



The Netherlands Institute for Social  
Research



## Migrant education policy in the Netherlands

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# Topics

- Characteristics of migrant population
- Education policy for migrants
- Effects of education policy for migrants
- Strengths and challenges



## Characteristics of migrant population

- 11% population of non-Western origin, in youth population 16%
- Increasingly of second generation
- Generally weak socioeconomic position (income, poverty, education, unemployment)
- Concentration of non-western migrants in major cities



## Policy approach to migrant students

- 1970's and 1980's introduction of policies for migrant students
  - Extra funding non-Western migrant pupils in primary and secondary education
  - Teaching in language of country of origin
  - Intercultural education
  - Induction classes for newcomers (teaching Dutch language)
- Last decade shift towards general educational disadvantage policy
  - In line with shift in public debate on integration of migrants
  - Socioeconomic dimension considered more important



## Current policy approach

- General disadvantage policy
  - Primary education
    - extra funding on basis of parents education level
    - pre- and early school programmes
    - induction classes
    - new requirement to promote active citizenship
  - Secondary education
    - extra funding for students from disadvantaged districts
    - new requirement to promote active citizenship



## Current policy approach (2)

- Remaining policies targeted at migrants
  - Special classes for newcomers (teaching Dutch language)
  - Support programmes migrant students in higher education
  - Civic integration courses for adults
  - Teaching in language of the country of origin discontinued
- Beneficial comprehensive policies
  - National programme to reduce school drop-out
  - Opportunity for accumulation of qualifications in secondary education
  - Promotion of transfer to higher education through vocational education

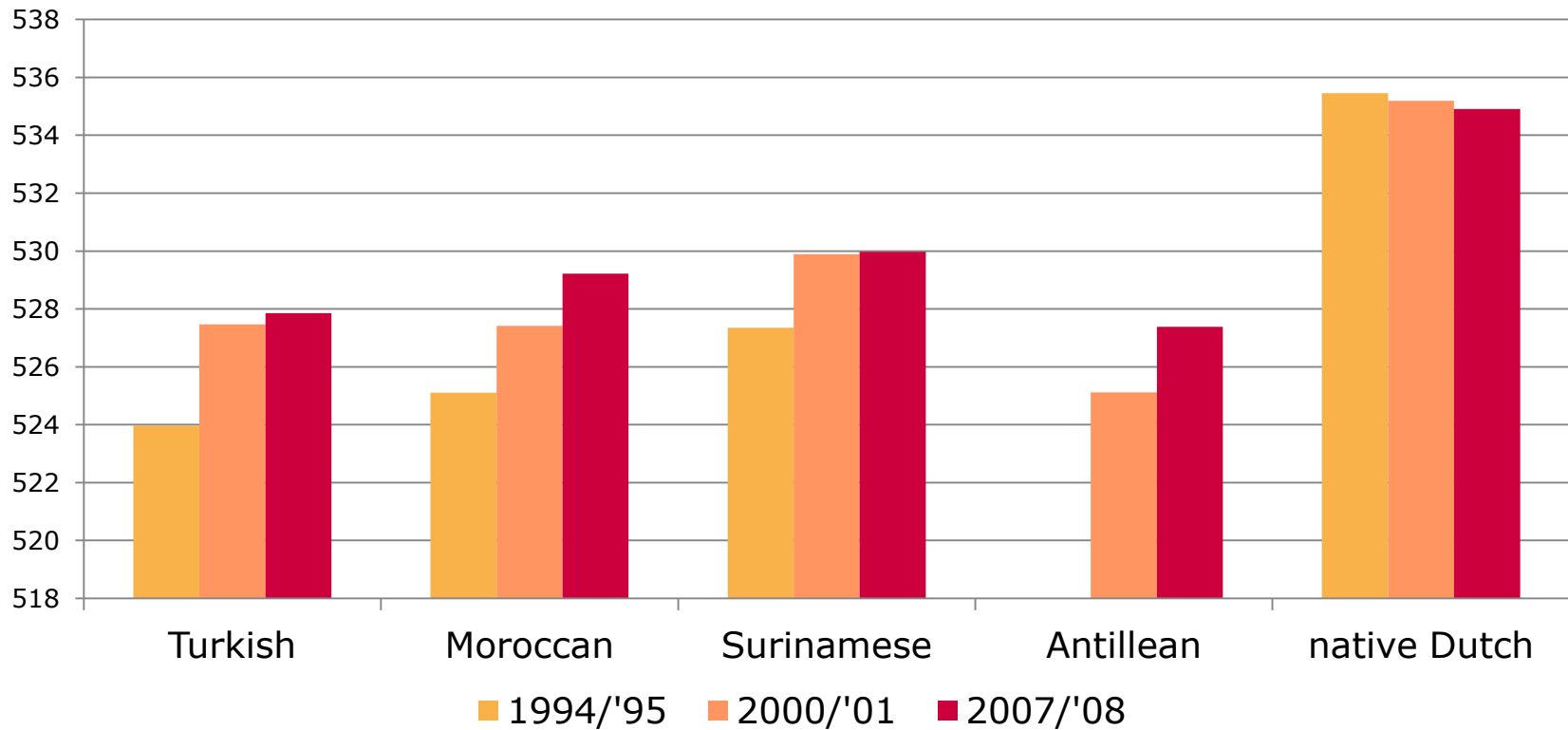


## Effects of policies

- Effectiveness of policies often difficult to determine
  - Doubts about effects of preschool and early-school programmes
  - Positive experiences with induction classes
- Achievement and educational careers of migrant pupils have improved
  - Reduction achievement gap in primary education
  - Increasing participation in higher levels in secondary education
  - Reduction of school drop-out in secondary education
  - Strong increase entrance in higher education



