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**AMSTERDAM INSTITUTE FOR  
ADVANCED LABOUR STUDIES**

**OVERCOMING MARGINALISATION? GENDER AND ETHNIC  
SEGREGATION IN THE DUTCH CONSTRUCTION, HEALTH, IT AND  
PRINTING INDUSTRIES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

It is common knowledge that indigenous men generally have a better position in the labour market than women and ethnic minorities. This study deals with the question why this is the case in certain sectors of the Dutch economy. The text discusses the labour market attainment for women and ethnic minorities in economic sectors where they are underrepresented. In each of the sectors construction, IT and printing we have evaluated five hypotheses regarding the opportunities of access into and promotion within labour markets for the particular occupations of carpenters, software engineers and printers. We have selected the health sector and the occupation of nurses, as a contrasting sector where women outnumber men in absolute terms. Our hypotheses deal with the following issues: education and training; wage-setting; recruitment and selection; social benefits and active labour market policies. The study arrives at a conclusion about the differences in the factors explaining gender and ethnic segregation.

The study is based on a literature overview, interviews with key informants and small case studies in 48 enterprises and organisations. This report includes the national overview for The Netherlands of the research project 'Overcoming marginalisation' that was funded under the fifth Framework by the European Commission. The research was executed simultaneously in Denmark, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK. The international comparison and our comparative working paper on good practice examples will be published separately.

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# I GENERAL INTRODUCTION TO THE NATIONAL REPORT

## I.1 INTRODUCTION

It is common knowledge that indigenous men generally have a better position in the labour market than women and ethnic minorities. Several separate studies have been conducted to the labour market position of women and ethnic minorities.<sup>1</sup> Less research has been done on sectoral differences: why are some sectors more less accessible for women and/or ethnic minorities than others? Also, the cross-section between gender and ethnic segregation is less researched, under what conditions are the factors for exclusion and integration for women and ethnic minorities different and why?

This research project aims at identifying structural and institutional mechanisms that are perceived by human resource managers to maintain certain groups of workers peripheral and marginalized to segregated labour markets and investigating the means for their integration. The study focuses on marginalisation regarding gender and ethnicity in segregated sectors in the EU both in industry and services. It analysis the barriers for women and members of ethnic minority groups to entry and participation, and the means by which these groups have been successfully integrated. In the study four sectors are compared: construction, the IT-sector, the health-care sector and the printing industry. Within each sector we focus on one occupation typical for that sector, i.e.: carpenters, software engineers, nurses and printers. In the overall research project a comparison is made between these sectors of activity in six European countries. These countries are Britain, Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain. This national report will focus on the Dutch findings. The general research question of the project reads as follows:

*“What are the barriers for women and ethnic minorities to gain access into or to climb the job ladder in segregated labour markets in the Netherlands, and what are the means for their integration?”*

Our study focuses on two processes: The first process under analysis is the entry into firms and organisations. As a general rule, younger people entering the labour market take part in education

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<sup>1</sup> The most authoritative comparative European studies on women are conducted by Rubery, Smith and Fagan (1999), for the Netherlands see Plantenga and Schippers (2000); Pott-Buter (1993) and Pott-Buter and Tijdens (1999) for an overview. Regarding ethnic minorities, in addition to the regular reports of the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau (1999, 2001, 2003), see especially Dagevos (1998).

and training before they search for a job. Adult people may enter the labour market after a period of inactivity. Entrants may get a permanent contract directly or indirectly, via training, apprentice schemes, or forms of autonomous work, like self-employment, subcontracting and flexible forms of 'first employment' contracts, such as temporary agency work. It is also possible that people work on a part-time basis, or are underemployed. Some persons will never make it to the standard job hierarchy, and are compelled to work in secondary labour market positions. The second process of study refers to progression from lower to higher status positions within the hierarchy of the job ladder.

We have identified five factors that are important for the labour market performance of women and ethnic minorities in segregated sectors: education and training, recruitment and selection, wage structures, social benefits systems, and active labour market policies. We have formulated hypothesis and have analysed in what way these factors have an impact on the chances of ethnic minorities and women in segregated sectors.

The outline of this introduction is as follows: In section 1.2 we define segregation and marginalisation. In 1.3 we discuss the reasons why labour market segregation is regarded as a problem and we present an overview of sectoral segregation in the Netherlands. In 1.4 we will sketch the research design in which we will shortly describe the five topics of research: the vocational education and training system, wage-setting, recruitment and selection, social benefits, and active labour market policies that all have a potential impact on the distribution of labour market positions of women and ethnic minorities. In 1.5 we will describe the labour market performance of women and ethnic minorities.

## **1.2 SEGREGATION AND MARGINALISATION: THE GENDER AND ETHNIC COMPONENT**

In this paper we distinguish between marginalisation and segregation. There are different definitions of *segregation*; one can crudely argue that labour market segregation in absolute terms refers to the process by which certain groups in a particular labour market are outnumbered by other groups. Any labour market where the number of men and women is not reflecting the over-all participation rates of men and women are then segregated by *gender*. The academic discussion on *ethnic* segregation is far less developed, since data are more difficult to gather and to interpret.



## Segregation by gender

There is abundant literature about measuring sex segregation and the use of indices for occupational segregation (see for a recent overview, Rubery, Smith and Fagan, 1999: chapter five). There is however not an exact theoretical definition of over-representation or under-representation in gender segregated markets. As a rule of thumb we might argue that under-representation occurs when within a certain labour market domain, the number of women is one quarter or one third below the national average. Over-representation occurs when the number of women is one quarter or one third above the national labour market participation for women. The position of women in labour markets is furthermore extendedly discussed in the literature. Rubery and Fagan (1994: 141) evaluated cross-national differences and stated that on the one hand there are 'strong and certainly more than superficial similarities in the position of women across countries', but also 'surprising variations in the experience of women between countries'.

In the literature about gender-segregated labour markets, different types of segregation are specified. Tijdens (1993) makes a distinction between segregation along industrial lines, segregation along occupational lines, and segregation along hierarchical lines.

- *Industrial segregation* refers to the phenomenon where in women are outnumbered by men in manufacturing industry, while the opposite holds true for the service sector (see also Martens 1997).
- *Occupational segregation* means the unequal distribution of women and men over occupations compared to women's share in the labour force. In industrialized countries, occupational categories such as nurses, shop assistant, secretaries, typists and clerks are predominantly female, whereas male workers dominate categories such as engineers, bricklayers, bookkeepers, and managers.
- *Hierarchical segregation* refers to the unequal distribution of women and men over job levels. Hierarchical levels have been categorized as skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled, though this concept is mainly restricted to manual workers. For white-collar workers, the hierarchy usually covers broad occupational groups and ranks comprise managerial workers, higher and lower professionals, clerks and salesmen.

## Segregation by ethnic minorities

Similar criteria might be distinguished for ethnic minorities, although there are less data available. One important study on both gender and racial inequality on the labour market is by Thomaskovic-

Devey (1993) on the basis of US-data. He argues that the mechanisms behind 'job segregation' (he does not compare occupations, but jobs) are virtually the same for ethnic minorities and women. Specific mechanisms for ethnic minorities could be: legal status (if one has a temporary residence permit one has more pressure to find a job and less time to find a matching one), non-recognition of qualifications obtained abroad can lead to greater availability for low paid work, et cetera. There are differences between the extent of gender and racial based segregation. He sees gender based segregation as more total: gendered job segregation appears from low to high level jobs, whereas ethnic segregation is not extensive among positions that require advanced educational credentials. Minorities with college degrees tend to end up in jobs with many indigenous co-workers, because of the simple fact that in most countries the percentage of minorities with a high educational level is relatively small. Women with college degrees, however, tend to end up in jobs with other women. Conversely, jobs that are typically held by minorities tend to be at the bottom in terms of job quality, whilst jobs held typically by women can range from high to low qualified jobs. So, in this sense gender-based segregation is more total, and ethnic inequality is more tied to class advantage and disadvantage. Another difference between gender-based segregation and ethnic based segregation is that in most European countries there is no such thing as ethnic occupational segregation in the sense that occupations are only or primarily undertaken by ethnic minorities, simply because the groups are too small. This means that we cannot speak about 'ethnic occupations' in the same sense as we can about 'male or female occupations'.

### **Marginalisation**

As Rubery et. al. (1997) point out segregation does not have to be regarded as in itself a problem, given, for example, the high degree of gender equality achieved in the Nordic countries for pay levels despite highly sex segregated Nordic labour markets. However, income equality may be considered only one dimension to labour inequality, and the maintenance of gender segregation still leaves open the possibility that gender inequalities could increase in the future through widening occupational differentials (Rubery et al., 1997: 432). This means that in order to analyse segregation and to determine whether it is a 'good' or a 'bad' thing we need to specify the dimensions of labour inequality first. In our research we will try to interpret the inequality from the uneven distribution of positions over the job ladder.

'Marginalisation' then refers to the process according to which persons are being excluded from or are achieving bad or inferior positions in labour markets. In most European countries, jobs that are only or primarily held by women or minorities tend to have lower task complexity, autonomy, supervisory authority, and opportunities for promotion than those of white males. For a given level

of educational requirements, on average, jobs held by indigenous males pay more, have more autonomy, more opportunities for promotion, et cetera. In this research we are interested to evaluate whether people at inferior positions in the labour market are invited to and are able to make progress on the job ladder. We will further develop this issue now for the Dutch case.

### **1.3 SEGREGATION IN THE DUTCH LABOUR MARKET**

#### **Women and industrial and occupational segregation**

Women and men often work in different branches of industry (sectoral segregation). More than 25 percent of female employees are employed in the sector health and welfare/social work. Besides that a great number of women work in trade sector, for example retail. Men are more often employed in manufacturing than women. Moreover, men and women hold on average different occupations (occupational segregation): some occupations are mainly performed by men, others mainly by women. Typical female occupations are (para) medical and nursing occupations. Both on low, middle and high occupational level, women are strongly represented in these occupational categories. Women work less often in technical and transport occupations. Since 1987, because of the increase of their labour market participation, the share of women in almost all occupations has risen. But the increase in the typical female occupations was bigger than in the male occupations.

The increased labour market participation of women has caused an increase of women in middle, higher and scientific occupations. In 1987 only 18 percent of persons in scientific professions were women. This had increased in 1994 to 24 percent and has further risen to 31 percent in 1999. In 1999, 20 percent of managers in higher and scientific occupations were women, against one in seven in 1994 and one in twelve in 1987.

Vertical segregation in the Netherlands (in 1999) is very low in the target occupational groups. The extent, to which women and men are divided over occupational levels, is almost proportional. Over the past decade the differences in the share of women per occupational level - vertical segregation - have gotten smaller, but at the same time the occupational segregation has risen (SCP, 2000).

Table I.1 Working population age 15-64 per gender and branch of industry 1994 and 2001 (in %).

	Women		Men		Share of women %	
	1994	2001	1994	2001	1994	2001
Agriculture and fishing industry	55	52	182	137	23	27
Mineral exploitation	.	.	9	0	.	.
Industry	186	226	817	833	19	21
Energy and waterworks companies	7	7	40	27	14	20
Construction	27	32	374	465	7	7
Trade	364	442	547	615	40	42
Hotel and catering industry	78	96	91	109	46	47
Transport and communication	83	112	304	339	22	25
Financial services	94	131	119	167	44	44
Business services	197	317	345	540	36	37
Public services	159	195	342	338	30	37
Education	188	241	1	204	49	54
			98			
Health and welfare/social care	571	783	185	210	76	79
Cultural and other services	117	161	110	141	52	53
Total <sup>a</sup> x 1000	2.172	2.684	3.747	4.121	37	39

. = data of sufficient accuracy are missing.

A Total includes persons employed in households and in international community organizations.

Source: CBS (Labour Force Survey), in: *Emancipatiemonitor 2002:82*.

Table I.2 Share of women in the working population age 15-64 per occupational group 1987-1999

	1987	1990	1995	2001
Highest share of women in occupation				
(para)medical- lower	84	86	87	90
(para)medical- middle	82	85	85	87
Nursing- higher	68	65	70	78
(para)medical- higher	69	76	77	77
Administrative, commercial, etc.- lower	71	75	74	73
Nursing- lower	79	75	79	73
Social- middle	52	51	60	72
Nursing middle	66	70	70	70

. = data of sufficient accuracy are missing.

Source: CBS (Labour Force Survey), in: *Emancipatiemonitor 2002:84*.

Hardly any studies have been executed on ethnic segregation. In the Netherlands no sectors are 'dominated by ethnic minorities' in the same sense as there are male or female dominated sectors. Ethnic minorities were up till the beginning of the 1990s, unlike women, over-represented in industry and under-represented in the service sectors. Recent studies show that there are

differences between ethnic groups in the division in sectors in the Netherlands (SCP 1999). Turks and Moroccans tend to work in industrial sectors, Surinamese and Antilleans in service sectors. It also seems that with ethnic minorities the hierarchical segregation is more important than the industrial segregation. Dagevos (1998), for example, finds that Turkish and Moroccan workers in the Netherlands are far more dependent on the secondary labour market than native Dutch with equal characteristics (equal educational level, comprehension of the Dutch language, et cetera). Surinamese and Antillean workers on the other hand have virtually the same chances as native Dutch to end up on the secondary labour market. According to him the differences between these groups have to be explained by differences in social networks, migration history, labour orientation. We have no accurate data on industrial or occupational segregation on the base of ethnicity.

### **Problems with segregation**

There are several reasons why labour market segregation can be regarded as a problem. Firstly segregation causes gender and ethnic pay gaps: On average women tend to earn less than their male counterparts, because generally the wages of typical 'female occupations' are lower than that of typical 'male occupations'. And up till recently typical female vocational education had worst labour market perspectives than 'male' vocational education. There is also an ethnic pay gap: Ethnic minorities earn less than indigenous workers. Zorlu (2001) shows that both gender and ethnicity play an important role in wage differentials, which results in a bigger pay gap between women from ethnic minority background and indigenous Dutch male workers, than between Dutch women and men or between ethnic minority men and indigenous Dutch males.

Secondly, segregation is a problem when it leads to unequal opportunities (Rubery et al. 1999). When individuals have no access and are literally excluded from certain positions, both in gaining access in certain sectors/occupations and reaching higher positions inequality results. Inequality might even result from statistical discrimination, i.e. the fact that employers are less inclined to hire and employ women and ethnic minorities, just because in statistics these groups show less value added as a consequence of their low labour market representation.

Thirdly, segregation can be harmful for employers: Not acknowledging the potentials of other groups of workers can drive up the price of labour in times of labour shortages, especially in times of economic growth (Van den Brekel et al, 1999).

Fourthly, if the workforce of a company is homogeneously composed it can hinder the enterprise to relate to a wide range of clientele (Lewis and Lewis, 1996).

Hence, labour market segregation can be very disadvantageous, not only for the groups involved at the supply side of the labour market, but also for organisations at the demand side. The main factors to gain from overcoming segregation for organisations are: maximising the available resources in the labour market; maximising employee potential within the organisation's work force; creating business opportunities and expanding the range of customers through the employment of people who have insight into new customers markets (Harris and Foster, 2003). However, despite all kinds of policy measures sectoral and occupational segregation still exists. In this report we want to examine how human resource managers perceive the under representation of women and ethnic minorities in their labour organisations and what bottlenecks these groups are facing when integrating in segregated labour markets.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH DESIGN**

In the study we try to explain labour market segregation in four sectors of activity. We have selected three 'male dominated sectors' with a high percentage of male workers and in which we expected an under representation of women and ethnic minorities, namely construction, IT and the printing industry. In contrast we have selected one control sector in which we expected an over representation of women and ethnic minorities, namely the health-care service. Within each sector we have focused on one occupation typical for that sector, i.e.: carpentry, software engineering, printing and nursing. According to the literature, segregation has to be studied by making use of the indices for segregation and dissimilarity. Given the fact that we have no complete sectoral data available for ethnic minorities both in the Netherlands and in the other countries, we are unable to calculate the index for ethnic segregation. The choice for the industries has been made on the basis of a comparison of segregation in the six countries under study. Health serves as a control sector. The focus on the occupations enables us to compare developments across countries especially since their qualifications levels are defined in all countries at secondary and tertiary level. In the following Table 1.3.a we summarize the labour market participation of women and ethnic minorities in construction, IT, printing and health industries. As expected, the representation of women is substantially lower than in the economy as a whole in construction, IT and printing and very high in health. The participation of ethnic minorities is also lower than in the national economy in construction and printing, but contrary to what we had been expected higher in IT and lower in health.

Table 1.3.a. Percentage of women and ethnic minorities per sector (s) and occupation (o) in the Netherlands

2000	Women	Ethnic minorities (non-western)
National economy	40-45%	8-9%
Construction sector- carpenters	S: 7% in entire industry O: 0.2% in manual labour force	S: 3.4% in entire industry O: 2% in manual labour force
IT- software engineers	S: 15% in entire industry O: <5% among software engineers	S: 5.5% in entire industry O: about 5%
Printing - printers	S: 22% in entire industry O: small percentage among printers	S: 5.1% in entire industry O: Less than 5% among printers
Health – nurses	S: 80% in entire sector (OSA), 66% (CBS) O: 84% among nurses	S: 4.2% in entire sector O: 3.3% in hospitals

Source: CBS-data for 2000, SBI-sectors: 45.5, 72.2, 85.1, 22.2 for the sectoral data, and sectoral statistics and fieldwork for the occupational data.

The data for women can be analysed in further detail, as we will do in chapters two, three, four and five in this report. We will then present data about qualification levels, working hours and contract type. Regrettably, this is impossible for ethnic minorities. For these groups, the statistical data available are rather incomplete, not only at sector level, but above all at occupational level. At the sector level we can only provide the distinction between different groups of ethnic minorities and their country of origin. We do not have data for different qualification levels. In the Table 1.3.b. below, we present the shares of indigenous employees, western ethnic minorities (the category for which one of the parents is born in the Western world), and non-western ethnic minorities. This latter category (that already was mentioned in the column at the right in Table 1.3.a. presented above) can be divided according to country of origin, i.e. Morocco, Turkey, Suriname, Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, and other non-Western countries of origin. The data are available only at three-digit level and refer to all qualification levels. The figure shows that the share of indigenous persons is the highest in construction (90%) and the lowest in IT (83%). And reverse, the share of western ethnic minorities is highest in IT (12%), and lowest in construction (6%). In both cases printing and health take a middle position. The share of non-western ethnic minorities already was provided in Table 1.3.a. It appears that the share of Surinamese persons is in all sectors slightly higher than of persons originating from other countries. The differences however are small, and in all cases these ethnic minority groups take minority positions.

Table I.3.b Share of indigenous, western ethnic and non-western ethnic employees as sector level (in 2000)

	Indigenous Dutch	WEM	NWEM		Morocco	Turkey	Suriname	Neth. Ant. + Aruba	Other non-western ethnic minorities
Printing	86.5%	8.5%	5.1%		0.8%	1.1%	1.5%	0.4%	1.2%
Construction	90.4%	6.2%	3.4%		0.6%	0.7%	0.8%	0.4%	0.9%
IT	82.8%	11.7%	5.5%		0.4%	0.4%	1.8%	0.7%	2.1%
Health	87.6%	8.2%	4.2%		0.5%	0.4%	1.8%	0.6%	0.9%

Source: CBS-data for 2000, SBI-sectors: 45.5, 72.2, 85.1, 22.2

WEM: Western ethnic minorities, NWEM: non-Western ethnic minorities

The information on ethnic minorities differentiated to country of origin can also be presented in terms of their relative share, which is the subject of Table I.3.c. In Table I.3.d. we also present the gender component, so the non-western ethnic minorities are divided in the shares for males and females according to country of origin. The Table I.3.d. makes clear that the construction, IT and printing sectors are male-dominated, also for non-western ethnic minorities. The health-sector is female dominated. In all sectors, the Surinamese is the largest group among the non-western ethnic minorities, except for IT, where the 'other' non-western ethnic minorities outnumber the other categories. When reading Table I.3.d., one should remember that the absolute number of non-western ethnic minorities in all cases is relatively small and that no differentiation has been made according to qualification.

Table I.3.c. Share of non-western ethnic employees at sector level to country of origin (in 2000)

	Morocco	Turkey	Suriname	Netherlands. Antilles + Aruba	Other non-western ethnic minorities
Printing	16%	22%	30%	7%	25%
Construction	17%	22%	25%	10%	26%
IT	8%	8%	33%	13%	38%
Health	12%	11%	42%	13%	22%

Source: CBS-data for 2000, SBI-sectors: 45.5, 72.2, 85.1, 22.2

All rows add to 100%.



Table I.3.d. Share of non-western ethnic employees at sector level to country of origin and gender (in 2000)

	Morocco		Turkey		Suriname		Netherlands Antilles + Aruba		Other non- western ethnic minorities	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Printing	14%	NA	19%	3%	24%	6%	6%	NA	18%	7%
Construction	17%	NA	21%	NA	24%	NA	10%	NA	25%	NA
IT	6%	2%	6%	1%	24%	9%	10%	4%	29%	9%
Health	4%	8%	3%	7%	11%	31%	3%	10%	9%	14%

Source: CBS-data for 2000, SBI-sectors: 45.5, 72.2, 85.1, 22.2

All rows add to 100%.

### From the sector to the occupational level

In the Netherlands, there are some datasets available for analysing the issues of entry into and promotion within the labour market, but detailed information for particular occupations regrettably is not available.<sup>2</sup> We have therefore applied a strategy in which we held in-depth interviews with organisations within the selected sectors about five key issues, which were vocational education and training, wage forms, recruitment and selection, social benefits and active labour market policies. About all these issues hypotheses have been drafted (see below). We have directed our research to the demand side of the labour market; in each sector we have interviewed personnel managers of at least ten enterprises and questioned them about the composition of their workforce, their recruitment and selection procedures, and their perceptions and preferences regarding the inflow of women and ethnic minorities. Besides human resource managers we additionally interviewed representatives of trade unions, employers' associations and vocational education institutes. The reasons to focus on the demand side and not on the supply side were that the supply side is already studied extensively, research on the demand side has occurred to a far lesser extent.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, at the demand side of the labour market recruitment, selection and promotion takes place. Via the demand side we have thus indirectly collected opinions and perceptions about the supply-side. In addition, we provide information about the supply-side of the labour market from available research, studies and statistics. Our study focuses on two processes, the entry into and the career progression of employees within the enterprise.

We have identified five factors that are important for the labour market performance of women and ethnic minorities: education and training, recruitment and selection, wage structures, social benefits systems, and active labour market policies. We have formulated hypotheses to analyse in what way

<sup>2</sup> See the working package 3 document on European statistics, produced in the 'Overcoming marginalisation project'.

<sup>3</sup> See the literature references in footnote one.

these factors have an impact on the opportunities of women and ethnic minorities in segregated sectors.

### **Hypothesis I on training and education**

There is no doubt that skills and qualifications are crucial production factors and -as human capital theory predicts- important variables for understanding labour market positions. Gender and ethnicity are relevant variables in the choice for school types and levels, and for performance. Traditionally, women make different choices than men (e.g. Pott-Buter and Tijdens, 1999). Women also face different risks than men when investing in training, since they may interrupt their careers when giving birth or raising children. During such interruption of careers, no investment will be made in their firm-specific or industrial skills. Moreover, they need social (welfare state) protection against losing their income during maternity periods, and protection against dismissal. These are all costs that need to be paid. This may cause women to suffer from under-investment in their qualifications more easily than men (see Estevez-Alba et al., 2001; Pott-Buter, 1993; Plantenga and Schippers, 2000).

For ethnic minorities different considerations are important. Ethnic minorities may have varying preferences and motivations when selecting school-types and levels. Different cultural backgrounds, language problems or the educational level of their parents may influence them. Another relevant argument is that the different school-types may be associated with different status (see Crul and Wolf, 2002).

In this hypothesis we compare the effects of education for labour market achievement of gender and ethnicity: 'Women and ethnic minorities, are more dependent on formal qualifications to prove their ability than men, but experience greater difficulty in acquiring the education and training necessary'. The hypothesis contains a double component in its wording: in the first part it stresses the importance of formal qualifications in the selection and comparison of employees by managers. The second part of the hypothesis puts attention to the fact that pupils in schools undergo a trajectory of education and training programs. They follow primary general education until the age of twelve, before they choose between a lower or medium vocational training program and a secondary general education school. In all these school institutions they may be successful and arrive at the final qualification, or they may not be successful and dropout.

## **Hypothesis 2: wage-setting and employment conditions**

The second hypothesis discusses wage-setting and employment conditions. The wage-setting for 84 percent of Dutch employees is taking place in collective bargaining. Of these 84 percent, about four-fifths is covered by an industry agreement, another fifth is covered by an agreement signed at enterprise level. Bargaining of agreements is a matter of open negotiations between (a number of) employers and employees associations. Collective agreements are deep in scope, many topics are being dealt with, apart from wages and labour hours also employment conditions, trade union rights and vocational training. Also several forms of social protection to cover sickness, holidays or pensions are included in collective agreements. Over the last number of years, collective agreements increasingly contain output- and performance related elements in addition to the task and time-elements of the past (Van der Meer and Smit, 2000; Huiskamp, 2003).

In the Netherlands, trade union membership is fairly moderate, at 25 percent in the market sector. Due to the high associability of employers and the procedure of general extension of collective agreements by the governance to enterprises that are not affiliated with an employers association, the coverage rate is extended at more than 80 percent in the market sector and 100 percent in the public sector. Employees in the smaller enterprises in the financial services and agriculture are covered to a far lesser extent. Of course, also the self-employed are not included by collective agreements, they negotiate economic contracts with their principals.

Hypothesis 2 is formulated as follows: *“The more the wage structure is graded and related to the potential (skills) of the workforce rather than craft-based and related to output, the more inclusive it becomes. The less the wage structure is graded and related to skills rather than craft based and related to output, the less inclusive it becomes.*

In the hypothesis a relationship is presumed between the structure of the wage-setting and the level of inclusion in the labour market. In the Netherlands, the graded system of collective bargaining is closely bound with the development of the system of regulated, formal training. Each grade in the wage hierarchy relates to a different level of skill (qualification). Through training, too, it is possible for those on lower grades to progress upwards or even horizontally. The differentials are, therefore, to all intents and purposes, skill differentials.

There is no evidence to what extent gender and ethnicity characteristics differentiate the outcomes in collective bargaining and the division of jobs in the labour market, apart from some information about the gender and ethnic wage gap (see the discussion of Kee and Zorlu below in this introduction chapter).

### **Hypothesis 3: recruitment and selection**

When filling vacancies, companies can use different forms of recruitment and selection procedures. At the entry into the labour process (process one in this research) and the promotion to higher positions (process two in this research), different forms of recruitment may be applied, varying types of contract can be selected and employers will perceive the costs of employment protection when contracting a new employee. We have drafted three hypotheses about these issues. The first hypothesis relates the formal nature of recruitment to networks of selection, the second hypothesis relates contract-types to selection, and the third hypothesis relates employment protection to selection. For all the hypotheses, we do not possess general information about the potential impact for gender and ethnic issues in the national economy.

In hypothesis 3a we presume that: *The more formalised the recruitment procedure, the higher the job access for women and ethnic minorities. The more informal the recruitment procedure, the more important social networks come into play as a powerful social force for exclusion, supporting gender bias in gender-segregated jobs, and ethnic-bias in ethnic segregated labour markets.*

The hypothesis suggests that in case of informal recruitment, personal networks are important for understanding recruitment and selection. In psychological research however, it appeared that selection instruments (interviews, intelligence test, assessments) are biased to the disadvantage of ethnic minorities (Abell, 1997; Van den Broek et al, 2001, Maessen en Abell 1997; 2001).

*Hypothesis 3b. The more different forms of temporary and flexible contracts are available, the more employers prefer to hire job-seekers with flexible contracts to hiring employees with permanent contracts. Under these conditions, new entrants into the labour market such as women and ethnic minorities will predominantly work in the flexible segments of the labour market and will face difficulties in getting the work experience and training that is needed for promotion. The suggestion in this hypothesis is that new entrants in the labour market will relatively often work under temporary contracts. In the*

Netherlands, women and ethnic minorities more often work under flexible, non-permanent contracts, as will be further illustrated below in this introduction.

*Hypothesis 3c. The more extended the formal employment protection is the more the difficult it becomes for new entrants into the labour market such as women and ethnic minority workers, because employers will avoid high fixed labour costs related to dismissal protection and indemnity payments. The less extended the formal employment protection is, the greater the chances for women and ethnic minorities.* This hypothesis is originating from comparative research, focusing at the topic of dismissal protection and last-in-first-out mechanisms and the effects for labour market participation and unemployment. Entry into a company might be hindered by strict regulation at the exit-side of the labour market, which makes entrepreneurs reluctant to hire new employees (Büchtemann and Walwei 1997: 653). Employment protection can negatively influence the opportunities of women and ethnic minorities in two respects. Firstly, if it is difficult to dismiss employees, this can influence the decision whether or not new employees will be hired and what kind of employment contract they will be offered (formal-informal/ regular-non regular). Secondly, if dismissals are on the basis of a last-in-first-out principle, this can harm the position of women and ethnic minorities in the sector/enterprise, because they are relatively newcomers on the labour market. There is no wide empirical support for this phenomenon in the Dutch empirical literature, though some authors give evidence (Delsen, 1995; Dagevos 1998).

#### **Hypothesis 4: social benefits**

The Dutch case is regularly classified as a conservative and corporatist type of welfare state. Contributions are based on pay-roll taxes and premiums of employees, and benefits levels are ample for both workers and their relatives (Esping Andersen, 1990). In the course of the 1990s, it appeared that the Dutch welfare state was innovated to a certain extent. Passive policies were substituted by more active welfare programs (Visser and Hemerijck, 1997; Muffels et al. 1999).

In recent studies, it also appeared that the relation between social benefits and employment opportunities is not so clear-cut, as recently appeared in the literature. First, studies fail to find a relation between social benefits and employment chances. Second, for a specific group (women) this relation can be found, but this goes in the opposite direction (in other words comprehensive benefits have a positive impact on employment chances, rather than a negative one) (see Gallie and Paugam (2000: 6). Systems that provide greater financial security will thus permit longer period of job search, increasing the chances of people finding work that suits them. Furthermore, countries

with active labour market policies are likely to ensure a better flow of information and thereby more effective matching of skills to types of work. Finally, institutional factors can play an important role with respect to women's employment chances, by reducing the problems of compatibility between domestic and work roles. These are likely to be particularly great when there are young children in the household (2000: 360).

In recent years, the socialist-liberal government coalition (1994-2001) has undertaken several initiatives to improve the labour market situation of women. In almost all policy fields, a gender mainstreaming approach has been applied. Tax regimes, pension schemes, education programs, et cetera, they all have been evaluated in the light of increasing female labour market participation. In addition, a particular Committee has been established with the task to study the daily order of activities for men and women in families and to issue recommendations for improvement (Commissie Dagindeling). Moreover, particular attention has been put to the development of the life course of men and women. In this vein, different laws have been proposed such as the Act for part-time work, the Act on Sunday work, the Working hours act, which are all discussed from the perspective of the interest of women.

We add, that not only the state can provide such social benefits, it might as well occur that social partners and individual enterprises agree on the supply of certain forms of social benefits that are offered at the company level. Such on-the-job benefits may include payments and company support for job search, maternity leave, parental leave, further training, indemnity payments in case of lay-offs or redundancies, and sabbatical leaves. All these forms of on-the-job benefits may improve the matching of demand and supply. This brings us to the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 4. Women and ethnic minorities covered by comprehensive social benefits provided by states, social partners or enterprises have more extended labour market opportunities than women and ethnic minorities without such benefit coverage: The more women and ethnic minorities are covered by comprehensive social benefits provided by states, social partners or enterprises, the more extended labour market opportunities they have. The less women and ethnic minorities are covered by such benefit coverage, the less extended labour market opportunities they have.*

### **Hypothesis 5: Active labour market policies**

Hypothesis 5. Employability policies will improve the labour market position of vulnerable groups relative to the position of incumbent workers, when these policies are supported by a substantial

number of enterprises and are being perceived as in the enlightened self-interest of the employers involved.

Active labour market policies form an integral part of an active welfare state. Esping Andersen (1999) has argued that the commitment to full employment varies in the different welfare models. It is central to the Scandinavian welfare state model due to the presence of an active labour market policy, which devotes rights to both men and women to have work but also obligations to find work. Such an institutional commitment is however lacking in the continental model where unemployed workers used to receive social benefits without obligations. In the continental model, it took countries decades to realise that passive benefit systems might erode welfare state systems in periods of economic decline and unemployment (Visser and Hemerijck, 1998).

In 1997 an 'European employment strategy' was launched, that is based on four basic pillars: employability, adaptability, entrepreneurship, and equal opportunities for men and women, which define the main lines of policy that have been further developed into 18 guidelines for concrete policy. All the 18 guidelines within the four pillars are to be incorporated in National action plans for employment, that are to be drafted by each Member State. At the European level, only monitoring and evaluation takes place.

In the evaluation of the implementation of the European employment strategy for the Netherlands, the above-mentioned side effects of Dutch labour market policies appeared. For example, when discussing the target groups of ethnic minorities, for which since 1987 policies have been developed, it appeared that their level of unemployment is three to four times higher than the level of indigenous work force. Several policy recipes have been probed. For job seekers in general and for ethnic minorities in general, new jobs should be created, tax incentives were introduced, and the number of new new people hired should be counted and registered. Then it appeared that the level of unemployment for the ethnic categories has sharply declined from 16% to 6%, but no one is able to explain whether this is due to favourable economic climate or to successful policy. Moreover, the relative share of unemployment among ethnic minorities is still three to four times higher than among ethnic minorities (Zijl et al. 2002).

In the subsequent chapters, we discuss the performance of women and ethnic minorities in construction, health, IT and printing industry. To conclude we give an overview of the factors obstructing the integration of women and ethnic minorities in segregated sectors. But before doing so, we will first give an overview of the performance of these groups in the overall Dutch labour market in the following sections.

## I.5 LABOUR MARKET POSITION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES AND WOMEN

### Labour market performance of ethnic minorities

From the beginning of the 1980s onwards, the number of long-term unemployed grew and unemployment in the Netherlands became a structural phenomenon. During the economic recession period from 1979 to 1983 the number of registered unemployed increased to 14% of the total working population. The unemployment among ethnic minorities, however, rose to 30% in 1985. After the 1979-1983 recession employment increased again, but the levels of unemployment among ethnic minorities remained relatively high. Since the beginning of the 1990s the unemployment rate of both indigenous workers and ethnic minorities dropped. The unemployment rate of the former decreased from 7% in 1991 to 4% in 1998 (Vermeulen & Penninx 2000: 13). The unemployment rate of ethnic minorities dropped from an average of 30% in 1991 (31% of the Turkish, 36% of the Moroccan, 26% of the Surinamese and 31% of the Dutch Antillean workers) to an average of 16% in 1998 (18% of the Turkish, 20% of the Moroccan, 10% of the Surinamese and 13% of the Dutch Antillean workers). Despite the fact that the unemployment rates dropped, unemployment among ethnic minorities still remained four times as high as among indigenous workers.

Table I.4. Unemployment per gender/ethnicity in %

Gender/ethnicity	1994	2001
Women	11	5
Indigenous	10	4
Western immigrants	15	6
Non-western immigrants/ethnic minorities	23	9
Turks	31	7
Moroccans	18	15
Surinamese	20	5
Antilleans	23	7
Men	7	2
Indigenous	5	2
Western immigrants	9	3
Non-western migrants/ethnic minorities	27	9
Turks	30	8
Moroccans	33	8
Surinamese	19	8
Antilleans	21	9

Source: CBS; *Emancipatiemonitor 2002:86*.

The labour market participation of ethnic minorities is lower than that of natives. In 1999 46% of ethnic minorities had a job for 12 hours a week or more, against 58% of the natives. Especially Turks



and Moroccans (both men and women) have a low participation rate. Ethnic minority men less often have a job than indigenous men; ethnic minority women less often have a job than indigenous women.

Surinamese, Antillean and Aruban women more often have a paid job than Turkish and Moroccan women. The participation of Surinamese women equals that of indigenous women. The participation of Turkish and Moroccan women is very low: only 20% has a paid job for 12 hours a week or more.

Table 1.5: Gross and net labour participation of persons ages 15-64, per gender, ethnicity

	Non-western				Non-natives	Indigenous	Total
	Turks	Moroc.	Surinam	Antill.			
<b>Gross participation</b>							
<b>Women</b>							
1995	27	21	52	47	51	50	49
1999	28	27	60	49	55	55	54
<b>Men</b>							
1995	59	59	70	69	74	78	76
1999	61	61	71	76	76	80	79
<b>Net participation</b>							
<b>Women</b>							
1995	17	14	44	33	44	45	44
1999	24	21	53	41	51	52	51
<b>Men</b>							
1995	43	41	56	56	67	74	72
1999	54	51	63	67	73	78	76

Source: CBS (Labour Force Survey 1995 and 1999)

Table 1.5 shows that in the past 4 years the labour market participation of both minority women and indigenous women increased. This is true for the gross- and the net-labour market participation. Especially the increase in participation of Moroccan women is remarkable (gross-participation: from 21 percent in 1995 to 27 percent in 1999; participation-participation: from 14 percent in 1995 to 21 percent in 1999).

