutch TVET system is governed.

| Function  | VMBO (ISCED-2)  | MBO (ISCED-3/4)  | HBO (ISCED-5)  |  |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Legislation/financing<br>(section 4.2 and<br>chapter 10)  | Ministry of Education,<br>Culture and Science/<br>Ministry of Agriculture,<br>Nature Management and<br>Food Quality | The same   | The same  Design: school level  Validity: national   |  |
| Development of qualifications                             | Design: national level  Validity: national  | Design: sectoral level by<br>Knowledge Centres VET –<br>Trade and Industry<br>(social partners & VET),<br>Validity: national |  |  |
| Development of<br>curricula (chapter 8)                   | School level  | School level   | School level   |  |
| Examination (chapter<br>8)                                | Partly central/national;<br>partly school exams   | School exams; external contribution of trainers in enterprises   | School exams   |  |
| Quality assurance   | Internal  | Internal   | Internal: self-evaluation.   |  |
|   | External: Inspectorate  | External: Inspectorate; special attention: exams   | External: accreditation of<br>HBO-programmes by<br>NVAO*. European level:<br>use of Dublin level<br>descriptors. |  |
| Promotion of interests<br>by associations of<br>schools** | VO Council  | MBO Council (schools);<br>Colo (association of<br>sectoral knowledge<br>centres)   | HBO Council  |  |

<sup>\*</sup>NVAO = Dutch-Flemish Accreditation Organisation (Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie).

Table extracted from CEDEFOP Refernet (2010). Netherlands VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

The Dutch Association of VET Colleges - MBO Raad, which represents all government-funded colleges for secondary vocational education and training and adult education, is an important player in the field of TVET. It negotiates labour conditions for the sector with trade unions and signs collective labour agreements. MBO Raad is a significant contributor to the remodelling of vocational education to competence-based vocational education and training.

There are numerous providers of CTVET in the Netherlands including publicly funded ITVET suppliers and various private organisations. Therefore, there is no defined institutional framework for CTVET governance. Social partners play a big role by stimulating the provision of CTVET with the help of branch-specific Training and Development Funds (*Opleidings-en Ontwikkelingsfondsen*).

Knowledge centres for TVET Trade and Industry (*Kenniscentra Beroupsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven*, KBB's) play an important part in upper-secondary TVET since they act as intermediary bodies between sectorial labour markets and the educational sector. Their main goal is to interpret the needs of the labour market and adjust vocational qualifications accordingly.

<sup>\*\*</sup>NRTO (*Dutch Council for Training*) promotes the interests of private, non-subsidised VET providers that have been legally recognised by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to offer regulated VET courses at upper secondary and tertiary level.

## **Financing**

Financing of education is administered by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. Service Institute of Education (*Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs*, DUO) is an agency within the Ministry that plays a key role in administration and financing of ITVET.

Educational institutions have a great degree of autonomy in terms of managing funds coming from the government. Almost all schools qualify for state funding if they meet the quality standards and funding conditions imposed by law on the school system as a whole.

Each level in Dutch TVET has its own funding scheme.

Lower-secondary vocational schools are financed in block grants that are at a fixed amount per pupil plus a fixed amount per school. Schools are considerably free in deciding how to apply available financial resources.

Funding for upper-secondary vocational education and general adult education comes from different sources:

- Government funding in the form of block grants that are based on the number of students per course/learning path and also on the number of certificates issued per institution;
- Government funding for Knowledge Centres for TVET Trade and Industry;
- Government funding for general adult education that is allocated to municipalities
  based on the number of residents over the age of 18, the number of ethnic minorities
  and the number of adults with learning difficulties. TVET providers sign contracts with
  Municipal authorities for the provision of adult education courses; and
- Funding coming from the students paying course fees to educational institutions.

Companies offering learning places for the participants of apprenticeship or dual pathway programmes receive a tax facility for each place occupied.

Funding of educational activities at the higher professional education level comes from: government funds (based on the amount of participants enrolled and the number of diplomas issued); private funds (contract activities paid by the contractor, e.g. enterprises, individuals/employees); and tuition fees paid by students.