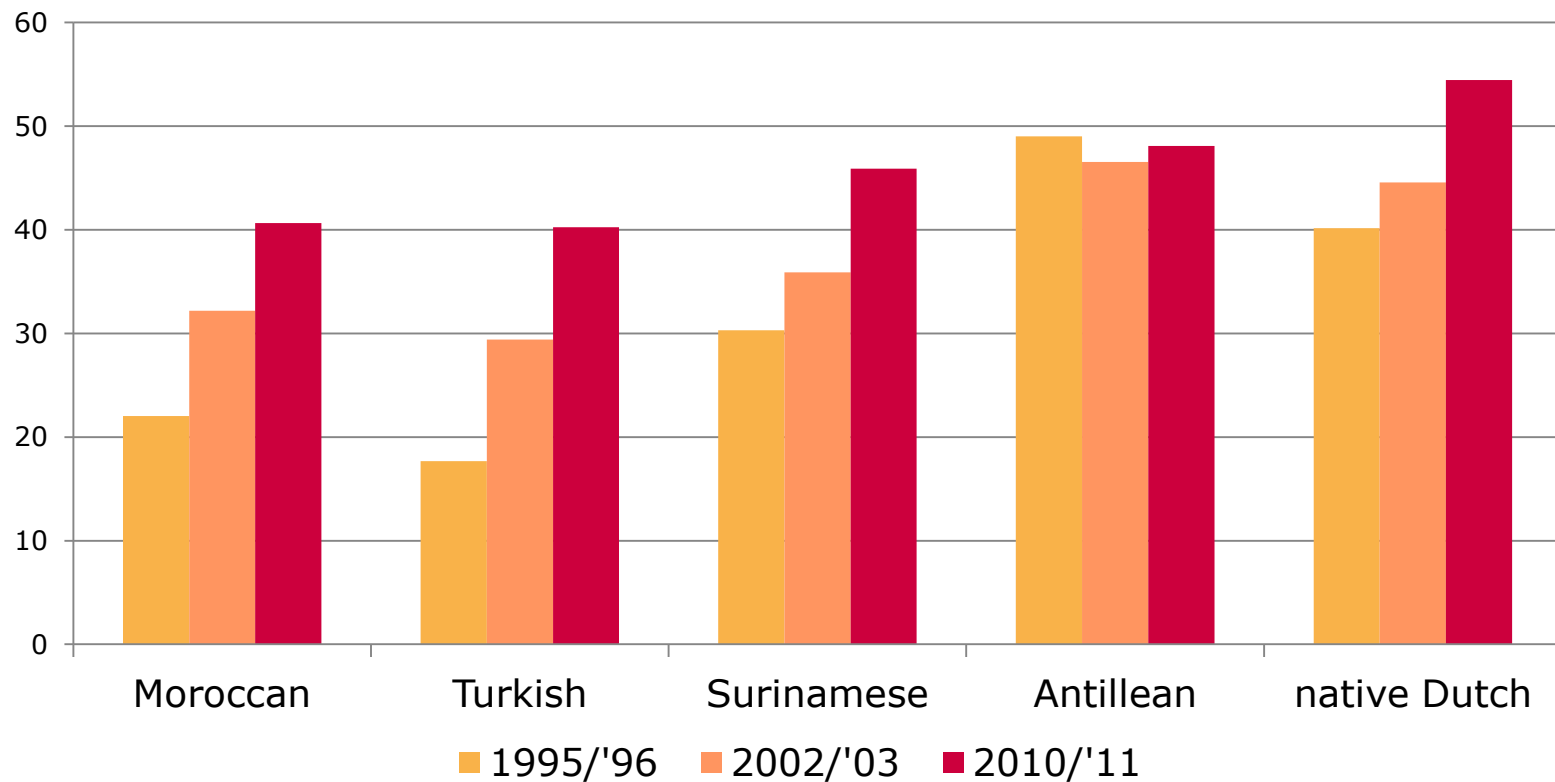
## Achievement level primary education (score final test)







## Entering higher education, in % (second generation)





# Strengths and challenges

- Strengths
  - System of extra funding for disadvantaged pupils (weighting system)
  - Mitigation of negative effects of early tracking
  - National programme to reduce school drop-out



## Strengths and challenges (2)

- Challenges
  - Enhancing the effectiveness of preschool and early-school programmes
  - Improving language skills
  - Reduction of drop-out in higher education
  - Combating segregation?