### Labour market performance of women

The labour market participation of women shows a different pattern. The participation rate of women in the Netherlands has always been low compared to other Western European countries. In 1960 the participation rate of Dutch women was 25 percent against respectively 38 percent and 36 percent of British and French women. In 1991 the differences between these countries were diminished: 56 percent against respectively 65 percent and 57 percent of British and French women

(Van Eijl 1997: 327). However, the number of Dutch women with a small part-time job was very high: in 1991 25 percent of the women with a paid job worked less than 15 hours a week. Only 40 percent of women had full-time employment (Van Eijl 1997: 123).

In The Netherlands, especially men had paid jobs, whereas women (especially married women) were discouraged to work outside the household. The male breadwinner system was the dominant model. This partly explains why during the period of reconstruction after World War II foreign labour was recruited and why the Dutch government and social partners did not deploy the surplus of female workers.

The legal system was also in the disadvantage of women. Until 1956, for example, married women did not have full legal capacity, which made it impossible for them to do financial transactions independently. A women's choice whether or not to continue working after marriage were limited by law. In certain professions women were forced to resign in case they got married or became pregnant. It was not until 1957 that the obligatory resignation of married female civil servants was abolished. In the private sector, however, it stayed practice for years to fire women or to let them hand in their notice once they married. It was not until 1976 that the law to fire women because of marriage or pregnancy was prohibited.

The participation of women in The Netherlands was already gradually growing since the 1960s and 1970s, but in the 1980s and 1990s their participation increased rapidly. At the beginning of the 1980s 3 out of 10 women had a paid job. In 1999 more than 50 percent of all women between ages 15-64 were employed. The gross-labour market participation of women is 54 percent in 1999. The labour market participation of men has increased slightly in the same period to 79 percent in 1999. Table 1.6 shows that between 1990 and 1999 the labour market participation of women in all age categories has strongly increased. In the age category 45-54 the share of women with a paid job increased from 33 percent in 1990 to 50 percent in 1999. The increase of the labour market participation of men is much smaller in all age categories (SCP 2000).

Table 1.6: Gross-labour market participation and net- labour market participation of persons between age 15-64 per gender and age, 1990-1999 (in %).

Age	Net-labour market participation			
	Women		Men	
	1990	2001	1990	2001
15-24	41	43	43	47
25-34	53	72	88	91
35-44	43	64	90	93
45-54	33	55	82	89
55-64	11	20	42	48
Total	39	53	71	77

*Net-labour market participation: the share of the employed working population in the total population age 15-64.*

*Source: CBS Labour Force Survey, Emancipatiemonitor 2002: 73*

## 1.6 TYPES OF CONTRACTS: FLEXIBLE AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

The flexibility of the labour market has increased during the 1990s. The number of flex workers has sharply increased since 1992. In that year 400.000 people had a flex contract. In 1999 this number had risen to 571.000 people. This declined in the top of the economic boom in 2000 and 2001. However, in spite of the increased flexibility most people (almost nine out of ten) have a regular/permanent job.

The number of workers with a flex contract increased, especially among young people. In 1998 young employees more often had a flexible contract than in 1994. This is true for both ethnic minority and native youth, although the number of ethnic minority youth with a flex contract is almost twice as high as the indigenous youth flex workers. At the end of the 1990s, almost half of the ethnic minority youth has a flex job.

Research shows that ethnic minority workers more often have flex jobs than indigenous workers, even if one differentiates for age, gender and educational level (3 to 4 times as often). It shows that ethnic minorities with the same characteristics as natives more often end up in flex jobs, and that the chances for minorities to end up in a flex job have increased during the 1990s: in 1998 more minorities worked in flex jobs than in 1994 (Emancipatiemonitor 2000, Zorlu 2001).

Zorlu (2001) finds that women and men from all ethnic origins are employed in part-time jobs more frequently than indigenous workers. The Caribbean women form an exception, since they are more often employed in full-time jobs. He also looks at the relationship between part-time and flexible work and occupational level. He finds that the share of native Dutch men in part-time jobs clearly decreases when the occupational level increases. For Eastern European, Turkish and Caribbean men, however, the share in part-time employment remains fairly substantial, even if the occupational level increases. For native Dutch workers (both men and women) flexible employment is mostly

concentrated in the lower end of the labour market. The percentage of native Dutch men and women who are employed in flexible jobs decreases as the occupational level becomes higher. But, for example, Turkish and Moroccan women with a university degree are more frequently employed in flexible jobs.

So, the economic growth has led to an increase labour participation of ethnic minorities during the 1990s. But, at the same time the structure of the labour market changed. The increase in employment went along side with the increase in flex jobs. Ethnic minorities do a great number of these jobs. During the 1990s, ethnic minority newcomers on the labour market (school-leavers, house wives) and job seekers have been able to find jobs, but these were mostly part-time jobs. In this respect the dividing line has changed: during recessions for ethnic minorities the dividing line lies between employment and unemployment, during economic growth this line lies between regular and non-regular (part-time or flexible) work.

Twice as much women than men have a flex job. The share of women in flex work has decreased since the beginning of the 1990s: it dropped from 59 percent in 1992 to 55 percent in 1999.

Women work more often in part-time jobs than men. Most men have a full time job (88 percent), whereas the share of women with a full time contract is 37 percent.

Table 1.7. Working hours per gender in % (2001)

	12-19 hours	20-34 hours	35 or more
Women	18	45	37
Men	2	10	88

Source: CBS; *Emancipatiemonitor 2002:79*.

## 1.7 WAGE DIFFERENTIALS

A number of studies have been done on the wage gap between male and female workers in the Netherlands.<sup>4</sup> Recent research shows that the difference between wages of Dutch men and women is 23 percent in the market sector and 15 percent in the public sector. Correcting for observed differences, like education, experience, tenure, age and function type, between men and women leaves a difference of 7 percent and 4 percent respectively (Arbeidsinspectie 2000). Most of this difference is not due to discrimination, because not all possible variables have been included in the regression analyses. This applies mostly to the inclusion of detailed industry and occupational dummies, but also to the inclusion of a variable 're-entrant'. Another research shows that occupational segregation, measured by five aspects, is the main cause of the pay gap between men

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<sup>4</sup> See for instance Bakker et al. (1999), Groot & Maassen van den Brink (1993), Stichting van de Arbeid (2000) , Mertens, E.H.M. (1998).

and women.<sup>5</sup> First of all women work in other occupations than men and these occupations are lower paid. Within occupation there are hardly any pay gaps. Secondly women work at lower functional levels, which causes them to earn less. Thirdly men more often have managerial positions and if women do so, the profit to a lesser extent from it. Fourthly the number of hours worked was checked, but did not appear to influence the hourly wage of men nor of women. Fifthly factors like education level, education strand and age influence the pay gap. Career breaks negatively influence women's financial position but not that of men.

Little research is done on the pay gap between ethnic minorities and indigenous workers. Two important studies in this field are Kee (1995) and Zorlu (2001). Kee (1995) finds wage differentials between these groups. He reports that discrimination is present between Antillean and Turkish men: the mean offered wage level of Antillean and Turkish men is respectively 10.95 and 6.29 percentage point lower than that of Dutch men due to discrimination. Zorlu (2001) shows that both gender and ethnicity play an important role in wage differentials, which results in a bigger pay gap between women from ethnic minority background and indigenous Dutch male workers, than between Dutch women and men or between ethnic minority and indigenous Dutch males. He too argues that a large part of the pay gap between Dutch women and men is explained by differences in the characteristics and to a minor extent by discrimination. The wage gap between Dutch women and Caribbean/Indonesian women, however, can for a large part be explained by wage discrimination.

## **1.8. LABOUR MARKET POLICIES REGARDING ETHNIC MINORITIES AND WOMEN**

We have seen above that in the corporatist kind of welfare state in the Netherlands, men have always been the breadwinners who gained an income for their families. The social benefit structure that has been created after the Second World War was organized along such principles. The male worker who was ill, unemployed or disabled should be compensated for that risk. The welfare state was financed via premiums and pay-roll taxes by employers and employees, but had a purely passive nature: inactive persons with a work history were granted a social benefit without obligations to find a job. It was the Swedish sociologist Göran Therborn, who in 1986 in his book 'why are some people more unemployed than other', remarked that the Netherlands lacked an institutional commitment to an active labour market policy. He remarked that there were no resources and authority involved in order to improve the labour market situation for vulnerable groups. This was especially true for women and ethnic minorities, though since several improvements have been initiated.

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<sup>5</sup> Bakker et al. (1999)

## Ethnic minorities

From the beginning of the 1980s the Dutch government started to formulate ethnic minority policies in order to integrate immigrants in Dutch society and to improve their social (and cultural) position. The policies aimed at improving the educational level, the labour market position, and housing. It appeared to be difficult to fulfil the objectives of these integration policies, especially on the labour market. In 1986 the Advisory Comity for Research on Ethnic Minorities (Adviescommissie Onderzoek Minderheden – ACOM) advised the government to formulate affirmative action policies, like the ones already implemented in the U.S.A. and the U.K. The government did not adopt these recommendations of the ACOM. Although the Social Economic Council (SER) in 1987 suggested a number of measures for improving the social position of ethnic minorities through education and joint actions from both employers' organizations and trade unions, it categorically rejected all forms of compelled affirmative action. The government itself – as an employer – decided to employ more ethnic minorities via affirmative action measures, because the share of the minority employees in the governments' own work force was also very low.

In May 1986 the government and the social partners agreed to reduce the overall number of unemployed beneath 500.000 persons in 1990. Between 1988 and 1993 the number of collective agreements regarding training and employment increased. In 1989, The Dutch Scientific Council to the Government (WRR, 1989) launched its report *Allochtonenbeleid (Policies for ethnic minorities)* with a blueprint for policy. In 1990, after the release of the report *Een werkend perspectief (A working perspective)* of the same council (WRR, 1990), the government made the increase in the labour market participation rate one of the main objective of socio-economic policies.

With regard to ethnic minorities this resulted in a number of policies and laws both from the side of the government and from the social partners. In 1990 the social partners made an agreement in the Stichting van de Arbeid (Foundation of Labour) to improve the labour market position of ethnic minorities. This led to an increase in the number of collective bargaining agreements on behalf of these groups of workers, and in 1996 another agreement was made with the same objective. These agreements failed to reduce the number of long-term unemployed, especially among low skilled workers. The aim of that agreement – proportional representation of ethnic minorities on the labour market – was never reached.

In 1993 the Employment Equity Act Ethnic Minorities (Wet Bevordering Evenredigheid Allochtonen - WBEAA)<sup>6</sup> came to existence. This act stipulated that companies with over 35 employees had to report on the ethnic composition of their work force and on the actions they had undertaken to

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<sup>6</sup> In 1998 this act was altered in the *Wet Samen*, which had practically the same objectives as the WBEAA. In 2004, the *Wet Samen* was abolished.

employ more ethnic minority workers. However, there were no sanctions if employers did not take any actions (or not sufficiently) to recruit ethnic minorities.

In April 2000 the government, the Dutch Association of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises and the Employment Service signed an agreement to place 20,000 people from ethnic minority groups in the SME-sector before May 2001 (the so called MKB agreement). In June 2000 the government presented an action plan to the Parliament, announcing a large number of measures to further improve the position of ethnic minorities in the labour market. The measures are designed to ensure that implementing bodies execute the present policy more effectively and to step up the specific efforts made for minorities. There are quantified agreements with at least 100 large companies regarding the recruitment and mobility of minorities in those companies and the interculturalisation of their personnel policy. An agency has been set up to 'Smooth the Way for Minorities', to help employers in implementing policy on minorities. An Integration Task Force monitors the implementation of the Newcomers Integration Act (Zijl et. al. 2002).

## **Women**

With regard to women, the policies of the Dutch government and social partners focused on stimulating labour market participation and equal opportunities. During the 1980s, the Dutch government did make an attempt via commercial adds to stimulate female youth to choose more exact classes in school, which ultimately was supposed to lead to an increase of women in male dominated occupations (the campaign was called: *kies exact!*). In 1990, within the Stichting van de Arbeid (Foundation of Labour) the agreement *Vrouw en Arbeid (Women and work)* was concluded, which led to a number of collective bargaining agreements on affirmative action for women, combating sexual harassment, and improving ways to combine work and family responsibilities.

Equal treatments and equal opportunities for women and men had already since the 1960s and 1970s been major issues in the Netherlands, resulting in the Act on Equal Pay in 1975 and the Equal Treatment Act in 1980, which stipulated that the unit of comparison between a man and a woman performing the same work is the firm in which they work and that labour should be valued according to a sound system of function valuation. Since the beginning of the 1990s however Dutch policy regarding equal opportunities has been focusing on the possibility to combine work and family responsibilities. This means that child-care, leave schemes and working time regulation are central issues. This resulted for example in the introduction of the Working Time Act in 1996, which stipulated that employers had to take personal circumstances of employees in consideration in working time agreements (Zijl et. al. 2002). In 2001 the Labour and Care Act has been introduced which aims to integrate all policies regarding the improvement of the position of women in the labour market. At the same time, a debate has been developed regarding the life-course of women

and the division of labour between the household and the formal labour market (SER, 2003; Van der Meer and Leijnse 2003). This debate is still in general discussion.



## **2 THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION: THE DUTCH CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY**

#### **The industry**

The labour market and the product market in the construction industry in the Netherlands are highly regulated (Van der Meer, 1998; 2003). The industry consists of different branches of activity with their own forms of regulation. More than 20 sectoral collective agreements are being applied. In this chapter the focus is at the collective agreement for construction workers. The government declares the collective agreement generally extended to all enterprises that are no member of an employers' association. The coverage rate is therefore 100% among wage earners. The collective agreement therefore also covers employees working in enterprises that are not associated with an employers' association. Trade union density is 40%. The employers' and trade associations on the one hand, and the trade unions organisations on the other hand influence government regulation, to an extent that regulation in the construction industry often anticipates national policy programs. Collective agreements include many more issues than just function classification, wage tables and working hours. Also many social issues are being addressed, such as personnel policy, trade union rights, labour conditions, health and safety. Enterprises are organised in local associations that are affiliated with national cupola organisations. The density of these networks is high.

#### **The labour market**

In the building and construction segments of the entire construction industry in the Netherlands, 200,000 persons are employed. Construction work has fame to be labour-intensive. In the Netherlands, the introduction of new technologies has increased labour productivity. Unskilled work has largely disappeared, in recruitment procedures enterprises ask for skilled workers. Communicative capabilities and craftsmanship are perceived to be crucial. The average age of the work force is about 38,5 years, and the work force is ageing. In the period 1995-2002, craftsmen were in demand, after 2002 the economic activity in the industry went down, though given the ageing of the working force there is still demand for qualified crafts persons. Younger people enter the sector, but also leave after a short working period. Tenure of construction workers is longer than one would expect given the flexible nature of the labour process in the industry. Some people work on a temporary basis, others have long work records in one enterprise.

The construction industry in the Netherlands is dominated by small and medium sized enterprises. In 1995 there were almost 19,000 enterprises. 85% of all enterprises have less than 20 employees, though the enterprises with more than 50 employees have 40% of the labour force on the pay role. Almost 12,000 of the enterprises in the industry were active in building and construction, 2,500 companies were busy in civil engineering, whereas 3,500 execute painters work (see figure 2.1). In this research we focus on building and construction firms. Building and construction firms may work as main contractor, as subcontractor, or as both (all data from EIB).

Table 2.1 Number of construction firms related to size and sub sector (1995)

Size	Main contractor in building and construction	Subcontractor in building and construction	Civil engineering	Painters	Other	Total
<20	5269	4578	2021	3116	1121	16135
20-50	726	350	331	286	99	1792
>50	442	103	178	57	34	814
Sum	6464	5031	2530	3459	1257	18741

Source: EIB.

The requirements for the staff are substantial and firms do not want to hire less than qualified labour in their internal labour market. Enterprises work with an inner cycle of employees. Enterprises respond to fluctuations in demand by hiring employees from other firms for a number of days (collegial hiring) or by making use of self-employed persons. The number of ethnic migrants (2%) and women (9%) in the sector is very low by comparative Dutch standards. These figures will be explained in this chapter.

### Women in construction

The number of women in construction is fairly restricted. Women are above all mostly not working on the work floor; they do fulfil administrative jobs. In 2001 there were 17,984 women employed in the industry, among which 16,456 in administrative functions, 1,068 in technical and supervision positions, and 460 crafts persons. Women form 9% of the active working population in construction, but only 0.2% of the crafts persons. These numbers are slightly rising over the years. Among the crafts persons, the largest group of women is working as carpenter. There are no data on the tenure by sex, neither do we possess information about women who have made a successful career in the industry, though information of the services center Bouwradius makes clear that some of the women work in the industry for a longer period of time. Below we provide the figures with numbers of employed women.

Table 2.2 The distribution of women in the construction sector

	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
	Number					
1. Technical/supervision Construction Collective Agreement	275	336	364	381	373	329
2. Technical frame						
3. Administrative, care, service, other	12,143	13,239	13,566	13,736	13,393	13,472
Total	12,418	13,575	13,930	14,117	13,766	13,801

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
	Number						
1.	425	394	427	423	393	401	460
2.	501	545	654	759	947	1,077	1,068
3.	13,994	14,949	14,895	15,605	16,444	17,350	16,456
Total	14,920	15,888	15,976	16,787	17,784	22,428	17,984

Table 2.3 The distribution of women in the technical/supervision construction collective agreement

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
	Number						
Carpenter	187	150	149	151	154	153	151
Bricklayer	6	7	4	2	4	5	5
Tiler	9	9	5	6	6	8	8
Joiner, concreter, concrete interweaving	10	6	6	4	10	4	6
Other	213	222	263	260	219	231	290
Total	425	394	427	423	393	401	460

Table 2.4 Share of women in Construction

	Total number of employees in construction	Number of women in construction	Share
1997	198,710	15,341	7,6
1998	195,000	16,789	8,6
1999	200,000	17,815	8,9
2000	197,000	18,828	9,5

Source all data: EIB, published by Bouwradius

## **Ethnic minorities**

In construction few ethnic minorities are employed. In the last ten years the share of ethnic minorities has not progressed in spite of the increase of ethnic minorities in the labour force and the attempts to get ethnic minorities to work in construction.

In the autumn survey for 2001, the Economic Institute for the Construction industry (EIB) asked main contractors in construction about the presence of ethnic minorities. Since the EIB also conducted similar research in 1993 and 1996, we can compare the results, which however only refer to main contractors in civil and utility construction. According to the survey conducted in the autumn of 2001, 15 percent of the main contractors in civil and utility construction were employing ethnic minorities. This is an increase compared to 1996, when 13 percent of the main contractors were employing ethnic minorities, and to 1993, when this was only 9 percent.

In the autumn of 2001, 1.1 percent of the people employed by main contractors in civil and utility construction were ethnic minorities. It's obvious that this is far less than the share of ethnic minorities in the total labour force, which is almost 9 percent. Ethnic minorities are thus strongly underrepresented in construction. Moreover, the progression that can be seen in the percentage of ethnic minorities in the labour force is completely lacking in construction. In 1993 the EIB estimated the share of ethnic minorities in construction at 1.3 percent. In 1996 this was still 1.3 percent. In the national labour force the percentage of ethnic minorities progressed from 8 percent in 1993 to 8.8 percent in 1998. Construction is closer to a decline in the percentage of ethnic minorities than to a progression (EIB, 1993; 2001).

In Table 2.5c the share of different groups of ethnic minorities is clarified. Employees with a Turkish background take in the biggest share, followed by the Moroccans, whereas Antilleans and Arubans are the smallest group. The remaining category consists of employees from different countries, either in or outside Europe. In all cases the size of these subcategories is very small. When we compare these numbers with the composition of the national labour force, construction has a slightly different population of ethnic minorities. In the national labour force the largest group is formed by the Surinamese, followed by people from Turkey and Morocco. In construction the Surinamese are only the third biggest group. The composition of the ethnic minority population in construction is relatively stable. Table 2.5c shows that this composition hasn't really changed over the past ten years.

In the autumn of 2001, 4 percent of the main contractors employed more ethnic minorities than the year before. Some of these main contractors didn't employ ethnic minorities at all the year before. In the autumn of 2001 also 4 percent of the main contractors employed less ethnic minorities than the year before, but a notable part of these companies still employ ethnic minorities. On balance the number of main contractors employing ethnic minorities has grown.

In 1993 and 1996 a calculation was made of the number of ethnic minorities per company. Table 2.5 shows that it's mainly in the main contractor companies that the number of ethnic minorities declined. In 1993 an average of 5.0 ethnic minorities worked for a main contractor. In 1996 this was 3.3 and in 2001 this number had declined to 3.0. At the small- and medium sized companies the number of ethnic minorities remained stable, but on balance the decline in the number of ethnic minorities in the main contractor companies led to a decline in the total number of ethnic minorities that work in construction. As can be seen in the last row of table 2.5.d., the average number of ethnic minorities per company has been declining over the last nine years.

The share of ethnic minorities in construction is thus notably lower than in the total labour force. Especially Surinamese are underrepresented in construction. Contrary to the national trend the share of ethnic minorities in construction is not progressing, despite the fact that the number of construction companies that employ one or more ethnic minority workers has progressed. Especially in the main contractor companies the number of ethnic minorities has declined. The question is why construction is so different in this area than other sectors. Below we will provide answers to these questions.

Table 2.5a. Percentage of main contractors that employ ethnic minorities

Year	1993	1996	2001
Size			
< 20 employees	5	8	7
21-50 employees	15	22	29
> 50 employees	45	55	62
Total	9	13	15

Source: Beereboom, EIB

Table 2.5.b. Percentage of ethnic minorities in staff

Year	1993	1996	2001
Size			
< 20 employees	0.8	0.9	0.9
21-50 employees	1.3	1.0	1.3
> 50 employees	1.3	1.6	1.2
Total	1.3	1.3	1.1

Source: Beereboom, EIB

Table 2.5.c. Number of ethnic minorities in construction and utilities according to background

Year	1993	1996	2001
Origin			
Turkish	445	545	446
Moroccan	289	246	382
Surinamese	220	150	225
Antillean/Aruban	88	139	156
Remaining category	342	301	321
Total	1,386	1,381	1,531

Source: Beereboom, EIB

Table 2.5.d. Average number of ethnic minorities in C&U.

Year	1993	1996	2001
Size			
< 20 employees	0.9	1.1	1.1
21-50 employees	1.7	1.4	1.6
> 50 employees	5.0	3.3	3.0
Total	2.3	2.1	1.9

Source: Beereboom, EIB

## Fieldwork

This chapter aims to make clear why the number of women and ethnic minorities in construction is so restricted. The main focus is on the occupation of carpenters. In the fieldwork period, secondary literature material has been collected and several interviews have been kept with representatives of the trade unions, employers' associations, and training institutions in the industry. In addition several good practice cases have been selected. Also nine enterprises covering both main and subcontracting companies have been interviewed. The participating enterprises rank from departments of multinational companies to local companies. Also two temporary work agencies have been interviewed. Two of the participating companies are ethnic companies; one is a small Turkish contractor with several employees, the other is a Moroccan employment agency that allocates employees for cleaning and demolishing work. The participating companies form a good

shortcut of the construction enterprises in the industry. They all are working in utilities and construction, and they all employ carpenters. A snowball technique has been applied in order to include also companies with ethnic employees in the file. An interesting characteristic is the fact that ethnic entrepreneurship in construction is almost non-existent. In the interviews only a handful of companies under ethnic leadership were mentioned. Several ethnic minorities have argued themselves that directing a construction company is a too complicated task for most ethnic minorities (see further below).

In Table 2.6, an overview is provided of the enterprises that have been visited. The provided numbers provide an indication of the prominence of women and ethnic minorities in the several companies. In some cases, the number of staff persons varies per day (above all in temporary work agencies, but also according to portfolio and seasonal conditions), in other cases the staff is permanent. The figures also show that main contractors have in general on average about one craftsperson to one supervisor/ administrative and technical employee on the pay role. This share varies per company. As a general rule main constructors predominantly hire carpenters, whereas bricklaying work is contracted out to subcontractors.

Table 2.6 Fieldwork in construction

Kind of firm	Size of department	Number of crafts persons in construction activities	Number of carpenters among crafts persons	Number of women among carpenters	Number of ethnic minorities among carpenters
C1. Multinational company, regional department, main contractor	360	210	200	0	15 (13 skilled carpenters, two cement workers)
C2. Multinational company, main contractor, regional department	70	35	35	0	0
C3. Local company, internationally owned, main contractor	120	80	70	1	10
C4. Regional company, family owned, main contractor	70	30	22	0	4 skilled carpenters
C5. Regional company, family owned	220	140	120	1	10 (lower skilled)
C6. Regional company, family owned, placement of employees	70	60	60	0	4
C7. Local company, Turkish owned, main and subcontracting	5	4	2	0	4
C8. Temporary work agency in construction	Around 150	75 crafts persons, 75 unskilled	75	1-2% (crafts persons)	50%(unskilled), 1-2% crafts persons
C9. Temporary work agency for cleaning and demolishing work, Moroccan owned	30-40 (winter), 70-80 (summer)	0	0	0	100%
C.10 Sectoral training institution	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not relevant
C.11 Center for foreign workers	40-50	12	12	0	12
C.12 Temporary work agency	varies	50%	100%	0	0

The research in the construction sector has taken place at a moment of scarcity in the labour market, after the economic boom was just over the top. We add that at the period of fieldwork period, a parliamentary inquiry took place regarding the cartelisation of construction enterprises at public tenders.<sup>7</sup> It appeared that contractors set prices via a system of information exchange before the tender concludes. This is forbidden under European law. Due to the extended negative publicity, the already low image of the industry was further damaged.

<sup>7</sup> Report 'Parliamentary inquiry on fraud in the construction industry, directed by M.Vos, December 12. 2002.



## **2.2 TRAINING AND EDUCATION (HYPOTHESIS I)**

Construction work in the Netherlands is qualified work; due to technological change construction process has become more demanding. Those persons lacking the required qualifications are condemned to work with subcontracting firms in cleaning of the construction work floor and demolishing work. According to our interviews, only in exceptional cases people working in cleaning and demolishing, make it into the training for carpenter work (C8; C9; C 12).

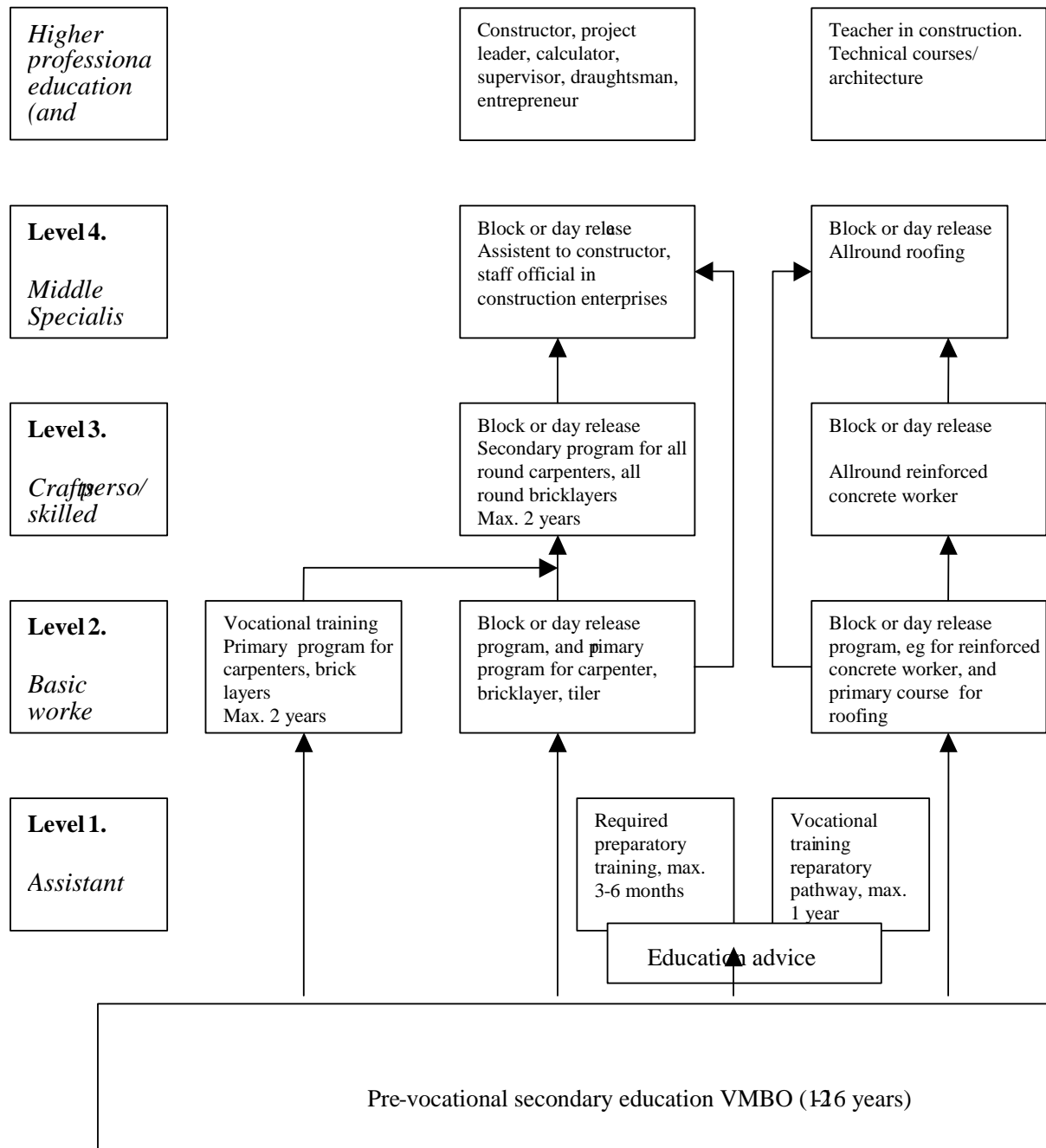
To become a carpenter, workers at least need a secondary level of the professional vocational education and training schemes to achieve a regular job. These skills can be acquired via the sectoral training institutions, organized by employers and employees since 1946.<sup>8</sup> From 1982 onwards, the vocational training at local level is organized by 50 cooperative associations of construction enterprises, financially supported by the sectoral training fund at national level. The organisations of employers and employees have a strong finger in the development of the curriculum since the late 1940s. Via the sector-specific social fund for education and development, they finance part of the training programs from a levy on the wage-sum. Trainees have the status of ‘pupil-employee’, and they are juridically covered by the collective agreement. The participating enterprises have signed a gentlemen agreement, that they will hire apprentices solely from the cooperative association. There are about 50 of these cooperative associations in the Netherlands, equally spread over the country.

In the Figure 2.1 below, we chart the training possibilities for construction industry. On the left hand, the four different qualification levels (1, 2, 3, 4) are summed up. In principle, the different levels are seamlessly connected to each other, and at each of the different levels separate certificates can be acquired for theory and practice. To get into the structure, pupils sometimes need to participate in a 3-6 month preparatory trajectory where language, work attitude and orientation to the trade are being instructed.

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<sup>8</sup> The Dutch construction industry is famous for its wide array of sector-specific social funds. Such funds exist for education and development, bad weather, pension, unemployment, labour conditions. From these funds, among others, vocational training institutes have been financed (van der Meer, 1998).

Figure 2.1. A flow chart on training in the construction industry at different levels and specializations



Source: based on information of Bouwradius.

The standard route of entrance into the occupational labour market of the industry is via the public lower vocational training schools (VMBO) during four years, followed by the sectoral vocational training institutions (two to four years), leading up to level two (skilled work), three (experienced skilled work) and four (specialized skilled work). All qualification levels can be achieved through either a vocational training pathway (BOL), which is school-based, but includes a work-based (so-

called internship) component of at least 20% and an apprenticeship-training pathway (BBL) that includes a work-based component of 60% or more.

In the construction the apprenticeship-training route is the most important. In the sectoral training institutes, students work four days in an enterprise and go to school for one day a week (apprenticeship). The courses take two year for the starting level of craftsmanship (level two, the required minimal level to get a job), and another two years for the level of 'adult' craftsmanship (level three, '*vakvolwassenheid*' in Dutch - comparable to the Master-level in Germany). In interviews it is argued that in exceptional cases, during past years of extreme labour market scarcity in 1996-2002, also less qualified labour was hired by construction enterprises. But they prefer to use the sectoral vocational training schools as entry.

There is large concern about the quality of the new entrants into the sectoral training program. In earlier days, the lower general vocational training (VMBO in Dutch) was the main source of supply to the sectoral training institutions. These schools nowadays are overcrowded with unskilled ethnic minorities, from very different cultural background (they suffer from backlogs in education, they are newcomers, family unification, et cetera). For example the Montessori College in Amsterdam, 95% of all pupils is from ethnic backgrounds. The education level is very low according to the representative of the sectoral training institutes. On an annual basis, all eight VMBO-schools in Amsterdam that all have a specialization in 'construction' are only able to offer 8 pupils that directly can be accepted in the sectoral vocational training. The large majority of pupils have problems, since their entrance level (into the vocational training) is extremely moderate. Recently, the VMBO-schools were labelled as 'garbage cans' in press, due to the accumulation of problems (Het Parool, February 2003). In order to keep the inflow into the training schools up to date, also pupils are allowed with a background in other specializations of secondary professional education (e.g. technical studies) and pupils from lower general education (e.g. HAVO). Most of the participants in the vocational training program are carpenters on different qualification levels, followed by bricklayers and assistant to supervisors.

Table 2.7 Vocational training in Dutch construction

	Job content	Job level	Duration of training	Required preparatory training
Preparatory phase			3, 6 or 9 months	VMBO-bouw and any other
Level one: assistant worker	Helper/ assistant to carpenter work	Unskilled work		
Level two: basic skilled worker	Basic carpenter work	Skilled work	Two years	VMBO-bouw and preparatory period
Level three: adult skilled worker	Carpenter work	Skilled and experienced work		Level two
Level four: middle management/ specialist	Specialized work	Experienced and specialised work	Four years	Level three

Source: Field work

In the interviews, it appears that all main contractors formulate clear entry-requirements: they expect their employees to have required the secondary level of vocational training. All respondents hold a positive opinion about these sectoral training institutions. The termination of the sector specific vocational training organised by the industry, incl. a head start program, four days work, one day training. The requirement of the final certificate is a guarantee, an access for work.

### **Debate and critique about the current structure of vocational education and training**

Nevertheless its new outlook, the structure of the vocation training is in constant debate and revision. There have been complaints by enterprises that the quality is too low, and that students are insufficiently prepared to work in the sector. Moreover, many ethnic minorities proved to drop-out (see below). The trade unions and the employers associations regularly criticise the development of the training institutions. Especially after the 1995 change in the legislation, the feeling is that the attention to craftsmanship has largely disappeared, whereas too much attention is being paid to ‘general skills’, that are not directly useful in the labour process. Over the course of recent years, the trade union FNV Bouw has published several proposals for an improvement of the vocational training. The first document plead for the establishment of the *Bouwschool* (literally: construction school), an attempt to stop the scale enlargement in the vocation training, to protect the juridical status of the labour contract of the pupils in vocational training, to improve the

guidance of trainees, and to stimulate life long learning.<sup>9</sup> In a second report, the idea of a construction school had developed into constructive education programs ‘*constructieve beroepsopleidingen*’.<sup>10</sup>

It is relevant to add that the government insists in using the ‘assistant level’ (level I) of the qualification structure for creating the opportunities for target groups for getting work in the industry. The social partners organizations of management and labour have strongly opposed to this positions, since they are of opinion that at this level no structural job perspectives can be offered.

### Women and training

There are almost no women among the students in the vocational training institutes, and only single exceptions make it to get a job in the enterprises. At the time of the interview there was one female apprentice. The few number of women who get a job in construction is treated carefully, for example by granting them a female instructor or supervisor in the construction enterprises. This seems to work well, some seem to hold good crafts(wo)manship. Women do (in contrast to ethnic minorities) however not receive policy support within the sectoral vocational school SSP. In earlier times -up to 1995 - this was seen as a responsibility for the municipal government (the so-called ‘*bouw-vrouw*’ project which trained about 14 women). In other words as is expressed in many interviews: it is argued that it is ‘difficult for girls to get training and work in an entire male world’. We have however not gathered much information about these groups, since they play no role in most of the enterprises. Of course, there are women among the technical and administrative personnel, but they have not been subject of research.

Table 2.8 The distribution of men and women in education

	Men	Women	Share
Pre-vocational secondary education construction (Bouwtechniek)	14,445	380	2.6%
Block or Day Release (BBL)	9,517	35	0.3%
Vocational training Construction place assistant (Bouwplaatsassistent)	185	14	7.7%
Vocational training Carpenter (Timmervrouw)	878	15	1.7%
Higher vocational training / Architecture (Bouwkunde)	7,248	595	7.6%
Higher professional education Architecture (Bouwkunde)	4,984	1,027	17%
University Architecture / (Bouwkunde)	3,303	1,477	31%

Source: Data provided by Bouwradius

<sup>9</sup> FNV Bouw, *Nieuwe impulsen voor de vakopleiding van jongeren*, september 1999.

