

School attendance data in the Netherlands

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The recording, reporting, and use of school attendance data in The Netherlands:

Toe the line or take a new path?

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The national association for school attendance officers and related professionals

www.ingrado.nl

Content

- Laws on school attendance and recording and reporting absence
- Availability and use of data
- Recent developments





Laws on school attendance I

- Compulsary education act (1969)
- Education participants act (2019)
- Primary education act
- Secondary education act
- Appropriate education act (2014)



Laws on school attendance II

Compulsary education act (1969)

Defines obligations and responsibilities for

- Parents and children (5 – 16/18 years old)
- Head masters/school principals
- School attendance officers

With regard to

- School enrollment
- Visiting school
- Exemptions



Laws on school attendance III

Two types of absence

1) Unauthorised absence

- No school enrollment, no exemption
- School enrollment but absent without exemption

2) Authorised absence

- No school enrollment, with exemption
- School enrollment but absent with exemption

Laws on school attendance IV

Education participants register act (2019)

- National database containing education data
- Managed by DUO an agency of the Ministry of Education
- Portal
- School enrollment and deregistration
- Reports on unauthorised absenteeism



Laws on school attendance V

Recording and reporting absenteeism

- Obligation for schools to record absenteeism
- No guidelines on recording authorised absenteeism
- Guidelines on recording unauthorised absenteeism can be distracted from regulations on reporting unauthorised absenteeism
- Some guidelines are contradictory (reporting half-days, clockhours, classhours)



Laws on school attendance VI

Reported forms of unauthorised absence

4 categories

- 16 hours in 4 consecutive school weeks
- Unauthorised absence of 1 month or more
- Luxury absence
- Other absence



Laws on school attendance VII

Reports from communities

Yearly reports on types of unauthorised absence and exemptions from communities to the Ministry of education.

Data on school attendance and absence I

	No school enrollment		School enrollment		
	No exemption	Exemption	Unauthorised absence	Authorised absence	School Attendance
School	NA	NA	AI	AI	AI
Municipality	AI	AI	AI	NA	NA
DUO	AI	AI	AI	NA	NA
Ministry of education	AA	AA	AA	NA	NA

AA = Available at aggregated level, AI = Available at individual level, NA = not available

Data on school attendance and absence II

Research findings

- Inspectorate of education 2015-2016 Unsatisfactory compliance with the Compulsary Education Act
27% primary school, 69 % special education schools
11% secondary schools
Most problematic: absence administration, reporting unauthorised absence and granting leave
- Roelofs et al. 2021
less systematic recording in primary education compared to secondary education
Suggest that school personnel in primary schools is hesitant to report absenteeism



Data on school attendance and absence III

- Dullaert (2019), Lubberman et. al. (2019). Research on the approach of longterm absenteeism 'Thuiszittersaanpak'

Absence is very often reported too late to communities



Data on school attendance and absence IV

Experiences of communities with data noted by Ingrado

- Communities are critical on the quality of data they receive
- Comparison between DUO data from schools and data from communities in 2018 showed huge differences
- Part of the communities are critical on the data they are asked to report to the Ministry of education in relation to the approach of longterm absenteeism.



Data on school attendance and absence V

- Little is known on whether and how schools analyze their data on absence and attendance



Latest developments

Bill on reducing school absenteeism

- Aims at an unambiguous reporting of absence
- Offers possibility for formulating requirements on the absence policy of schools

**Every young person has
the right to development**



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