

Abstract: Gender differences in labour market perspectives of young migrants in the Netherlands

Stream 1: Migrants, ethnic minorities and social policy.

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In the Netherlands young migrants are in a disadvantaged position when it comes to schooling and employment: they are concentrated in lower segments of education, drop out more often and have higher unemployment rates. In spite of this somewhat negative picture it is important to note that the school performances and experiences of migrant youngsters are diverse and there are clear differences, for example between the genders. In general girls outperform boys at school and results of our study indicate that in particular migrant girls are very satisfied with their school life.

Interestingly, more school engagement of migrant girls does not translate itself in better labour market outcomes and participation is still relatively low. However, since the global crisis this image slightly changed. Unemployment rates are increasing among young migrants, although less for women than for men. Moreover, the labour market participation of migrant women is still increasing, while for migrant men it is on the decrease. Segments in which traditionally more women work seem less affected by the crisis, but the fact that participation is even on the increase also points in the direction of an emancipation process of migrant women which is not only restricted to their life at school.

There are several explanations for this gendered picture, like differences in motivation, social support, labour market perspectives, traditional beliefs and perceived discrimination. For our analyses we use survey data on school satisfaction and professional orientation supplemented with qualitative data consisting of observations and interviews with migrant vocational students. In addition we will discuss the policy reforms which have affected the situation of young migrants, like educational policies and policies to combat youth unemployment and how these reforms might influence young migrants' future perspectives.

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