

How **Holland** excels in global education

The Netherlands (population 16 million, GDP per capita: Euro 30,174) has always had an international orientation, in business, in social life and in culture. Nowadays this is among others reflected in our role as an active partner within the European Union, which gives high priority to strengthening the knowledge economy.

By Nikolaos van Dam

The Netherlands is a place where knowledge, skills, ideas, and cultures from all over the world come together. Its education system also reflects its international orientation. The Netherlands was the first non-English-speaking country with courses taught in English, and Dutch higher education institutions together now offer 1,400 high quality international study programs. This makes the Netherlands the largest provider of English-taught study programs on continental Europe.

Dutch education furthermore enjoys a world-wide reputation for its quality and di-

versity. In Dutch higher education, students get the attention and freedom they need to develop their own opinion and their own creativity in applying knowledge and experience.

Research has shown that international students choose the Netherlands because of the academic quality and the cosmopolitan atmosphere. For their part, Dutch higher education institutions consider international staff and student populations as important part of their quality assurance policy.

It is no coincidence that many of the thousands of alumni of Dutch higher education institutions worldwide, are now leading poli-

ticians and businessmen and -women, who play an important role in the development of their countries. Indonesia is a good example of this.

In the Netherlands there are two main types of regular higher education, namely research universities and universities of applied sciences. The latter specialise in technical and vocational training, while the research universities focus on providing scientific instruction and conducting scientific research.

Since 2002, the higher education system in the Netherlands has consisted of a Bachelor's and a Master's phase in addition to doctoral degree programs.





There are 14 government-approved research universities in the Netherlands, which focus heavily on research as well as education. This combination ensures that every student is instructed in a research-intensive environment.

The universities vary in size, with enrolments ranging from 6,000 to 30,000. Altogether they have some 205,000 students enrolled. 11 out of these 14 research universities are listed in the top 200 of the world's best universities. Other characteristics are the integration of research and education, the fact that most Masters programmes are taught in English, the focus on international partnerships and the close collaboration with the private sector. There is also a very rigorous and thorough accreditation system, which guarantees high quality.

The universities of applied sciences are career-oriented. Acquiring practical work experience through internships is an integral part of professional study programmes. There are 42 government-approved universities of ap-

plied sciences in the Netherlands. The largest enrol 20,000 to 39,000 students. Altogether some 350,000 students are enrolled in this type of higher education programmes.

G2G socio-educational relations

Dutch-Indonesian bilateral relations have never been better than they are today. This is reflected in numerous cooperation arrangements, many of these in the field of higher education and research.

Last month, the DG Higher Education, Dr Fasli Jalal, and I signed a bilateral MoU concerning Cooperation in the area of Higher Education for Human Resources Development. The MoU builds upon various existing cooperation agreements in the field of education, and aims at further enhancing the quality of higher education for human resources development in Indonesia through exchange of knowledge, experience and means between Indonesia and the Netherlands.

Over the last few years, a growing number of double degree programmes between Indo-

nesian and Dutch higher education institutions has been established.

This is a very positive development, and an excellent example of mutually beneficial cooperation. The graduates from these double degree programmes benefit directly from this, but it also expands the knowledge base and horizon of our universities.

We hope that this kind of cooperation will also lead to an increase in exchange of staff and students, in both directions. We hope to see more Dutch students coming to Indonesia for part of their studies. International exposure is very important for individuals, for their organisations and for our countries. It is crucial for the kind of human resources every country needs in today's globalized world.

Support to institutional and human resource development is therefore a high priority in our cooperation with Indonesia.

We offer a number of fellowship programmes, such as the Netherlands Fellowships Programme, the StuNed-programme and the Huygens programme.

Dutch technology in modern life style

Dutch knowledge is applied throughout the world. What do the pendulum clock (1656), the compact disc (1972) and WiFi and Bluetooth, the new standards for wireless networks, have in common? All are Dutch inventions that have changed the world as we know it. And the list goes on with a huge variety of other inventions, in fields as varied as the creative industry, the high-tech industry, life sciences and water management.