<sup>10</sup> FNV Bouw, *Naar constructieve beroepsopleidingen op maat van de leerling*, 2000.

## **Ethnic minorities and training**

Ethnic minorities are stepwise improving their positions in the work force. In most of the companies you find some of them, though we have also found big main contractors with departments in the 'Randstad' area without ethnic minorities on the pay role. The labour market chances for ethnic minorities may rise, at least for demographic reasons since the work force in construction is aged and the ethnic minorities form an increasing part of the pupils in the vocational training schools. In the companies we interviewed, the opinion about the ethnic minorities working with them is essentially positive, though many mention that ethnic minorities have no extended tenure track.

To start with, ethnic minorities face substantial problems in acquiring the qualifications needed. We have already seen that the number of students leaving the VMBO-education is restricted and their level is very low. Especially in the larger metropolitan areas of the country, the ethnic minorities occupy the lower general vocational education schools, i.e. the traditional source of inflow into the sectoral training institutions. Here many problems appear to accumulate: financial, social, criminal, psychological, et cetera.

We have collected data about one particular training institution, the SSP vocational training school in Amsterdam. In the SSP, ethnic minorities are a target group and their guidance is a particular aim. The ethnic minorities are selected with help of the National Center for Vocational Training (CVV) and the Netherlands Center for Foreigners (NCB). The in-take of students into the specific vocational training occurs with extreme care. Persons have an entry interview, as well as a test-week, where their practical and theoretical capabilities are being assessed: when they in the interview score negatively on more than one of the following issues: housing, police, financial situation, health, psychological well-being, family, they are not accepted in the vocational training. When one factor turns out to be negative, they will be treated separately in an additional intake.

It should be noted that for the training in building and construction, in contrast to civil engineering, there are no particular programs for dropouts with a criminal record. The ethnic minorities are treated with a specially established social-medical team. Non-attendance due to illness is as low as 5%. The team also guides and follows apprentices after they have left the school.

The return of education is very positive since 75% finishes the two-year program, which accordingly gives them access to jobs. This is substantially higher than the national, over-all dropout rate of 50%

out of vocational training. There are however important barriers for ethnic minorities in the training period, as follows from the following figures. On an annual basis, several hundreds of candidates are being tested, but only 80 to 100 pupils enter into the preparatory trajectory and 70 to 80 pupils enter into the first year of the primary program (level two). Overall, 140 pupils have a contract in the school. 120 participate in the primary training, 70-80 in the first year and 40-50 in the second year. Another 20 pupils follow the secondary program (level three).

The overall number of ethnic minorities is 35%. The most important observation is that the participation of ethnic minorities decreases throughout the education trajectory, when the qualification level increases, their share becomes lower:

- In the six-month preparatory trajectory: 60% is ethnic minority. Overall return is 30%.
- In the three-month preparatory trajectory: 30% is ethnic minority. Overall return is about 50-60%.
- In the two year primary education (level two): 35% is ethnic minority. Overall return is 75%.
- In the two year secondary education (level three): 5% is ethnic minority. Overall return is more than 75%.

The experience is that ethnic minorities suffer at theoretical courses and enjoy practical instruction. The problems with the ethnic minorities in the vocational school SSP can be summarised as follows (interview):

1. They have to accustom themselves to the training; this takes time.
2. They postpone the exams, whereas delay leads to renouncement.
3. The selection is tough.
4. The daily rhythm is demanding, the day starts at 7.00 am.
5. When they have children, they need to earn money and have no time to visit school.
6. There are differences among groups. Moroccans face the largest difficulties; there is mutual competition, proud and leadership among them, for Surinamese and Turkish the perception is that far less problems occur. Antilleans however face many problems on the building site; this is also the case in the Antilles isles.

## Other difficulties ethnic minorities face entering construction

We have found a number of structural barriers for them to integrate. Some of these reasons have to do with the low image of the industry and the problems of vocational training, which also exist for native Dutch persons. The sector holds not much fame among pupils and the vocational education is suffering from many problems. Some of these problems, which already appear in the apprentice period, accumulate for ethnic minorities, who do not get sufficient training and work experience to reach the status of adult craftsman:

- Given the temporary nature of the construction work, new entrants have to prove themselves several times vis-à-vis the incumbent work force.
- Some of them suffer from the problem of keeping up with the strong work ethos among native Dutch people, according to managers: *'they show shirking behaviour' ... 'They cannot keep pace with native Dutch pupils'*.
- Some have problems with the rhythm of the daily schedule (stand up early in the morning). They use shams, excuses and stories, why they have not appeared, why they were too late. *'The first day it went well, the second day he came to late, arguing something about transport, the third day there was some illness ... some do not appear for days without mentioning'*.
- Some have problems with the cold and rainy weather, and perform worse, this problem already appears in training.
- Sometimes in vocational training and education direct discrimination occurs, not among the pupils in the schools, but for the apprentices entering a company: *'some companies do not welcome black people, they are afraid that the incumbent work force will not accept it'*. Examples have been mentioned from directors of companies who argue: *'I like to have craftsmen, as long as they are not German or Black'*. A Turkish employee, who (exceptionally) made it in a later stage to the level of main executor ('uitvoerder') argued in an interview: *'I have been refused for a position as apprentice at the moment of the acquaintance, only when it appeared that I was Turkish. I went there together with the supervisor of the sectoral training institute, but even with this personal help, I was refused in the company, and we had to go to another place... I only managed to get a position due to the help of my supervisor and due to the fact that he arranged a personal mentor for me'*.
- Executive managers lack the time and the capabilities to treat ethnic minorities well. In an interview it was reported about group interviews with executive managers on the building site. It was argued that two types of management exist: *'On the one hand, there are executive managers without any sensitivity towards ethnic minorities, they will even not know their names on*



*building sites, and they treat them as a number, on the other hand other executive managers argued that they realised that there is a problem with ethnic minorities that should be solved by good treatment of these persons. In such cases, this second category of managers proved to be persons who in their ordinary life already have had experiences with ethnic minorities, and for this reason were able to express their concerns’.*

- There is no incentive for younger people within Turkish families to start a program in vocational training.
- In the home country of ethnic minorities, construction work has also a low image: which is not an impetus for choosing a working life as construction worker.
- Language is sometimes mentioned as an obstacle to enter. Language is not only referring to command of Dutch language, especially for Turkish and Moroccan workers, not so much for Antilleans and especially not for Surinamese. In all cases, the lack of command of technical language of the trade can be handicap as well.
- In Mediterranean countries, the carpenter trade is less relevant than bricklayers. They are less used to working with wood, they work with stones and clay, so in Turkey and Morocco the carpenter trade is less relevant than in the Netherlands. (Apart from specialized woodworking occurring for example in Morocco).

### **Further training**

In the Dutch construction industry, further training is well developed. All employees have the right for two days training on an annual basis. This is stipulated in article 35.b. in the collective agreement for the construction industry. Training is paid from sectoral sources, which are accumulated via a levy prescribed by the collective wage agreement. Most larger companies have extended training programs, which are organized by the sectoral organization, called ‘Bouwradius’. Small and medium sized companies can also make use of the training facilities, but they can hardly afford missing their employees a day or two. As a general rule, the larger companies offer a range of training opportunities for employees. People are trained both on the craftsmanship and communication. The main components of the training include health and safety and specialization courses of the own trade. One company strategically thought of introducing some kind of ‘intercultural’ training, though the sectoral training institute ‘Bouwradius’ does not offer such courses.

In principle all courses for further training are also open to women and ethnic minorities. Courses on health and safety are obligatory. When asking about the participation of ethnic minorities in

programs for further training, it is argued that 'ethnic minorities do not take an interest in further study'. We add that we have to interpret the causality of this argument further: are they not willing or are they not invited to get trained? We presume that only in exceptional cases ethnic minorities are invited to progress themselves on the job, whereas we have found only a single case where an ethnic minority indeed made it up in the job ladder.

### **Summary regarding hypothesis 1 on education and training**

Training is a crucial institution for understanding the entrance of employees in the Dutch construction industry. Companies demand trained employees and the training provides a network of contacts. The training structure itself is complex and pupils may dropout. We have found several barriers for target groups to get access to the training needed. These problems include language problems, attitudinal problems, and direct and indirect forms of discrimination. The problems accumulate due to the particular nature of the work process, where people work on a temporary basis in work places, and then rotate to another project. Construction workers are thus working in different compositions of staff, which increases the chances for abusive behaviour and discriminatory language without control.

It should be added that the Dutch government has compelled the vocational training institutes in the industry to train people for the assistant level in the industry, whereas the spokespersons of the industry were of opinion that at this level no work is available. Currently, assistants are being trained, but at this qualification level no serious career perspective is available.

## **2.3 WAGE-SETTING (HYPOTHESIS 2)**

All construction workers at the work floor are covered by the 'collective agreement for the construction industry' (*Bouw-CAO*). The collective agreement is signed by several employers' associations and by three trade unions and covers about 180,000 employees both in construction and utilities and civil engineering. There is a separate agreement for administrative, technical and executive management covering 45,000 employees. In addition there are about 20 separate collective agreements for roofing, tiling, the housing corporations, the wood sector et cetera.

We restrict the analysis to the collective agreement for the construction industry. The function scheme of the collective agreement was developed in 1981. In the agreement, five functional groups are being distinguished based on education, experience, health and safety, physical work load,

executive tasks and the autonomy in work. There are 117 different job profiles. Lower skilled work for helpers, porters, and cleaners is classified in *function level A*. A starting ‘second class’ carpenter (*timmerman II*), who has finished the two-year primary vocational training program is ranked in *function level B*. According to the text of the collective agreement such a carpenter is able, ‘on the basis of technical drawings and instructions of supervisors, to measure and produce generally applied boxes and to measure and execute technically not complicated operations’. A first class carpenter (*timmerman I*) is classified in function level D. A first class carpenter is able ‘on the basis of technical drawings to autonomously measure and make all forms of boxes and to independently measure and execute all occurring operations both in new housing, maintenance and renovation’. Such a first class carpenter will have two to three years of experience and will have finished the specialization course (level 4 in the qualification structure).

In the collective agreement the possibility is created for paying pluses, above the sectoral rates. In practice most companies apply these bonus rates. The bonus is permanently paid a fixed part of the weekly wage. All employees are ranked according to their age, experience and education. New entrants are in wage scale B, adult craftspersons with more qualifications and work experience are in scale D. The best craftsmen are being paid according to the level in the collective agreement (scale D) in addition they receive a permanent bonus of 10 to in exceptional cases 25%.

The wage rate structure is relatively flat. In the figure below, the wages for adult crafts persons are mentioned in euros. These are gross wages. Foremen, instructors and teachers get an additional fee (column D, E). When people have a managerial position their wage may be increased with 45 euro per week. Shift-work might be compensated with a 10% (two shifts) or 15% plus (three shifts).

Table 2.9 Wage levels for adult crafts persons and for foremen/ instructors

July 2001.	(A) Weekly salary Adult crafts persons	(B) Hour rate adult crafts persons	(D) Weekly salary foremen, instructors	(E) Hour rate foremen, instructors
A	398,40	9,96	446,00	11,15
B	422,40	10,56	470,40	11,76
C	447,60	11,19	495,20	12,38
D	478,80	11,97	526,40	13,16
E	502,80	12,57	-	-

Source: Collective agreement

## Younger persons

There is a separate wage structure for younger workers, who have an employment contract as soon as they take part in the sectoral vocational structure. The weekly wage is determined for 25 hours per week. For these younger people, wage rise with age. When younger people have finished part of their qualifications or work more hours per week, their wage levels will rise with a certain percentage. They arrive at the wage level for an adult craftsperson at the age of 22. When younger people are married they are ranked three additional years in tenure.

Table 2.10 Wage levels for younger people in the vocational training structure

July 2001.	Weekly wage (25 hours)	Hour rate
16 years	105,50	4.22
17 years	119,00	4.76
18 years	145,25	5.81
19 years	171,75	6.87
20 years	198,00	7.92

Source: collective agreement

## Entry-wage level

For people entering the industry who are inexperienced there is a special 'entry-wage level'. The entry-wage level has been created in order to bridge the difference between the legal minimum wage and the function level A. This wage-difference is as large as 35%. It is generally believed that the difference between the lowest wage level in the collective agreement and the legal minimum wage is too large, and hinders persons with lower productivity to find a job at about the minimum wage level. For this reason the entry wage level has been introduced in the late 1990s. The entry wage level is calculated as follows. During the first 26 weeks or first half year, the entry wage equals to the minimum wage level plus 25% of the difference between the minimum wage level and function level A. During the second 26 weeks, the entry wage is at the legal minimum wage plus 50% of the difference between the legal minimum wage and the function level A. After one year, people should at least be calculated according to function level A.

## Application of collective agreement to agency workers

Trade unions have strongly argued that agency workers (who were legally banned between 1982 and 1997) should be covered by the collective agreement in order to safeguard the existence of the sectoral funds. The unions have managed to arrange the following agreement: agency workers are covered by the particular stipulations of the collective agreement for the construction industry

when 1. They are qualified as adult crafts persons; 2. when they are taking part in the sectoral vocational training; 3. when they have more than twelve months of experience in the industry over the course of the past two years. Only in the case of inexperienced and unqualified work for a period less than 12 months, the separate collective agreement for agency workers with its low wage levels is valid, and during that period no contribution has to be paid to the sectoral funds for training, unemployment, bad weather, pensions et cetera.

### **Other characteristics of collective agreement**

Working hours have collectively been reduced from 40 hours per week in 1982 to 38 in 1985 and 36 in 1992. In actual practice, employees work 40 hours per week, but the entire industry closes down in December for two weeks and in summer for three weeks. In addition, employees hold a substantial number of free holidays and days off due to labour time reduction. Over-work occurs, especially in high conjuncture, and is compensated with a plus on the salary.

In the collective agreement, all kind of secondary benefits are laid down as well. Social security is arranged at the sector level. All employees in the industry receive additional benefits in case of unemployment, sickness and disabledness. In the period of fieldwork, a conflict was taking place between the unions and the employers' associations about travel payments. The employer pays travel payment.

Most employers working for main contractor companies have expressed themselves in positive terms about this wage system. This is in contrast to their attitude some five years ago, when they often hold negative opinions about this system. The wage system is an inclusive system, with substantial social benefits that creates a positive work attitude among employees where qualified work is rewarded, and flexible allocation of labour is still possible (see also below). Smaller companies also underline the negative aspect that it involves a relative elevated wage floor in the labour market. Especially all sectoral premiums for the sectoral funds are considered too high and the social contributions and own risk clauses for disability and sickness are considered to be too elevated. Some employers and scientists argue that the wage costs in the industry therefore are too high. In the research it appeared that in one company with Turkish employees, the collective agreement was not respected. Wage payments were below the collective agreement. In some companies the travel payments were paid on an individual basis with the employees, and not collectively according to the collective agreement.

In spite of the fact that construction work is relatively well paid, still, for those who leave the industry, labour conditions in competing sectors are apparently more positive. The level of rewards in the construction industry has increased with 50% over the last twenty years, and 16% of the employees earns an additional payment above the rates of the collective wage agreement (EIB-data).

### **Effects of the wage system on gender and ethnicity**

The wage system does not seem to have direct exclusionary effects on gender or ethnicity. All wage-earning carpenters are compensated within the same wage system, which has many checks and balances in its function classification and wage structure. Notwithstanding, it might occur that female or ethnic employees are compensated at a somewhat lower level than the male, native work force, but we have not found evidence about this fact. Most probably, companies will pay their employees according to their productivity, and when direct inequality occurs people will find a job elsewhere. However, for the category of self-employed workers this might be different. Below, we will return to the self-employed persons that negotiate economic contracts instead of employment contracts.

## **2.4 RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION (HYPOTHESIS 3)**

In the industry various ways of internal and external flexibility occur. Studies reveal that increasingly larger companies take a more managerial position, while subcontracting the actual construction work out to the subcontractors and self-employed. Carpenters work in principle with permanent contracts with a company. They are placed on the different projects for a number of days or weeks, until the completion of the project, and then continue in another project. There is thus not a daily recruitment of personnel. When companies have a need for employees this will not increase their staffing, but make use of different forms of labour supply. They will make use of self-employed persons, of inter-collegial hiring of employees, and of temporary work agencies. Moreover, part of the work will be outsourced to subcontracting companies.

In spite of the flexible nature of the work process in the construction industry, employees have thus considerable length of service in one enterprise. According to surveys of the Economic Institute for the Construction industry (EIB), 43% of the employees in main constructors have more than 10 years of tenure, whereas only 14% is less than 12 months with the same enterprise. For subcontractors these percentages are only slightly higher (31% more than ten years, 20% less than one year)

Table 2.11 Tenure in Dutch construction

Length of service	Working with primary contractor (%)	Working with subcontractor (%)	Both (%)	Total (%)
< 1 year	14	20	24	17
1-3 years	17	18	15	17
2-5 years	10	12	7	10
5-10 years	16	19	19	17
> 10 years	43	31	35	39
	100	100	100	100

Source EIB, 2000.

### Hypothesis on formal/ informal recruitment (hypothesis 3a)

When vacancies occur, companies make use of different ways of recruitment. Mostly informal ways of recommendation and distribution of jobs takes place. Having good contacts is crucial in the industry. Sometimes companies place announcements in newspapers and on the building site. Most of the times, people are recruited in informal circuits. People are enlisted that are known from the neighbourhood or place of origin of the construction workers. Since many construction workers are commuters, who travel on a daily basis from the countryside into the metropolis of larger cities where most building work is, ethnic minorities, who above all are living in the cities have problems of getting known to the people commuting from the countryside into the cities. On the other hand, self-employed and people working in temporary work agencies, who have proved to add value, can make it this way to a permanent contract.

For employers, the most preferred way of insertion of younger, new employees however takes place via the training institutes. Former apprentices are being hired after good performance during their apprenticeship. New entrants into the industry enter thus best via the training programs. The main contractors take part in the organization of the apprenticeship scheme and have therefore good contacts with apprentices and their instructors.

### Recruitment of ethnic minorities

An EIB study of 1992 has made clear that enterprises apply different channels for the recruitment of ethnic minorities and native workers. For the native work force, construction enterprises make use of public employment service (48%), advertisements (40%), informal recruitment via contacts of employees (37%), they also relate to job seekers (21 percent) whereas job seekers approach enterprises themselves (18%). Ethnic minorities on the other hand, more often approach enterprises themselves (33% for main contractors, 30% for subcontractors), they make also use of the public

employment service (19% for main contractors, 30% for subcontractors); and use the networks of schools and the training institutions (29% for main contractors, 13% for subcontractors). Personal contacts (12% for main contractors, 16% for subcontractors) and advertisements (5% for main contractors, 7% for main contractors) are applied to a far lesser extent.

Ten years later, during the interview period, the construction industry still has shortage of personnel. The public employment service is no longer mentioned as a source for recruitment. In the interviews it however appears again that the informal recruitment networks prevalent in construction enable the selection of especially male workers in mostly in rural areas with relatives and families, who commute every day to the work places in the cities. Ethnic minorities do not take part of these networks and are therefore taking part in the production process to a lesser extent. When they enter the work force via the training institutions (which is the third best way of recruitment, especially for main contractors), they are guaranteed of strong ties and contacts. It seems however that they face difficulties of getting accepted as productive labourers. From interviews it appears that their low-estimated work attitude and indirect forms of discrimination, temper the chance of a long work history records for these categories in the sector.

It should be added that in no of the enterprises interviewed, there were targets for the entrance of ethnic minorities.

### **Promotion alongside the career ladder**

Carpenter work is highly valued by enterprises, to put it simply: 'good carpenters earn money for the enterprises, especially when they make not so many errors'. The job ladder for carpenters in the industry is restricted; there are almost no possibilities for making a career. Workers can only change in status from 'starting craftsman' to 'adult craftsman', to 'supervisor or foreman' up to 'executive manager'. All steps relate to higher qualifications. Almost nobody makes it up to executive manager, since in most cases additional training is demanded (MBO-level and particular courses at level four of the qualification scheme).

In addition, the craftsmanship of carpenters is rewarded in various ways: in terms of their skills and qualifications, the status of the difficulties in the work someone is performing, the autonomous and independent way of organization of the work, and in terms of receiving different forms of



compensation and performance-related pay. Craftsmen therefore hold informal differences in status among themselves.

### **Women and a career in construction**

There are almost no women entering into the carpenter's trade. They simply are not trained into this profession, and when there is a single woman she will be working not in the main work places, but in more individual restoration work and with housing corporations. In the fieldwork, some additional reasons have been provided suggesting why women have problems for making a career in construction. Managers are on the forehand precautious of hiring women since they fear that they will be treated badly by the male work force: 'When women enter the work floor and join the lunch in the shed, something changes, men distract from their ordinary work and behave themselves in an aberrant way' (C12). Managers also argue that the working conditions are hard, and many women are not prepared to carry and lift heavy material. In relation to these arguments on the work culture in the companies, in the construction industry also traditional social-cultural values about the role of women in Dutch society at large have been mentioned as a reason of not hiring women.

Female personnel managers (who themselves are not carpenters) have argued that in construction women in general are not treated as high potentials in case of recruitment for the ranks of manager or director. They have informed us that many times they have heard managers arguing that 'women should not run this company' and 'no women should be allowed in top-positions' (C2).

The female managers have also stated that they regularly are treated badly by male 'ethnic' employees. This occurs for example on moments of conflict: the ethnic minorities do not like to explain to female managers about their personal life-course in case of illness or other work-related problems. The female managers argue that these male ethnic minorities face difficulties in accepting females in higher status positions than themselves (C2).

### **Ethnic minorities and a career in construction**

Ethnic minorities face difficulties to getting access to the high-skilled part of the industry. In no company except one, ethnic minorities proved to make promotion. Ethnic minorities thus were not selected and invited to improve their qualifications. In some companies this was commented upon as follows: '*in this company only family members can get to higher positions*' (C5).

We enumerate the reasons why above all ethnic minorities have problems making a career in construction:

- In some cases we have been told, *'that ethnic minorities work well, sometimes very hard, though have no interest in getting higher up the ladder'*.
- Some personnel managers argue that ethnic minorities *have to show their productivity more than natives, they have to prove themselves twice. This is related to the relative unfamiliarity of working with ethnic minorities.*
- Also native crafts-persons have argued about the productivity of ethnic minorities: *'Ethnic minorities are lying behind ... cannot get along with us ... will never reach our level'*. When there is a reduction of personnel: *'they are the first to be fired'* (group interview among native employees).
- There is a division of work between main contractors and subcontractors companies. In the subcontractors companies, more ethnic minorities are employed, especially when the work is less qualified. In this kind of companies (that is not in qualified carpenter's work) in some cases ethnic minorities hold a supervising position, e.g. as foreman, but only in the authority of other ethnic minorities, not in supervision of indigenous workers (C2).
- Some cannot stand the tough humour between workers. Some cannot stand the coarse and rough 'jokes' that are being practiced and show clear forms of indirect discrimination. For example, one Turkish man was asked: *How are you doing, camel fucker?* The man immediately arose, quitted and never reappeared (interview with employers' association).

We conclude that the working culture can be tough for ethnic minorities. Of course, perhaps all new entrants (natives and ethnics) into the labour process are being put to the test of their colleagues. It has been argued that ethnic minorities have to succeed more informal pressure than indigenous workers. They are invited to promotion only in a limited number of cases. We have found only one enterprise that had appointed a Turkish and a Chinese 'executer' (that is the over-all manager at the work place). In one case, we have been informed about a Surinam foreman, but this person could not stand the pressure and quitted. In all other companies, such forms of ethnic selection and recruitment had not taken place and were not considered as useful.

### **Hypothesis 3b. on contract forms**

The majority of workers in the industry today are working full-time with permanent contracts. In 1997, 83 per cent of the workforce in construction had a permanent contract; only 1 per cent, a

temporary contract; 16 per cent were self-employed (CBS, 1999). As a general rule, all employees work with a probationary period before getting a permanent contract. Such a probationary period takes one week to one month. Some have a contract for one year, before they will be contracted on a permanent basis. The hypothesis on contract forms can only be interpreted by taking self-employment, agency work and entrepreneurship into consideration.

### **Agency work**

In 1997, when the ban on temporary agencies was lifted, 6 per cent of all enterprises hired at least some temporary workers through such agencies, and approximately 40 per cent of enterprises considered this option to be positive (EIB 1998b). Agency workers have an advantage in wage costs, since the collectively agreed rates for these categories are lower, and since the agreements do not oblige firms to pay contributions to social funds. The social partners now require agency workers to respect the construction agreement in full (including the contributions to the social funds) once they have finished a degree in vocational training or have twelve months of work experience in the industry (see also section 2.3).

According to our interviews with one of the largest agency companies, agency work has increasingly become accepted in the industry in the years 2001 and 2002, after major hesitancy in the first years after the ban on the allowance of agency work was lifted in 1997. Currently the market share of agency work in construction is about 0.5%, which still is low in comparison with the 4% share of agency work in the Dutch labour market as a whole.

The manager of the temp agency explains that about 50% of the persons his agency is hiring, are ethnic minorities. However they cannot be ranked among the crafts persons. They have no qualifications and are unable to work autonomously (C8). In another interview, we found out that there exist many small temp agencies that are specialised in placing cleaners and porters at building sites. These are 100% ethnic minorities, and none of them holds a substantial qualification. The exceptions are those who are able to restore concrete work, but this is a very low qualification in comparison with adult crafts persons (C9).

### **Self-employment**

Since the second half of the 1990s, the number of self-employed persons has risen fastly. In 2001, the top was reached at 35,000 self employed, about 17% of the workforce. As a general rule, self-

employment occurs among carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers and painters. The rise in self-employment has worried both the trade unions and the employers' associations representing small and medium-sized firms. Compared to ordinary wage earners, the status of the self-employed is unclear. On the one hand, they are not employees, since they have no labour contracts, do not adhere to collective agreements, and do not contribute to the collective funds. On the other hand, neither are they employers, since they work under subcontracting conditions and have little control over the pace or substance of the work. In violation of the standards set by the collective agreements, the self-employed often work more than forty hours per week (in 2001 50% worked more than 50 hours per week). Moreover, they are insured on a voluntary basis only, and their levels of insurance against the risks of accidents, disability, and sickness are far less than that of wage earners who participate in the obligatory collective funds (EIB 1998a). In other words, the self-employed take individual risks by offering flexibility, lower prices (without social security costs), and longer working hours than employees covered by the collective agreement. The self-employed earn 60 percent of their income via private principals, 40% is earned via working for main contractors. In a recent survey, the self-employed complain about the sluggish payment by their taskmaster and the hard competition with moonlighters. The wage rate per hour rate is 16% below the rate of employees (EIB, 2001).

It has been mentioned in different interviews that many ethnic minorities work as self-employed, but we have not found statistical information supporting such statements. We can however provide some interview statements. In two interviews it was made explicit that indeed many ethnic minorities work as self-employed, but they should not be ranked among the qualified crafts persons. *'Sometimes they have worked in Morocco or Turkey and offer their experienced labour power here looking for jobs. Then, however, it appears that they do not know to prepare cement, and you have to send them away since they cannot work autonomously'*. In another interviews this point was made in similar terms: *'we often hire self-employed, there are about 60 in number, may be 50% of these is from ethnic background. They offer their labour power, but they cannot be ranked among the adult carpenters, they for example do not command reading technical drawings'*.

### **Illegal contracting**

According to many spokespersons, illegal contracting has always been a problem in the construction industry. Often a distinction is made between illegal contracting, which is not allowed, and moonlighting, which is often considered as being acceptable. The Chain Responsibility Act that came into force in 1982 is controlling illegal contracting. This act prescribes that the main contractor is responsible for the tax payment of all subcontractors in the chain. In interviews some managers

argue that in spite of this legislation and the control by the Dutch tax institutions and labour inspectorate, 'often fraud occurs'. 'I estimate that only 90% of all construction workers in the larger project have legal documents. Legal documents include, passport and work permit. But when subcontractors offer employees to a project, subsequently their documents are sent in by fax to the main contractor. The quality of the papers does not allow to true control of the genuineness of the documents by the labour inspectorate'. In other interviews this point is made in other terms: In the Bijlmer area and in Amsterdam-West where many ethnic minorities live, a wide scale system of mutual repair and maintenance work exists outside the control of the tax institutions. Here many small companies work without permits. In other interviews remarks have been made about the number of above all Polish, but also crafts persons from other Eastern-European countries, which are working at half the official rate and are not contributing to the Dutch taxation and social security system. The black and grey circuits are roughly estimated to be up to ten percent of the production output.

There are different ways of fraud in the construction sector. An employer can hire his own personnel and can use false accounts and bills et cetera and through this way fraud with the payment of taxes and social security contributions. An employer can also provide false information about his accountancy.

Then there exist the so-called 'illegal contractors' (*koppelbazen* in Dutch). These illegal contractors are a kind of temp agencies, who make their profession out of allocating workers to employers. These workers are not on their payroll, but work as self-employed persons, whereas no taxes and social security contributions are paid. As a general rule, in illegal contracting the so-called E-101 form is used. This official form proves that an employee is registered as a self-employed person. Self-employed persons are themselves responsible for the payment of taxes and social security contributions. The Chain Responsibility Act is controlling this illegal contracting. To dodge this act the illegal contractors are making increasingly making use of private companies-fraud.<sup>11</sup>

Another form of fraud is abuse of social security numbers. In 2001, the General administration office (called GAK), together with the Treasury and the Labour Inspectorate, carried out the project 'fraud on social security number' to improve the quality and currency of the data and by reduce illegal working. In 2001, the Social Fund for the Construction Industry (SFB) carried out a project to go against moonlighting in the construction sector. More than 50% of the examined construction

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<sup>11</sup> 'Inzake opsporing', Rapport enquêtecommissie opsporingsmethoden.

workers turned out to earn an additional income through illegal working.<sup>12</sup> Since 2002 there exists a special 'Construction intervention team' that is engaged in moonlighting and other forms of fraud.

In 2001 there was an examination among 21 self-employed persons in the region Utrecht. It turned out that 70% of them were abusing the 'Flexibility and security Act'. They appeared to be on the payroll of another company. The treasury held the main companies responsible and gave them an after-tax for the underpaid taxes and contributions.<sup>13</sup>

### **Ethnic entrepreneurship**

Ethnic entrepreneurship in construction is extremely low. In several interviews it has been remarked that the construction industry is a very closed industry with its own codes of striking deals and doing business. In the interviews we spoke to several persons from ethnic origin and they all argued that they did know only of one or two other ethnic entrepreneurs directing a company. According to them there is no more than a handful of Turkish construction enterprises in the Amsterdam agglomeration. They suggest that similar figures exist for the other three to four larger cities in the Netherlands. We have already illustrated that almost no ethnic craftsperson climb the vertical ladder to the top. Sometimes ethnic employees start their own enterprises, but this is seldom successful. According to our key informants, the reason for the lack of entrepreneurship in construction is simply that it is too difficult: 'Indeed, you see many shops, bakeries, butchers of Turkish and also Moroccan origin, but that are family enterprises, where the entire family is participating and all accumulate a small benefit. In construction however, cost calculation is very difficult, there are many risks involved and we ethnic people lack the skills of understanding the opportunities and treats. Natives are better trained in that and better prepared to doing so. (...). In addition the Dutch regulation can be difficult and sometime there are negative attitudes among clients'. When there are ethnic entrepreneurs that are in the role of self-employment (where the risks are smaller and the juridical consequences are larger) and in grey, undeclared and illegal work, for example in refurbishment of houses and offices'. As we have seen however, this is in the secondary segments of the labour market.

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<sup>12</sup> Persbericht Ministerie van SZW, nr. 02/169

<sup>13</sup> "Aannemers misbruiken flexwet masaal", Internet.

### **Conclusion on contract types and ethnicity**

In construction, different contract types compete with each other. Ordinary employees have permanent employment contracts, and companies realize the need for flexibility in the labour process by making use of subcontracting, self-employment, collegial hiring and agency work. Self-employment and wage employment contracts are varying contract forms in economic terms with different costs, rights and obligations. We know from surveys that self-employment underbids wage levels with 16% in comparison with ordinary wage employment contracts. We have seen that agency work is only partly beneficial in comparison to ordinary wage employment contracts, since a price reduction from the collective agreement is only allowed for maximally 12 months and not for qualified work. Collegial hiring is no more than a temporary solution for matching demand and supply; here enterprises do not make large cost differentials.

This information needs to be evaluated for the labour market achievement of ethnic minorities. Do they benefit from the different contract types? We have not so much information gathered to answer this question; we know however that ethnic minorities often work as self-employed and as agency workers. Our interview partners however argue that when this is the case, this occurs above all in their role as *unqualified* workers, which is in the secondary segments of the labour market. As a general rule, you will not find qualified ethnic minority workers offering their labour power as self-employed or as agency workers. On the contrary, they will work as wage-earners. It is also generally argued that these unqualified ethnic workers, who work as self-employed or as agency workers, do not invest in their qualifications and do not climb the job ladder.

### **Hypothesis 3c. on employment protection**

In the construction industry a division of labour exists between main contractors and subcontracting companies. Moreover, there are several forms of making the construction process flexible: enterprises use temporary work agencies, collegial hiring and self-employed persons.

Employment protection strictly is not a reason for a division between incumbent workers on the one hand and job seekers or new entrants on the other. In the collective agreement for the construction industry, a stipulation has been drafted arguing that enterprises can reduce their work force when construction enterprises have no contracts in their portfolio. Some entrepreneurs argued that they do not even understand why trade unions have agreed to this stipulation, since it threatens in their view the position of the unions and that of the employees. The trade unions argue that such stipulations improve the functioning of the labour market.

During the period of fieldwork, there was one enterprise that was negotiating an agreement with the trade union about an internal reorganization and lay-off. In this case the unions agreed about a higher social benefit for trade union members than for employees that are not member of the union. This is quite an exceptional case. There is no evidence that due to employment protection, a relatively high number of ethnic minorities or women was harmed.

## **2.5 SOCIAL BENEFITS (HYPOTHESIS 4)**

The collective agreement for the construction industry is rather extended. It contains many stipulations on social benefits, including attention to nurseries and part-time work. Such initiatives need to be implemented at the enterprise level. According to our interviews however, in most companies it is not at all easy to use such stipulations in the collective agreement in practice. In addition, we have not found any references to companies where, in addition to the collective agreement, particular policies were being developed for improving the position of women or ethnic minorities in the work force. There was no diversity management or what so ever. The requirements for the Wet Samen (the legal need to register the share of ethnic minorities) were only being fulfilled as an administrative burden, and not as a goal in itself. No enterprise got a target for the hiring of women or ethnic minorities.

Given this practice, the construction industry is an exception to the rule of part-time work in the Netherlands. Part-time work is not widely accepted in the industry. The industry appears to be populated by a rather traditional and male labour force. Those male employees, who have children, do not take care of their children (also given the travel hours and the early start of the working day), whereas female employees do not work in the industry on a part-time basis.

In addition, several female personnel managers have argued in the interviews that flexible working hours in the industry are not widely accepted given the need for time-management and planning in the production process. Even for these managers, and for women in general, it appeared difficult to combing work and care responsibilities.

We therefore conclude that on the job social benefits play no significant role in the distribution of status positions for carpenters, being male or female, indigenous or ethnic.



## 2.6 ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES: SECTORAL POLICY FOR TARGET GROUPS (HYPOTHESIS 5)

In the collective agreement for the construction industry a specific annex exists that serves as a protocol for improving the employment situation of target groups in the industry. Social partners argue that the entry of target groups (long term unemployed, women, ethnic minorities and school leavers that are unemployed for more than six weeks) in the vocational training programs should be encouraged. The following three main instruments are being proposed:

- The social partners aim at a 10 percent inflow of vocational training that originates from the target groups.
- Furthermore, an incentive system is applied, the cooperative associations in the vocational training system, that meet the target goal of 10 percent receive a premium, the cooperative associations that fail to meet the target are being sanctioned financially.
- The development of these procedures is evaluated on an annual basis.

In the construction industry there is a long history with attempts to make public employment policies more active and useful for the industry. The industry was a forerunner of the Dutch model of active labour market policy in the 1990s (Van der Meer, 1999). Several initiatives have been made, especially when unemployment was high, in 1984-1985. The most important instruments applied include the following: the files of the public employment service have been updated, training and work experience has been provided, there have been attempts to improve the matching of demand and supply. This was regulated in the sector-wide Construction-trade-work institute (in Dutch: Bouw-vak-werk). From 1989-1999, this organization was quite successful in the industry at national and regional level. In 1999, the sectoral employment program was however dismantled, and the remaining tasks (especially applying for subsidies) were placed with the sectoral training institute 'Bouwradius'. It is questionable whether the past status, commitment and resources to active sectoral labour market policies still apply.

