

# Dutch vocational education and training in a nutshell





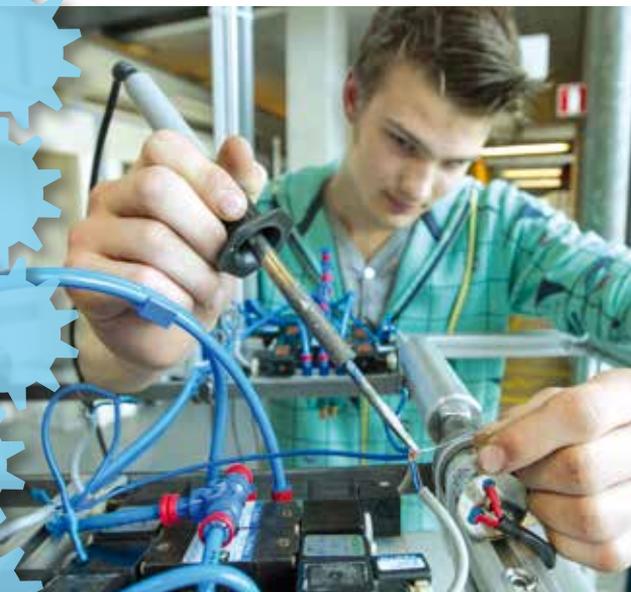
# Dutch vocational education and training (MBO)

*MBO (Middelbaar Beroeps Onderwijs) is the abbreviation for secondary Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the Netherlands.*

*VET is the main supplier to the labour market and is often regarded as the 'foundation of the economy' and the 'backbone of society'.*

*Approximately 40% of the Dutch working population has completed a vocational course to at least a secondary vocational training level.*





## MBO colleges

The MBO sector consists of 70 VET colleges comprising multidisciplinary VET colleges (ROCs in Dutch), agricultural VET colleges (AOCs in Dutch) and specialised vocational colleges. All VET colleges have a strong regional orientation and function. The ROCs offer VET in technology, economics, personal/social services, health care and adult education. The agricultural VET colleges offer pre-vocational secondary education and VET in the agricultural sector and in food technology. Specialised vocational colleges offer programmes for one branch of industry only, such as graphic arts and design, butchery, house painting, furniture making, the fishing industry and shipping and transport.



### Education level of the working population

☀ Primary education	379,000
⚙ Pre-vocational education and vocational education level 1	1.389,000
🌱 Vocational education level 2, 3 and 4	2.667,000
🔴 Senior general secondary education and pre-university education	647,000
🔵 Higher vocational education and university bachelor	1.700,000
🌿 University master and post graduate education	960,000
☀ Unknown	75,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,817,000</b>

Source: DUO, 2010-2011



The diagram shows in brief the structure of the Dutch education system. The MBO sector forms the linchpin in the vocational and higher professional learning pathway that runs from pre-vocational secondary education through VET on to higher professional education.

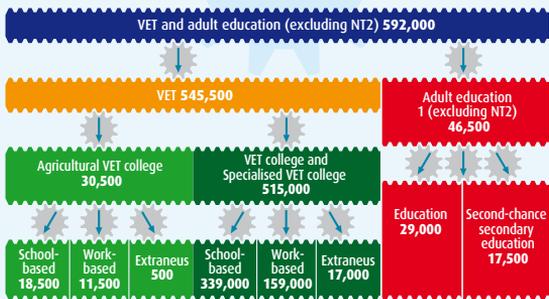
### Students per educational level

☀ VET	546,000
⚙ higher professional education	417,000
🌱 university	241,000

Source: DUO, 2010-2011



## Number of students in different learning routes and levels



Source: DUO, 2010-2011

## The Dutch education system

With the implementation of the WEB, the act on Vocational Education and Training, in 1996 the two existing learning pathways in VET (work-based or school-based) were put in the same qualification framework. The school-based option with full-time education is called the BOL system and the work-based pathway, offering a combination of work and study, is called BBL. Both learning pathways offer programs on four different levels, ranging from the entry level to the middle-management level with qualification profiles that are drawn up by branch commissions representing the employers and the world of education and training on equal terms. The number of students in the work-based learning pathway versus the school-based learning pathway slightly fluctuates according to the economic situation. In both the school-based and the work-based pathways and at every training level, all students have to spend part of their time on work experience

in order to obtain a diploma. This means that all students acquire competences in a work-based environment. The duration of the courses varies from six months to four years, depending on the level and other requirements of the course.

- level 1** entry level
- level 2** basic vocational training
- level 3** full professional training
- level 4** middle-management and specialist training

### Adult education

Adult education is accessible for adults from the age of 18 onwards and offers various programmes for their development. Adult education offers, for example, introductory courses for immigrants into the Netherlands, language and literacy courses at various levels and second-chance secondary education. It plays a major role in integration issues and contributes to social cohesion.