The quality of the research conducted at the Dutch research universities is high. This is true both of the number of scientific publications and the impact they have, and of the number of patent applications. Important issues in the field of international cooperation are how to reduce poverty and the widening gap between rich and poor countries, the knowledge society and how to increase international competitiveness. For Dutch higher education, international cooperation means more than recruiting students from abroad. Their mission is top quality in higher education, scientific research and knowledge valorisation (economic and social) and the creation and application of new knowledge.

Dutch higher education and research are closely intertwined with Dutch commerce and industry. This guarantees a unique combination of knowledge creation and application in daily life. Plenty of examples can be found in the ICT sector, in maritime industry, in automotive technology, in environmental technology, in renewable energy and in the media. The Netherlands excels in the following disciplines: Management and business studies, Agricultural sciences, Medicine, Civil Engineering and Water Management, Remote Sensing, Arts, and Architecture.

Educational assistance

The education sector is our biggest sector in Indonesia in terms of financial support, and Indonesia is our biggest bilateral part-

ner in education. Our educational assistance amounts to more than 30 million Euros per year. Our increased support to education in Indonesia is an evident reflection of our policy to support countries with good policies and strong political commitment to reach the Millennium Development Goals and the Education for All Goals.

With our support, fully embedded in Indonesia's policies and objectives, as laid down in the education Renstra, we hope to further enhance the development of the Indonesian education system and the efforts for improving access, quality and relevance of education at all levels and in all regions of this vast country. See annex for more detailed information.

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Expand your horizon

In today's growing global society there is a demand for people with global vision, skills and experience. If Indonesia wants to eliminate poverty and compete regionally, it may have to expand its horizon and invest in knowledge systems. Investment should probably not come from the public sector only. In Indonesia, there is probably an untapped potential for private sector involvement and investment in knowledge systems. This could be explored.

Knowledge is a cross-cutting issue for development in many ways. This poses a number of

challenges to research and to researchers. Research and researchers need 1) to be inclusive, sensitive to context (local and global); 2) to be demand-driven, that is: relevant; 3) to be curious, and continuously reflect on what works, what doesn't, and why; 4) to make research part of broad, interactive learning processes between people, from North and South as well as from science, the private sector, civil society and government.

The policymakers will have to address some issues as well. They have to open up and participate in the broader arenas of knowledge and development. This will lead to new challenges and questions.

The Netherlands supports Indonesia in its efforts to improve the access, quality and relevance of education, thereby contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) goals in Indonesia.

The Government of Indonesia gives high priority to the improvement of the quality of its education system. This is, among others, reflected in the substantial increase of its annual budget for the education sector. The intentions, priorities and education strategies are laid down in the National Education Strategic Plan 2005-2009 (Renstra), which was approved by Parliament.

It is clear from the Renstra that significant external additional funding will be required to meet the objectives. Hence, since 2006, the Netherlands' support to basic education has increased and broadened in scope. Currently, the Netherlands supports the following education programs in Indonesia:

- Decentralized Basic Education Project, with the Asian Development Bank: This program aims to improve the enrolment, retention and learning outcomes of poor children in nine years of basic education. It also supports decentralized management of basic education. Dutch funding to this program (EUR 23 million) made it possible to expand the coverage to six districts in the province of Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT).

- In cooperation with the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Netherlands supports, with an amount of EUR 18,8 million, the Education and Skills

A move to boost RI education

Training for Youth Employment Program in Eastern Indonesia. This program supports the implementation of the National Plan of Action for the Elimination of Worst Forms of Child Labour and it improves the education and training systems to prepare young people for the world of work. The program covers six provinces in Eastern Indonesia.

- With a contribution of EUR 21 million, the Netherlands supports the Early Childhood Education and Development Program, which aims to improve poor children's development and readiness for further education. Funding is channelled through the World Bank.