In the interviews, none of the main contractors interviewed, argued that they were making use of active labour market policies, except for the sectoral training initiatives that are supported widely. As explained above, enterprises are using the article 35.b of the collective agreement for further training and the sectoral training institute. Enterprises were not applying the subsidized work programs or the extended possibilities for reducing labour taxes and social premiums. They argued: *'I am not interested when people offer me 'carrots', or give me a subsidy of 10,000 guilders (4,500 euro) in*

*case I hire an unemployed on a permanent basis. I am explicitly interested in the qualification of the involved person. Only qualified people will be hired' (C.6).*

For ethnic minorities, one of the most interesting cases of this active labour market policy was expressed under the juridical formula of 'contract compliance'. The idea is that in the tender for public construction work, an obligation for enterprises was laid down, arguing that ten percent of the working population in the project should be of ethnic origin. This obligation existed in mid 1990s, but immediately came under criticism of the employers' associations. Now, it has no longer been mentioned in the interviews in the Amsterdam area, but according to press releases it may still play a role in the cities of The Hague and Enschede.

## **2.7 CONCLUSIONS IN THE LIGHT OF THE HYPOTHESES**

In the Dutch construction industry, segregation of the labour market is by some respondents seen as a problem. First, some respondents argue that the work force in the larger cities is changing, whereas the labour force in construction is ageing. There is therefore a need for new employees. Secondly, some respondents have argued that attention to segregation is needed in order to control and combat illegal contracting. Thirdly, social partner organisations argue that segregation should be stopped via active employment policy. It should however be admitted that several respondents do not consider segregation as a major problem.

The study on construction work has made clear that a number of obstacles for integration exists. Training is a first obstacle. In the Dutch case training is provided by the employers' associations as a collective good. The current structure allows for training, financially supported by the industry and the state. Nevertheless a number of problems have appeared. First the transition from primary vocational training to secondary education is anything but smooth. The skill-level of pupils leaving the primary education is too general and very restricted; moreover for ethnic minorities social and cultural problems are accumulating. A second problem is that not all pupils have sufficiently access to apprenticeship positions. Also at this level discrimination and exclusion occurs. Some ethnic minorities have problems with the work ethos and the rhythm at work. For women, these problems are different, since they have to compete with a large majority of male pupils.

Secondly, wage-setting is less an issue. The collective wage agreement is widely developed. Since the collective wage agreement is applied sector-wide, there are almost no differences between groups.

When persons have the qualification and productivity level, they will be ranked and paid accordingly. In some interviews (with a group of employees) it was remarked that ethnic minorities would never reach the productivity level of the native working force and in some companies the collective agreements was underbid.

Thirdly, recruitment and selection is another obstacle. Informal forms of recruitment appear to prevail, whereas in enterprises employees have long-term tenure relationships. Firms make use of external flexibility by contracting sub-contractors, self-employed and making use of collegial hiring. For ethnic minorities, the informal recruitment is a handicap to integrate since they do not take part in the networks of commuters. An exception is the vocational training school: a successful career in the school provides graduates a network into the labour market. In addition, we have found several indications about illegal contracting and the misuse of social policies, which have been summarised in our text.

Fourthly, social benefits are widely developed in the collective agreement. Social benefits are not believed to play a negative role in the insertion of ethnic minorities. Women can use the social benefits according to their needs and individual bargaining position with their employer.

Fifthly, active labour market policy is widely developed since 1985. Its results are moderate however, and the system has largely been dismantled in 1999. Nowadays, all attention is put to training and employability policies nowadays.

### **Other exclusionary mechanisms in addition to the hypothesis**

There are also other exclusionary mechanisms at stake in the construction industry, which were not dealt with directly in the hypotheses. For ethnic minorities we have found the following three additional mechanisms resulting in ethnic segregation. Firstly, ethnic minorities consider the construction industry often as dirty work, where you should not work. The image of the industry is therefore low. Secondly, every now and then direct discrimination occurs both in the work site and in the vocational schools. Thirdly, ethnic minorities often prefer to inscribe in general and not in technical professional education.

For women there are also some additional mechanisms at stake. Firstly, there is a social norm that women should not work in dirty handiwork. Secondly, a perception exists among male managers that women should not have responsible positions or should not run a company.

### **Evaluation of hypotheses**

The first part of the hypothesis one on the need for vulnerable groups to prove their ability is difficult to test, since we lack data about substitution of people with and without formal qualifications. Formal qualifications are obtained in public schools and in the sectoral training institutes. In addition to formal qualifications, work experience is very relevant. There is no doubt that *new* entrants need formal qualifications. *Adult* craftsmen sometimes have no qualifications, but extended work experience, these persons will not be substituted by people with higher formal qualifications.

The second part of the first hypothesis on the difficulties for vulnerable groups to require the qualifications needed proves to be very relevant. In the field research, it appeared that ethnic minorities and women often encounter difficulties in acquiring the qualifications needed to find a job. Women are isolated in a male dominated training structure. Ethnic minorities face many problems and for them the training trajectory can be long lasting with many barriers. The barriers include image problems, language problems, the working ethos, the daily working rhythm, and discrimination.

Regarding the process of promotion and status improvement, further training is provided in the larger companies. The sectoral training institute 'Bouwradius' organizes and subsidizes these courses. Further training thus has in principle no gender or ethnic effects. Moreover, promotion often occurs before the training takes place, and courses are being granted to employees to prepare themselves to the new job.

It should be mentioned that the incentive system in vocational training is an interesting institutional characteristic that needs further study.

Hypothesis 2 on wage setting is not very relevant for the Dutch case given the fact that the collective agreement is generally extended to all enterprises and is covering all employees. It might become relevant in comparison to the evidence in other countries. For the Dutch construction sector, the question still is to what extent women and ethnic minorities more often work as self-

employed, and therefore have no employment status, but work under economic contracts that are open to mutual competition. We come to these issues in the next section. It might also be that some subcontractors companies do not respect the collective agreement. The collective agreement then appears to work as a threshold for entering into the industry.

The first part of hypothesis 3 on informal contracting appears to be very relevant. It helps to understand why ethnic minorities (and women) face difficulties integrating in the networks of selection and recruitment. These informal networks are dominated by white males. It also suggests that promotion is more difficult for them.

The second part of hypothesis 3 on flexible contract types needs to be evaluated in terms of the internal organization of the construction process with its different forms of internal and external flexibility. Several contract forms compete with each other: a. employment contracts, b. self-employment and c. agency work. Ethnic minorities relatively often appear to make use of self-employment and temp agencies. These categories of ethnic minorities however cannot be ranked as adult crafts persons. The ethnic minorities who make it into the formal job ladder tend to work under permanent employment contracts. For women the situation is different; they might use temp agencies and self-employment in the ranks of the qualified workers, their number is however extremely low.

The third part on employment protection does only indirectly hold. Employers can get around the employment protection by making use of the stipulation in the collective agreement about the 'lack of work in the portfolio of the enterprise'. In that case, lay-offs are only an administrative issue. In addition, other forms of flexibility are applied in the construction process, and accordingly is anticipated to the need to fire people.

Hypothesis 4 on social benefits. There is an extended collective agreement for the construction industry. Several collective risks such as unemployment, sickness and disability are being covered. Also opportunities for childcare and part-time work have been created. Such issues need to be implemented at company level. In all companies it was remarked that the collective agreement is being implemented. No company is however applying a kind of equal opportunities policy, diversity management policy or additional on-the-job benefits for particular groups. The hypothesis is therefore difficult to evaluate and not very relevant for the distinction in labour market achievement between men and women, natives and ethnic minorities.

Hypothesis 5 on employability policies. In the construction industry, active labour market policies are being developed to a very substantial extent. The appendix of the collective agreement contains a protocol for affirmative action for target groups. It appears that currently employers estimate qualifications as far more important than labour costs. Over the last couple of years, the training policies have further been improved, whereas the employment policies have passed away. Training policies are organized at sectoral level; it is seen as the joint responsibility of enterprises at regional level and are motivated by the need for keeping the qualification of the working population up-to-date. In spite of many remaining problems, the current sectoral training program offers a number of opportunities for both ethnic minorities and women to develop their qualifications and skills, which will enable them to find a job in the primary segments of the construction labour market.

## 3 THE IT-INDUSTRY

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION: THE DUTCH IT-INDUSTRY

The IT-sector (in Dutch ICT- information communication and technology) can be defined in several ways; one can either take a broader or a smaller view. IT is only for a small part an independent sector, and is for the most part interwoven with and imbedded in all other sectors. The Netherlands is perceived as an IT trading post, as import and export exceed national production (Van Lieshout and van Liempt, 2001).

In 1999, the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs initiated a Taskforce (*'Werken aan ICT'*) to study the problems in the sector. In its report an insightful panorama of the sector is drawn, distinguishing between five categories of firms: users, services, standard software, embedded software, and telecommunication. First, IT-users are companies that are increasingly applying IT, whereas their core-business is not IT. This group consists for example of banks, insurance companies, retail, distribution and industry. Second, IT-services are involved in the development of tailor made software, secondment of IT-ers, instalment, maintenance and management of IT-systems, IT-training and IT-advise. Third, standard software companies mainly develop software that can be sold as an independent product. Fourth, embedded software is software that is entirely integrated and built in products that are driven by electronics, like consumer electronics, telephone stations and production systems. Fifth, the telecommunication sector consists of all companies that deliver services in fixed phones and mobile phones, broadband, internet and cable companies.

These subcategories all have their own characteristics and dynamics. IT jobs show an enormous diversity. After examining the different categorizations it should be clear that the ICT sector is not a sector, branch or field of occupation that can be separated well from the others. The OECD summarizes this debate by their distinction of three main segments within the IT-sector: 1. hardware and manufacturing; 2. telecommunications; and 3. software and services. It is the latter segment that we discuss in this chapter.

We thus restrict the analysis to service companies, which primary function is to produce, sell and offer consultancy work related to software. We therefore exclude wholesale firms, hardware producers/ hardware consultancy companies, and companies that offer maintenance and repair of IT-products. In addition, in our comparative research design, companies, banks, government

agencies and research institutions with internal IT-departments are excluded from the sample as well, though these departments may provide similar services as do IT service companies. We add, that in contrast to the segments of telecommunication and hardware and manufacturing that are no part of this study, in software and services many small firms and start-ups are to be found.

In this research we will especially focus the attention to the occupational groups of software engineers and software programmers. According to the nomenclature of NACE (SBI in Dutch), that is also used by Eurostat, the general heading for these categories is labelled as 'computer and related activities' (code 72). This label can be disaggregated into six other codes. Under the heading of 72.2 (named 'software consultancy and supply') we find the occupations of software engineers/programmers in focus.

### **Number of people in employment**

In different reports and statistics there is no consensus about the number of people that are employed in the Dutch IT sector. The problem is that ICT-specialists not only work in software companies, but also in larger organizations such as larger companies, banks, government agencies, research institutions et cetera. When focusing on NACE 72, we exclude all ICT-specialists working for such banks, companies, government and research. Moreover, many of the few available statistics on the IT-labour market, do not provide data on this disaggregated one-digit level. Below we will compare our data with the international standard classification of occupations within the labour force survey (enquête beroepsbevolking).

First, we reproduce a Table (3.1) of the employers' association Fenit (2003), with the number of IT-employees in the industry, according to different definitions and levels of analysis. In column (2), the number of IT-specialists in the IT-sector is provided. In column (3), the number of IT-employees in the entire Dutch economy as a whole is given; this number is twice as high as the number of IT-employees in the IT-sector only, which was provided in column (2). In column (4), the total number of employees in the IT-sector is given. This number is including apart from IT-employees also the persons who have other than direct IT-functions. This number corresponds with NACE 72 of the labour force survey.

The columns (2), (3) and (4) make clear that in all categories there has been a very strong rise in the number of jobs in the period 1997-2000. After 2000 the number of employment went to decrease.



Consequently, the number of vacancies for IT-specialists (both in the IT-sector and in the economy at large) which was elevated in the late 1990s has also decreased now, see column (5) and (6). In column (9) the shortage of IT-specialists has been shown, this shortage was particularly large in 1999, at the top of the boom period, but has been reduced since.

Table 3.1 The labour market for IT-specialists.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Year	IT-employees in IT-sector	IT-employees in the Netherlands	Total number of employees in IT-sector	Vacancies in IT-sector	Vacancies IT-employees in total	Outflow	Job growth	Shortage in IT-sector
1997	47,250	98,000	173,500	3,550	6,922	803	6,000	8,853
1998	53,000	104,400	185,000	4,700	9,165	901	5,750	9,851
1999	64,375	110,400	195,600	5,000	9,750	1,094	11,375	15,969
2000	66,875	122,654	201,859	4,275	8,336	1,137	2,500	6,412
2001	65,957	128,554	211,548	1,922	3,749	1,121	-918	626
2002	62,838	130,482	214,722	681	1,328	1,068	-3,120	-2,870
2003*	63,784	132,440	217,942	1,200	2,340	1,084	946	1,730

Source: Fenit, 2003; column (6): Fenit survey among members; Source column (9) = outflow+ vacancies + job growth – inflow.

### Gender composition of the workforce

The discussion about the number of IT-specialist on different levels of analysis is especially relevant in the light of our research question where the entry and promotion of ethnic minorities and women in the IT-sector is addressed. The problem again is that size and level of the workforce in the ICT-sector can be approached in different ways. In this section we will compare enterprise and occupational data, both data are taken from National Central Bureau for Statistics. We add that these data are being revised over time; especially since the employers' association Fenit and the national bureau for statistics CBS are revising the categories for jobs and occupations. Enterprise data are collected according to the 'Nomenclature générale des Activités économique dans les Communautés Européennes' or NACE-classification (in Dutch SBI 1993). In the category of NACE 72 are included all computer service companies, but excluded all computer departments from enterprises, public institutions, research companies, et cetera. The NACE data include all job levels, from the employee at the work floor in line and staff functions to the top-management. Occupational data are collected according to the occupational criteria at medium professional, higher professional and university level. Here all IT-specialists are included, whereas managers, administrative staff et cetera is excluded. The definition has two disadvantages. First, it is still a rather broad category, which includes sales persons and managers, and therefore is broader than

the number provided by Fenit in Table 3.1. Second, people working less than 12 hours per week have not been included.

In earlier scientific studies, IT is described as a truly male dominated sector. Van den Brekel et al. (1999: 5) state on the basis of CBS-data, that 'gender segregation in IT occupations has been strong since the sixties, when these occupations went through a process of professionalisation. In the seventies, when the (association of) IT staff defined their professional domain and certificates for vocational training courses were set up, female 'entry typists' were excluded from this domain. In the eighties, the number of key entry jobs declined but remained 100 percent female. Women's share in the declining computer operator jobs decreased. The high status, quickly expanding programmers' and systems' analysts' occupations became slightly less male dominated. In 1987, 5.6 percent of the systems' analysts and 10.3 percent of the programmers were female. Six years later, in 1993, the percentages of women had grown to 8.9 percent among systems analysts and to 13.0 percent among programmers' (Van den Brekel et al., 1999: 5). Various indications suggest that since then, even the slow growth of women's share in IT occupations has stagnated. Moreover, not much change can be expected, as we will see further on in this chapter, the share of women among IT students is less than 10 percent in the late 1990 (see Frissen, 2000: 89; Hermanussen, 2002: 8).

The exact share of women however depends on the definition applied. According to the reports published by Opportunity in bedrijf (1998) and Van den Brekel et al (1999), in 1998 only 11 percent of all employees in ICT occupations were female. Hermanussen also uses this percentage, on the basis of the occupational categorization of the Central Bureaus for Statistics (EBB - enquête beroepsbevolking). Plantenga and Remery arrive at a different conclusion on the basis of the CBS labour force data, NACE 72. According to them, the share of women in IT of 19 percent for 1997, compared to almost 39 percent in the total labour force (Plantenga and Remery, 2001).

Table 3.2 Share of female employment in Dutch IT, according to a number of studies

Source	Percentage
Taskforce IT (1999:26)	<10%
Opportunity in bedrijf (1998: 10)	11%
Van den Brekel et al. (1999: 5)	11%
Plantenga and Remery (2001: 42)	19%
Hermanussen (2002: 34)	12%

**... when using NACE classifications in the labour force survey**

When we overview the labour force data for several years according to the NACE, we see that the number of women has risen substantially, but that the share of women varies over time. For NACE 72, the share for women in IT (NACE 72) has decreased from 22% in 1993 to 18% in 1998, and has been risen since then to 21% in 2001. For NACE 72.2 the absolute numbers are somewhat lower, but the share for women and men vary only slightly in comparison to those of NACE 72. The share of women decreases from 19% in 1993, to 16% in 1997, but has been risen to 20% in 2001.

Table 3.3 Numbers and share according to gender in IT-companies, NACE 72

Computer service, Information technology NACE 72					
	Number employees			Percentage	
	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female
1993	38,900	30,500	8,400	0.78	0.22
1994	41,000	32,000	9,000	0.78	0.22
1995	47,500	38,600	8,900	0.81	0.19
1996	58,600	47,700	10,900	0.81	0.19
1997	68,700	55,900	12,900	0.81	0.19
1998	84,500	69,200	15,300	0.82	0.18
1999	108,300	86,300	22,000	0.80	0.20
2000	114,800	90,600	24,200	0.79	0.21
2001	120,700	95,300	25,500	0.79	0.21

Calculated from the EWL-labour force survey (CBS)

Table 3.4 Numbers and shares according to gender in It-companies, NACE 72.2

System development, system analysis, programmer services NACE 72.2					
	Number employees			% male	% female
	Total	Male	Female		
1993	20,400	16,600	3,800	0.81	0.19
1994	24,800	20,200	4,600	0.81	0.19
1995	28,800	24,300	4,500	0.84	0.16
1996	34,900	29,200	5,800	0.84	0.17
1997	41,600	34,800	6,800	0.84	0.16
1998	51,800	43,300	8,600	0.84	0.17
1999	65,600	53,300	12,300	0.81	0.19
2000	70,700	56,800	13,800	0.80	0.20
2001	72,300	57,900	14,500	0.80	0.20

Calculated from the EWL-labour force survey (CBS).

### ... when using occupational standards in the labour force survey

When we use the international standard classification of occupations in the labour force survey, we arrive at different conclusions. In the figure below we have summed the number for occupational category medium level (category 514), higher level (category 714) and university level (category 914) IT-specialists. In this data, apart from IT-specialists also sales persons and managers in IT are included. The share of women of 12 % for the year 2000, appears to be almost half of the percentage of 20% suggested above when looking at NACE 72.2. It is this occupational figure that is used in most scientific reports.

Table 3.5 The number and gender of medium and higher level IT-specialists (summation of occupational category 514, 714 and 914)

Year	Number of IT-specialists	Men	Women	Male share	Female share
1992	128,000	107,000	20,000	83,6%	15,6%
1993	125,000	112,000	13,000	89,6%	10,4%
1994	125,000	110,000	16,000	88,0%	12,8%
1995	135,000	118,000	17,000	87,4%	12,6%
1996	153,000	134,000	19,000	87,6%	12,4%
1997	166,000	147,000	19,000	88,6%	11,4%
1998	203,000	181,000	22,000	89,2%	10,8%
1999	221,000	194,000	28,000	87,8%	12,7%
2000	250,000	221,000	30,000	88,4%	12,0%
2001	228,000	205,000	28,000	89,9%	12,3%

Source: CBS-EBB, occupational classification, own calculations

Hermanussen (2002) has published a further differentiation among different occupational categories. According to her, the number of women among programmers is 11%, among technical system analysts is 13%, among system analysts is 12% and among informatics 12%.

### Ethnic minorities

About the share of ethnic minorities in IT, the CBS does not publish separate data. In several documents, very low percentages of ethnic minorities are mentioned. The Taskforce ICT mentions the number of 2% for 1998 (1999: 52). According to CBS-data for 2000, the average share of ethnic minorities is 5.5%

In a recent report however, it is suggested that the number of ethnic minorities is rising. Here a broad definition is used with help of CBS-data, referring to the persons of whom one of their

parents is born outside the Netherlands. The share of ethnic minorities then shows an increase from 9% in 1997, 10% in 1998, 10% in 1999 to 11% in 2000 (Hermanussen, 2002: 20). The CBS could not yet confirm this trend for a larger number of years. The conclusion is that the share of ethnic minorities in the IT-industry is substantial and higher than the national average of 8%. This suggests that they are relatively well integrated in the industry.

Table 3.6 Share of ethnic employment in Dutch IT, according to a number of studies

Source	Percentage
Taskforce ICT (1999: 52)	2% (strict definition)
Hermanussen (2002: 20)	11% (broad definition)

### The imbalance between demand and supply

The ICT industry has risen extraordinary strong in the period 1996-2001; in this period production rose with 12% per year, whereas the number of employees rose with 14% (Hermanussen, 2002).

The demand for IT services has increased considerably in the late 1990s. This is related to several factors. There has been a tendency in companies to outsource their IT-activities. The level of innovation in software is high: new programs and program languages are being developed and adjusted in new versions. The favourable economic growth has stimulated demand for information technology. Due to increasing internationalisation and transnational mergers, administrative and management processes have to be adjusted. Electronic trade is occurring and Internet is creating new applications. The conversions of the euro and the Millennium change have also increased the demand for IT-products. It has been expected that the employment in IT will keep growing the next years (AWT 1998; ROA 1998). In 2001 and 2002 however, when the economic growth tempered, IT had to shed labour.

At the same time, the growth in supply of qualified employees was lagging behind. The number of students that graduate from studies in computerization was insufficient to meet demand. The rather low number of students is related to developments in the sector. From the middle of the eighties till the beginning of the nineties, the labour market perspectives in IT were poor. Since 1996, labour is in short supply in the IT sector (Van den Brekel, 1999). Many reports in the late 1990s stated that the demand for skilled workers in the IT sector would further increase. Outsourcing of IT activities would lead to a considerable rise in demand for skilled workers, like programmers, consultants and developers. ROA (1998) estimated the need for new employees in the ICT sector at 50.000 for the period 1997 to 2002. Giving these expectations, a rise in labour supply was needed. At all education

levels (MBO, HBO and WO) only 3,000 people graduate in IT on an annual basis. The labour shortage led to an inflow of people from people from other sectors into IT, after they were retrained.

The shortage of labour is of qualitative nature as well. Employers prefer employees who contain in addition to IT skills, also social and commercial competencies. Moreover, due to technological developments the work is getting more complex. The provision of IT-services is an activity in which information technology is applied and adapted to a working environment in a particular firm or office. As a result employees quite often are seconded to the firm 'on location'. Often service is sold by the hour (according to the slogan: '*uurtje factuurtje*') and the cost calculation takes place on project basis. The exact duration of the work is difficult to plan in advance and the work pressure can be demanding in order to meet deadlines. In the period of economic boom, the imbalance between demand and supply often resulted in long working hours.

### **Industrial relations**

Industrial relations in ICT are less institutionalised than in other sectors in the Netherlands. Trade union density is low at 5-10 percent, and according to one interview with the trade unions at 7 percent. The employers associations have not a full representativeness. There is only one sectoral collective agreement, which is valid for the hardware companies that are not studied in this study. In the software part of the IT-sector most companies have no collective agreements, and those companies who do have a collective agreement often use the works council in stead of the trade union as their negotiating partner (Schilstra, 1998). Some companies apply the collective agreement of the hardware part of the industry. This is a multi-employer or sector agreement for 'ICK-bedrijven' (literally: information, communication and offices) that is signed between the employers' association *ICT-Nederland* and the trade unions. In the software branch, about ten larger companies such as EDS, Getronics, Pink Roccade and Atos-Origin have negotiated an enterprise agreement with the trade unions and works councils. Often these agreements are named differently than collective agreement, for example, employment conditions regulation or book. The contents of the stipulation in such arrangements generally are -unlike the other agreements in the construction, printing and health sectors discussed in this report- Anglosaxon in nature, with many individual provisions allowing for individual choice and risk taking, the lack of function categorization, a role for performance-related pay systems, whereas as a general rule extended collective provisions for training or social security are lacking.

## Field work

In our fieldwork, fifteen companies have been selected via the Internet and have approached by a formal letter and brochure. Cooperation proved to be reasonably good. One company refused cooperation since it had no women on the pay role. Another company was a hardware company that did not take part. One company was not interested in the results. The other twelve enterprises cooperated in the research and gave the impression to be really interested in the issue of diversity management.

In our interviews it appeared that the number of women in IT is low: varying from 0 to 21 per cent in the twelve companies under study. Moreover, women seldom get at top-positions. In some larger companies, there are no women in the highest ranks at all.

Table 3.7 Fieldwork in IT

IT 1. A small national company in software developments for website design- 20 employees.
IT 2. An American company, based in the Netherlands for four decades. Interview with the head of personnel department – 600 employees
IT 3. A Surinam company, recently set-up – 2 employees.
IT 4. An interview with director of IT-company in humanoid interfaces and artificial intelligence - 9 employees.
IT 5. An interview with floor manager in Dutch software house - 3,000 employees
IT 6. An interview with European director of American IT-company – 500 employees.
IT 7. An interview with vice-president of Dutch soft ware house – 6,000 employees, her department 50 employees.
IT 8. An interview with general director of American hard ware and software company - 900 employees.
IT 9. An interview with specialised director of temporary work agency in IT – 9 employees allocating 200,000 persons included in a date base.
IT 10. An interview with a recruiter for IT-company in business-to-business applications, 1,500 employees.
IT 11. An interview with HR-manager in Dutch software house - 6,200 employees.
IT 12. Interview with personnel director in Center for mathematics and information science - 260 employees.

The survey includes both small, medium-sized and larger companies. We have aimed to study all size-categories. As it appears from the Table 3.8 below, we have approached too many large firms in the sample, whereas the small and medium sized companies are underrepresented. When we spoke to these smaller companies it appeared that they work often in networks in which they distribute

tasks and orders among themselves. Many of the self-employed persons, will therefore most probably work in close cooperation with other small-sized companies.

Table 3.8 Computerservice bureaus according to firm size (NACE 72)

Year	Self-employed	1 to 5 employees	5 to 10 employees	10 to 50 employees	50 to 100 employees	100 to 200 employees	> 500 employees
1993	4,210	1,320	265	360	55	45	10
1994	4,500	1,555	335	415	65	40	10
1995	4,285	1,710	350	420	75	40	5
1996	4,745	1,965	380	470	70	40	10
1997	5,235	2,520	500	560	80	55	10
1998	6,265	2,560	600	590	85	60	15
1999	7,315	3,010	615	710	95	70	20
2000	8,655	3,585	745	805	120	75	20
2001	10,295	4,280	985	970	130	85	20
2002	11,440	4,050	780	1030	140	95	30
2003	11,865	4,035	810	1025	165	95	25

### 3.2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING (HYPOTHESIS I).

Vocational training and education in IT is only recently institutionalised (Van Lieshout and van Liempt, 2001). The institutionalisation of information science took off in the early 1970s in higher vocational education, whereas the first academic study was established as late as 1981. In 1971, the first higher professional colleges for mathematical computing specialists started, in 1973 followed by particular programs for administrative computing specialists. Vocational training for a third form of specialization, the technical computing specialists, took place exclusively on the work floor, without public institutions such as occupational associations and educational institutions being involved, as appeared from the historical case-studies about the development of skill-formation in the enterprises Raet and BSO-Origin, in the dissertation study by Van Dael (2001) (see also in Van Lieshout and van Liempt, 2001).

#### Jobs and job profiles

Over the last three decades, the number of IT jobs has expanded rapidly. The result is significant overlap in the actual activities of people in IT with different job titles. Jobs and job profiles are not fully crystallized yet. In the labour force survey, four different occupations are being discerned among IT-specialists. The largest group concern the system analysts. They were 52% of IT-



professionals in 1996, though after 1999 their share is only 48%. The second group is the programmers, whose share increased from 31% in 1996 to 34% in 2000. The group of informatics specialists has been risen strongly, from 9% in 1996 to 15% in 2000, whereas the fourth category of the technical system analysts is at a (decreasing) share of 5% (Hermanussen, 2002: 17).

The skill profile in IT is anything but stable. Different generations of computers and software technology have been developing fastly, and programming language has allowed networking and communication between computers. Giving the speed of change, the training market for IT lacks transparency. There are many suppliers, and there is no general, standardised certification standard or quality control (Couzy, 1998). Many different standards coexist at the same time, and the larger companies such as Microsoft and Unysis have developed their own training centres.

In this climate of technological development and change in product market combination, the Dutch employers association in IT, Fenit, has established an Education and training committee that aims to signalling skills profiles and relating education and training requirements in the IT-sector (see van Lieshout and van Liempt, 2001: 50). In the period 1998-1999, the committee has drafted a number of occupational profiles at 'entry level' in order to allow for a matching of supply of employees and demand by firms. A starter, i.e. a junior level first-time IT worker must be able to meet the qualifications in one of four profiles: 1. specialist; 2. developer; 3. architect; and 4. coordinator. These qualifications are being defined at the higher vocational training level (HBO), except for the profile of IT-coordinator, whose qualification requirements have been defied at upper secondary level (MBO). The starter must have a good basis, as defined in terms of core competencies, but cannot be expected to be generally skilled, additional training will be necessary source (Fenit, 1997).

### **Education levels**

IT-employees in general possess higher education levels; in the period 1997-2000 on average 54% appear to have completed a higher profession education (HBO, 35%) or university (15%) education. The persons with a MBO-degree form however the largest group (39%), whereas 7% has only a degree in general secondary education (Hermanussen, 2002: 19).

Most students in IT-education programs participate in courses at medium professional MBO-level (52%), another 35% at higher university HBO-level whereas 13% studies at university level. In the course of the last five years, the number of students in IT has risen considerably. There is a rise in the number of students from 24,500 in 1997 to 47,400 in 2000, this rise is equivalent to a 93%

increase. Especially the education at MBO-level has increased very substantially with plus 174% in the period 1997-2001, whereas HBO-education showed an increase of plus 53% and university education of plus 22% (Hermanussen, 2002: 22).

On the basis of ROA-data, Hermanussen has provided an overview of the skill levels for the four different groups of IT-specialists. Three out of four occupations are trained at higher professional or university level. Especially the occupations for information scientists and technical system analysts ask for university degrees, the occupation of the system analyst is mainly trained at HBO-level. The occupation of the programmers is an exception to the rule; here most 80% of the employees are trained at MBO-level (Hermanussen: 2002: 17-19).

Within the MBO-education, most students (91%) are trained at level 4 of the vocational education structure, whereas only 5% is trained at level 3 and 4% at level 2 of the vocational structure (data for 1997-2001; Hermanussen, 2002). The level of IT-specialists is therefore substantially higher than of the occupations in the construction, health and printing sectors, elsewhere in this report. In addition, it should be added that a substantial share of MBO-students continues their education at HBO-level. Some of the HBO-graduates continue their education at university levels. Another important issue concerns the fact that the dropout rate from medium professional, higher professional and university education is 50%. It is unknown why this is the case (Hermanussen, 2002).

### **Job ladders**

In the interviews, it is stated that the requirements to new employees vary for the different job and function levels. Some companies demand skills and qualifications in information science at medium to higher professional level, some on academic level. Other companies do retrain persons who have graduated in other disciplines and train prepare them for IT-positions.

In IT, several different promotion paths are possible, both horizontally (learning new packages, programme languages and specializations) as vertically (upwards the enterprise hierarchy). As a general rule, our fieldwork has shown the existence of kinds of job ladders, one for software developers and one for consultants:

- a. Promotion path one: from helpdesk employee to software developer. In the promotion path for helpdesk employees until software developers, specific IT-requirements are demanded. For helpdesk employees, work experience and a medium or higher professional education is demanded, for software developers an academic level is required.
  
- b. Promotion path two: from junior to medior to senior consultant. Here more general skills are needed in addition to IT-skills. Also people with a background in psychology or information and organization theory are welcome. At the higher positions, as a general rule an academic level is required which integrates apart from IT-skills, also management, communication and organization capabilities.

In IT-companies therefore, not for all functions a qualification in information sciences are required. In most technical functions, people are hired with exclusively on-the job experience with software packages. Control of IT-software is thus very important in technical positions, but less so in marketing and consultancy work where social and communicative qualifications are demanded. The second type of IT-companies distinguished here; tend to accept a more complex form of organization, where the integration of technical skills with social, organizational and communicative skills is seen as decisive for commercial success.

For specific work, for example the development of humanoid interfaces, the interviewee complained about the low quality of the Dutch education system, and the lack of scientifically trained employees. They were considering hiring people from Hungary due to the lack of skilled labour supply at specialised academic level in the Netherlands (interview IT 4).

### **Access to the industry: from education to work**

In our interviews it has been argued that when vacancies for software engineers occur, employees are hired who contain the required qualifications. For the first job ladder of helpdesk employees to software engineers, these requirements have been drafted in terms of the degrees from medium to higher professional education to academic level. Some helpdesk employees are being hired with medium professional education, but this is exceptional. In such cases, persons involved will have extended experience with the application of software packages. Software engineers will have higher professional education and mostly an academic background in information science. In actual practice the persons in this job ladder are mostly indigenous males. The number of ethnic minorities is fairly

restricted. In the first job ladder for software specialists, slightly more ethnic minorities work than in the second job ladder for consultancy work.

For the entry of employees into the second job ladder of consultants, a variety of educational backgrounds are possible. Often people will have a background in information technology, but also students in psychology, communication sciences, economics, organization studies or other forms of social sciences will be taken into consideration. Persons without a degree in information sciences will be trained in specialization courses before they start working or will be trained on the job. In actual practice, the persons in this part of the job ladder are males, though here you find more women than in the aforementioned job ladder for helpdesk employees and software engineers. The number of ethnic minorities here is lower than in the job ladder for helpdesk employees and software engineers.

In the course of the last ten years, many unemployed persons with a degree in higher professional education or an academic degree have been retrained and switched their careers from their original specialisation into IT. Many software engineers in IT have a background in various forms of education, before they enrolled in private courses on IT and entered the industry. From the early 1980s, when unemployment rose, many unemployed were granted training in ICT-skills. The PION-foundation, started in 1985 to train unemployed at higher vocational training and academic level. PION delivered its 5,000<sup>th</sup>. graduate in 1998, and claims that 97% of them have found a good job (Van Lieshout and van Liempt, 2001: 46). But also other small private initiatives have been set up to train and second people. We have interviewed several employees who were working in other sectors, before they got an offer for a training course in computer and information skills. Such persons got employed for a year, were instructed during four to six month, and then got a project to acquire work experience in a certain company who was paying their training and their salary. After a successful training these people got a permanent job.

### **Further training**

IT-specialists consider themselves as professionals and they attend a lot of courses to be up-to-date. There are extended opportunities for further training in IT. Larger companies have their own on-line electronic academia or universities. Companies claim to invest up to 10-15% of the wage sum in training during the boom-period. These investments are said to have diminished to almost zero percent in some companies in the downturn economy. However, further training is seen by all as necessary to keep the qualification levels up-to-date. Some interviewees argue that especially senior

employees have a larger opportunity of having outdated skills; it is often these persons that alter their careers from IT-skills to positions in consultancy and management.

### **Gender effects in training**

Managers have argued that the number of women in the higher professional education and university education is low. This is the first reason explaining the moderate entry of women into the IT-sector: they have not been trained in information sciences and rarely apply for a job. Several studies point to the reasons why girls do not choose for an education specialisation in IT. For girls, IT is seen as synonymous to technique, a world of 'nerds', fast boys with high performance, long working days, and poor work-life balance' (see Hermanussen, 2002: 33, see also further on in this chapter).

In 2000-2001 only 7% of all students in IT were female (Hermanussen, 2002: 34). In 2000, the share of girls in MBO-education was 45%, just larger than the share of 38% in HBO-education, and 18% in university education. On average, the girls participate at a slightly higher level than boys in IT-education.

At the MBO-education, the most attractive specialisation programs for girls are general IT-employee (43%), multi media design (17%), system analysis (10%) and office automation (10%). In specialist and technical informatics courses at MBO-level, the participation of girls was extremely low. At HBO-education level, most girls opt for a specialisation in economic and administrative applications of IT (11% girls in 2001), and not in the technical IT specialisations (6% girls in 2001). At university level the share of girls is moderate, although most girls opt for a specialisation in natural science, more than in technical science or economic information science (Hermanussen, 2002).

In our interviews, personal managers confirm this picture. Since IT-qualifications can be defined in a broad way, the participation of girls in informatization science is depending on the degree of specialisation of the education program. In pure technical IT-courses for software engineers, one hardly finds female students. In education programs that integrate IT and management, the share of women will rise. In programs on IT and multi-media, the number of female students is relatively high. The rising share of female students is related to both the contents and profile of the education program, but also to the context where the education is provided. Women less often opt for technical colleges and universities, but increasingly participate in for example artistic programs where IT-applications play a substantial role (several interviews).

### **Ethnic effects in training**

The number of ethnic minorities in IT-related vocational training and academic education is rising substantially, though concrete data are lacking. Personnel managers argue about ethnic minorities that when these students finish their education, they can enter the company without any problem. Ethnicity is not a criterion for selection. On the contrary, managers state to wish to hire people from different cultural backgrounds, some enterprises see this as an advantage.

