

# INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS IN THE NETHERLANDS

## Freedom of Education and Freedom of Parental Choice

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## OVERVIEW

1. Cultural and historical background of Public and Private schools
2. ca. 70% of the schools are Private schools with public funding
3. Meaning and limitations of the freedom of education
4. Social results of private schools
5. Freedom of education at the European level
6. New approach in education for the disadvantaged
7. Beyond the old debate





## 1. Cultural and historical background of the Dutch pillarization (denominational segmentation) of Public and Private Schools (1)

- The development of the pillarization model is close connected with the development of the Dutch state
- Jewish schools as the first 'private' schools in the Netherlands
- Private school and the license to operate of the government





## **Cultural and historical background of the Dutch pillarization (denominational segmentation) of public and private schools (2)**

- The orthodox Protestants and the roman Catholics knocked at the door of the school system
- The growth of private schools based on new religions and new philosophy
- The modern case of the Islamic schools as private schools with public funding





## 2. CA 70 % of the schools are Private schools with public funding (1)

- Number of school boards Primary Education (PE) 1.800
- Number of school boards Secondary Education (SE) 375
- Number of institutions Primary Education 7.635
- Number of institutions Secondary Education 660



## CA 70 % of the schools are Private schools with public funding (2)

<b>Schools by denomination (by %)</b>	<b>PE</b>	<b>SE</b>
<b>Public Authority</b>	33	29
<b>Protestant</b>	30	22
<b>Roman Catholic</b>	30	25
<b>Private non-denominational</b>		14
<b>Inter-denominational</b>	>7	10



### 3. Meaning and limitations of the freedom of education (1)

- **The freedom of education includes**
  - the right to establish independent schools (with equal public funding as the Public school)
  - the right to choose the religious or philosophical foundation of the school
  - the right to determine the content of teaching and the teaching methods used
  - the right to add special subjects to the standard program
  - the right of parental choice of a school



## The meaning and limitations of the freedom of education (2)

- **The freedom of education has limitations**
  - minimum number of pupils
  - minimum quality demands
  - Dutch language is required
  - qualified teachers
  - demands for the curriculum
  - audits by the national inspectorate



## 4. Social results of private schools

- Contribution to the process of emancipation
- Growing self esteem and self awareness have (after decades) lead to integration
- The fear for segregation in society is never far away
- ‘Social cohesion and active citizenship’ as a new challenge



## 5. Freedom of Education at the European level

- The right to education (art. 14 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, 7th of December 2000, in Nice)
- School Accountability, Autonomy, Choice and the level of student achievement: International Evidence from PISA<sup>[1]</sup>, 2003
- The vocabulary discussion about private schools
  - independent schools
  - social enterprise school
  - civil society school
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[1] Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)



## 6. New approach in education for the disadvantaged (1)

- Experiments with ethnic mixed schools (on voluntary basis)
- Pre school language program
- Cooperation between school, sport and social welfare institutes





## **New approach in education for the disadvantaged (2)**

- Educational partnership between school and parents
- Extra activities to reduce the number of pupils who leave school without qualification
- Focus on numeracy and language teaching in primary education
- Extra public funding for schools with a high number of children of underprivileged families





## 7. Beyond the old debate

- We have to pay more attention to the teacher
- The teacher as the new key figure in the Knowledge Society
- It is all about inspiration, creativity and entrepreneurship
- Schools have to take their social responsibility very seriously
- Public schools are becoming privatised
- We can learn a lot by international comparisons about what works in education (evidence based)

