



Press release

Statistics Netherlands

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One quarter of students drop out without diploma

University students take an average of six years to complete their studies. Students in the medical disciplines graduate fastest, law students are slowest. The number of graduates after five years at university is significantly higher than in the past. Women who graduated in 1993/'94 to 1997/'98 needed an average four months less than their male peers. One quarter of all students who start at university, drop out without a diploma of higher education.

Large differences per discipline

Students who graduated in 1997/'98 had taken an average five years and ten months to do so, that is one month longer than those who graduated in 1995/'96 and 1996/'97. There are large differences between the disciplines. Students taking medical subjects took five years and two months, while law students needed a whole year longer. Women are faster than men, women who graduated in the period 1993/'94 to 1997/'98 took four months less than men graduating in this period. In the humanities, this difference was even ten months.

Five-year graduation rate up substantially

Thirty per cent of students who started at university in 1991, 1992 and 1993 graduated within five years, a significantly higher proportion than that of students who started before 1991. This increase may be connected with the restriction in the number of years students can claim a basic grant: this was reduced from six to five years in 1991. It does not mean, however, that more students starting in 1991 or later ultimately graduate. Six years after starting, 46% of students who started university in 1991 had graduated. This is just slightly higher than in the years before. The results after seven years are around equal to those for students who started before 1991.

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Statistics Netherlands
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One quarter of students drop out

Three quarters of students who started university in 1988 received a certificate of higher education: two-thirds graduated from university, 7% from a vocational college. Nearly one quarter of students dropped out before graduating. For all the cohorts included in the survey, the drop-out rate was highest among first year students.

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