In our fieldwork, we have visited a school for computation science at the level of higher professional education in Amsterdam. Since 1999, in this school the 'Color IT' project was hosted and supported by the ECHO-centre for expertise for ethnic minorities in higher education, whereas also in Utrecht and The Hague similar initiatives were taking place. It aimed at an inflow of ethnic minority students of at least 30%; return and results should be equal to native students (i.e. 70% in the first year, 90% in the main stream of the program); the duration of study should not exceed that of regular students and graduates should have good labour market perspectives. The target group from Turkey, Morocco, but also from Irak, Iran and China, did meet the 30% threshold, though suffered more than native students from the following problems: the insufficient command of Dutch language; the need for structured exercises; problems in system development, in literature study, and in informal behaviour and social relations in enterprises; and concerns about how to find a job.

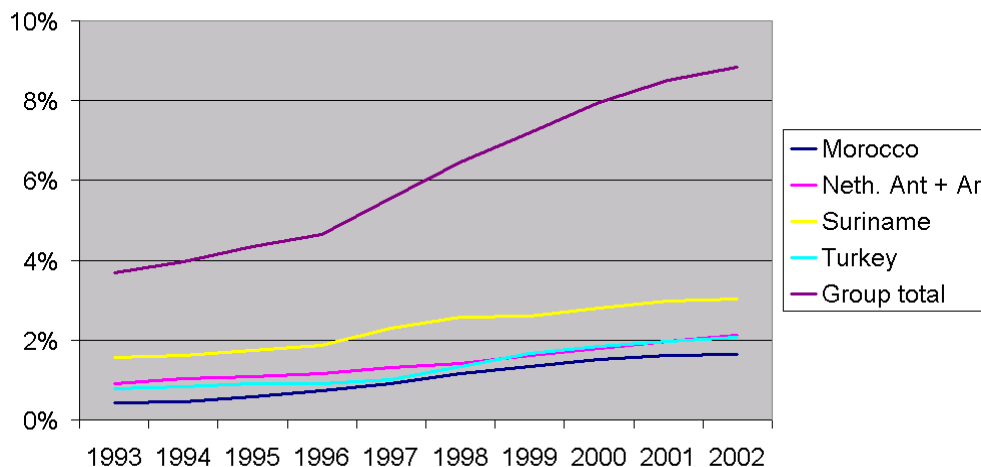
The number of women was extremely moderate and opted above all for specialisations in web design, interactive media and design. Notwithstanding above all the Moroccan women appeared to perform well: *'They do not dare to subscribe in universities and consider to create for themselves better labour market perspectives in higher professional education than in universities'* (interview).

In Amsterdam and The Hague the results were more positive than in Utrecht given the following conditions: the general management of the school (directors, counsellors, teachers) have to support the project and the students, whereas enterprises cooperated well (also given their need for qualified labour). According to the project management an important credo of the project is: *'to support though not to stigmatise'* (in Dutch: *'wel de steun, niet het stigma'*). Cooperation with enterprises is also seen as a critical condition in a decreasing market where enterprises are anything but philanthropical organisations. *'Investment in students, acceptance of other cultures and getting used to different working cultures is time-consuming and costly'*. According to our interview partners *'many enterprises are cost-competitors and unwilling to pay such contributions'*. Finally, the project management

of Color IT has estimated that *'it will take about two generations before the cultural differences between native and ethnic students are truly eroded*. Examples of cultural differences between students include issues such as: *'ethnic students not taking initiatives, not being used to discuss, no able to defend their own rights'*. In all cases, personal guidance and coaching of ethnic students is believed to be of crucial importance for their chances to finishing education and finding a job.

General data provided by the HBO-Raad (the council for higher profession education) show that the share of ethnic minorities that enrolled in higher education with a specialization on IT, has more than doubled over the last decade from less than 4 percent in 1993 to almost nine percent in 2002 (see figure 3.1). It is therefore to be expected that the inflow of ethnic minorities in the IT-sector will rise, though we do not possess clear data on examination results.

Figure 3.1 Matriculation (%) of non-western ethnic minorities in higher professional IT education (HBO)



Source: Calculated from data provided by HBO-raad

### Other sources

Since the data about the number of ethnic minorities in the IT-sector are scarce, we also have collected information from the database "Wet Samen" (Law stimulation of working participation of minorities). This law came into force in 1998 and forces companies with at least 35 employees to make an annual account. In this account the employer has to report among other things the share of ethnic minorities in their company. We present data for 1998 and 2001. In 1998 we could examine 46 companies who delivered their annual report. They have 10,014 employees on the pay list. Among which 495 belonged to an ethnic minority group; this is a share of 4.9%. We also examined

the education level of the ethnic minorities in 31 companies. The overview in the next table suggests that many ethnic minorities have a low education level.

Table 3.9 Education level of ethnic minorities in IT in 1998

	Maximum primary education	Pre-vocational secondary education	Secondary (vocational) education	Higher professional education/University
Share	19.1%	55.3%	16.2%	9.4%
Number	45	130	38	22

Source: *Wet Samen database*

In 2001 we could examine 69 companies with a total of 14,373 employees. Of these, 754 of the employees were from an ethnic minority group, this is a share of 5.2%. We could examine 53 companies concerning the education level. The education levels are now significantly higher than in 1998.

Table 3.10 Education level of ethnic minorities in IT in 2001

	Maximal primary education	Pre-vocational secondary training	Secondary (vocational) education	Higher professional education/University
Share	2.8%	23.0%	29.7%	44.5%
Number	14	115	149	223

Source: *Wet Samen database*

The table shows a difference in education levels. In 1998 about 75% of the ethnic minorities had maximal primary education or pre-vocational education, the two lowest education levels. In 2001 this percentage has twisted into a share of 75% in the two highest education levels. Especially the increase of the share of ethnic minorities with a higher professional education or university is striking. One important remark: the examined companies in 1998 and 2001 are only partly overlapping, and in this sense the data are not comparable.

### 3.3 WAGE SETTING AND EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS (HYPOTHESIS 2)

For a long time, wage-setting in the Dutch ICT-sector was unregulated (Bijlsma, 1999; Tijdens, 2000; Van Liempt en Van Uffelen, 2002). The last decade showed a break with this tradition since companies are willing to discuss issues concerning terms of employment with employee-representatives. The liberalization of the telecommunication market in Europe, which took place in the first half of the nineties, changed a lot of traditional state-owned companies, like PTT Telecom, in private-owned companies. This transition was accompanied by the entry of new companies in this



liberalized and lucrative market. This has had enormous consequences for the manner in which these companies and their employees think about the arrangement of the terms of employment. Eighty percent of the employees in IT now work under an arrangement in which the terms of employment are stated. This can be a collective agreement (23%), a company specific arrangement (46%) or an individual arrangement (8%). The works council is in 39 percent of the cases responsible for the arrangements of the terms of employment. In 33 percent of the cases the employer gave shape to the terms of employment in an unilateral way. In 19 percent of the cases the trade union played an important role (Tijdens, 2000: 8-9).

In the 'hard ware' part of the Dutch IT-industry a multi-employer collective agreement exists, in the software branches most companies have no collective agreement, though some companies such as Unisys follow the hardware agreement, whereas companies such as Getronics, EDS, Origin and Pink Roccade have enterprise agreements. Trade union density is low, approximately 5-10% in the larger companies, some people expect that this will rise due to the current process of labour shedding.

In the interviews it has been explained that the wage setting may be an individual matter between employer and employee, but also wage schemes exist in companies that are divided in wage scales that vary per function. For example, in one company we found 22 different wage levels for the entire company. In another company there were two basic function classifications, with separate wage scales, one wage scale for the job ladder of technical IT-personnel got six levels, the other for job ladder of IT-consultants distinguished between 13 levels.

Most of the larger IT-companies annually redefine the annual wage increase on the basis of a benchmark with direct competitors. In the smaller companies, management determines wage systems single-handedly, though employees have proved to negotiate good employment conditions in periods of labour market scarcity.

In the entire sector, both in companies with and without a collective agreement, individual performance schemes are relevant. No enterprise appears to have a guaranteed collective wage increase. In 2002-2003 some enterprises are reducing wage levels with 10%, or at least reduce their fringe benefits (laptops, company lease cars). Skill levels are indirectly relevant for compensation. Persons with a higher professional education have a lower starting salary than people with a university academic training. In addition, particular work experience will be compensated. Seniority payments only result after good evaluation of performance. Such evaluation takes place on a

monthly, six monthly and annual bases, varying per enterprise. Several indicators are being applied such as: core attitudes towards clients and colleagues, competency of the company, competency on the job, IT-product development, knowledge of the industry.

### **Salary**

Different studies show that the average yearly salary of IT employees is approximately 35 to 40 percent higher than the gross average yearly wage of all employees. In addition, fringe benefits like a company care are quite common in IT (Computable 1999; Automatisering Gids 2000). At the same time however the particular wage systems not only compensate but also encourage long working hours. More than one third of all employees in IT have a partly variable wage, which is related to performance (Tijdens, 2000: 18).

Tijdens shows that half of the employees in IT have a substantial gross monthly income between 2400 and 3500 euro. For 27 percent of the IT-employees a part of the salary is contingent. For 33 percent of the ICT-employees this contingent part makes up 5 to 9 percent of their gross salary. For 20 percent this contingent part makes up 25% of the gross salary. The research also shows that employees that earn more money more often have a contingent part. Next to this primary compensation most IT-employees also have fringe benefits elements like a lease-car, profit sharing, bonuses and a thirteenth month (Tijdens, 2000).

### **Working time**

A vast majority (84%) of staff in IT has a 40-hour working week. A small group works 38 hours a week. Research shows that this official number of hours is often overrun. Half the employees state that they are working overtime. Working days from 10 hours or more are the rule rather than the exception. This makes overtime an important characteristic of this sector. A third of the employees work more hours than stated in their contract every week. A quarter says they have to work overtime every month. Only 18 percent can perform their work in the weekly-agreed number of hours. It's expected from employees that they finish their work and that enough output is delivered. Half of the employees working extra hours receives compensation for this (Tijdens, 2000: 14-17).

### **Effects on ethnicity and gender**

There are some observations in the literature about the nature of the labour supply in the sector. Janneke Plantenga and Chantal Remery (2001) have discussed organization of work and working

time in ICT. These authors see a tendency of 'de-standardization' of working hours, given the extended working day and the increase of overwork. They argue that the long working hours result due to the shortage in the supply of qualified labour, the specific nature of the product with its specialised and tailor-made application of information technologies to a business environment, the wage system with its focus to individual reward and performance related pay structure, and the weak position of trade unions. According to these authors, employees are accepting such conditions, given the 'autonomy' in their work and the possibility to manage their workload and exact working hours. The authors also state that 'a lot of employees seem intrigued by the complex nature of the problems on their desk and the intrinsic motivation is high' (Plantenga and Remery, 2001: 45).

Trade unions and works councils have not enough strength to change such working conditions. Union membership is low and their rank and file are mostly male, young in age (50% is younger than 36), and often without children (Schilstra, 1998; Plantenga and Remery, 2001). Notwithstanding, most companies do have fulltime working week of 40 hours, and many collective agreements do contain stipulations on working times, for example with respect to the fulltime working week and overwork (Van den Brekel, 1999). The reduction of the working week, which was negotiated by the unions in many sectors in the Dutch economy, did not occur in the IT sector.

One may argue that the opportunities for men and women to achieve a good status position in IT are similar, as long as they are willing and able to work full-time (De Olde, 1990). Van den Brekel et al. (1999) already questioned the availability of women in comparison to men. They argue that 'in real life it's much harder for most women to work about 45 hours a week than it is for men, especially for those with children, as most of them still cannot rely on their partner for a substantial part of the house keeping and the daily care of the children'. Their statements are supported by earlier studies. A study conducted by trade union federation MHP (1999) showed that working part-time could have negative effects on careering. It appeared that the company culture and the conviction of executive management was a barrier for part-timers to have a career. The study argued that in the IT-companies DEC and Origin, which were part of the sample, part-time work hardly existed (Van den Brekel et al, 1999: 7).

In our interviews, it is indeed stated several times that people who work part-time have less chances for making a career than full-timers. In addition, personnel managers admit that for men and women differences appear, especially when women have children: the working culture in IT-companies

includes a high commitment to work, about which people are also evaluated. Overtime work and long working hours are generally expected, especially for IT-projects with deadlines. Some managers argue that women also suffer from work stress and travel hours are seen as problematic, since most of the employees of software houses are placed to work in other companies.

All personnel managers have argued that the wage system and the practice of long working hours do not make a direct difference to the performance of natives and indigenous persons. According to them, gender is a more important issue than ethnicity.

Table 3.11 Contract hours per week in computer service bureaus by gender.

Year	Men			Women		
	12-19 hours	20-34 hours	>35 hours	12-19 hours	20-34 hours	>35 hours
1998	Na.	Na.	94.7%	Na.	31.8%	Na.
2000	1.7%	5.1%	93.2%	4.2%	20.8%	75.0%
2001	0.9%	6.8%	92.3%	Na.	Na.	Na.

Source: calculated from CBS-statonline.

Table 3.12 Type of labour contract in computer service bureaus by gender

Year	Male		Female	
	wage earners permanent contract	self-employed	wage earners permanent contract	self-employed
1994	97.4%	Na.	90.0%	Na.
1995	97.5%	7.1%	90.0%	Na.
1996	97.9%	7.0%	85.7%	Na.
1997	98.3%	7.8%	93.3%	Na.
1998	97.7%	5.6%	94.7%	Na.
1999	96.8%	4.1%	90.5%	Na.
2000	97.1%	7.3%	91.3%	4.3%
2001	96.1%	6.9%	Na.	Na.

Source: calculated from CBS-statonline.

### 3.4 RECRUITMENT AND CONTRACT TYPES (HYPOTHESES 3)

#### Hypothesis 3a on recruitment

The labour market in Dutch IT is truly international. Especially the larger software houses employ people from many nationalities. In some cases more than 30 nationalities have been counted. In the Amsterdam region, where all headquarters are, we have been informed that; 'Many backpackers from Australia, US, Africa or elsewhere, appear and work for two or three years in the company, before they quit again'. The number IT-specialist of ethnic minorities is restricted. We have mentioned earlier that

when using a broad definition, the share of ethnic minorities reaches up to 11%, whereas a strict definition leads to on average 5.5 percent of workers with a Turkish, Moroccan, Surinam or Antillean background (data 2000). These groups work both in IT-positions and in other professions in the company.

In Dutch IT, software houses are the dominant form of employment. Enterprises make use of different recruitment channels. To start with, it is an understatement that in IT the use of the Internet for recruitment is not uncommon. Vacancies are announced in both the intranet and the Internet. Sometimes announcements appear in general and specialist newspapers and IT-journals. Some jobseekers send their curriculum vitae. In larger companies up to 100 CV's are received per month. Also informal forms of recruitment take place. Some managers hire relatives or bring people from other projects or companies where they have been working. The public employment service has not been mentioned as a way for recruitment, but the public employment offices have retrained many persons from unemployment to IT-positions to a substantial extent. We have also interviewed a manpower temporary agency office, which allocates employees to enterprises. Trade unions or works councils do not play a role in matching of demand and supply.

No company has a target for recruiting a certain proportion of women and ethnic minorities. No company has a policy for equal opportunities measures or affirmative action. In some interviews it was remarked, that *'regretfully affirmative action is forbidden by the legal authorities'* (IT 6).

The recruitment has thus above all an informal nature. There is no government or trade union control. In the past period of high economic growth and labour market scarcity, there was elevated competition between companies to hire people. These people were being compensated with rising starting salaries filled-up with extended on-the-job-benefits. The general opinion is that the IT-companies have been too generous to their employees. Today, the recruitment climate is cutback and skimped. In many companies, a hiring freeze has occurred.

Often, informal contacts play a role. People get known to each other via training courses, work experience (posting), or career and job changes. In one company, at least five years of working-experience was demanded for new entrants. Often, managers hire relatives or bring people they know from earlier work experience and projects. Here informal networks play a role. On the other hand, in interviews it was revealed that also many foreigners and travellers work in IT. Such employees have found a job after making them selves known via the Internet, sending their CV or

knocking on the door. Here, criteria such as the control of English language, the 'Weltanschauung' (work view, philosophy of life) and the subjective criterion of 'fitting in the team' play a role.

### **Promotion**

As a general rule people start working at entry positions. After evaluation of their performance employees can get promoted to higher positions when they perform well and specialise in new qualification. Promotion has taken place especially in the past labour market situation with many vacancies. In this period, *'the sky was the limit'*. In the current labour market, promotion is taking place at a less regular basis. This pattern is valid for both the job ladder for software engineers as for the job ladder for consultants. In the ladder for software engineers, experience with software packages and the capability to manipulate and develop new software will give them access to higher positions. In the ladder for consultants, work experience, control of software packages and management capabilities are required. Often people get promoted after a positive evaluation of their performance (see hypothesis 2). Additional courses and training are demanded, but can be provided also after the promotion to a higher position has been granted.

### **Gender and ethnic effects in promotion.**

Women and ethnic minorities not only have a marginal access to most IT companies, and especially to the job ladder of software engineers, they also make promotion to a far lesser extent. In some of the larger companies there were no women present in the top three to top five wage scales at all. Top management was exclusively male dominated. In other words, though some women enter into the company, they progress on the job ladder only to a limited extent.

Some managers argue that women are being trained on the job to a lesser extent than men, but they are not entirely sure since they had no data available. The difference in participation in further training between men and women is thus not a matter of fact. Some managers however suggest that women fail to specialise in a certain task, and therefore have no added value and cannot survive in the company in the longer run. The exit-rate of women is substantial, especially at the age of birth giving, and in many cases women do not make it to top-positions. In some companies there is a clear glass ceiling. Especially in the larger companies, women have complained to possess insufficient critical mass to change the male dominated working culture. *'Women getting higher in the top, are often hindered by abusive language, games, tricks, bad jokes and manipulation. You need to get supported by a higher manager, but often they fight together to reach the same position'* (IT 7). The existence of a

glass ceiling is however was reject by a women who was has set-up a multi-media company herself and was co-directing this from the beginning (IT 1).

Some interviewees have the impression that some ethnic minorities have somewhat lower ambitions than natives to further study and progress in their jobs. However again, this is an impression, not a matter of fact. On the other hand, many interviewees argue that they estimate the opportunities for male ethnic minorities better than for native women. Their argument is that ethnic minorities can compensate their lack of language and social skills with computer skills. A career in the job ladder for helpdesk employees is then the best option.

### **Hypothesis 3b on contract types**

In the Netherlands, many IT-companies work as software houses that hire employees on a permanent basis and send them temporarily to other business enterprises. This employment system is called 'posting' or 'secondment' (*detaching*). Employees do not work for their own account and risk, but have the status of employee. When a company A, places people to work at another company B, this person still is employee of company A (but works for company B). Because such persons do not work on a freelance base, the posting company takes all the risk, is liable for the worker, has to pay his salary when he is ill et cetera. This situation is an exception in Europe. In most other countries (esp. UK, US), people will work either for own account, or as employee of the company they are really employed at.

The Dutch legal system has drafted different criteria for the rights and accountability of employees. The legal system protects the employee against the employer on the following grounds:

- There are strict terms of notice (recite);
- The employer is liable for his employee;
- In case of illness, the employer has to pay an ill employee for 2 years at least 70% of his salary;
- After 3 contracts for a period of time with the same employer, the 4th contract will be automatically for permanent period (The "Flexlaw").

New entrants in a company have a probationary period. This period varies in between one week and one month. Some employees start with a contract of six months or one year. Normally, they

will get a permanent contract after one year. The Flexibility and Security Act (1999) prescribes that after three temporary contracts a permanent contract needs be offered by the employer. We have no information about the impact on gender or ethnicity.

### **Hypothesis 3c on employment protection.**

Many larger IT companies originate from US head quarters. It is no secret that the American and Dutch labour regulation differs systematically. In the Netherlands, US companies with their American informal culture (no unions, performance evaluation et cetera) have to apply the Dutch labour regulation. In the field of employment protection, some managers in IT-companies (with extended tenure and de facto life-long employment) are of opinion that the Dutch employment regulation is too strict, though they do not hold the opinion that a kind of American firing regulation should be introduced (IT 1) . They are of opinion that the Dutch employment protection should be relaxed and flexibilised to a certain extent. Permanent employees are too well protected, which makes it difficult to change the internal organisation and to hire new groups in the organisation. In other companies, the circulation into and out of the company is substantial. Here tenure is only three to four years and employment protection is not seen as problematic (IT 5; IT 8).

In the current economic conjuncture, many IT projects have gone flat. Employees are waiting workless on their desks (they are called 'bankzitters' in Dutch). Especially consultant-jobs will disappear. The software houses are not allowed to reorganise the company without informing their works councils. Often they have to draft a social plan with the trade unions and to formally ask permission of implementing lay-off of more than ten persons. As a general rule, people with less-qualifications will be dismissed.

Overall, the information provided under the heading of on employment protection is of general nature; there is no evidence available that employment protection more directly relates to women and ethnic minorities than to indigenous men. There is neither any information that women or ethnic minorities are fired to a larger extent than men, though one can presume that when 'last-in-first-out'-systems are being applied, the most recent newcomers, and this are often women and ethnic minorities, will be discharged first.



### **3.5 SOCIAL BENEFITS (HYPOTHESIS 4)**

In the interviews it appeared that the societal division of labour between men and women has an impact in the work process as well. Some managers argued that in their company there is evidence that men more than women are expected to make a career in IT. The manager explained that at moments of working time reduction, women reduced their labour time to part-time jobs more often than men do. The manager argued that surprisingly traditional role models were applied in the industry (IT 7).

#### **Social benefits, fringe benefits, part-time work**

In many companies fringe benefits exist. As a general rule, people receive monthly salaries with 8% holiday allowance. In most larger companies, there are financial resources for nursery's, care for children, additional leisure, et cetera. Some companies support flexible labour hours by facilitating laptops and on-line connections between the enterprise and the home-address. Part-time work is however traditionally only allowed in a restricted number of companies. Some American companies have never allowed it, because it was forbidden by the CEO or the top-level company board. The reason often is that companies with a quotation at the stock exchange like to have an optimal 'benefit-number of staff' ratio. The companies fear that part-time work troubles their benchmark. On the other hand, at former Dutch state companies, such as Pink Roccade, part-time work is allowed for more than ten year now, there the over-all number of women is at 21%, higher than the industry average.

### **3.6 ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES (HYPOTHESIS 5)**

No company makes use of active labour market policies. Employment subsidies are below the range of the salaries paid to IT-employees.

Some companies mention the relationship with higher professional training schools in IT, in order to guarantee the continuity of the inflow of new entrants, but such relations are fragile and not structurally implemented (IT 10).

One company mentioned that they have supported active labour market policies in the 'women-trade-schools (vrouwen-vak-school), by offering computers to the students, but these projects have not been continued. After the project was finished, the women would be prepared for getting a job

in IT. In spite of the good attempts of the holding of the company, problems were felt on the work-floor where people should be guided. That took managers too much time and energy; it proved to be ineffective.

Another company argues that it has financially supported labour market insertion programs in Amsterdam South East, where the many Surinam and Antillean people live. But this manager holds a very negative opinion about such initiatives. In his opinion, such programs should not be continued, he argued that all investment is not spent well; he has not seen any results from such initiatives (IT 8).

### **Good practices**

Some companies are proud of having more equal and fair employment conditions than other companies. Some companies argue positively about the existence of the collective agreement.

Many companies internally discuss the growth of women in their own staff. One company explicitly attempts to initiate a policy for diversity management. This is initiated from the top management in the US. The reason for this policy shift is that it is believed that customers of IT-companies are more diverse than the work force of the IT-company is. The policy will be stimulated by the appointment of a particular equal opportunities manager for all Europe countries. All local HR-employees will be evaluated on their contribution in all areas of their work: recruitment, evaluation, reward et cetera. Examples include: announcement for job vacancies will be checked for Muslim holidays and food. The US company board insists that the percentage of female employees, ethnic employees, and people from other cultures, religion and conviction should be increased until a level of 10% above industry average.

Only in exceptional cases, companies have argued about the existence of positive examples. When we went to interview these companies, it appeared indeed that in these companies the number of women was above industry average. This was explained from both the fact that the enterprise is known as, firstly, a social and trustable employer and, secondly, that part-time work is allowed.

### **3.7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

In the IT-sector, our respondents see segregation as a problem for several reasons:

1. The unequal access into the sector and to higher status positions.
2. The high labour costs associated with a lack of qualified employees.
3. The too extended working hours for the people in the industry.

A summary of the structural barriers for women mentioned in the interviews:

1. The informal working culture in IT companies, where women suffer from the dominance of male employees. The working ethos is an important point. People are expected to work long hours, also in the evening and weekends. In some cases also remarks have been made about sexual harassment and intimidation. Women have insufficient critical mass to change the company culture. More specifically with regard to the recruitment of women in the ICT sector, flexible working time patterns and flexible terms of employment may be an important element in attracting (or retaining) women.
2. The lack of possibilities to work part-time. Part-time work is allowed only after government intervention. In many American companies the work culture or the stock exchange quotation does not support part-time contracting.
3. The lack of flexible nurseries for children up to four years in age and flexible opening hours of schools for children visiting primary schools do not allow mothers to work in IT.
4. The time to spend on transport to and back from work.
5. The way of evaluation of performance related pay is believed to put stress on women.

Reasons mentioned in the interviews of the structural barriers for ethnic minorities.

- a. The informal working culture dominated by white males and the lack of sufficient critical mass.
- b. The presumed lack of ambition.

## **Consequences for the hypotheses**

Hypothesis 1 on education. The first part of the hypothesis on vulnerable groups competing for jobs is difficult to verify. We lack data on the direct substitution of employees with lower and higher qualifications. Also the ethnic and gender division in the acquirement and development of qualifications is not entirely clear. The second part of the hypothesis on the difficulties to require the competences needed seems to hold some truth. There is evidence that many women leave the IT-sector after some period of time. In one way or another they do not get the required set of qualifications, that is needed to survive in the competition for jobs among with men. We have also gathered some remarks about selection and self-selection of ethnic minorities in higher professional and academic education. They need guidance and support. This part of the research needs further interpretation by the comparison with other sectors and with other countries. We will come back to this topic in the conclusions of this paper.

Hypothesis 2 on wage setting. The wage setting forms and the ways of evaluation play a role in IT-companies. All work is evaluated in terms of performance. In larger companies organization schemes exists allowing for comparison of functions and grades. Within these levels, output determines the relative success of employees. The effects of performance evaluation on ethnicity are not clear. It has been mentioned that ethnic minorities perhaps are less ambitious. This needs further study. The effects of performance evaluation on the position of women might be negative, they value negatively about the culture of evaluation and the need to constantly show their performance.

Hypothesis 3. The hypothesis on informal selection gets support. Informal recruitment supports both relatives looking for jobs and gives also opportunities for unknown foreign people who can fit 'in the team'. The hypothesis 3b on flexible contract forms is not very relevant in the Dutch case, where most have permanent jobs. The hypothesis 3c on employment protection is relevant in the current situation of reorganisation and lay-offs. The effect on gender and ethnic issues can hardly be established since we have no information about the application of last-in-first out mechanisms. When such mechanisms are applied it can be presumed that especially women and ethnic minorities experience the consequences, since these categories have on average been recruited more recently.

Hypothesis 4 on social benefits. On the job benefits give more opportunities to women. Especially the possibilities to work part-time helps women to enter the industry, although it has also been argued that part-timers do not make a career. Nothing can be said about ethnic minorities, since we

have not found evidence about this relationship. This hypothesis needs to be evaluated in comparison with the situation in other countries.

The hypothesis 5 on active labour market policies is not relevant for IT and cannot be verified.

### **Other mechanisms beyond those discussed in the hypotheses**

There are several additional mechanisms not directly discussed in the hypotheses, but which prove to play a role in the allocation of gender and ethnicity in the labour market:

1. the nature of the working culture.
2. the technical orientation of boys and the a-technical orientation of girls in primary and secondary education.
3. the large crisis of scientific and mathematic education who both suffer from a very low image and a lack of new students.

### **Conclusions**

In the Dutch software sector there is no heritage of institutionalised cooperation between enterprises and trade unions. On the contrary, individual employment relations prevail and only in some cases collective agreements exist, only at the firm level. The system of secondment allows that many employees hold permanent employment relations with their employer.

In general, personnel managers hold positive opinions about the chances for ethnic minorities to enter the internal labour market of IT-companies. They believe that they will have added value, especially due to the variety in their cultural background, which may support the entrepreneurial creativity that is required for the successful implementation of IT-applications. Moreover it is argued that ethnic minorities, by specializing in technical studies, can compensate their lack in language and communication skills. The critical condition for the inflow into the sector is believed to be the additional guidance of new entrants.

In this male-dominated industry, the working conditions with their attention to performance appear to be less favourable for women than for men. For women, we therefore arrive at other conclusions. At first sight, when the ICT sector is compared to other segregated sectors, the IT employees are relatively young and highly educated. In the 1990s, when the IT sector quickly

expanded and industrial relations reached some maturity, the societal norms about working attitude and performance are in line with individual responsibility and personal effort as stressed in many IT companies (see SCP, 1999). One may argue that such conditions are relatively favourable for a substantial inflow of female employees (see also Plantenga en Remery, 2001). We have however been informed that the number of women is restricted since 'there are no women applying for jobs in IT', and when they are working in IT it is argued that 'they quit earlier than men do'.

It appears that the conditions for working in IT differ substantially for both men and women. Although the size of our sample does not allow us to divide small, new starting companies on the one hand and large, mature companies on the other hand, one should further investigate such differences. In the older companies, many of them originally coming from manufacturing industry, we came across what has been described as 'bureaucratic and hierarchical' internal organizations, in which HRM policies were being developed with help of information technology. For example, extended personnel information systems, recruitment and selection took place with help of internet and the individual choice for several forms of employment conditions could be made with help of integrated computer programs. Within such companies, the introduction of a kind of diversity management oriented to balance the gender composition in the companies should be integrated in the standard working procedures in all HRM-specialisations, regarding both the job ladder for software specialists and the job ladder for consultants.

In the smaller, younger and more flexible organizations, where jobs are quickly upgraded and broadened, the mix of technological, social, organizational and communicative skills is important for creating economic profits. In this kind of organisations, informal networks with clients and the interpersonal relations between colleagues matter a lot. Given the speed of technological change and the increasing diversity in the Dutch labour force, it is expected that women and ethnic minorities may fill particular niches to create value added in such companies. In these companies, the under-provision of collective goods such as training, the availability of nurseries and the possibilities for part-time work should be realized with help of the state and networks of companies.

In all cases, the attention to flexible working hours, the possibility to work part-time, the importance of training and specialization, are perhaps more important than high salaries and extended fringe benefits. The rise of successful role models can also change the educational segregation due to the attitudes and choices of girls in technological and informational education.

## **4 THE PRINTING INDUSTRY**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION: THE DUTCH PRINTING INDUSTRY**

In the project we have defined the printing industry as the activity taking place in NACE-code 22.2, which is labelled 'printing and service activities related to printing' - it contains the sub-sectors 'printing of newspapers', 'printing n.e.c.', 'bookbinding', 'pre-press related activities' and 'ancillary activities related to printing'. 22.2 is part of the 22 'publishing, printing and reproduction of recorded media'.

In 2001 the total number of employees working in the printing industry was 56.000, of which 43.000 men and 13.000 women. This amounts to 1.1 percent of the Dutch workforce. The printing industry in the Netherlands is traditionally a male dominated sector with a lot of old family businesses and high tenure. Approximately 80 percent of the companies have less than 20 employees (Leisink and Leisink, 2002). The printing industry can be divided in pre-press companies (preparation of the printing process), printing shops/companies, finishing companies (finalizing the printing process) and remaining printing companies.

The employment in the printing industry has decreased during the 1990s. Especially in the pre-press companies the number of employees dropped dramatically. The decline in the number of employees also went together with a decline in the number of trainees in the printing industry. The number of apprentices on the total number of workers declined from 6,1 percent in 1992 to 1,2 percent in 1997 (Leisink & Leisink 2002: 22). Currently, in 2002, the trade unions are very much concerned with the redundancies and reorganizations in the sector.<sup>14</sup>

The most important cause for the changes in the printing industry in the 1990s is the developments in the information and communication technology. At the end of the 1980s the pre-press companies were confronted with an information technology revolution, which transformed the traditionally manual industry into a high-tech process industry. Traditionally the classical printing process always existed of separate text and image processing, with a compositor, lithographer, assembler, et cetera. However, due to the digitalisation of the information the processing of text and images was digitalized and integrated and a substantial part of the pre-press work became superfluous. At the same time rationalization of printing presses led to a reduction of the number of required printers and a substantial capacity increase (Leisink & Leisink 2002: 22-25).

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with two trade union officials in the printing sector, July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2002.

Research shows that pre-press companies were the first with mass laid offs of pre-press and administrative personnel. After that, printing companies followed. Most redundancies were in relatively large companies (over 50 staff members). The most important reasons for dismissals were reorganisations, bankruptcies, or lack of orders (74 percent). Especially in the beginning of the 1990s dismissals were for these economic reasons. Other reasons were disability (14 percent) and incompetence (12 percent) (Teunen, 1996).

### **Women's and ethnic minorities' position in the printing industry**

The dismissal of personnel in the printing industry had a negative effect on special company and government policies for the employment of low qualified, female and ethnic minority workers.

Since the end of the 1970s the share of women within the printing sector had increased. Women were predominately working in assistance jobs, assembly, and administrative jobs. They were underrepresented in highly skilled technical professions. The share of women was especially low in printing jobs and managerial positions. Most executive jobs are fulfilled by technical personnel, which explains the under representation of women in these positions.

During the first half of the 1990s due to redundancies especially the share of women in the technical printing professions has decreased. The percentage of women in the different professional categories varies: there is a high share of female employees in administrative jobs (55 percent), a low share in technical professions (14 percent), and even a lower share in executive positions (6 percent). Most discharged women had administrative jobs, low-skilled assistant jobs or traditional jobs as skilled pre-press workers. Precisely in these technical printing jobs, the share of women among dismissed workers is high. 20 percent of all dismissed apprentices are female.

The reasons for dismissal differ for male and female workers: for male workers incompetence as reason for dismissal is twice as high as for female workers (40,3 percent versus 20,6 percent). For women disability is more often a reason for dismissal than for men (14,7 versus 2,7 percent) (Teunen, 1996: 33-36). The share of women is larger in large companies than in small companies. However, because of the relative high percentages of dismissals of women in large companies, the difference between small and large companies in this respect is getting smaller.

There are no figures available for ethnic minority workers, but it is likely that because of the fact that a high percentage of ethnic minority workers are employed in low skilled jobs, their share in the printing work force has decreased (Teunen, 1996). An additional reason for the severe job loss for women and ethnic minorities is the frequent use of the last-in-first-out-principal in the printing companies. This means that in times of recession the young and the flex employees are the first to



be laid off, which also has a negative effect on the share of ethnic minorities, youth and women in the printing labour force.<sup>15</sup>

### **Labour demand in the printing industry**

Growth in employment in the printing industry is predominantly concentrated in the new media occupations in, such as WEB-design, IT-development, and multimedia management. Partly this growth is outside the printing sector. Because of the continuous economic boom and the decreasing number of school leavers the sector has to cope with labour shortages since 1999. The number of vacancies in 2002 was considerably lower than in 2001 (15 percent versus 21 percent). The average number of vacancies per company dropped from 1.9 to 1.7. The total number of vacancies in the printing sector was 876. The middle-sized companies (10-99 employees) have the highest number of vacancies, but also the small companies (less than 10 workers) have labour shortages. The biggest demand is for skilled printers (272 vacancies or 33 percent of total vacancies), second for pre-press personnel (181 or 22,7 percent of total vacancies), thirdly the demand for skilled and unskilled workers in final production stage (231 or 26 percent of total vacancies) (Teunen, 2002a). A survey among printing companies (Teunen, 2002a) showed that almost half of the companies (48 percent) were willing to train apprentices to fill the vacancies. This sums up to a total of 367 apprentices. Half of the companies (51 percent) were willing to fill their vacancies with 'specific applicants', such as elder, disabled and part-time workers. People with no work experience or who do not master the Dutch language have the least chance to get employed.

### **Chances of school leavers**

Both employers and trade union officials have a high appreciation for the vocational education system for the printing sector in the Netherlands (the GOC). They find it of good quality and very up to date. The vocational education institutes had suffered a decrease of new entrances over the last few years. According to the trade union officials this is due to a general decline in the number of new entrances in vocational training, which the trade union has no answer to. To tackle the problem, the social partners in the sector started an image-campaign in 2000 to stimulate youth to choose for a profession in the printing sector.<sup>16</sup>

In 2002 the GOC conducted a research on the careers of school leavers in the printing industry (Teunen, 2002b). Approximately 30 percent of the trainees in the printing vocational education leave school without a diploma. According to the schools the most important factors for dropping

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid

out are: preparatory education level is too low; most important reason for apprentices to choose an apprenticeship is the practical experience, not the theoretical part. According to the trainees the main reasons for dropping out are: the situations within companies, the wages, bad contacts with colleagues, too theoretical, lack of motivation, wrong vocational choice, lack of career perspectives in the sector.

