Paulina Amador

UNESCO

American Nicaraguan School

Netherlands, SSUNS 2016

Topic 1: Education, Government and Funding

Both the government and society in Netherlands work together to ensure quality education for their population. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science provides funding to all levels of education; public and private schools are funded on an equal basis through a distributed amount.  Additionally, this Ministry also has  as the duty of ensuring the quality of the education for all students as well as setting national education policy for early childhood education. Caring for both primary and secondary education, including standards, examinations and funding mechanisms are just several of the many ways the Ministry ensures quality education. Flexibility, guidance and counselling are available to support Dutch students as they transition into higher education and the labour market. In the Netherlands, the education system “combines a centralised framework and policies with decentralised administration and school management.”(1) School boards are responsible for the administration of schools and implementation of national education policy. Schools in the Netherlands receive equal public funding according to the number of students in the school: They do so, as long as they meet certain requirements. For early childhood education, municipalities receive grants from the government’s Municipalities Fund, based on parents’ educational background and school location; this is partially equal in distribution. In 2012, the government introduced performance-based budgeting in secondary vocational education and in tertiary education in an effort to improve the quality education. (4) Government and municipalities are in charge of funding for schools with specific student needs. (5) Also, with the sole purpose of  boosting student’s and teacher’s performance, performance based budgeting will provide schools with an additional amount of funding if they reduce dropout rates in their institution.

Topic 2: World Heritage Sites

Throughout the world there are historic sites that are not only important to the country in which they are located but to the world as a whole. There are currently ten world heritage sites in the Netherlands which are both irreplaceable and unique. The Netherlands is above all a country of water, which lives and continually battles against such. It is a country that has a very strong trading tradition and civil society. Finally, the Netherlands primarily believes in its ability to shape society and to make it as efficient as possible. In order to accomplish such goals, the Dutch Government aims to preserve what are called historic sites. The Dutch Government decides which properties in the Netherlands should be submitted to UNESCO's World Heritage List and ensures that these are well chosen.These sites later appear on a Tentative List, one in where a special committee advises on further Dutch additions to the World Heritage List, and finally, the State Secretaries for Culture and Nature adopt such recommendations. To ensure the wellbeing of these sites, managers of such provide insurance and protection to such. Sites may be managed by a foundation or a public authority even, by local authority. (4) Every six years these managers report to UNESCO on the condition of the property, being able to keep a full record of any changes or measures that have taken place or an. These individuals  also have  a duty to make sure the heritage site is accessible to the general public, while ensuring  it is simultaneously well preserved. “Responsibility for the cultural World Heritage Sites in the Netherlands lies with the State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science.” (4) The natural World Heritage Sites are also the responsibility of the State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation.(5) When working together to preserve this sites, the two State Secretaries determine Dutch world heritage policy.

Topic 3: Netherlands and the 2030 Agenda

Many countries around the world have goals to improve their overall society. In the case of the Netherlands, the 2030 Agenda provides a reference for development cooperation policy, international policy on sustainable development and national sustainability policies. In light of this, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is therefore a government-wide responsibility, involving, in the most part, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs,Infrastructure and the Environment, Economic Affairs, Public Health, Welfare and Sport, Social Affairs and Employment, Education, Culture and Science and Finance(1) However, the smooth implementation of such an Agenda at a national level has yet to be worked out in detail. In additional to national implementation, governments such as the one in the Netherlands agree to engage in a systematic follow-up and review of the Agenda’s implementation to track progress and the overall success of such policy. “A recent study on the performance of the 34 Member States of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) with regard to the SDGs ranked the Netherlands among the seven best performing countries (Kroll, 2015).”  (2) Over the past few decades the Netherlands has committed to a wide range of sustainability-related targets and has succeeded through hard work and the launch of various policy programmes for their implementation.  The country has also committed to a range of global policy targets through various multilateral agreements, including the three Rio Conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions on hazardous chemicals and waste. (2) At the European level, the Netherlands has successfully committed to various policy targets as part of EU Directives, Strategies and Roadmaps. (2)

Work Cited

1. Cultural Heritage Agency. (n.d.) World heritage. *Cultural Heritage Agency.*Retrieved from: <http://culturalheritageagency.nl/en/world-heritage>
2. Lucas, P; Ludwig, K; Kok, M; Kruitwagen, S. (2016). Sustainable development goals for Netherlands. *The Hague.* Retrieved from: <http://www.pbl.nl/sites/default/files/cms/publicaties/pbl-2016-sustainable-development-in-the-Netherlands_1966.pdf>
3. OCED. (2014). Education policy outlooks Netherlands.  Retrieved from: <http://www.oecd.org/edu/EDUCATION%20POLICY%20OUTLOOK_NETHERLANDS_EN%20.pdf>