### Education and courses on contract basis

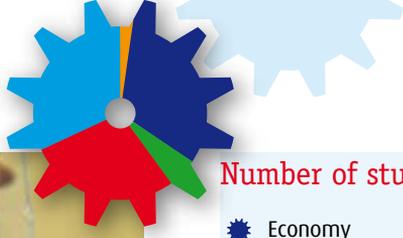
The colleges also offer education and courses on a contract basis, such as refresher courses and in-service training for employees and training programmes for the unemployed. This type of education provides for 'lifelong learning' opportunities.

## The Dutch system of education and training



Source: DUO, 2010-2011





## Number of students per VET sector

 Economy	174,900
 Health care, service and welfare	173,200
 Technique	153,500
 Agriculture	30,800
 Combination of sectors	13,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>546,000</b>

Source: DUO, 2010-2011



## Relation to the EQF

There is a generic classification of the MBO levels to the European Qualification Framework. Generally, the four VET levels correspond with the first four levels of the EQF. It is however possible to come to a different classification for a specific qualification, if there is clear evidence for another classification. In that case certain Dutch level 4 qualifications have the possibility to become referenced to the EQF 5 level.

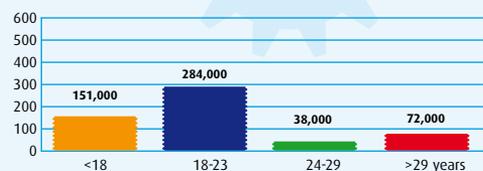
## Connection with the labour market

Among the Dutch educational sectors, the MBO sector maintains the closest relations with the labour market. Colleges have frequent contacts with companies and organisations where students work or obtain their work experience. Regional trade and industry communicate with the colleges about the quality and content of the courses on offer. These contacts between colleges and

companies are extremely important in ensuring a close match between the education that colleges offer and the skills that companies need. On the national level, the needs of trade and industry are brought in line with the education and training programs through the 'Foundation of Vocational Education and Labour Market' (SBB), where employers and education are equally represented. Together they advise the Minister of Education about subjects that concern education and trade such as the qualification structure and the requirements of the work experience periods.



## Average age of students in VET and adult education



Source: DUO, 2010-2011

## Internationalisation in the MBO sector

The globalisation of the labour market is developing rapidly. The international mobility of workers is increasing and Dutch society encompasses a great variety of nationalities and cultures. As a result, the international dimension in education has become increasingly important for the MBO sector.

The EU 2020 ambitions to make Europe smarter, greener and more sustainable with a strong social cohesion, gives the European VET sector a crucial role in achieving these targets. Vocational education is also an extremely important element in the drive to achieve excellence in the knowledge-based economy in Europe. The European and international labour markets demand highly-educated workers who are participating in lifelong learning in an European context. It is the mission of the MBO Raad to support and advise its members in achieving this goal.

## The Netherlands

Situated on the North Sea coast, the Netherlands shares borders with Germany and Belgium and forms a gateway to Europe. Due to its geographical position, trade and international orientation have been characteristics of the country for many centuries. This attitude is the foundation of our vocational system.



## MBO Raad

The 'MBO Raad' is the Netherlands Association of VET colleges. The association represents all government funded colleges for secondary vocational education and training and adult education in the Netherlands.

On behalf of its members, the MBO Raad promotes the collective interests of the sector, including educational innovations. The MBO Raad supports common activities of the colleges and acts as an employers' organisation. As such, the association negotiates labour conditions for the sector with the trade unions and signs collective labour agreements.

In order to advocate the interests of the VET sector on the European level and to promote international cooperation, the MBO Raad is a member of the European Providers of Vocational Education and Training (EUproVET) and the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE).

### Staff

Number of staff at VET colleges	54,706
Number of fte at VET colleges	44,611
Percentage of staff younger than 45 years	34,85%
Percentage of staff older than 45 years	65,15%
Number of staff younger than 45 years	19,066
Number of staff older than 45 years	35,640

Source: DUO, 2010-2011

### List of abbreviations

<b>AOC</b>	Agricultural VET college
<b>BBL</b>	Work-based learning pathway
<b>BOL</b>	School-based learning pathway
<b>HBO</b>	Higher professional education
<b>MBO</b>	Vocational education and training
<b>NT2</b>	Dutch as a second language
<b>PO</b>	Primary education
<b>ROC</b>	VET college
<b>VET</b>	Vocational education and training
<b>VO</b>	Secondary education (3 levels)
<b>WO</b>	University education