In general school leavers tend to find employment relatively easy: 70 percent of school leavers have a job within one month after leaving school, after a year 90 percent has a job. One third of the school leavers start or remain working in the company in which they were trained, 13 percent find work via a job add, 19 percent via an employment or agency, 21 percent via family or friends and 3 percent via internet (Teunen, 2002b). Most school leavers (74 percent) say that the tasks they are fulfilling in their jobs are in accordance with their qualification level. School leavers have more career opportunities in large firms than in smaller companies.

### Recruitment methods

To fulfil their vacancies, companies use different methods for recruiting staff. For large companies the most important recruiting methods were: their own network of relations, and advertising. For the small companies, the own network was by far the main method for finding staff. Only a quarter of the large and 14 percent of the small companies used the Internet as a recruitment channel.

Table 4.1 Share of companies using a specific recruitment method

Recruitment Method	Large companies in %	Small companies in %
Own network of relations	55	79
Advertising	53	12
Temp agencies	30	8
Internet	24	14
Apprenticeships	18	31
Open applications	16	21
Recruitment and selection agencies	7	0
Employment bureau	2	2
Other	5	1
Total number of companies	210	168
Average number of recruitment methods	2,1	1,7

Source: Leisink, P. Teunen, J. & J. Boumans, 2000: 93.

Policies developed by companies to solve the problems around staff turnover and difficult-to-fill vacancies vary per company size: large companies were mainly focusing on efforts to bind present personnel by meeting personal wishes, extra recruitment and employability policies. The small companies first of all concentrated on seeking co-operation with other companies, and in the second place binding present staff and third employability policies. Two-thirds of large companies would certainly hire someone who qualified for a vacant job by means of retraining. In small companies this was only a quarter. For most small companies this depended mainly on the person concerned in relation to the vacancy concerned (Teunen, 2000).

### **Vertical mobility**

Although professional skills in the printing are highly valued, the career possibilities in the printing industry are very limited, especially in the smaller companies. In large companies there are more possibilities to make a career, but according to the FNV KIEM trade union officials nepotism plays an important role in promotion decisions.

For an industry such as printing, which is constantly subject to rapid technological changes, employability policies are of great importance. On average, 60 percent of the workers in large companies and 70 percent of the employees in small companies was employable in a wide range of jobs. 60 percent of the large companies offered many facilities for training and development of staff, and over two-thirds did much about motivating their workers to improve their skills for a wide range of jobs. In the small companies less efforts were made to improve the employability of staff. Only 30 percent of the small companies offered many facilities for training and development, and only 37 percent did much about motivating their employees for training. Knowledge of the availability of relevant courses is an important condition for companies in motivating workers to participate in training programmes: 70 percent of the large companies had (very) good knowledge of the availability of courses against 44 percent of the smaller companies. Another aspect of employability policies of companies is career planning: 50 percent of the large companies did very much about stimulating their employees to actively explore future steps in their careers against 25 percent of the smaller companies.

## **4.2 ANALYSIS OF THE MICRO LEVEL FINDINGS: INTRODUCTION AND STATISTICAL OVERVIEW**

This section discusses the findings of our fieldwork. We have interviewed representatives of vocational training institutes and trade union organizations and we have selected eleven printing firms that employed at least one female or ethnic minority worker. Since the printing industry in the Netherlands is mainly composed of small enterprises (80 percent has less than 20 employees) the majority of the selected enterprises were small firms. We have included 8 firms with 4 to 15 employees, and 3 with over 100 employees. Three out of the 8 smaller firms were family businesses, specialized in offset printing of brochures, visiting cards, birth announcement cards, et cetera. Two smaller firms had a socialist background; they were set up in the beginning of the seventies by members of the leftist/socialist protest movement in Amsterdam. The remaining three were specialized in printing of books, brochures, journals, magazines, et cetera. Two of the larger printing companies were rotation printers specialized in newspapers and the other was an offset printer, specialized in books.

The total number of employees in the small firms is 66, of which 24 printers. The total number of women is 17 (all indigenous), of which 3 female printers, 2 managing directors and 10 pre-press workers. The number of ethnic minorities is 5 (all male), of which 3 printers (+ one managing director and one organising executive).

The total number of employees in the larger companies is 538, of which 124 printers. The larger firms also have a relatively low share of women and ethnic minorities, especially in printing: Out of 124 printers 6 are women and 13 are members of ethnic minority groups. Table 4.2 gives an overview of the selected companies in terms of size of the enterprise and share of women and ethnic minorities within the firms. These figures cannot be generalised for the entire sector, because of the selection criterion of at least one female or ethnic minority employee.

Table 4.2. Fieldwork in printing

Firm	City	Size	Number of women	Number of EM	Number of printers	Female printers	EM printers
P1	Amsterdam	204			64	4	8 (of which 1 foreman)
P2	Den Haag	108	8 (administrative work, HRM-department)	9 (prepress, finishing)	12	0	0
P3	Amsterdam	168			48	2	5
P4	Amsterdam	12	3	1	2	0	1
P5	Amsterdam	4	0	2 (1 manager)	3	0	1
P6	Amsterdam (s1)	12	3 (of which 1 manager)	1 (director)	3	0	0
P7	Amsterdam (s2)	8	3	0	2	0	0
P8	Wormerveer	10	3 (1 manager)	0	4	1	0
P9	Zaandijk	8	3 (1 manager)	1	4	1	1
P10	Haarlem	4	0	0	2	0	0
P11	Zaandijk	8	2	0	3	0	0

### 4.3 EDUCATION AND TRAINING (HYPOTHESIS 1)

The printing process in the Netherlands requires skilled workers. Both in the larger and in the smaller firms, (almost) all the printers were qualified printers with a printing diploma, which is on pre-vocational secondary education level. It is a 2 years learning and on the job training scheme (apprenticeship). Once employed, printers can take various training courses in order to learn how to operate other presses. In only two firms we found that one of the printers did not have the required qualifications. This is highly exceptional in the Netherlands.

The graphic vocational education system is divided in five educational levels, of which level 1 is the lowest vocational training level. There are no preparatory education requirements to enter and level 1-employees do very low to unskilled work. Level 5 is on the highest vocational training level. Table 4.3 gives an overview of the vocational training system. Students can get their qualifications via two education routes:

- Vocational training schemes (BOL = Beroepsopleidende leerweg): In this scheme 70 percent of the training is theory (within the training institute) and 30 percent is practical experience in printing companies.
- Vocational 'apprenticeship' training schemes (BBL = Beroepsbegeleidende leerweg): 30 percent theory and 70 percent practical experience.

It is also possible to have a mixture of these education routes (for example 1 year BOL and 1 year BBL).

Table 4.3 Vocational training and education in printing

Vocational training level	Job content	Job level	Duration of training	Required preparatory training
Level 1: Graphic assistant	Assistance in the daily graphic process: cleaning of machines, refilling of ink, paper, etc.	Very low to unskilled work	1 year	Non required
Level 2: Assistant printer	Basic printing work	Skilled work	2 years	Graphic assistant/ pre-vocational secondary education
Level 3: offset printing, silk screen printing, engraving, etc	Advanced printing work	Skilled work	3 years	Level 2 diploma, pre-vocational secondary education
Level 4: Graphic designer, creative desk top publishing (dtp), management	Designing, dtp, management, coordination and planning	Skilled work	4 years	Level 3 diploma/ Pre-vocational secondary training diploma
Level 5: Graph media technology	Development of Graph media-technology	Highly skilled	4 years	Level 4 diploma/ Secondary vocational training, pre-university education diploma, senior general secondary education

Printers are qualified on level 2 and 3. In theory employees can make a career from a job on level 1 to a level 5 profession. In practice (in the companies we have visited), vertical mobility from employees working on level 2 to level 3 is most common. In some cases there is mobility from level 1 to 2, or from level 3 to 4. Mobility from people working on level 4 to level 5 is highly unusual, because most (small) printing companies do not have employees working on level 5 as graph media technologists.

The most received answer to the question why there are relatively few ethnic minorities or women among the employees in the printing profession is that there simply are very few women or ethnic minorities applying for a job as a printer. According to most interviewees there are not many qualified ethnic minority/female printers. They point out that the number of both women and ethnic minorities in the graphic vocational training institutes is very low.

However, if women attend these institutes they tend to choose designing, advertising, desktop publishing (these are 4 year courses on secondary vocational training level), and not printing (which

is a 2 years course on primary vocational training level). This means that in the Netherlands men choose relatively more often for graphic vocational training, but women in the graphical training institutes tend to take relatively more often courses on secondary vocational level. The women in the smaller printing firms that we have visited (4 to 15 employees) are on average higher educated than the men.<sup>17</sup> As far as promotion is concerned, in none of the cases it would have been considered a vertical promotion for these women to become a printer instead of a designer or a desktop publisher (dtp). Mobility the other way around - from printer to dtp, designer or preparatory worker – is looked upon as a promotion. In three occasions this has happened.

One of the managers of the smaller firms (a Surinamese manager) argues that there is no under-representation of qualified ethnic minority printers. He stresses that there are enough Surinamese, Turkish or Antillean printers, but they experience more difficulties in finding a job than their indigenous counterparts. After a long period of job-hunting they leave the printing sector. He mentions acceptance of white male printers as one of the most important reasons that ethnic minorities have difficulties in finding a job in this sector. The average age of printers is rather high (approximately 45). These men have always worked with colleagues who – in social and cultural respect -are very similar to them. They are set in their own ways and it is hard for them to accept employees that differ from them. He emphasises that in most cases it is not racism or discrimination, but difficulties with accepting something new.

#### **4.4 WAGES, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS (HYPOTHESIS 2)**

All employees in printing are covered by the collective agreement for the graphic-media industry. Four employers' associations and three trade unions are partners the collective agreement.<sup>18</sup> All firms pay wages according to the wage scales in the collective bargaining agreements. The agreement distinguishes 11 functional groups (level A to K). These scales are based on criteria such as qualifications, complexity of the work and seniority. As a general rule the more experienced a printer gets, the more (s)he earns. Low or unskilled workers, such as helpers, porters, et cetera are rewarded according function level A to B. Starting printers with a 2 years primary vocational training

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<sup>17</sup> This does not apply for the women in the larger firms, because these companies have more low skilled manual workers and more (skilled) administrative jobs. In both categories the percentage of women is relatively high, which has an impact on the average qualification level.

<sup>18</sup> Employers' associations: The Royal Association for Graphic Enterprises (Koninklijk Verbond van Grafische Ondernemingen –KVGO), the Association for Small Graphic Enterprises (Vereniging voor Kleinere grafische ondernemingen), the Association for Silc Screen companies (Vereniging voor Zeefdruk en Sign Ondernemingen), the Association for Dutch Daily Press).

Trade unions: The Dutch trade union for the graphic industry (FNV KIEM), the Christian trade union for the graphic industry (Dienstenbond CNV), the trade union for middle and higher employees (de Unie).

qualification, are paid according function level C. More qualified and experienced printers are classified in function levels D to G (G= managerial printing position). Prepress workers with qualifications on a four years secondary vocational training level are classified in level D to F.

Table 4.4 Wage levels in the printing collective agreements

Function scale	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
Starting salary (in euro)	1350	1400	1475	1550	1630	1725	1835	2000	2160	2400	2700
Maximum salary (in euro)	1550	1625	1740	1860	2000	2160	2365	2650	3000	3460	4050

All firms paid at least according to and in a great number of cases above the agreed wage levels. None of the firms had a bonus system or other performance related additional payment above the monthly salary. All interviewees indicated that printing is a relatively well-paid profession. We have found no indications that the wage system is disadvantageously for women or ethnic minorities.

#### 4.5 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION (HYPOTHESIS 3)

In cases of vacancies, firms use various recruitment channels. All firms recruit via graphic temp agencies, ads in (local) newspapers and word of mouth. One of the larger companies was also very keen on recruiting employees from (smaller) firms that went bankrupt. There are no great differences in the recruitment channels used by larger and smaller firms. There are also no differences in the channels used for recruiting male, female or ethnic minority workers. However, there is a distinction between the selection procedures of larger and smaller firms. Larger firms tend to work with more formalized and standardized selection procedures, which (seemingly) leads to selection based on more objective criteria. The selection criteria and job interviews in smaller firms are often far less formalized.

The informal way of selecting personnel leaves more latitude for subjective criteria.

Especially in the smaller firms preferences of firms affected the chances of female and ethnic minority workers. Subjective criteria such as ‘fitting in the team’ appeared to play an important role in deciding whether or not an applicant was suitable for the job. ‘Fitting in the team’ can mean all kind of things. Different firms have different preferences. Sometimes fitting in the team means being young, flexible, hard working, whereas other firms prefer older, more experienced workers. In two cases political or religious ideology played a role in ‘fitting in the team’. Both cases it concerned ‘the



socialist' printing firms. They argued that employees with conservative or right-extremist political views would not fit in the organisation. Although the vast majority of the interviewees argue that it did not matter to them whether an applicant is male/female, black or white, as long as the person is qualified for the job, we have found both negative and positive examples of gender or ethnic biased preferences. One interviewee (P7) indicated that his company would not hire Muslims (or any other actively religious persons for that matter), because the workers in that company were anti-religious. According to the interviewee the religious beliefs of Muslims would also clash with the print-work they produced.<sup>19</sup>

A negative illustration of gender preference occurred in another firm (P5). This firm previously had negative experiences with a female printer. There were tensions between this female printer and the rest of the (male) printers, partly related to her being a woman. After her resignation the male workers did not want another female colleague, because 'there was always trouble with women'.

Preferences relating to gender or ethnicity appear to be only in the advantage of women and ethnic minorities in case the person in charge of recruiting staff is female or of ethnic minority background. Two interviewees (both female owners/managing directors) stated that they preferred to have more female employees within the firm. They argued that it would positively influence the attitude on the work floor: for example male workers tended to pay extra attention to their language in the presence of women (which would diminish the use of rude or abusive language). Another important argument for one of the female managing directors for preferring a female co-worker was that she had to work very closely with new employees. The male applicants she had interviewed were all older, self-willed men who already during the interview (indirectly) indicated that they would not easily accept the authority of a young, female managing director.

So, informal selection procedures can influence the chances of women and ethnic minorities. But also formalized procedures based on seemingly objective selection criteria can have a negative impact on the chances of these workers. For example an objective requirement such as 'long work experience' can reduce the chances of ethnic minority workers. One of the larger firms argued that they preferred to work with older; more experienced printers over age 40, because these printers produced higher quality products. Because most of first generation ethnic minority workers came to the Netherlands as low-skilled workers, there are hardly any printers among these workers. Also 'neutral' vacancy texts can influence the chances of women applying for a job, such as not wanting people with a 'nine to five' mentality (possibly meaning a lot of overtime or irregular hours).

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<sup>19</sup> This firm was specialised in art and leftist journals.

Finally, the way the job interview is conducted can both in formal and informal selection procedures affect the chances of women and ethnic. This was illustrated by the Surinamese manager (P5). He argued that he had a different style of interviewing applicants than his white colleagues. For example, his white colleagues are in general very sceptical about printers who have been unemployed for quite a period of time. This is something we came across several times. One of the other interviewees even told us that his experience was that 'there was something wrong with long-term unemployed printers: good printers could always find employment and had no reason to be unemployed'.<sup>20</sup> The Surinamese interviewee argued that because it is relatively harder for ethnic minority printers to find a job, they are relatively longer unemployed. He said that the approach of such a candidate during the job interview is important: instead of being suspicious of a long-term unemployed one should have more appreciation for people who, after many rejections, are still motivated to get a job in the printing industry.

### **Promotion**

All companies provide further training for their employees. In the printing industry it is vital that employees keep up with new technology. So, further training of employees is stimulated by the management and is accessible for all personnel. Further training is not so much seen as a right for employees, but is more or less considered as an obligation for employees: they have to keep pace with new developments. Training courses are external. We have found no evidence for differences in participation in training programmes between male/female and ethnic minority/indigenous workers.

Further training of printers hardly relates to promotion. First of all promotion opportunities for printers are scarce: they can move up on the executive ladder (become foreman) or they can shift to pre press. However, the interviewees indicate that most printers have no desire to get promoted. Printers are technically skilled workers who have consciously chosen for the printing profession. Promotion often means leaving that profession. Most printers do want to get extra training to specialise and expand their skills even further, but they do not feel the urge to climb on the executive ladder. Furthermore, printers in the Netherlands are very well paid skilled workers, which makes that the financial gain of a promotion is relatively small. In 4 cases firms had 'promoted' a printer over the last two years: in one case a Surinamese printer was promoted to foreman (in a larger company); in a second case a Surinamese printer was promoted to manager (a small firm); in the two other cases printers were 'promoted' to pre-pressers (both white males). In case of

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<sup>20</sup> In general, school leavers from the graphic training institute tend to find employment relatively easy: According to the report *Schoolverlaters grafmediabranche uitstroom 1999 en 2000* (2002) 70% of the school leavers has a job within one month after graduation. After a year, 90% of the school leavers has employment. The report does not

vacancies, all the firms indicated that they examine the possibilities to promote an employee from a lower level first.

### **Contract forms and employment protection**

In all companies printers were employed on a permanent contract. The larger firms did hire employees on temporary contracts, but only low-skilled workers (porters, et cetera) not printers. The average tenure is very high. Workers are firstly hired on a trial period of 6 months, before receiving a permanent contract. In this sense there are no differences in the contract types of male, female and ethnic minority printers.

Contract forms appear to have a negative impact on the labour market performance of women in another way than we have presupposed. Not temporary contracts, but the lack of possibilities to work part-time in the printing profession appeared to be an obstacle for women. Part-time work for printers is seen as a difficult issue. Only one of the twelve interviewees argued that it was possible for printers to work part-time. The other interviewees were absolutely against part-time printers and said that they would not allow their printers to work less than full-time. For the other occupations, the pre pressers, et cetera part-time work was an option. With the exception of one, none of the female printers had children. The interviewees named several reasons why according to them it was not possible for printers to work part-time:

- The machines had to be operated during the entire week. If a printer would work part-time, this would mean that his/her machine would not be operated that part of the week.
- In case of two part-timers instead of one full-timer, it is difficult to find two printers, who each wanted to work part-time and could operate the same machines. Furthermore, they feared problems with printers constantly having to take over each other's work and each other's machines.
- In case of shift work, management faced difficulties with the work schedules.
- If printers work part-time it takes longer for them to acquire the work experience needed to be an expertly skilled worker.

The managing director of the only firm that employed a part-time printer (a female printer who recently had a child) said that his firm had no problems with the fact that this printer did not work full time. In order to make it possible for the female printer to work part-time the organisation was restructured and the printing tasks were re-divided among the printers.

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have information on the share of women and ethnic minorities in the 10% that does not find a job within a year.

There is no evidence that employment protections had any effect on the chances of women and ethnic minorities.

#### **4.5 BENEFITS, ACTIVITIES AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES (HYPOTHESIS 4)**

Social benefits in the Netherlands are either regulated by law on national level or part of collective bargaining agreements on sector level. Leave schemes, childcare and working time arrangements are generally laid down in regulation on national level that provide a framework within which social partners stipulate their agreements.

There are various leave schemes in the Netherlands. Pregnancy and maternity leave is a legal entitlement of female employees in the Netherlands. The leave lasts a minimum of sixteen weeks and should be taken at least four weeks before the expected birthing date. During the leave the wages are fully paid. A small number of collective agreements, such as the collective agreement for hospitals, contain stipulations on options for additional pregnancy and maternity leave. A male worker whose wife has given birth to a child is legally entitled to post-natal-leave. This is also a full paid leave. The duration of this leave is however not stipulated at national level but in the collective agreements. Almost all collective agreements have post-natal arrangements. The average number of days awarded is two. Arrangements for adoption leaves are not regulated on national level, but provided in collective agreements. Parents, whose children are under the age of eight, have a legal right for a leave of 50 percent of the working time during a period of six months. This is an unpaid leave. However, in some collective agreements employers pay a percentage of the wage. For example civil servants receive 75 percent of their salary during the leave period. Employees have also have the legal right to calamity leave, in case of sudden illness of a partner, child or other relative. The number of leave days awarded is stipulated in collective agreements, and varies between two and five days. Provisions for the care of relatives longer than a period of five days are not legally arranged, but in the collective agreements. There are great differences between sectors in length and payment. Most agreements do not regulate the duration of the care leave.

Apart from the leave facilities, there are a number of childcare arrangements. Some collective agreements contain childcare provisions. Parents pay a contribution to the costs of childcare and the rests of the costs are born by the employer. Often the employee 's contribution is related to his or her income. Local authorities also provide nursery facilities for parents who are not working in sectors where the collective agreement covers childcare arrangements. In these subsidized day-care centres parents pay a fee related to income, the local authorities subsidize the remaining costs.

Provisions for facilities such as childcare arrangements and part-time work are not only regulated on national level, but also included in the collective agreement for the printing industry. However, although employers' contribution in childcare facilities is part of the collective bargaining agreement in the printing sector, most of the smaller firms indicated that they would not pay for childcare. They argued that it was an employee's private problem to take care of their children and that the firm did not have financial latitude for childcare. These firms also indicated that in their firms part-time work (not only for the printers, but also for the other professions) would be problematic. To illustrate, a quote from a manager of one of the smaller firms with 8 employees of which 3 women:

*"I always joke with my female colleagues that in case one of them would get pregnant, the firm will pay for the abortion."*

As we have mentioned earlier, except for one, none of the female printers in our research had children. But also most of the female pre-pressers had no children. It seems that for women the decision whether or not to have children is decisive for a career in the printing industry.

On sectoral level there are no active policies to increase the share of women or ethnic minorities in the printing industry. Also on enterprise level, none of the companies had special policies or measures for recruiting more women or ethnic minorities.

#### **4.6 ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICIES (HYPOTHESIS 5)**

None of the firms included in the research project made use of subsidized employment schemes to hire printers. In general subsidised employment suffers from a bad image. It is seen as targeted to un- or low skilled workers who have all kinds of problems. The first reason given for not using such schemes was that it takes too much time to supervise such an employee. Secondly managers indicated that they would only hire the best and they argued that these people lack the acquired qualifications.

It is noteworthy that in the two cases that companies did hire a worker on a subsidised scheme (white male workers), it concerned small firms. One would rather expect large firms to do this, because they have more capacity to supervise and they would be more likely to see it as their social responsibility. Furthermore, the risks in case such an employee is not functioning well are far bigger in small companies. The reason for these smaller firms to hire someone on a subsidized scheme was the financial benefits for the company. But they also stressed that they felt it was important to give people a chance. They reasoned that they knew how hard it is for a small or relatively new company to survive on the market and they knew how important it is to get chances.

## 4.7 CONCLUSIONS

Women and ethnic minorities are under represented in the printing industry, especially in the printing profession. Most respondents did not regard this as a problem. They were more concerned with the limited supply of qualified printers in general. They also argued that the problem was not so much exclusion of groups but rather the preferences of women and ethnic minorities. The micro-level research indicates that education and training are very important for printers in the Netherlands. It is almost impossible to start as a printer if one does not have the required qualifications. Women and members of ethnic minority groups simply did not choose for printing vocational education. There are a number of barriers for women and ethnic minorities in the printing industry. Firstly, the way new employees were recruited has some effect on the opportunities for women and ethnic minorities to enter the printing profession. There is a distinction between the selection procedures of large and small firms. Large firms tend to use more formalized and standardized selection procedures, which (seemingly) leads to selection based on objective criteria. The selection criteria and job interviews in small firms are often far less formalized. The informal way of selecting personnel leaves more latitude for subjective criteria. Although all interviewees say that they just want the best, subjective criteria, such as 'fitting in the team' play an important role. It appears this is more the case in smaller firms than in large firms. On the other hand in the few cases that women or ethnic minorities are in a position of making decisions about recruitment, these same social networks and subjective criteria tend to be in favour of women and ethnic minorities. But formalised forms of recruitment can also be disadvantageous for women and ethnic minorities. For example the profile in the ad text affects the people applying for the job. If a firm is only interested in older, more experienced printers, it reduces the chances for ethnic minority printers, because (on average) these workers are younger. Or if a company mentions in its ad that they do not want people with a 'nine to five' mentality (possibly meaning a lot of overtime or irregular hours), this can have an impact on the number of women applying for the job.

Some of the barriers mentioned are particularly in the disadvantageous of women. . Firstly, it appeared to be very difficult to work part-time as a printer. With one exception, all firms were against part-time work for printers. This has an impact on opportunities for women within these firms. We assume that it makes it very hard for female printers with children to apply for a job if the resistance against part-time work is this strong. This means that the vicious circle remains: because of the fact that there are hardly any women in printing, there is no tradition of part-time work within this profession, which makes the printing profession less attractive for women. Additionally, the inability to make use of childcare arrangements, even though these were stipulated in the collective agreements, made it for women much harder to combine their work with family responsibilities. Finally, the printing profession has an image of dirty and heavy work.

Also for ethnic minorities there appear to be several obstacles. Because printing is regarded as a low status profession (like all manual labour), ethnic minority parents do not stimulate their children to choose for printing school. Furthermore ethnic minority apprentices have supposedly more difficulties in finding an apprentice-post and experience discrimination on the work floor.





## **5 HEALTH-CARE SERVICE**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION: THE DUTCH HEALTH SECTOR**

Opposite to the previous sectors, the health-care sector is a female dominated sector. Health was initially chosen as a control sector, with - contrary to the other sectors – an over representation of both women and ethnic minorities. As it turned out, statistics showed that in the Netherlands ethnic minorities were unequally divided over the various sub branches in the health-care sector. In some sub sectors they are more or less integrated (proportionate represented). In other sub sectors, among which hospitals, they appeared to be under represented. We will elaborate on this in paragraph on the position of ethnic minorities in the health-care service.

For the health sector we have focused our research on NACE code activity 85.1 labelled human health activities. This contains: hospitals (85.11), medical practices (85.12), dental practices (85.13), and other human health-care services (85.14). The health sector makes up for a substantial part of the employed labour force. In the Netherlands 424.000 workers were employed in the health sector in 2000, which is approximately 6 percent of the total working population (cbs-statline).

In the period 1995 to 2002 the employment growth in the health-care service was far more substantial than the growth in the rest of the Dutch economy. Between 1997 and 1998 the growth in employment was partly caused by a reduction of the total amount of working hours per week in the health-care sector from 38 hours to 36 hours. After 2000 the employment growth in the health-care service stabilized on the same level as in the rest of the economy (Hingstman et. al. 2001, [www.azwinfo.nl](http://www.azwinfo.nl)).

Also the number of vacancies and the number of difficult realizable vacancies increased more substantial in the health-care service than in other sectors of industry in the last 7 years. Due to the ageing working population in the health-care service it is expected that the number of vacancies will increase even further in the near future (Hingstman et. al. 2001, [www.azwinfo.nl](http://www.azwinfo.nl)).

#### **Labour market situation in the health sector**

The health sector in the Netherlands is confronted with labour shortages. Although the recruitment of employees gets full attention, it will still be one of the major problems in this sector within the coming years. The social partners together with the government have stated that a number of policy measures have to be taken to diminish the backlogs in the health service and to put an end to the

enormous waiting lists in this sector. Key objectives in these policies are the focus on entrance of new personnel and the preservation of current employees.

The supply of nurses from the vocational training institutes is not increasing in accordance with the demand for care and nursing. This demand is growing because of the increase in population, the proportionate increase of the ageing population, and the growing appeal to the health-care service. The health sector has to grow with an average of 3,7 percent per year until 2005, to provide in the demand for care and nursing. Without additional policy measures, it is estimated that there will be a personnel shortage of approximately 7 percent. This varies from a shortage of 2 percent in hospitals to 10 percent in nursing homes. The number of students enlisting in the training institutes, however, is declining since 1997. This increases the personnel shortage even further.

Compared to the shortages in the nursing homes and the psychiatric health service the shortages in the hospital branch are relatively small. The impact of these shortages however, is severe, especially when it concerns specialized nurses: it means that operations have to be cancelled which results in even longer waiting lists.

Personnel shortages not only differ per branch, but also per region. The problems are concentrated in the conurbation of the western part of the Netherlands, but they also increasing in the rest of the country.

If these shortages were to be solved solely by increasing the number of trainees, then one and a half as much students as present had to start attending a vocational training for nursing (this means 25.000 new students per year). But this will not be sufficient. To raise the percentage of qualified nurses additional measures have to be taken. These measures can be for example (Sectorfondsen Zorg en Welzijn, 2001):

- *Increasing the number of women re-entering the sector;* The health services has until the middle of the 1990s always relied on recruiting from a large reservoir of women re-entering the labour market and pupils from the training institutes. Because of the employment growth both within and outside the sector this reservoir has slowly run out. On top of this the sector suffers from a strong competition with other sectors: for many women the health service is no longer the only alternative. The fact that only half of the graduated nurses

starts working in the health service underlines the attractiveness of other sectors. The influx of unemployed in the health sector is low.

- *Diminishing the number of people leaving the sector;* The health service has a high turnover of staff. This means that it constantly has to recruit new personnel to replace old staff members. The turnovers are caused by physically heavy work a (researched showed that in 1998 58 percent nurses had back problems); high work pressure; and a high percentage of women resigning after giving birth to their first child.
- *Diminishing the percentages of absences through illness and improving the image of the sector;* The general image of the health sector is that working conditions in this sector are relatively worse than in other sectors: work pressure is relatively high; changes for promotion are small; and the salary scales are rather flat. There is a relatively high percentage of absence through illness and a high number of employees that end up receiving disability benefits. This bad image is supposed to cause the decrease of students entering the vocational training institute, and the relatively small number of graduates actually starting to work in the health service.
- *Diminishing the demand for care and nursing.*

The financial latitude for solving the problems in the health service is not so much determined by demand and supply, but depends on government policies. Therefore changes in the political debate can also imply changes in this latitude. The Ministry of Social Health-care and Sports is for a large part responsible for (financing) labour market policies in this area. Over the past five years the social partners together with the Ministry of Social Health-care and Sports have made several agreements to enlarge the influx of employees in the health-care service (*Convenant Arbeidsmarktbeleid Zorgsector-CAZ* in 1998, and *Hard Nodig* in 2001).

### **Women in the health sector**

The majority of employees in the health-care service work in the nursing profession (67 percent), 11 percent has a medical profession, 14 percent a paramedical profession and 8 percent has an assisting profession (Hingstman et. al., 2001: 57). The majority of employees in a nursing profession are female (84 percent). The personnel in this occupation is ageing: the percentage of nurses over age 50 will increase within the next 8 years from 10 percent in 2000 to 18 percent in 2010 ([www.azwinfo.nl](http://www.azwinfo.nl)). Also the share of women in the paramedical profession is high: 77 percent. One of the most striking developments is the fast increase of women doctors. In 2001 37 percent of the

doctors was female. This percentage will undoubtedly rise over the coming years given the fact that 59 percent of the medical students are women.

Traditionally the share of part-time workers in the health-care service is high: 72 percent. The nursing profession has the highest share of part-time workers (75 percent) against 28 percent of the medical staff (Hingstman et. al., 2001).

The chances of finding a job for qualified nurses are relatively high. Unemployment among nurses is much lower than other occupations at the same qualification levels.

Over the past 7 years the growth in hourly wages in the health-care sector was lower than the average growth in the Dutch economy. The hourly wages in the health-care service increased with 19.7 percent against 20.5 percent in the Dutch economy. Both in the Dutch economy at large as in the health-care service the growth of the hourly wages of men exceeded that of women. This is probably caused by the fact that the wage-increase in highly paid jobs, which are more often fulfilled by men, was higher than in low paid jobs.

### **Ethnic minorities in the health sector**

In 1990 the social partners made an agreement in the Foundation of Labour to stimulate the labour market participation of ethnic minorities. To implement this agreement in the health sector the social partners in this sector formulated an objective to employ 3800 ethnic minority workers in the health service (especially within the hospital healthy care and homes for the elderly) within four years. The social partners succeeded in this aim. Because of the success, a new agreement was made between the social partners, the Ministry of Health-care, Welfare and Sports, and Employment Strategy Netherlands and new aims were set: in 200-2003 an additional number of 4.000 ethnic minority workers had to be employed in the health-care sector.

In 2000 a study was made of the number of ethnic minority workers in the health-care sector and the multicultural personnel policies in the health-care institutes (Van Til et. al. 2001). This study also reported on the influx, progression, and outflow of ethnic minority workers in health-care institutes in the year 1999.

85 percent of the health-care institutions employ at least 1 or more ethnic minority workers. Table 5.1 shows that on average, the share of ethnic minority workers in the health-care service is 4.2 percent. In absolute figures this means that on average, there are 19 ethnic minority workers per health-care institution. In the four major cities this percentage is 8.8 percent, in the other regions it

is 2.8 percent. In absolute numbers it means approximately 36 ethnic minority workers per institution in the four major cities against 12 in the other regions. Differences per branch: In nursing homes and homes for the elderly the percentage of ethnic minority workers is the highest (5,5 percent), in the health-care for the mentally disabled the lowest (2,5 percent). In absolute numbers hospitals and domicile care employ the most ethnic minority workers (58 per hospital and 41 per domicile care institution). The total number of ethnic minority employees in the health-care service is estimated at 30,750 (see table 9).

Table 5.1 Number of ethnic minority workers per institution per branch (abs. and %)(2001)

	Total (N=189)	Hospitals (N=15)	Nursing/elderly homes (N=76)	Care for physical disabled (N=38)	Mental health-care (N=27)	Domicile care (N=30)
Average % per institution*	4.4	3.3	5.5	2.5	4.9	2.7
Average absolute numbers per institution	19	58	10	11	7	41
Weighed % per branch**	4.2***	3.3	6.7	2.4	4.9	2.7

Source: Van Til et. al., 2001: 46.

\* Calculated as average percentage ethnic minority workers of the total number of staff per institution

\*\* Considering the number of employees per institution: Calculated as percentage of the total number of ethnic minority workers on the total number of workers in the branch concerned.

\*\*\* Also weighed according to number of employees per branch.

Table 5.2 Estimated numbers of ethnic minority workers per branch January 2000

	Total	Hospitals	Nursing/elderly homes	Mental health-care	Care for physical disabled	Domicile care
Estimated number of ethnic minority employees	30,750	7,000	13,250	4,250	2,000	4,500
Total number of employees	736,398	210,748	198,887	85,062	80,501	161,100

Source: Van Til et. al., 2001: 46.

The percentage of ethnic minorities working in the health-care sector (4.2 percent) is not proportionate with their share in the Dutch working population (which is 7.4 percent). However,

this percentage of 7.4 percent does not take in consideration the division over the qualification levels in the health-care service. A better way to establish proportionate representation of ethnic minorities is to take into account the composition of the qualification levels of the total staff.

Table 5.3 Average composition of the qualification levels of the total staff per branch in %

	Hospitals	Nursing/elderly homes	Health-care for physical disabled	Mental health-care	Domicile health-care
Primary education	2.5	6.5	4.2	2.0	16.2
Primary vocational education	12.9	28.3	16.4	10.9	24.0
Secondary vocational education	45.9	56.4	54.6	41.3	45.5
Higher vocational education/ Academic degree	38.7	8.7	24.7	45.8	14.4

Source Van Til et. al., 2001: 49.

Table 5.4 gives the percentages of ethnic minorities institutions should have employed in order to comply with the norm of proportionate participation.

Table 5.4 percentages for proportionate participation of ethnic minorities in the health-care service per branch (accounted for level of qualification)

	National percentage
Hospitals	5.9
Nursing/elderly homes	7.7
Mental health-care	5.6
Health-care for physical disabled	6.5
Domicile health-care	9.3
Total	7.6

Source: Van Til et. al., 2001: 49.

This table shows that to meet proportionate representation (accounting for level of qualification of ethnic minorities) the mental health-care service needs the lowest percentage of ethnic minority workers (5.6 percent) and the domicile health-care the highest (9.3 percent). This is due to the fact that employees in the mental health-care sector are relatively highly educated and ethnic minority workers relatively less often have a higher qualification. In the domicile health-care service the share

of low qualified workers is relatively high. It is also the branch with the highest percentage of ethnic minority workers.

Table 5.5 gives an overview of the percentage of institution that comply with the proportionate participation norm. The percentage of institutions with a sufficient share of ethnic minority staff members is very low: only 22 percent.

Table 5.5 The participation norm for ethnic minorities

	National %	Four major cities %	Other regions %
Hospitals (N=14)	28.6 (4)	0.0	30.4 (4)
Nursing/elderly homes (N=75)	30.7 (23)	42.9 (9)	25.9 (14)
Mental health-care (N=27)	25.9 (7)	27.3 (3)	25.0 (4)
Health-care for physical disabled (N=38)	10.5 (4)	0.0	12.5 (4)
Domicile health-care (N=30)	3.3 (1)	0.0	4.5 (1)
Total	22.2 (37)	25.5 (12)	19.7 (27)

Source: Van Til et. al., 2001: 49.