Financing of enterprise-based training for employees (CTVET) comes from the companies themselves; training and development funds, tax facilities and individual initiative. Training and Development Funds are financial arrangements for continuing training laid out in Collective Labour Agreements. The latter are made in each sector of industry and are signed after negotiations between employers and employees. The agreements normally last for 2 years.

#### Sources:

CEDEFOP Refernet (2010). Netherlands VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

## 4. TVET teachers and trainers

There are 3 types of teachers in Dutch TVET:

- Teachers in regulated, publicly financed ITVET;
- Trainers in enterprises participating in school-based and/or dual pathways in TVET programmes; and
- Teachers and Trainers in CTVET as a market and demand-driven part of TVET.

The training of teachers for vocational education is provided by higher professional education institutions and by universities. The training leads to a Bachelor's degree for teachers (grade 2\*) and contains both subject training and teaching methods training in general.

Becoming a teacher at secondary vocational education schools does not necessarily require a teacher qualification. It is up to the school to decide whether the candidate is competent enough to teach the subject in question. A candidate however may also be asked to make up for the shortfall and gain a certificate of competence in teaching, which normally requires two additional years of study.

Graduates with a Master's degree may pursue a postgraduate teacher training course with an average duration of 1 year and receive a grade 1 teaching qualification.

Secondary vocational schools train teaching staff themselves as part of a dual pathway within teacher training. This includes students on training and employment contracts, teaching assistants undergoing teacher training, and lateral entry staff with substantial work experience. (CEDEFOP, 2010)

The need and content of in-service training for teachers is jointly decided by secondary vocational education schools and their teaching staff. Schools have their own budget for inservice training and the school board is obliged to ensure that the staff maintain and develop their skills and knowledge.

Since CTVET is a demand-driven market dominated by private providers there is no generalised framework for the training of teachers/trainers in this segment.

Grade 2 qualification enables teachers to teach in the first 3 years of HAVO and VWO and all years of secondary vocational education (VMBO/MBO)/ Grade 1 qualifies teachers to teach at all levels of secondary education.

#### Sources:

CEDEFOP Refernet (2010). Netherlands VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (2009). Teacher training – basic and specialist teacher training – Netherlands. Accessed: 27 March 2012.

## 5. Qualifications and Qualifications Frameworks

## National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

The qualifications structure was redesigned in 2010 and now consists of 237 competence-based qualifications/diplomas.

The Dutch Qualifications Framework (NLQF) is a "systematic arrangement of all existing qualifications in the Netherlands. It includes both qualifications regulated by three Ministries (the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation, and the Ministry of Healthcare, Welfare and Sports) and other qualifications" (Karin van der Sanden, Wouter Smit and Marijke Dashorst, 2012). "Other qualifications" include those present at the labour market but not regulated by any of the afore-mentioned Ministries. The classification of these qualifications is conducted upon the request of the institution awarding them, which is normally a provider of the learning programme leading to the qualification in question.

NLQF is a transparent overview of Dutch qualifications that supports education and training institutions, social partners and employers and students by:

- "Enabling people of all ages and in different situations to identify their level of education and training in order to find an appropriate education and training programme where they can use their abilities efficiently;
- Enabling employers and individuals to understand the levels of existing national qualifications and international qualifications (through the EQF) and how they relate to each other;
- Showing how the different qualifications contribute to improving workers' skills in the labour market" (Karin van der Sanden, Wouter Smit and Marijke Dashorst, 2012).

#### However:

- NLQF does not provide a revision of the Dutch education system;
- NLQF is set up as a level indication tool for non-formal and informal qualifications, where the Dutch existing formal qualifications have been used as starting point to indicate the levels of the framework;
- NLQF does not regulate the right to enter and transfer to different education subsectors. This depends on a number of factors, such as the precise content of a qualification that NLQF is not in position to provide.

According to the Referencing Document of the Dutch National Qualification Framework to the European Qualification Framework issued on February 2012 "the NLQF levels are not referenced to an education sector. All NLQF levels are open to all qualifications of all education sectors. NLQF levels are not referenced to degrees or titles. This means, for example, that a qualification at Level 6 does not automatically belong to HE (Higher Education) and the achievement of this qualification does not give automatic entitlement to a Bachelor degree. The right to move within and between sectors is governed by existing laws and regulations. Achieving a qualification referenced to the NLQF does not mean automatic access to a qualification at the following higher level". (van der Sanden, Smit & Dashorst, 2012).

