



# Press release

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## ***Dutch education figures 2010***

- One quarter of drop-outs return to school later
- Many returners in apprenticeship-based *mbo* tracks
- Strong rise in education spending as % of GDP during recession
- Language spoken at home affects primary school achievement
- surprising shifts in chosen subject clusters in *havo* and *vwo*
- Increasing number of higher educated women in particular

These are just a few of the main conclusions in the most recent edition of Statistics Netherlands' annual book of education facts and figures *Jaarboek onderwijs in cijfers 2010*. This book describes a number of important facts and developments in Dutch education.

### **One quarter of early school-leavers return to school later**

About a quarter of pupils who leave school without a diploma returned to school in later years; some of them will therefore attain a basic qualification as yet. School drop-out rates have fallen steadily in recent years. In 2008/'09, 43 thousand pupils and students younger than 23 years left education without having a basic qualification. Four years previously this number was still 55 thousand.

### **Apprenticeship *mbo* tracks popular among returners**

More than half of students entering the apprenticeship-based tracks (*bbi*) of senior secondary vocational education (*mbo*) in 2008/'09 came from outside education. Many of them had had a job in the previous year, a smaller number were on benefit. Two-thirds of these returners were 30 years or older. Most students in the school-based track (*bol*) of senior secondary vocational education had been in school in the preceding year.

### **Education spending in terms of % GDP up sharply in economic crisis**

Government, households, private companies and international organisations spent a total of nearly 38 billion euro on education in 2009. This is 6.6 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), the highest percentage since 1995. This percentage is the result of higher spending on education and a sharp drop in GDP as a result of the economic crisis.

### **Language spoken at home affects primary school achievements**

Pupils with a non-western foreign background who do not speak Dutch at home achieve much lower scores on the Cito test taken at the end of primary school to determine the appropriate level of secondary education than children

who do speak Dutch at home. The largest differences are in the language part of the test, but children who do not speak Dutch at home also do less well in the arithmetic/maths part of the test.

### **Shifts in subject clusters chosen in *havo* and *vwo***

In senior general secondary education (*havo*), the popularity of the 'culture and society' subject cluster has dropped sharply. Since the introduction of the new second stage, maths and economics are no longer compulsory subjects in this cluster. As one of these subjects is often required for entrance to higher professional education (*hbo*) more *havo* pupils choose the 'economics and society' cluster. More and more pupils in pre-university education (*vwo*) are choosing a combination of clusters. They often combine the clusters 'nature and technology' and 'nature and health'. More than 50 percent of *vwo* pupils are now choosing one of the two nature subject clusters.

### **More and more higher educated women**

A record number of students were enrolled in higher education in 2009/'10: 403 thousand in higher professional education (*hbo*) and 233 thousand in university. At the same time the share of *havo* and *vwo* pupils in secondary education also rose. The increased participation in higher education has pushed up the number of higher educated young people in the Netherlands. In 1999, 27 percent of 25-34 year-old women had a *hbo* or university degree. In 2009 this was 42 percent. For men in the same age group the share rose from 27 to 35 percent.