Ethnic minority and indigenous workers hold on average different types of jobs and different kind of contract types. More than one-third of ethnic minority employees work in assisting or auxiliary jobs. Ethnic minorities have occupy such positions proportionately more often than indigenous Dutch employees. In comparison to total staff, ethnic minorities are more often employed in lower positions and less often on executive level. Most of the employees have a normal job with a permanent contract. Ethnic minority employees have less frequently a permanent contract than indigenous Dutch workers. They also are over four times as likely as indigenous Dutch workers to hold a subsidized job for long-term unemployed (so-called I/D jobs). Compared to total staff, ethnic minority workers on average tend to have slightly less extensive jobs.

## 5.2 ANALYSIS OF THE FIELDWORK: GENERAL INTRODUCTION AND STATISTICS

Although there are some private clinics, the health-care service in the Netherlands is predominantly a public sector. We have focused our research on hospitals, but we have also concluded two institutes for the mentally disabled. Hospitals in the Netherlands are divided in general hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, academic hospitals and specialised hospitals. In the selection of the health

institutes we have used a number of criteria. We have tried to incorporate regional spread, variation in type of hospital and hospital size. We have conducted interviews with four health-care institutes in Amsterdam, of which two general hospitals, one academic hospital and one institute for mentally handicapped; three institutes in the region Haarlem (western part of the Netherlands), of which two general hospitals and one institute for mentally handicapped; two general hospitals in the eastern part of the Netherlands (in Arnhem and Deventer) and one specialized hospital in Rotterdam. Furthermore we have interviewed representatives of trade unions and employer associations. In table 5.6 we give an overview of the gender and ethnic composition of the employees of these health institutes. The interviewees could not always rely on officially documented data, and sometimes gave own estimations.



Table 5.6 Fieldwork in the health institutions

Institute	City	Size	% women	% ethnic minorities	% women in nursing	% ethnic minorities in nursing
H1, academic hospital	Amsterdam	Large (6000)	67%	10%	±80%	±10%
H2: General city hospital	Amsterdam	Large (2500)	±75%	?	±80%	
H3: General city hospital	Amsterdam	Medium (1400)	±85%	14%		?
H4, general regional hospital	Heemstede	Large (2700)	80%	5%	±80%	?
H5 general regional hospital	Haarlem	Medium (2000)	80%	8,2%	±80%	?
H6 general regional hospital	Deventer	Medium (1900)	81%	2,8%	±80%	?
H7: general regional hospital	Arnhem	(Large) 3300	±67%	4,6%	?	?
H8: Specialized hospital	Rotterdam	Small (270)	75%	17%	85%	10%
H9: Institute for mentally handicapped	Amsterdam	Small (700)	±75%	12%	90%	2%
H10: Institute for mentally disabled	Haarlem	Medium (1300)	80%	4%	90%	0%
H11: Institute for research health-care and ethnic minorities						

Source: Statistics are partly based on data from annual reports and partly on estimations of the interviewees.

Large: >3000; medium: 1500-2500; small: <1500

Table 5.6 makes clear that all institutes have a high percentage of female employees. However, the share of women in higher position appears to be very low in all institutes. On middle management level the division of male and females is on average 60 percent men and 40 percent women, whereas on the higher executive levels the share of men is 80 percent against 20 percent of women. In the section on promotion we will elaborate on this.

There is much variation in the share of ethnic minority employees. This is partly due to the uneven regional spread of ethnic minorities over the Netherlands. Ethnic minorities are predominantly

concentrated in the conurbation of the western part of the Netherlands. It was also not always clear to what extent ethnic minorities were represented in the nursing staff.

### 5.3 EDUCATION AND TRAINING (HYPOTHESIS I)

In the Netherlands there are different levels of vocational training for nurses:

*Nursing training levels:*

Level 1: helper (assistance in the daily care of the patients): very low to unskilled work. Length of the vocational training: 1 year. Preparatory training: not required.

Level 2: Qualified helper (sort of assistant nurse): One-year assistant nurse training on primary vocational training level (nurses who assist with washing patients, et cetera).

Level 3: assistant nurse: secondary vocational level.

Level 4: nurse: secondary vocational level, specialised nursing training.

Level 5: nurse: nursing vocational training on higher vocational training level.

Table 5.7 Vocational training and education in health

Vocational training level	Job content	Job level	Duration of the training	Required preparatory training
Level 1	Assistance in the daily care of the patients	Very low to unskilled work	1 year	Non required
Level 2	Assistance in the daily care of the patients	Low skilled work	1 year	Non required
Level 3	Daily care, simple medical actions, reporting on patients	Skilled work	3 years	Level 2 diploma, pre-vocational secondary training diploma
Level 4	Medical actions, reporting/monitoring on patients, etc	Skilled work	4 years	Level 3/ Pre-vocational secondary training diploma
Level 5	Medical actions, coordination of the total care of the patients, managing of lower nursing staff,	Highly skilled	4 years	Secondary vocational training, pre-university education diploma, senior general secondary education

Fully qualified nurses in hospitals are level 4 and level 5 nurses. Level 4 and 5 nurses have to be registered to be able to practice their profession. To work on level 3 or lower it is not necessary to

be registered. Employees on level 1 to 3 are not considered as ‘nurses’. So, in this paper the term ‘nurse’ only refers to nurses qualified on level 4 and level 5.

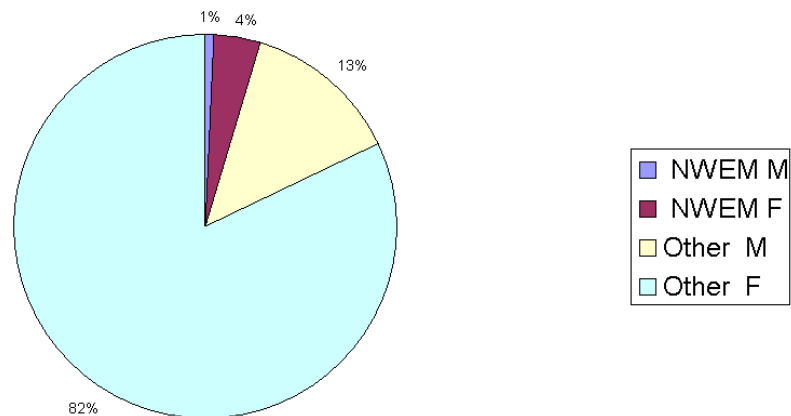
Nurses can get their qualifications via two education routes:

- Vocational training schemes (BOL = Beroepsopleidende leerweg): In this scheme 70 percent of the training is theory (within the training institute) and 30 percent is practical experience in the hospital.
- Vocational ‘apprenticeship’ training schemes ( BBL = Beroepsbegeleidende leerweg): 30 percent theory and 70 percent practical experience.

Vocational training on level 4 and level 5 leads to a general nursing diploma. To become a specialised nurse, further training is required. Training schemes for specialisation can vary per hospital. For example, the specialised hospitals provide training in their own specialisation, sometimes in cooperation with general vocational training institutes: training schemes of hospitals that are specialised in cancer or eye-diseases are focused on having specialised ‘cancer’ or ‘eye’ nurses. Academic hospitals have extended training schemes, however in general hospitals this can differ per hospital

According to many respondents ethnic minorities are underrepresented in nursing education. We have no general data on the participation rates of ethnic minorities within nursing vocational training schemes, but figures from the Board for Higher Vocational Training HBO-raad) show that ethnic minorities make up 5 percent of the students in nursing education, of which 1 percent males and 4 percent females (see figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1 Matriculation (%) of non-western ethnic minorities in higher vocational nursing education (HBO) in 2001

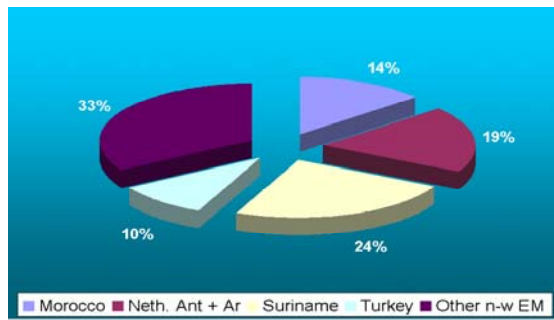


Source: Database of the HBO-Raad.

According to some of the respondents the main reason why ethnic minorities do not prefer nursing is because it is seen to be of low status (especially among Turks and Moroccans). They emphasize that because of the unfavourable starting position ethnic minorities have in Dutch society, they are much more inclined to stimulate their children to choose vocational training for professions with a high status (such as office jobs, advocacy, medical doctors, et cetera). This also explains according to them the differences in participation rates between Turks and Moroccans on the one hand and Surinamese and Dutch Antilleans on the other: In the countries of origin of the former two groups nursing is seen as a low status profession, whereas in the countries of origin of the latter two nursing is a profession of high esteem for women.

The differences in preferences between Turks and Moroccans on the one hand and Surinamese and Dutch Antilleans on the other are visible in the participation of these groups in higher vocational nursing education. In 2000, the Surinamese (24 percent) and Dutch Antilleans students (19 percent) were the largest groups among the non-western ethnic minority nursing student population, against 10 percent Turkish and 14 percent Moroccan students.

Figure 5.2 Share of non-western ethnic minorities in HBO-education for health



Source: Database HBO-Raad

Some interviewees also pointed out structural barriers within the educational system. For example subject requirements, such as English as an obligatory second language (and not France, Turkish or Arabic) were seen as a possible obstacle for ethnic minority students to attend nursing school. Also complications on the work floor during the apprenticeship period were mentioned: Because of misunderstandings between ethnic minority and indigenous workers, and the culture of the institutions, ethnic minorities had a lot of difficulties to integrate. To solve such problems some health institutes placed and trained ethnic minorities in a group instead of just one ethnic minority worker in a unit. Furthermore discrimination of both patients and colleagues during apprenticeships were mentioned as obstacles, causing higher dropout rates for ethnic minorities than indigenous students.

## Promotion

The relation between further training and promotion is not so clear-cut in the hospitals. Firstly, although in theory there is a straightforward job ladder distinguishing qualification levels from level 1 to level 5, in practice the number of level 1 'nurses' that ends up as level 5 'nurses' is very small. Furthermore, not all promotions are vertical ones. In a number of cases nurses made horizontal promotion: from general nurse to specialised nurse or from one specialisation to another. We have also found evidence that in a number of hospitals there is no distinction between level 4 or 5 nurses (in salary or job content), whereas in the academic hospitals having a level 5 nursing diploma is a necessity. In all hospitals further training is a right. Especially in the specialised and academic hospitals further training is stimulated. The personnel managers could not tell whether or not men, women, ethnic minorities participate equally in training schemes.

According to some respondents, further training is somewhat more difficult for Caribbean women than their indigenous counterparts, because they are more often single parents and sole breadwinners.

Promotion opportunities in Dutch hospitals are limited. There are various opportunities for horizontal mobility: general nurses can have further training to become specialised nurses. Regarding vertical promotion a nurse can be promoted from nurse to team leader, to head of a nursing department. The Dutch government has recently launched a proposal to extend the job ladder for nurses. The idea is to give nurses the opportunity to become doctors (not on academic level, but on higher vocational education level). The government wants to introduce the 'nurse practitioner' to relieve the workload of general practitioners and other doctors. Hospitals have reacted positively to these plans of the government. They not only think that it is a good way to relieve doctors, but it is also a way to make the nursing profession more attractive, for example for men. It tackles one of the reasons for men not to enter the profession, namely lack of career possibilities.

The chances for promotion appear to differ between men and women. Although there are far more female than male nurses in hospitals, on management level male head nurses outnumber female head nurses, on average 60 percent male against 40 percent female. On higher managerial level this division is even worse: 80 percent male against 20 percent female. So, it appears that male nurses are relatively more often promoted than female nurses are. According to some of the interviewees the reason that male nurses more often make it to head nurse than female nurses is that male nurses are more ambitious than female nurses and are more focused on having a career. Furthermore, men's careers are hardly interrupted by having children. Finally, men work more often in full-time contracts, which (still) is more beneficially for having a career.

#### **5.4 WAGES, EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS (HYPOTHESIS 2)**

Nurses in the Netherlands get paid according to the collective wage agreements.

In the collective agreements for hospitals the wage schemes are divided in wage scales: the scales range from 5 to 80 for the various occupations in the hospitals, each scale is divided in 10 steps. The salaries of nurses vary from scale 45, step 0 (1483 euro) to scale 55, step 10 (3073 euro). The technical nurses (intensive care, anaesthetic nurses) tend to get paid in a higher scale than the general nurses, or other specialised nurses. But the salary scale also depends on work experience.

According to our respondents the wage system in itself does not seem to be disadvantageously for women or ethnic minorities. It is nevertheless possible that their work experience is graded differently than that of men, which can result in being paid in a lower nursing scale. But we have found no indication that this is in fact the case. However, according to Plantenga & Remery (2001:197) the FWG system has been criticised for not being gender-neutral. There are several

mechanisms in the system that can lead to a low evaluation of positions that are mainly held by women. For example, elements of care, characteristic of positions mainly held by women, are hardly elaborated in the system, whereas elements of management, characteristic of positions mainly held by men, are thoroughly elaborated.

Differences in salary between men/women, ethnic minorities and indigenous workers are mainly caused by the number of hours they work (part-time or full-time) and the position within the hospital: nurses earn less than managers/head of the departments, head of the departments earn less than doctors, et cetera. Furthermore, as we have seen in the previous paragraph there is a correlation between the number of working hours per week and the chances to climb up on the occupational ladder, which also results in a difference in wage scales.

## **5.5 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION (HYPOTHESIS 3)**

Nurses in Dutch hospitals are hired when they are full-trained nurses. Nurses have to be registered. It is not possible in the Netherlands to work as a nurse in a hospital without being registered. Nursing in the Netherlands is a female dominated occupation. Only a 20 percent is male. The reasons interviewees have mentioned for the low share of male nurses are:

- Nursing is traditionally a 'female occupation'
- There are hardly any men on the nursing schools
- Male nurses are predominantly working in technical nursing professions (intensive care, et cetera), and there are relatively fewer technical nurses than general nurses.
- The career perspectives are relatively absent in the nursing profession.

The share of ethnic minority nurses differs per hospital. This has to do with the region in which the hospital is located: the share of ethnic minorities is higher in the western part of the Netherlands than the eastern part. Within regions there is also a difference between small and big cities.

In most of the hospitals we have interviewed there is a (slight) under representation of ethnic minority nurses. Ethnic minority nurses in the Netherlands are mostly Surinamese, Antillean or Philippine women. The number of Turkish and Moroccan nurses is relatively small.

The reasons interviewees have mentioned for the under representation of ethnic minority nurses are:

- there are relatively less ethnic minority applicants
- ethnic minorities do not choose nursing school, because nursing is seen as a low status profession
- language problems
- difficulties with recognition of diplomas obtained outside the Netherlands

Compared to other sub-sectors of the health-care sector, for example the nursing homes or homes for the elderly, the share of ethnic minority nurses in hospitals is relatively low. The main reason given for the difference between nursing homes and hospitals is that the labour shortages in nursing homes are a bigger problem than in hospitals. These shortages also occurred earlier in the nursing homes. As a result nursing homes started in a relatively early stage with trying to recruit other categories of workers than they usually did: They started actively to recruit ethnic minorities and women who wanted to re-enter the labour market. Hospitals did not feel the need to change their recruitment areas and recruitment methods, because most of the hospitals have no real difficulties in recruiting new nurses.

Another important difference between the nursing homes and the hospitals is the duration of stay of the patients. Two interviewees explained that problems concerning the communication with ethnic minority patients are smaller in hospitals than in nursing homes. The average duration of stay of patients in hospitals in the Netherlands is 9 days, whereas the stay in nursing homes can be permanent. Because the share of ethnic minorities in nursing homes in the Netherlands is increasing, the demand for personnel that can communicate with these residents is also increasing. Although the share of ethnic minority patients in hospitals is increasing as well, these institutes do not regard having personnel that can communicate with these patients in their own language as urgent, because these patients only stay for a short period of time. So in this regard the need for ethnic minority nurses is smaller in hospitals than in nursing homes.

According to an official of one of the employers' association the reasons why the influx of ethnic minorities in the hospital branch is smaller than the influx in the nursing homes or the domicile health-care is that nursing in the hospital branch is a highly skilled profession. The required qualifications are therefore much lower. Secondly, she said that especially for more Muslim women the threshold to enter nursing profession is high. According to her this was because of the 'intimacy aspects' of the profession: bathing of male patients was a problem.



The channels most frequently used for recruiting nursing staff are:

Special temp agencies for nurses (most of the time hospitals 'buy' the nurses from the temp agencies); advertising in newspapers; specialist journals for nurses; network of the hospitals; word of mouth: 2 interviewees have indicated that this one of the reason that they have so many ethnic minority nurses. The hospital is located in a neighbourhood with a high share of ethnic minorities. In case of vacancies the ethnic minority nurses tell other ethnic minority nurses in that neighbourhood; and finally open applications.

None of the hospitals have special recruitment channels for men or ethnic minorities. They do not make special efforts to recruit male nurses. In the selection procedure however, a number of hospitals have indicated that if they have a male applicant, they pay special attention to that candidate and that they have a slight preference for a male candidate. The main reason mentioned is to balance the share of male and female workers in a department. Ethnic minority candidates however, are treated as every other candidate and there is no preference for ethnic minorities. On the question why these HRM-managers have no preference for ethnic minorities the answer is in all cases: 'we do not care if a person is black, white or purple, we pick the best-qualified candidate'.

The HRM-manager of one of the hospitals indicated that although that hospital did not use specific recruitment channels, they always made sure that they used 'multicultural ads' (pictures of a multicultural staff). They also participated in the yearly multicultural festival in their neighbourhood, where they had a first aid stand and information about the hospital in general and vacancies in the hospitals in particular.

None of the hospitals had special targets for ethnic minorities or male nurses. Hospitals are obliged – as any other company or organisation with 35 or more employees – to register the number of ethnic minority personnel and they have to indicate what measures they will take within the coming year to overcome the under representation of ethnic minorities in their institute. In the conversations it appeared that none of the HRM-managers said that they had special targets for ethnic minority nurses. Two of them argued that there was no real under representation of ethnic minorities, so there was no reason. The others argued that it just was not hospital policy and they only selected on qualifications.

Criteria for recruitment are formal qualifications. These formal qualifications can differ per hospital. The academic hospitals only recruit nurses with higher vocational nursing diplomas (level 5 nurses,

see paragraph on education and training), whereas the general hospitals also recruit nurses with nursing diplomas on secondary vocational level (level 4 nurses).

None of the hospitals we have visited experienced severe recruiting problems for general nurses.<sup>21</sup> Vacancies were fulfilled relatively quickly (within 4 to 5 weeks). This is one of the reasons why the hospitals hardly take any measures to attract new groups of personnel (men, ethnic minorities, or women re-entering the labour market).

Four hospitals recruit nurses on a-typical contracts. These contracts are a-typical in the sense that they are flexible in the number of working hours per week, such as min-max contracts, which stipulate the minimum and maximum number of working hours a nurse should work a week. In this way nurses have the possibility to regulate their own working hours. The same goes for the so-called nil-hours contracts. One hospital had parent-contracts: part-time contracts with working hours from 9.30 till 13.30. This hospital introduced this type of contract to be able to attract and preserve nurses who want to tune their working hours to the school hours of their children. So these measures have nothing to do with avoiding complicated dismissal rules and everything with attracting and preserving personnel. We have found no evidence that some groups (like women or ethnic minorities) work more in these types of contracts than others. But we assume that because the share of female nurses in part-time contracts is bigger than the share of male nurses, the share of women in these kinds of a-typical contracts will also be bigger than the share of men.

None of the HRM-officials reported special barriers for men or ethnic minorities to enter the hospital. They argued that in principle ethnic minorities had just as many chances as their indigenous colleagues as long as they had the right qualifications. However, they said that the Dutch language could be an obstacle in following the Dutch nursing school. According to them this could be one of the reasons why there were not so many ethnic minority (especially Turks and Moroccan) student nurses. Special barriers for men were that nursing is still seen as a female occupation and the lack of career opportunities.

## **5.6 BENEFITS, ACTIVITIES AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES (HYPOTHESIS 4)**

Social benefits in the Netherlands are either regulated by law on national level or part of collective bargaining agreements on sector level. Leave schemes, childcare and working time arrangements are

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<sup>21</sup> It was however difficult to recruit specialized nurses.

generally laid down in regulation on national level that provide a framework within which social partners stipulate their agreements.

There are various leave schemes in the Netherlands. Pregnancy and maternity leave is a legal entitlement of female employees in the Netherlands. The leave lasts a minimum of sixteen weeks and should be taken at least four weeks before the expected birthing date. During the leave the wages are fully paid. A small number of collective agreements, such as the collective agreement for hospitals, contain stipulations on options for additional pregnancy and maternity leave. A male worker whose wife has given birth to a child is legally entitled to post-natal-leave. This is also a full paid leave. The duration of this leave is however not stipulated at national level but in the collective agreements. Almost all collective agreements have post-natal arrangements. The average number of days awarded is two. Arrangements for adoption leaves are not regulated on national level, but provided in collective agreements. Parents, which children aged under eight have a legal right for a leave of 50 percent of the working time during a period of six months. This is an unpaid leave. However, in some collective agreements employers pay a percentage of the wage. For example civil servants receive 75 percent of their salary during the leave period. Employees have also have the legal right to calamity leave, in case of sudden illness of a partner, child or other relative. The number of leave days awarded is stipulated in collective agreements, and varies between two and five days. Provisions for the care of relatives longer than a period of five days are not legally arranged, but in the collective agreements. There are great differences between sectors in length and payment. Most agreements do not regulate the duration of the care leave.

Apart from the leave facilities, there are a number of childcare arrangements. Some collective agreements contain childcare provisions. Parents pay a contribution to the costs of childcare and the rests of the costs are born by the employer. Often the employee 's contribution is related to his or her income. Local authorities also provide nursery facilities for parents who are not working in sectors where the collective agreement covers childcare arrangements. In these subsidized day-care centres parents pay a fee related to income, the local authorities subsidize the remaining costs.

All hospitals have various possibilities for nurses to work part-time and childcare arrangements and leave schemes are incorporated in the collective agreements. In order to be more attractive for their personnel a number of hospitals provide possibilities for more flexible contracts (min-max hours, nil-hours or parent contracts, see above). These measures are especially target to facilitate workers who want to combine work and (family)care. These are mainly women, but also younger men make much use of these arrangements.

## **5.7 ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET POLICY (HYPOTHESIS 5)**

In the health-care service at large a number of active labour market schemes have been implemented to integrate unemployed workers. Some of these programmes have been aimed at women re-entering and ethnic minorities. In 1990 the social partners made an agreement in the national Foundation of Labour to stimulate the labour market participation of ethnic minorities (see in section three). In order to implement this agreement in the health sector the social partners in this sector formulated an objective to employ 3,800 ethnic minority workers in the health service (especially within the homes for the elderly) within four years. The social partners succeeded in this aim. Since the start of the agreements the number of health-care institutions that have special policies for ethnic minorities has increased.

However, none of the hospitals in our research project participated in an active labour market project. They also did not make much use of (other) subsidised employment schemes. The few hospitals that did never used these kinds of schemes to hire nurses, only to employ low-skilled personnel. The main arguments given for not hiring nurses on subsidised schemes are that HRM-managers believe that these schemes are for low qualified personnel. They also said that they lacked the staff to supervise these workers. A third reason was that people on subsidised employment contracts are often hired via employment agencies. Most hospitals do not use these agencies as recruitment channel.

In most hospitals the under representation of ethnic minority nurses was not seen as a problem. This was also an important reason why hospitals did not have special policies for recruiting employees of ethnic minority background. One of the view respondents who did indicate that under representation of ethnic minority workers was problematic, was the manager of the home for the mentally disabled in Amsterdam. She reasoned that because of the increasing number of ethnic minority clients (who are permanent residents), the need for employees of ethnic minority background had risen. At the time of the interview her organisation was in the process of changing current policies and adopting special policies for target groups.

## **5.8 CONCLUSIONS**

As we have mentioned earlier nursing is predominantly a female occupation. Health has a lot of advantages and, compared to the other sectors, it is in a lot of ways 'employee and family friendly'. There is a formalized education and training structure, formalized entering qualifications, and the wage system is relatively well ordered and formalized. Also the recruitment procedures, employment protection, and social benefits are relatively good compared to the other sectors. It is difficult to say whether women choose for this sector because of all the above factors or that

because it is a female dominated sector these aspects have been taken care of. What it does not explain is the fact that glass ceiling effects occurs, despite the fact that women have a 'critical masses advantage'. Notwithstanding their overwhelming dominance in the sector, women still find a greater difficulty in reaching the top-level positions (where men are present, and given an equivalence of credentials, they seem to obtain recognition and promotion more easily). A barrier for women to climb the job ladder is part-time work. Workers in full time employment climb the job ladder faster than workers in part-time contracts. Additionally, it also proved to be more difficult to work part-time on executive level. Women are perceived to be less ambitious than men. An extra obstacle regarding Caribbean women was that they had more difficulties in combining training and family responsibilities, because they were more often single parents and breadwinners.

That the above factors also not automatically contribute to the inclusion of vulnerable groups in general becomes clear when we look at the position of ethnic minorities in this sector. According to the respondents the main barriers for ethnic minorities entering this profession were related to factors such as their perception of the occupation, the working culture within hospitals, obstacles within the training program, and insufficient preparatory qualifications.

This indicates that there are other mechanisms that are equally or perhaps even more important than the hypotheses we have formulated in our project.

Obviously, one of the main reason for high female presence in the health sector is due to tradition and culture: nursing was considered a female job because, women are perceived as 'naturally qualified' for care giving jobs, and especially nursing which takes care of the human body.

Another fundamental mechanism explaining differences in access, which is connected to the first one, is preferences in educational choice. One of the reasons why nursing is still an overwhelmingly female occupation is that candidates to Nursing Schools are still mostly female. This conforms to a long historical trend. Women's' preferences for nursing could respond to strong socialisation patterns.

Preferences in career and educational choices partly accounts for the under-representation of ethnic minorities in nursing in the Netherlands. Some ethnic minority groups in the Netherlands consider the nursing profession as a low status occupation. As a consequence students from these backgrounds prefer to be educated in other, high status, professions such as doctors, lawyers, et cetera. Discrimination and racial harassment by patients, colleagues and managers has been pointed out to be an obstacle to the integration of ethnic minorities in the sector. This occurs not only on the shop floor, but also during nursing training, which may very well influence the educational choice of members of ethnic minority groups.

The final important mechanism that we have not included in our hypothesis is related to laws, rules and regulations in the countries under study. The under representation of immigrants or ethnic minorities is partly the effect of regulations. For example the difficulties with the recognitions of diplomas obtained abroad are a barrier for (foreign) nurses to gain access to the profession.

As we have stated in the conclusion the health sector was chosen as a contrast sector, a sector in which unlike the others, women and ethnic minorities were over represented or at least integrated and were performing well. The study shows that factors as formalized education and training systems, formalized recruitment, graded wage structures, possibilities for flexible contracts and extensive social benefits coincide with a high percentage of women in the sector. But having said that is it safe to conclude that if these conditions were also to be implemented in the other sectors, the percentage of female workers would increase?

When we look at the position of ethnic minorities in the health sector, than we can conclude that they are additionally suffering from barriers other than we have stipulated. These obstacles, such as discrimination and social harassment, rules and regulations (for instance regarding recognition of diplomas), language problems, et cetera also occur in the other sectors and need to be addressed in order to pave the way to a successful integration of these groups.

## **6 CONCLUSIONS NATIONAL REPORT**

### **6.1 BARRIERS FOR WOMEN AND ETHNIC MINORITIES**

In our study we have tried to answer the following question: “What are the barriers for women and ethnic minorities to gain access into or to climb the job ladder in segregated labour markets in the Netherlands, and what are the means for their integration?” We do realise that we have studied four sectors where labour market qualifications and qualified work are relevant requirements for getting a job. When we would have studied labour market with unqualified labour, we perhaps would have found other factors that determine integration.

It appears that there are a number of barriers for integration of women and ethnic minorities. These barriers partly differ for both groups, though there are also similarities. We should also keep in mind that the ethnic minority women form a particular group in the analysis. For women we have found the following issues, which we will interpret further below:

1. the education system. Especially the dropout from education programs and the selection of school choice at younger age.
2. the status and image of the occupation/ profession.
3. the existence of wage-setting when this is performance-related or output-related.
4. the informal working culture in male-dominated organisations
5. the lack of possibilities to work part-time and the lack of possibilities for child-care.
6. the traditional division in the household.

The barriers to integration include for ethnic minorities the following issues:

1. the dropout from the vocational and education system.
2. the status of the occupation / profession.
3. discrimination and racial harassment.
4. language problems (both general and technical). This argument is less valid for Surnames and Antillean people.
5. recognition of diplomas or earlier qualifications.
6. the lack of guidance and support in training and labour market programs.

7. the lack of participation in informal networks of recruitment.
8. the lack of role models to identify with.
9. religious and cultural orientations vary between groups. Examples include vegetarians and people on diets, relations with people from other cultures, languages and religious convictions, and for women also the relations with men.

There appear to be significant barriers in the sectors covered by this research project operating against both women and ethnic minorities. In this respect this research project is reinforcing other studies in this area that have studied gender segregation.<sup>22</sup> When we combine the gender and the ethnic aspect we can distinguish three types of barriers for both women and members of ethnic minority groups.

Firstly, we have discovered *personal* barriers. 'Personal preferences' in educational choice and – related to this – the image of a sector or profession are important factors that determine and reinforce sectoral or occupational segregation. Because certain sectors or professions have an image of being feminine (or masculine), male (or female) students are less likely to choose vocational education in that area. As far as ethnic minorities are concerned, the status of the profession also plays a significant role: Some ethnic minority groups in the Netherlands might consider heavy, manual work as low status occupations. This is the case for carpentry, printing, but also nursing. As a consequence students from these backgrounds prefer to be educated in other, high status, professions such as economists, doctors, lawyers, or software engineers.

Secondly, we can distinguish *interpersonal* barriers: obstacles that occur in the relation between management and (potential) female or ethnic employees or on shop floor level between colleagues. Clearly a range of managers was likely to stereotype women or people from ethnic minority background. They were said to have poor work ethos, to be less ambitious, or to fit poorly in the team. But also factors as discrimination and racial (or sexual) harassment and a masculine, indigenous working culture can cause interpersonal conflicts which may have a negative impact on women and ethnic minorities.

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<sup>22</sup> For example the work of Bakker, Tijdens and Winkels (1999); Brouwer (2003), Groot and Maassen van den Brink (1996); Plantenga and Schippers (1990); Pott-Buter and Tijdens (1999); Tijdens (1993); and the international studies of Rubery, Fagan and Maier (1997) and Rubery, Smith and Fagan (1999).



Thirdly, we have found *systemic* barriers: structural obstacles within a sector, profession or firm. The systemic barriers predominantly occurred in the male dominated sectors. The most important systemic bottleneck within the male dominated sectors and occupations is the lack of possibilities for part-time work. The share of part-time workers in the overall Dutch labour market is very high. Two thirds of all female employees in the Dutch labour market have a part-time contract. Yet, the opportunities to work part-time in the labour market as a whole are in sharp contrast with the possibilities to do so in the male dominated sectors covered by this research project. In these sectors, and especially in the occupations under study, the possibilities for working on part-time contracts are virtually absent. In this sense such contracts prove to be atypical in these specific sectors. But even in the health sector - the sector with the highest share of part-time employment – working part-time appears to be holding certain risks; working full-time is (still) more beneficial for having a career. Additionally, the informal way of recruitment in construction and the printing sector, which both contain a lot of small enterprises, has a negative impact on the opportunities of women and members of ethnic minority groups: Because recruitment is informal, social networks play an important role. Women and ethnic minorities are more likely to be excluded, because they are often not part of these networks.

The performance related wage setting system, especially in IT, has a negative effect on the opportunities for women. All work is evaluated in terms performance and output determines the relative success of employees. Virtually all personnel managers have argued that the work culture in IT-companies includes a high commitment to work. Overtime work and long working hours are generally expected, especially for IT-projects with deadlines. Some managers argue that women also suffer from work stress and travel hours are seen as problematic, since most of the employees of software houses are placed to work in other companies. The effects of performance evaluation on ethnicity are not clear.

The recognition of diplomas is a systemic barrier, which especially plays an important role in the health-care sector and is disadvantageous for (female) members of ethnic minority groups. This is less problematic in the IT sector, because this sector is international oriented with a less univocal relation between educational qualification and occupation.

## **6.2 SEGREGATION: A CASE FOR DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT?**

In the introduction we have argued that segregation is problematic especially in times of tight labour supply, because it hinders organisations to maximise the available resources in the labour market. In the late 1990s, in all four sectors under study in this report, there were substantial differences between the sectors in terms of labour market developments and labour surplus. In construction, qualified labour appears to be scarce due to the aged labour force and the need for annual

replacement of employees who leave the sector. In IT, the expansion of production after 1996, has led to a shortage of labour supply, which lasted until 2002. The development in employment in the printing industry was exactly opposite to the IT sector: the employment in this sector has decreased during the 1990s. But because of the continuous economic boom in that decade and the decreasing number of school leavers the sector has to cope with labour shortages since 1999. Also our contrasting sector, health, has suffered from labour shortages. But, although the sector as a whole is confronted with such shortages, the deficiencies in the hospital branch are relatively small. The impact of these shortages however is severe, especially when it concerns specialized nurses: it means that operations have to be cancelled which results in long waiting lists. Therefore, during the last decade the chances for employees to gain access in one of our four sectors has enhanced due to labour market deficiencies. This theoretically means that for these professions, employers have to make extra effort (for example recruiting from new categories of employees) to fill in the vacancies.

From this perspective of labour market opportunities, the issue of diversity management becomes relevant. Diversity management refers to equal opportunities policies that are applied across the HRM cycle in organisations, i.e. in the recruitment and selection, evaluation, reward and development of employees. As Linda Human (2003) argues diversity management should be an integrated part of personnel policy, with attention to both the recruitment of employees into the organisation and their further development and position attainment on the job ladder within the organisation. Lewis and Lewis (1996) argue that companies have a business case in training a diversified internal staff and allowing for men and women to combine work and care responsibilities.

Seen from the supply side of the labour market however, labour market segregation appears not to be giving any incentive to change HRM practices in companies. In all 48 companies in our research, notwithstanding the existence of professional HRM-departments in most of the larger organisations, no substantial diversity management policies existed. In addition, our interview partners generally remarked that their company was no exception to the rule. Diversity management thus is virtually absent in the sectors under study.

Nevertheless, in some companies segregation was perceived to be a problem. In the Dutch construction industry, firstly, some respondents argue that the work force in the larger cities is changing (due to the rising share of ethnic minorities), whereas the labour force in construction is ageing. There is therefore a need for recruiting new categories of employees. Secondly, some respondents have argued that attention to segregation is needed in order to control and combat

illegal contracting of migrant labour. Thirdly, social partner organisations argue that segregation should be stopped via active employment policy. It should however be admitted that several respondents do not consider segregation as a major problem in spite of the barriers in training and recruitment discussed above.

Also in IT, the composition of internal staff was sometimes seen as a problem. The main argument was that the composition of the staff did not reflect the personal characteristics of customers. Therefore, women working in IT-companies often are employed in relational positions vis-à-vis clients. And admittedly, in some of the larger, American companies, diversity management is seen as a need, a new emerging issue, that just came up in the period of fieldwork (2002). It also should be mentioned that IT-companies, which allow part-time work, contained a larger share of women in their staff, than companies where part-time work was virtually absent. For ethnic minorities, such arguments are not applied at all.

In printing and in hospitals, diversity management was not an issue, apart from the nursing homes and homes for the elderly. Also in this sub-sector, the one-sided composition of the work force hindered them to relate to a diverse clientele.

Overall, supply side factors do not give an impetus to the development of diversity management, in spite of national policies and apparent occupational and hierarchical segregation. In companies, gender and ethnic segregation are only perceived as a problem, when in the long run the self-interest of the company is concerned.

### **6.3 THE EVALUATION OF THE HYPOTHESES**

#### **Hypothesis I on education and training**

In hypothesis I we have presupposed that education and training are critical factors in determining entry into the labour market and promotion to higher positions. Regarding process one (the entry into the enterprise), there is no doubt that the Netherlands is a case in the set of countries with a 'qualification space' (Maurice et al., 1986). Young employees in the four sectors under study have learned their job-specific qualifications in a school-enterprise trajectory, where they first participate in general public education, and then follow a vocational training route both in schools and in enterprises. Employers participate in the organisation of the training and can select candidates on the basis of the different degrees. Relevant in this discussion is that the standardization and

recognition of the qualification degrees, increases for employers the reliability of the candidates for a certain job (Kerkckhoff, 2001). This process of acquiring qualifications is relevant in construction, health, and printing, and to a lesser extent in IT. As a consequence, women, men and ethnic minorities are all (equally) dependent on formal qualifications in the occupations under study (with the exception of software engineers). Regarding the first hypothesis on training and education, there is no doubt that for the occupations being studied personnel managers require clear entry qualifications from job applicants. In the Netherlands, applicants competing for jobs should have obtained their formal diplomas or degrees. We conclude moreover, that our research design regrettably has not allowed us to evaluate the differences in qualification between men and women or between natives and ethnic minorities when applying for a job. However, it has become clear that investment of pupils in their qualifications is not at all a self-evident process. Pupils make choices in their general education, they may dropout from education and find problems to acquire the work-experience necessary. For example, the number of women in information sciences is extremely low, whereas the problems ethnic minorities face in the training for construction work is considerable.