- Since the end of 2006, a Dutch Basic Education Trust Fund is being implemented, through the World Bank implementing. This program of EUR 9,25 million aims to carry out the necessary technical analyses using global knowledge and international best practices to help the Government of Indonesia reach its Renstra objectives and to successfully implement policies in the field of teacher management, certification, ICT, general and vocational education.

- Basic Education Capacity Trust Fund. This program is co-funded by the EC and the Netherlands, with EUR 22 million each, and implemented by the World Bank. The program aims to strengthen the capacity to conduct policy analysis, to engage in policy dialog with stakeholders and external development partners, and exercise oversight of basic education. The focus is on improving governance and increasing transparency and accountability, especially in local governments, and on strengthening the capacity of information systems.

- Together with the World Bank, the Netherlands supports (EUR 42 million) the programme for Better Education through Reformed Management and Universal Teacher Upgrading (BERMUTU). The objective of this program is to improve the overall qual-

ity and performance of teachers in Indonesia through enhancing teachers' knowledge and subject matter and pedagogical skills in the classroom and teacher certification.

- Through UNICEF, the Netherlands supports a programme for HIV/Aids Prevention and Care, which aims to raise awareness of young people and adolescents in the Papua and West Papua Provinces and to build the capacity of key stakeholders, such as government authorities, NGOs, and civil society, to develop, manage and sustain effective HIV/AIDS prevention and care services. The Netherlands support to this program is Euro 3,25 million.

In Indonesia, the Netherlands plays an active role in coordination and harmonization of donor interventions in the education sector. Close consultation between the relevant ministries and donors has resulted in a strategic framework for donor support and for possible joint funding and programming.

The cooperation in higher education and science builds upon a long tradition of cooperative relations between Netherlands and Indonesia. There are many institutional relations between Dutch and Indonesian universities, and there are also a number of programs that facilitate these relations.

The Scientific Program Indonesia – The Netherlands (SPIN) is managed by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Science in the Netherlands (KNAW). The Embassy has a facilitating role. Besides, there are ongoing academic research activities which are, on the Dutch side, coordinated by WOTRO/NWO.

The cooperation in higher university is coordinated by the Netherlands Education Support Office (Neso Jakarta). This institute functions as the information centre on higher education in the Netherlands and Indonesia; it facilitates exchange programs and coordinates the Netherlands' fellow-

ship programs.

A scholarship program exclusively for Indonesian professional, called StuNed, was started in 2000. This program provides scholarships to government officials, NGO officials, lecturers-educators and journalists. The program aims to contribute to the development of Indonesia through strengthening its human resource base. Each year some 150-200 full scholarships are offered for professionals to follow master programs, short courses or tailor made training, all conducted in the English language in the Netherlands. For further information on StuNed and other programs for study in the Netherlands as well as for academic cooperation, please visit www.nesoindonesia.or.id.

Neso also organizes the annual Netherlands Higher Education Fair (HEF) where Dutch universities present their programs. In early November 2008, Neso also organized the European Higher Education Fair in Indonesia.

In 2005, the program for Institutional Cooperation in Higher Education (NPT) was started. It aims to strengthen the capacity of post-secondary education. The program is managed by The Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) in The Hague. The Embassy maintains close contacts with Nuffic and the Indonesian Ministry of National Education regarding this program.

Furthermore, the Embassy supports the multi-year training program for Islamic Scholars in the Netherlands called: "Training Indonesia's Young Leaders: Muslim Intellectuals as Agents of Change" with a contribution of EUR 2,9 million. This program is carried out in close cooperation between MORA and the University of Leiden in the Netherlands. The program offers scholarships for junior lecturers of Islamic universities. It provides scholarships for Masters, PhDs and postdoc education.

The Netherlands also supports the program for Cooperation between International Institutions (SII) for South-South Cooperation. This program is managed by the Directorate for Cultural Cooperation, Education and Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague. CA