The table below shows how levels of NLQF fit into the Dutch education scheme. NLQF consists of 8 levels where the entry level is the least complex and level 8 is the most.

(For details on education system and TVET structure, including Dutch terminology and abbreviations, refer to Section 2: TVET formal, non-formal and informal systems)

| QF | NLQF                   | Volwassenenedu<br>catie         | Vmbo               | Mbo     | Havo/<br>Vwo | Но   | Overige<br>kwalificaties |
|----|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------|--------------|--|--------------------------|
|    | 8                      | I                               |                    |         |              | Doctoraat/<br>Ontwerper/<br>Medisch specialist |                          |
|    | 7                      |                                 |                    |         |              | Master   |                          |
|    | 6                      |                                 |                    |         |              | Bachelor                                       |                          |
|    | 5                      |                                 |                    |         |              | Associate<br>Degree                            |                          |
|    | 4+<br>4                | Vavo-Vwo<br>Vavo-Havo           |                    | MBO - 4 | Vwo<br>Havo  |  |                          |
|    | 3                      |                                 | 20                 | мво-з   |              | 16   |                          |
|    | 2                      | Vavo-vmbo tl<br>BasisEducatie 3 | Vmbo kb,<br>glenti | MBO-2   |              |  |                          |
|    | 1                      | BasisEducatie 2                 | Vmbo bb            | MBO-1   |              |  |                          |
|    | In<br>stroom<br>niveau | BasisEducatie 1                 |                    |         |              |  |                          |

Table extracted from Sander, K. van der, Wouter Smit and Marijke Dashorst (2012). The referencing document of The Dutch National Qualification Framework to the European Qualification Framework. Utrecht: NCP-NLQF.

#### Sources:

CEDEFOP Refernet (2010). Netherlands VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

Sander, K. van der, Wouter Smit and Marijke Dashorst (2012). The referencing document of The Dutch National Qualification Framework to the European Qualification Framework. Utrecht: NCP-NLQF.

# 6. Current reforms, major projects and challenges

## Current reforms and major projects

In order to improve TVET on all levels, study and career orientation and guidance has been integrated in the system. It consists of three main components:

• Study and career orientation and guidance that is embedded in the school curriculum and is a special task given to teachers who are then called counsellors/coaches. Apart from regular study programmes, students participate in visits to enterprises and are

involved in participatory learning. Private agencies such as Advice Centres for Training and Employment are involved in orientation and guidance processes upon request from schools;

- Orientation and guidance services provided for unemployed jobseekers. The latter are given an opportunity to consult specialised advisors at the Centres for Work and Income (Employment Services) that conduct individual competencies scans and provide information about work and training opportunities; and
- Orientation and guidance services for people in employment. Private consultancies specialising in guidance are the main providers of these services. An important task in this matter is the assessment of competences. Sectorial Training and Development Funds also offer career and training advices at regional level and for employees in their sector.

The Inter-departmental Project Unit for Learning and Working is in charge of setting up regional, learning/working desks that provide advice on careers, competencies and training opportunities for employed people and jobseekers. The Unit proved to be very efficient in the times of crisis. It focuses on providing assistance to youngsters without starting qualifications or unemployed people with no or low qualifications. The Units' working desks are accessible points of contact where jobseekers, employees and employers can obtain information and advice about training and be provided with career counselling and assistance.

## Challenges

Challenges facing Dutch TVET especially on secondary vocational education level are: high dropout rate; lack of motivation among participants; and the so-called transfer problem where only a small percentage of the theory taught to students can be applied in the work place.

#### Sources:

CEDEFOP Refernet (2010). Netherlands VET in Europe – Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

Meijers, F. (2008). Mentoring in Dutch vocational education: an unfulfilled promise. In *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 36(3). pp. 237–256.

### 7. Links to UNEVOC centres and TVET institutions

#### **UNEVOC Centres**

• Centre for the Innovation of Education and Training (CINOP)

#### **TVET Institutions**

- Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Food Quality
- Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
- Dutch Association of VET Colleges MBO Raad

# 8. References and further reading

### References

- CEDEFOP Refernet (2010). Netherlands VET in Europe Country Report. Thessaloniki: European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.
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## Further reading

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