The second part of the hypothesis holds some truth in it. For women and ethnic minorities it can be difficult to acquire the qualifications that are needed to find a job. In the training system in general, a large number of pupils drops out. This is valid for both indigenous pupils and ethnic minorities. For ethnic minorities sometimes the problem accumulate when they are grouped in particular schools (which in the media and among people sometimes are even stereotyped as 'black schools') in the larger cities. For example, in primary education and lower general vocational training (VMBO) many ethnic minorities bunch together whereas the general education level lags behind in comparison to the so-called 'white' schools. A second and related problem is that within the lowest level of professional vocational education, many pupils, among which the ethnic minorities, choose for the education stream with the lowest 'basic' level. The consequence is that the starting level of the pupils is easily too low to get access to the apprentice-scheme.

This problem occurs for example in the construction industry. It is for this reason that preparatory trajectories have been created to smoothen the step from the 'general' into the 'sectoral' professional training. But also then many problems might occur, as we have seen in chapter two. Already during the training period, ethnic minorities seem to suffer from the expected working ethos, the working rhythm, the severe employment conditions, whereas sometimes discrimination occurs on schools. In the field work period is appeared that ethnic minorities often have problems to find a position as apprentice. Additional investment in mentoring and guidance of the pupils is the key to their success in acquiring the qualifications needed. In IT, other problems occur. According to

the schools we have been visiting, the ethnic minorities do rather well in IT, as long as they get additional guidance by tutors or mentors. This takes time and costs money. In addition, it is argued that many of the enterprises are not willing to offer such guidance to newcomers in the sector. 'Short-termism' and 'earning money' are seen as more important than treating ethnic employees well.

Regarding the promotion within organisations after further training, the ethnic and gender division in the further training (acquisition and development of qualifications on the work floor) is not entirely clear. We know that further training is taking place but we do not know who is relatively benefiting more from this. Moreover, we find that in the occupational labour markets of construction, health, IT and printing not only vertical but also horizontal career paths exist. In addition, we have found evidence that (extra) education and training not always proceeds promotion, but that persons are being promoted and then receive extra training in order to perform adequately in the new job. The promotion is then more based on experience of the employee and his or her capacity to 'grow into the new job'.

### **Hypothesis 2 on wage structures**

In the Netherlands, wage-setting is mainly taken place via collective bargaining. In the collective wage agreement, wage levels relate to qualifications levels. The second hypothesis is difficult to test for the Dutch construction, health and printing sectors, given the fact that the collective agreement is generally extended to all enterprises and is covering all employees. It might become relevant in comparison to the evidence in other countries in our research project.

For the Dutch construction sector the question is whether perhaps women and ethnic minorities more often are self-employed, and therefore work under economic contracts instead of under employment conditions. Research points out that economic contracts are cheaper since self-employed under-invest in several insurance contributions. It might also be that some subcontractors companies do not respect the collective agreement. The collective agreement then appears to work as a threshold for job-seekers willing to enter the industry.

For the IT sector, where work is evaluated in terms of performance, the wage structure might have a negative impact on the position of women. They have little appreciation for the culture of

evaluation and constantly showing ones ability to 'score' on the performance criteria that are being set by the company.

### **Hypothesis 3a on recruitment and networks**

Regarding the hypothesis on formal and informal forms of recruitment, we conclude that also in this issue there is no clear divide between the one and the other. The construction industry is on the one extreme with informal hiring, followed by printing and IT, whereas health is at the other end with above all formal recruitment. However, the over represented and underrepresented groups in the occupations under study may use several ways to findings jobs (like appeared to be the case in construction), in most cases there is a combination of both informal *contacting* and formal *contracting*. For example, the organisation of training -via apprenticeships or internships helps pupils to build a personal network and to find a job (e.g. in construction or IT). But also within the school-to-work trajectories, student dropout and exclusion occurs. In a later stage of the life-course, people may again apply for a job and get one by way of both informal and formal recruitment.

In printing, although all interviewees say that they just want the best, subjective criteria, such as 'fitting in the team' play an important role. It seems that this is more the case in smaller firms than in larger firms. On the other hand in the few cases that women or ethnic minorities are in a position of making decisions about recruitment, these same social networks and subjective criteria tend to be in favour of women and ethnic minorities. But formalised forms of recruitment can also be disadvantageous for women and ethnic minorities. For example the profile in the ad text affects the people applying for the job. If a firm is only interested in older, more experienced printers, it reduces the chances for ethnic minority printers, because (on average) these workers are younger. Or if a company mentions in its ad that they do not want people with a 'nine to five' mentality (possibly meaning a lot of overtime or irregular hours), this can have an impact on the number of women applying for the job.

In construction, informal recruitment is taking place, this gives advantages to the indigenous workforce, which is commuting from the villages in the countryside to the large-scale construction projects in the cities. When women or ethnic minorities work in the companies, they are doing so because of knowing other persons. This form of recruitment appears to prevail, whereas in enterprises employees have long-term tenure relationships. Firms make use of external flexibility by contracting sub-contractors, self-employed and making use of collegial hiring. For ethnic minorities, the informal recruitment is a handicap to integrate, especially when they have no relatives in the

companies and do not participate in the informal networks. An exception is the vocational training school: a successful career in the school provides graduates a network into the labour market.

Informal recruitment often occurs in IT, but in periods of extreme labour market scarcity, also people who come from outside the enterprise networks are being hired. It is for this reason that many enterprises have stated that they have hired people not only from other European countries, but also from America, Asia or Australia. In the current period of rising unemployment, almost no recruitment takes place, and when jobs are available, there is competition between job-seekers on the basis of their qualifications and work-experience.

In health-care there is no division between formal and informal recruitment. All hospitals use formal recruitment methods. It is however not clear whether or not this increases for women and ethnic minorities the opportunities to gain access to the sector. Firstly, although women are over-represented it is difficult to establish a causal relation between recruitment methods and their performance in this sector. Secondly, in terms of representation of ethnic minorities, these formal recruitment methods do not coincide with a proportionate representation of these workers.

### **Hypothesis 3b. On temporary and flexible contracts**

This hypothesis is not relevant for the Dutch cases presented in this study, because none of the companies hired employees on temporary contracts. People will get permanent agreements, after a -varying- probationary period of one week to one year. The hypothesis might be relevant in making cross-national comparisons.

An exception to the rule is the discussion on self-employment. Self-employment occurs in construction and IT, not in health and printing. For IT we have however no substantial information about the effects on self-employment on ethnic minorities and women. In construction, there is some evidence since the self-employed work under different conditions than employees. The economic contracts of self-employed per project can relatively easily be adjusted to market forces, this is in contrast to employment contracts that are determined between the employers' associations and the trade unions and are prevalent for a longer period of time. There is some evidence that in the construction industry, ethnic minorities relatively often work as self-employed, but this is mostly the case in lower qualified work. This needs further study.

### **Hypothesis 3c. on extended formal employment protection**

We have found no evidence to support this part of the hypothesis. Firstly, in printing and health this is not relevant, because employers in these sectors are more concerned about preserving their qualified workers. Therefore it is in the interest of the company to offer solid permanent contracts. Secondly, for IT this might be relevant, but we have no indication to which extent this specifically affects women and ethnic minorities. Thirdly, in construction enterprises apply different ways of internal flexibility: they make use of subcontractors, self-employed, temp agencies, so in work processes the inner circle of own staff employees is relatively small. Moreover, the construction wage agreement contains a stipulation on terminating the contract when no work is available.

### **Hypothesis 4 on social benefits**

The Netherlands has been developed into a part-time work economy. One third of all jobs are part-time jobs, and the growth of part-time work has resulted in increasing labour market participation (Visser, 2000). Part-time work is facilitated by extended social benefits. Such benefits exist at the national level. In addition, the health-care, printing and construction sector have extended collective agreements. Several risks, such as unemployment, sickness and disability are being covered. Also facilities for child-care and part-time work have been laid down in the agreements. Such issues need to be implemented on company level. Great differences occur between the provisions made at sector-level and the extent to which employees can appeal to these rights. For example, some firms in the printing industry indicated that they would refuse to contribute in child-care, even though it is part of the collective agreements. This has an influence on women's career choices. We also found that it appeared to be very difficult to work in part-time jobs in printing and IT. This has an impact on the opportunities for women within these companies. We assume that it makes it very hard for women (with children) to apply for a job if the resistance against part-time work is this strong. This means that the vicious circle remains: because of the fact that there are hardly any women in printing or in IT, there is no tradition of part-time work within this profession, which makes the profession less attractive for women.

### **Hypothesis 5 on active labour market policy and good practice**

We have found restricted evidence to support this hypothesis, because we did not find any companies that were applying active labour market policies or any kind of special measures on behalf of women or ethnic minorities. At the industry level, health, printing and construction have all taken measures to increase the opportunities for women and ethnic minorities. The results prove to be moderate since a large gap seems to occur between the sectoral initiatives and the implementation



at enterprise level. The most developed active labour market policies exist in the construction industry. The policies in the construction industry are designed to overcome the collective action problem of inter-firm cooperation in the realisation of the public good. Active labour market and training policies have been developed on a collective basis by the industry bodies of employers and employees, and are laid down in the collective agreement that is generally extended to all employees. Employers perceive the initiatives on training and employability as more important than those on providing work-experience to the unemployed and the matching of supply and demand. Enterprises use such stipulations only when they see this in their own interest.

#### **6.4 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND LINES OF FURTHER RESEARCH**

We propose that new research in this field of gender and ethnic segregation should take notice of the following considerations:

- An analysis of the impact of discrimination and harassment.
- The impact of rules and regulations of recruitment and dismissal on chances of women and ethnic minorities.
- Important in further research is the analysis of ‘preferences in school choices’ (educational segregation), which includes the analysis of the study trajectory of women and ethnic minorities and the performance of women and ethnic minorities in higher education.
- In new research projects, the arguments brought forward by personnel managers about developments at the demand side of the labour market should be related to supply-side data about the qualification, availability and work ethos of women and ethnic minorities.
- Develop a further analysis of the combined characteristics of gender and ethnicity in the study of the labour supply.
- An in-depth study on the development of the informal economy is urgent, especially in construction and IT.
- ‘Integration’ instead of ‘exclusion’ should receive central focus in new labour market research projects.

### **Policy recommendations:**

We present a limited number of recommendations to improve the labour market performances of women and ethnic minorities in the four sectors and occupations under study. The extent to which gender and ethnic segregation, or the under representation of groups, was considered a problem differed per sector and sometimes even per company. In general sectors are more inclined to seek for or invest in new categories of workers in case of labour shortages than in case of ample supply. The printing firms, hospitals, IT companies and construction firms in our research project did not have major difficulties in finding qualified personnel, especially since the economic conjuncture was low, however in periods of economic growth, they will immediately face problems to keep their staff 'up standards', given the need to apply new technologies, the outflow due to the ageing of their labour forces, and the increasing diversification of clientele on the product markets.

For such reasons, several policy recommendations can be made to enhance the participation of women and ethnic minorities in these sectors and the occupations under study. We make the following recommendations at different levels of analysis:

At national level:

- Procedures for the recognition of diplomas and authorization of foreign nurses should be more flexible.
- An evaluation should be made of the recent agreements of the Foundation of Labour regarding the position of ethnic minorities and women in the labour market.
- The legal obligation to register the number of ethnic minorities in medium-sized and larger enterprises (Wet Samen) should be continued. This should be organised in a less bureaucratic way than was the case until 2004. The procedure of public registration however provides an incentive to organisations to discuss the ethnic composition of their staff and the possibilities for benchmarking of diversity management policies between organisations.
- The use of public websites, which allow for the diffusion and dissemination of good practices examples, is to be recommended so that enterprises might learn from experiences in other enterprises. The national websites of the 'Wet Samen' and the Framework agreement 'Smoothing the way for ethnic minorities' provide some basic ideas, but these websites should be made more accessible and more informative.

- The general extension of collective agreement and the gentlemen agreement regarding training, as we studied in the construction industry, appear to be a necessary condition for the distribution of resources and institutional support to the training effort for women (Bouwradius) and ethnic minorities (Amsterdam training institute). The incentive system in the training structure in the construction industry provides an interesting example for the solution of market failures (non-investment in training). Similar institutional mechanisms should be thought of for other sectors of activity.
- The national image campaigns directed at target groups to choosing technological and scientific education are generally not considered to have a major impact.
- Improve the labour market statistics regarding ethnicity.

#### At sectoral level

- Active labour market policies should not be restricted to low status jobs but also be used for higher qualified work, as the case study of the assistant and head nurses made clear.
- Social partners have to ascertain that employers make efforts to implement the right to working part-time (especially in the IT, construction and printing).
- Changes in the structure of training schemes can be helpful for women and ethnic minorities. Such measures can for example include breaking-up training schemes into smaller units, or reducing the size of the classes, thereby reducing the duration of courses and making these less intensive. This might allow women trainees to fulfil their family responsibilities. A related point is that many ethnic minorities might opt for more practical than theoretical courses in the ambit of the training program, given their language problems and work attitude.

#### At enterprise level:

- Employers have to formalise and standardise recruitment and selection procedures in order to reduce segregation caused by informal codes and networking. This is valid for both the access into and the promotion within organisations.
- Mentor schemes can contribute to improve the integration of women and ethnic minorities within the organisation.

- The application of principles of 'diversity management' can be useful in larger organisations where women and ethnic minorities appear to be handicapped in having access and making a career.
- Bridging the gap between training and employment seems necessary, above all by providing trainees or apprentices with opportunities for work experience.

## **ANNEX – LIST OF INTERVIEWS AND SOURCES**

Because the interviewed firms have been promised total anonymity, we cannot conclude the name of all of them in this list.

### **National level experts**

- Interview with Paul Abell (Ega-beleidsadvies, Amsterdam)
- Interview with Bella van der Linden (Sovov, Wijk bij Duurstede)
- Interview with professor Frans Leijne (HBO-Raad)
- Participants in national workshop (April 24<sup>th</sup> 2003).

### **Construction**

- Interview with trade union FNV Bouw.
- Interview with employers' association VAB-Amsterdam.
- Interview with sectoral training institute SSP Amsterdam.
- Interview with Nederlands Centrum Buitenlanders
- Group interview with several carpenters
- Interview with Turkish executive manager
- Nine enterprise interviews, among which with main contractors, subcontractors and temp agencies.

### **IT**

- Interview with employers' association Fenit
- Interview with Hogeschool van Amsterdam
- Interviews with FNV-Bondgenoten
- Interview with HBO-raad
- Several interviews with IT-programmers employed in the industry
- Twelve enterprise interviews with larger and smaller companies

### **Printing Industry**

- Interview with institute for vocational training in graphic industry
- Interview with FNV trade union in graphic industry
- Ten interviews with enterprises
- Interview with several employees in the industry

### **Health-care**

- Interview with Institute for research (including) health-care and ethnic minorities
- Interview with NVZ (employers' organization for hospitals)
- Interview with SIGRA (employers' organization for health-care institutes in Amsterdam)
- Interview with Eurofedop: European trade union federation for Health-care Service
- Interview with HBO-raad
- Interview with 8 hospitals and 2 institutes for mentally handicapped persons
- Interview with several employees in the health sector.

## **Work-packages**

Apart from the here mentioned sources, the findings in this report originate from a number of so-called work-packages which are part of the 'Overcoming marginalisation' project. These include:

*Work-package 1: State-of-the-art literature review:* Reviewing relevant studies related to the marginalisation project and providing basic information about the situation in the participating countries.

*Work-package 2:* Overall research questions and hypotheses (see chapter one of this national report).

*Work-package 3:* Statistical analyses of nation-wide and sector-specific data from pre-existing sources.

*Work-package 4:* Findings from interviews with national experts and representatives from national employers' federations, trade unions and education and training institutions within the four selected sectors (see the here mentioned list). In addition, interview-data with representatives from the EU-level were also included in the report.

*Work-package 5 (micro-level study of 'good' practice):* a study of good practice projects or firms within the 4 selected sectors. The good practice cases contain firms or organisations that consciously and successfully have attempted to overcome marginalisation of women and ethnic minorities. These good practice cases are not included in this report, but are analysed in a separate 'Good practice report'.

*Work-package 5 (micro-level study of 'normal' practice):* In-depth analyses of 9-12 workplaces within each of the four selected sectors, with special emphasis on the four occupations.

*Work-package 6:* A joint analysis of the results of work-package four and five, which is included in this report.

*Work-package 7:* The publication of six national reports (including this one) and one overall European report.





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## **SAMENVATTING VAN HET WORKING PAPER/ SUMMARY IN DUTCH**

Overcoming Marginalisation; gender en etnische segregatie in de bouwnijverheid, de IT, de grafische industrie en de gezondheidszorg in Nederland

### *Inleiding*

Dat vrouwen en minderheden in het algemeen een minder goede arbeidsmarktpositie dan autochtone mannen hebben, is bekend. We weten echter weinig over verschillen tussen sectoren: waarom zijn bepaalde sectoren wel toegankelijk voor vrouwen en etnische minderheden en andere niet? In deze studie hebben we onderzoek verricht naar de factoren die de in- en doorstroom van vrouwen en etnische minderheden belemmeren en maatregelen die de integratie van deze groepen juist bevorderen. Door de ontwikkelingen in sectoren en landen met elkaar te vergelijken kunnen specifiek sectorale en nationale verschillen worden gedestilleerd.

### **De doelstelling van het onderzoek**

De doelstelling van het project is het in kaart brengen van structurele belemmeringen voor de integratie van vrouwen en etnische minderheden in sterk gesegmenteerde arbeidsmarkten. Ook worden strategieën geïnventariseerd die een succesvolle integratie van de groepen bevorderen. Zo worden er vragen gesteld over waarom er zo weinig allochtonen of vrouwen in bepaalde beroepsgroepen te vinden zijn en zoveel in andere sectoren. Het onderzoek is tegelijkertijd uitgevoerd in zes Europese landen: Denemarken, Duitsland, Engeland, Italië, Nederland en Spanje en werd gefinancierd binnen het vijfde kaderprogramma van de Europese Commissie.

In het onderzoek is een theoretisch kader opgesteld waaruit vijf factoren zijn gedestilleerd die verantwoordelijk zouden kunnen zijn voor een verschil in de arbeidsmarktparticipatie van vrouwen en etnische minderheden. Deze factoren zijn:

1. Onderwijs en beroepsonderwijs: hoe worden beroepsvaardigheden en kwalificaties verkregen: is er sprake van algemeen toegankelijke beroepsvorming? Wat is daarbij de rol van de overheid? Het bedrijfsleven en sociale partners? Hoe vindt in- en uitsluiting plaats?
2. De loonvorming: zijn lonen gestandaardiseerd in CAO's of is er sprake van geïndividualiseerde op prestaties gebaseerde beloningssystemen? Wordt lager gekwalificeerd werk dat onder slechte omstandigheden wordt uitgevoerd op een bepaalde manier beloond?

Zijn er bepaalde categorieën werkenden die op de ene of de andere manier worden beloond?

3. Werving en selectie: maakt het wat uit of er sprake is van meer geformaliseerde werving- en selectiemethoden of prevaleren informele netwerken waarbij persoonlijke voorkeuren een rol spelen?
4. Sociale rechten en voorzieningen: zijn er bepaalde sociale rechten en voorzieningen die de integratie en arbeidsmarktparticipatie van bepaalde groepen bevorderen (sociale uitkeringen, kinderopvang et cetera)
5. Actief arbeidsmarktbeleid: welke vormen van actief arbeidsmarkt beleid zijn tot stand gekomen, welke worden benut en wat is daarvan de betekenis voor vrouwen en etnische minderheden?

## **De sectoren**

In het onderzoek worden de kansen op instroom en doorstroming van vrouwen en etnische minderheden in vier sectoren met elkaar vergeleken. Dit zijn de bouwnijverheid, de grafische industrie en de IT-sector, terwijl de gezondheidszorg als controlesector fungeert (gezien de oververtegenwoordiging van vrouwen). In de verschillende sectoren richten we ons in ieder van de landen steeds op één beroepsgroep: timmerlieden, drukkers, 'software engineers' en verpleegkundigen. In ieder van de zes landen zijn in iedere sector tenminste twaalf managers van twaalf grotere en kleinere ondernemingen bevestigd met behulp van een vragenlijst. Tevens zijn in elk van de vier sectoren interviews gehouden met de vertegenwoordigers van werkgeversverenigingen en vakbonden, alsmede met een vertegenwoordiger van een opleidingsinstituut. Tenslotte is op nationaal en op Europees niveau een aantal interviews gehouden met vertegenwoordigers van werkgevers en werknemersorganisaties.

## **Bouwnijverheid**

In de bouwnijverheid is het lager gekwalificeerde werk in omvang sterk terug gelopen. Bij hoofdaannemersbedrijven zijn alle medewerkers in vaste dienst en kennen doorgaans een vaste prestatiebeloning toeslag. De noodzakelijke flexibiliteit in het bouwproces wordt bereikt via collegiale in- en uitlening van personeel en door het gebruik van onderaannemers en zelfstandigen zonder personeel.

Voor allochtone leerlingen en allochtone bouwvaklieden zijn er veel problemen. Het imago voor de bedrijfstak is laag vanwege het zware werk en de lange werkdagen (vroeg opstaan en reistijden). Allochtone bouwvaklieden maken onvoldoende deel uit van de wervings- en selectienetwerken van

autochtone bouwvaklieden. Er bestaat discriminatie op de werkvloer en er zijn weinig rolmodellen en personen waarmee jongeren zich kunnen identificeren. Ook zijn er indicaties dat etnische minderheden in de bouw relatief vaak opruim- en schoonmaakwerk verrichten en niet doorgroeien naar meer gekwalificeerde functies. Het aantal etnische minderheden bedraagt slechts 2% van de beroepsbevolking in de bouw en is de laatste jaren niet gestegen.

Voor vrouwen is er in de bouw wel werk maar vooral in administratieve, technische en uitvoerende functies, voornamelijk in het middenkader als werkvoorbereider, calculator of kopersbegeleider. Het gaat in totaal om een kleine 18.000 vrouwen, bijna 10% van de beroepsbevolking in de bouw. Het aantal vrouwelijke timmerlieden is gering (ongeveer 150) in heel Nederland, daarnaast werken er nog zo'n 300 vrouwen in andere handwerkberoepen. De timmerlieden verrichten meestal gespecialiseerd timmerwerk dat onder toezicht van een (vrouwelijke) leermeester wordt uitgevoerd. De werkzame vrouwen in de bedrijfstak beklagen zich over de negatieve beeldvorming ten aanzien van hun functioneren en over de negatieve houding van het management over vrouwen in bouwberoepen, terwijl sommige vrouwelijke personeelsmedewerkers hebben opgemerkt dat het gedrag van allochtone bouwvaklieden jegens hen uiting geeft van spanning over de hiërarchische verhoudingen.

Het actieve arbeidsmarktbeleid in de bouwnijverheid is behoorlijk ver ontwikkeld, er zijn meer initiatieven om vraag en aanbod op elkaar af te stemmen dan in veel andere bedrijfstakken. Opvallend is dat van de vele goede bedoelingen toch niet zoveel terecht is gekomen. Bouwbedrijven oordelen over het algemeen negatief over gesubsidieerde arbeid. Zij willen gemotiveerde medewerkers die hard werken en productief zijn, zij zijn bereid daarvoor een goede prijs te betalen. Verder gaat de meeste aandacht uit naar het verbeteren van het beroepsonderwijs, terwijl het bijeenbrengen van vraag en aanbod minder van belang wordt geacht.

### **ICT-sector**

De informatie- en communicatiesector (ICT-sector) is een bedrijfstak die zich niet zo gemakkelijk laat afbakenen. De sector heeft een omvang van maximaal ongeveer 200.000 tot 250.000 personen, daarvan is 19% vrouw. Andere schattingen stellen dat deze percentages lager zijn. Voor etnische minderheden beschikken we niet over specifieke gegevens, maar het aantal niet westerse allochtonen bedraagt ongeveer 3-5%, terwijl het aantal westerse allochtonen aan het eind van de jaren negentig sterk gegroeid is.

In de ICT kunnen twee dominante loopbaanpatronen worden onderscheiden. Ten eerste de loopbaan van de 'software engineers' (van helpdeskmedewerker tot netwerkbeheerder tot softwareontwikkelaar). Ten tweede de loopbaan van de consultants (van junior tot medior tot

senior adviseur). Onder de software engineers treffen we weinig vrouwen aan, in consultancyfuncties zijn meer vrouwen vertegenwoordigd.

In de IT-sector werken relatief weinig vrouwen en ze bereiken maar zelden topposities. De eerste reden voor deze achterstand wordt gevonden in het onderwijs: er zijn zeer weinig vrouwen die zich scholen in wiskunde en informatica, en de vrouwen die zich specialiseren in software functies, kennen doorgaans een minder lange verblijfsduur in ondernemingen.

De vrouwen die wel werkzaam zijn bij ICT-bedrijven, werken vooral in administratieve en commerciële functies, waarbij veel communicatie bestaat met opdrachtgevers en klanten. Knelpunten voor vrouwelijke loopbanen zijn de competitieve werkcultuur van het declarabel werken, de lange werkdagen, en de reistijden.

Voor etnische minderheden bestaan waarschijnlijk minder problemen dan voor vrouwen. De etnische minderheden, zowel jongens als meisjes, doen het beter op het HBO, dan de autochtone meisjes. Op de Hogeschool van Amsterdam bestaat een project Color IT, dat we hebben getypeerd als een 'good practice example'. Volgens de interviews is de IT-sector meer in het algemeen een daadwerkelijk internationale bedrijfstak, in de periode van schaarste hebben lieden uit alle delen van de wereld in Nederland emplooi gevonden: Amerikanen, Australiërs, Russen, Iranen, et cetera. De overtuiging is wel dat etnische minderheden uit doelgroepen extra aandacht nodig hebben om succesvol te zijn, zowel op school als op het werk. We hebben ook geen voorbeelden gevonden van etnische minderheden die hogere managementposities bekleden.

In geen van de onderzochte ICT-bedrijven werd een diversiteitsbeleid gevoerd of werden er criteria gehanteerd om vrouwen of etnische minderheden in een betere positie te brengen. Bij sommige bedrijven bestond wel een ontluikend bewustzijn dat diversiteit bij kan dragen aan de productiviteit, maar dit verband kon bij geen van de bedrijven hard worden gemaakt. Opvallend was ook dat bij geen van de bedrijven belang werd gehecht aan een actief arbeidsmarktbeleid: nadat eind jaren negentig deze behoefte werd gevoeld, zag men daar nu bij een negatieve conjunctuur geen heil meer in.

## **Drukkerijen**

Het aantal mensen dat werkzaam is in drukkerijen in Nederland bedraagt 56.000, waarvan 43.000 mannen en 13.000 vrouwen. Het is een sector die voornamelijk uit kleine bedrijven bestaat: 80% van de ondernemingen heeft minder dan 20 medewerkers. Vrouwen in deze sector zijn het meest werkzaam in administratieve functies (55% van medewerkers in administratieve functies is vrouw) en veel minder in de vaktechnische functies, waaronder de functie van drukker (14%). Het aandeel vrouwen in leidinggevende posities is 6%. Er zijn weinig exacte gegevens over allochtonen in deze



branche. Wel staat vast dat het percentage allochtonen in deze sector vrij laag is en dat allochtonen relatief vaker werkzaam zijn in laaggeschoolde banen in de voorbereiding of nabewerking.

De meest genoemde redenen voor bedrijven om geen of weinig allochtonen en of vrouwen in dienst te hebben is dat er weinig allochtone of vrouwelijke kandidaten op vacatures reageren. Dit komt volgens de ondervraagden doordat weinig allochtonen of vrouwen de beroepsopleiding voor drukkers volgen. De opleiding heeft in het algemeen te kampen met een slecht imago. Daar komt voor vrouwen nog eens bij dat zij als zij al een grafische opleiding volgen zij de creatieve richtingen kiezen en niet de technische varianten, en het vak van drukker het imago heeft van vies en ongezond werk. Bij allochtone leerlingen zou de lage status van het beroep (vies handwerk) een belangrijke rol spelen.

Wanneer het gaat om werving en selectie van nieuwe medewerkers dan blijkt vooral bij de kleinere bedrijven een meer informele manier van werven en selecteren te worden gehanteerd. Bij aantrekking van nieuw personeel is het hebben van de juiste diploma's vrijwel altijd een eerste vereiste. Daarnaast spelen meer subjectieve criteria zoals 'in het team passen' een rol. Dit kan soms inhouden dat de bedrijfsleider zijn of haar voorkeur uitspreekt over het geslacht of de afkomst van de sollicitant.

Een groot knelpunt voor vrouwelijke drukkers is dat het in de meeste bedrijven niet mogelijk is om in deeltijd te werken. Een interessant gegeven is dat er slechts een van de vrouwelijke drukkers kinderen had. Van de 10 bedrijven had er maar 1 een drukker (een vrouw) in een deeltijddienstverband. Tevens is in de meeste kleinere bedrijven de bijdrage in de kinderopvang problematisch. Ondanks de afspraken in de cao zeggen de meeste kleine firma's dat zij niet bereid of bij machte zouden zijn mee te betalen aan kinderopvang.

## **Gezondheidszorg**

Er zijn ongeveer 970.000 mensen werkzaam in de gezondheidszorg, wat neerkomt op ca. 12% van de totale beroepsbevolking. Berekent naar fulltime eenheden is percentage lager (ruim 10%), omdat de zorg een van de sectoren is met het grootste aantal deeltijdbanen.

De gezondheidszorg bestaat voor 67% uit verplegend personeel, 11% medisch personeel, 14% paramedisch en 8% assisterend personeel. De verpleging in Nederland is een beroep dat nog steeds in hoge mate wordt uitgeoefend door vrouwen: 84% van het verpleegkundig personeel is vrouw. Een opvallende ontwikkeling is dat er steeds meer vrouwelijke artsen komen: in 2001 was het aandeel vrouwelijke artsen 37%. Dit percentage zal over de komende jaren stijgen gelet op het feit dat 59% van de medische studenten vrouw is.

Het percentage etnische minderheden in de zorgsector bedraagt in 2001 4,4%. De instroom is het grootst geweest in de verpleeg- en verzorgingshuizen, waar nu ook de meeste allochtonen werkzaam zijn. De minste allochtonen treft men in de gehandicaptenzorg (2,5%). Ruim eenderde van het allochtone personeel in de gezondheidszorg werkt in assisterende of lagere verzorgende beroepen. Ze zijn oververtegenwoordigd in de lagere functies en zwaar ondervertegenwoordigd in managementfuncties.

Geen van de onderzochte instellingen richt zich specifiek op instroom van allochtoon personeel. Met name ziekenhuizen lijken niet veel extra inspanningen te hoeven plegen om vacatures voor verpleegkundigen te vervullen. Dit brengt met zich mee dat deze instellingen ook niet de noodzaak voelen om hun wervingskanalen en -methoden te verleggen naar andere groepen.

Een van de redenen waarom er volgens een aantal geïnterviewden relatief weinig allochtonen in de verpleging werkzaam zijn is dat zij veel minder voor een opleiding tot verpleegkundige kiezen. Deze negatieve keuze wordt vooral geweten aan de lage status van het beroep en culturele barrières (met name voor Turkse en Marokkaanse vrouwen). Voor allochtonen wordt additioneel ook complicaties (in de zin van miscommunicatie en/ of discriminatie) op de werkvloer tijdens stages genoemd als reden waarom allochtone studenten afhaken.

Hoewel de zorg een 'vrouwensector' is en op de werkvloer 80% van het personeel uit vrouwelijke werknemers bestaat is het aandeel van vrouwen in topposities klein. Gemiddeld was op middenmanagement niveau 60% tot 70% van de leidinggevende vrouw en was op het hoogste niveau vaak het aandeel vrouwen zelfs slechts 20% tegenover 80% mannen. Ondanks dat werd aangegeven dat vrouwen en mannen dezelfde kansen hebben op promotie, stromen mannen vaker door dan vrouwen. Genoemde oorzaken zijn dat mannen ambitieuzer zijn dan vrouwen, meer carrière gericht zijn, minder vaak in (kleine) deeltijdbanen werken en ook eerder bereid zijn om voltijd te gaan werken als een leidinggevende functie dit vereist.

## **Conclusie**

Het blijkt dat de vijf onderscheiden factoren: onderwijs, loonvorming, werving- en selectie, sociale rechten en actief arbeidsmarktbeleid allemaal in mindere of meerdere mate een uitwerking hebben op de verdeling van de werkgelegenheid in het algemeen en de in- en doorstroom van vrouwen en etnische minderheden in de bestudeerde sectoren en beroepen in het bijzonder. Daarnaast hebben we in alle vier de empirische studies nog enkele andere belemmeringen gevonden die steeds aan het eind van het hoofdstuk zijn opgesomd.

In de tekst hebben we al deze factoren gerangschikt onder de labels van persoonlijke, interpersoonlijke en systematische voorkomende factoren. Hieronder vatten we onze conclusies over elk van de vijf hypothesen samen.

1. **Onderwijs en scholing.** In de onderzochte beroepen zijn specifieke diplomavereisten op secundair of tertiair niveau nodig om het beroep uit te kunnen oefenen. De 'loopbaan' van jongeren in scholen is niet zonder hindernissen en veel jongeren vallen uit tijdens het traject van de kwalificatieverkrijging zowel in het theoretisch als praktisch onderwijs. Gender blijkt (nog altijd) van invloed te zijn op de onderwijs- en beroepskeuzen van jongeren. Meisjes kiezen minder vaak voor een technische opleiding en jongens minder vaak voor een beroepsopleiding in de zorgrichting. Dit heeft consequenties voor de arbeidsmarktmogelijkheden van beide groepen. Daarnaast lijkt ook etniciteit van invloed te zijn op de schoolkeuze. Bij allochtonen (en dan met name Turkse en Marokkaanse jongeren) lijkt de status van een beroep een rol te spelen in de keuze voor beroepsonderwijs. Zwaar, vies en handmatig werk (zoals de bouw, drukwerk, en ook verpleegkunde) wordt gezien als van een lage status en wordt om die reden gemeden. Veel etnische leerlingen ondervinden last van discriminatie en tegenwerking bij het verkrijgen van stages en opleidingsmogelijkheden zo is in verschillende interviews gebleken, terwijl voor deze groepen juist extra aandacht en begeleiding noodzakelijk is.
2. **Loonvorming.** Ten aanzien van de loonvorming zijn er bij de vier beroepsgroepen weinig verschillen: in drie van de vier sectoren zijn er bedrijfstak-CAO's met standaard functiecategorieën en loonschalen. Alleen in de ICT is er sprake van individuele prestatiebeloningen. Deze vorm van beloning, en de werkcultuur die daarmee verbonden is, zou in het nadeel kunnen zijn van vrouwen.
3. **Werving en selectie.** De mate waarin de werving geformaliseerd is verschilt per sector en vooral per grootte van de ondervraagde bedrijf. Met name in de kleine bedrijven bestaan informele vormen van werving en selectie bij de instroom. 'Ons kent ons', 'via-via' en netwerken zijn veel gebruikte selectievormen. Dit werkt relatief meer in het nadeel van vrouwen en allochtonen omdat zij minder vaak deel uitmaken van deze netwerken.
4. **Sociale rechten en voorzieningen.** Vooral vrouwen hebben voordeel bij toegang tot sociale rechten en voorzieningen, zoals deeltijdwerk en kinderopvang. In de bedrijven in de 'mannensectoren' komt het relatief vaak voor dat er van dit soort van rechten maar nauwelijks gebruik gemaakt. Dit heeft een grote impact op de in- en doorstroomkansen van vrouwen in deze sectoren.

5. Actief arbeidsmarktbeleid. Geen van de onderzochte bedrijven voert een actief arbeidsmarktbeleid, ondanks sommige initiatieven daartoe in de CAO's voor de bouwnijverheid en, in minder mate, de gezondheidszorg. In het onderzoek hebben we gezocht naar succesvolle integratieprojecten en goede praktijken, maar we hebben niet zoveel in het oog springende casussen kunnen selecteren. Opvallend is dat in onze rondgang langs bedrijven tamelijk negatief werd geoordeeld over actief arbeidsmarktbeleid. In toenemende mate wordt er wel nagedacht over de noodzaak te komen tot diversiteit in het personeelsbestand van de eigen organisaties. We concluderen echter ook dat alleen goede intenties en goede bedoelingen van beleidsmakers of bedrijven niet voldoende voorwaarden zijn voor een succesvol integratiebeleid.

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