



## Curaçao

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### Education for All 2015 National Review

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**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE AND SPORTS**



**CURAÇAO EDUCATION FOR ALL REVIEW**

**2015**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

## Section I

### Introduction

This report aims at summarizing the progress Curacao has made towards the achievement of the UNESCO Education For All (EFA) goals. It presents the experiences of Curacao in implementing various strategies and initiatives to achieve the EFA goals and what the current challenges are. Since 2002, the Netherlands Antilles including Curacao has embarked on a major and extensive process of innovating its educational system at all levels, but especially primary and vocational education funded by the cooperation program between the Netherlands and the Netherlands Antilles.

In the year 2000 at the meeting in Dakar, participating countries agreed and gave their commitment towards achieving the six Education For All (EFA) Goals by the year 2015. The government of the former Netherlands Antilles and after 2010 the government of Curacao implemented several policies and strategies targeted to achieve the EFA Goals. The six EFA Goals include:

**Goal 1:** Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

**Goal 2:** Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

**Goal 3:** Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs.

**Goal 4:** Achieving 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

**Goal 5:** Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2015, achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

**Goal 6:** Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

Education has always been looked at in Curaçao as the mainstay of social development and economic recovery. In its government coalition agreement, the current government has put as its main goal in the area of education to raise the quality of education and to maintain it free and accessible to all children. The coalition parties agreed to put attention to different aspects of early childhood education (0-4), foundation based education (4-12) vocational education (VSBO and SBO), and general secondary education (Havo and Vwo). With regards to vocational education, special attention is given to the connection to the labor market and also the connection

between VSBO and SBO. Furthermore attention is given to guarantee that our diplomas continue to be recognized in The Netherlands and other countries around the world. Our native language Papiamentu has been fortified as the language of instruction and attention is given to the formation of skilled laborers and entities that support education.<sup>1</sup>

The government maintains that its educational system should close the gap between the existing programs of study and the specific needs of the labor market. According to the government education should contribute to the development of society and enable people to take ownership of their lives and live together in harmony with each other.

The government of Curacao has shown its commitment to education by allocating 23.1% percent of its budget to finance education in 2012 and 24.5% in 2013 which is 6.18% of its GDP in 2012 and 5.84% of its GDP in 2013.

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<sup>1</sup> Akuerdo pa un Gobernashon enfoka riba pas, trankilidat i prosperidat, periodo 2012-2016



## Section II

### Curacao Country Profile

Curaçao is an island in the southern Caribbean Sea, off the Venezuelan coast, that forms part of the Dutch Caribbean. The Country of Curaçao which includes the main island and the small, uninhabited island of Klein Curaçao ("Little Curaçao"), is a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. It has a population of over 150,000 on an area of 444 km<sup>2</sup> (171 sq mi) and its capital is Willemstad. Willemstad, the capital of Curacao received a UNESCO designation as a World Heritage Site in 1997.

The dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles came into effect on 10 October 2010. Curaçao became a country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, with the Kingdom retaining responsibility for defense and foreign policy. The Kingdom was also to oversee the island's finances under a debt-relief arrangement agreed between the two. The archipelago, consisting of the five islands of Bonaire, Curaçao, St. Maarten, St. Eustatius and Saba, has acquired a new administrative structure within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius, also known as the BES-islands, have become special municipalities of the Netherlands. They are now part of the Dutch government structure, but have been assigned a separate Caribbean status. Curaçao and St. Maarten have acquired the status of autonomous countries within the Kingdom, comparable to the status that was granted to Aruba in 1986. Figure 1 gives a description of how the current situation is in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Figure 1



Curaçao's first Prime Minister was Gerrit Schotte. He was succeeded in 2012 by Stanley Betrian, ad interim. After elections in 2012 Daniel Hodge became the third Prime Minister on 31 December 2012. He led a demissionary cabinet until 7 June 2013, when a new cabinet under leadership of current Prime Minister Ivar Asjes was sworn in. Prior to 10 October 2010, when the Netherlands Antilles was dissolved, Curaçao was administered as the Island Territory of Curaçao one of five island territories of the former Netherlands Antilles.<sup>2</sup> The government of Curaçao takes place in a framework of a parliamentary representative democratic country.

<sup>2</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cura%C3%A7ao>

The Prime Minister is the head of government. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both the government and parliament. The judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature. Curaçao has full autonomy on most matters, with the exceptions summed up in the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands under the title "Kingdom affairs"

Curaçao is a polyglot society. The official languages are Dutch, Papiamentu, and English. However, Dutch is the sole language for all administration and legal matters. The most widely spoken language is Papiamentu, a language spoken in all levels of society. Papiamentu was introduced as a language of primary school education in 1993, making Curaçao one of a handful of places where a creole language is used as a medium to acquire basic literacy.<sup>3</sup>

Curaçao has a tropical savannah climate with a dry season from January to September and a wet season from October to December. The temperatures are relatively constant with small differences throughout the year. The trade winds bring cooling during the day and the same trade winds bring warming during the night. The coldest month is January with an average temperature of 26.5 °C (80 °F) and the warmest month is September with an average temperature of 28.9 °C (84 °F). The year's average maximum temperature is 31.2 °C (88 °F). The year's average minimum temperature is 25.3 °C (78 °F).<sup>4</sup>

## 2.1 Demographic Factors

According to the 2011 Census data (see Table1) presented by the Central Bureau of Statistics the population of Curacao stood at 150,563 persons, comprised of 68,848 males and 81,715 females, in 2011. This represented a 15 percent increase from the previous census of 2001 in which 130,627 persons were enumerated. In 2011, a large share of the population (23.8 %) were adults ages 40-54. Children aged 10-19 made up 14.7 percent of the population. Compared to 2001 the population of 60 years or over had increased by 50 percent in 2011 and represented almost 20 percent of the total population. This makes the age group 60+ the fastest growing age group, indicating that Curacao has an aging population. Additionally, the sex ratio of the total population stood at 84 males for every 100 females. Within every age group, with the exception of the age group 0-19, there were more females than males. The population continued to increase and at the 1st of January 2014 the population of Curacao reached 154,843 persons, an increase of approximately 3 % compared with the 2011 census<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Anthony Liddicoat (15 June 2007). *Language planning and policy: issues in language planning and literacy*. Multilingual Matters. p. 149

<sup>4</sup> Meteorological Department Curaçao. Retrieved February 21, 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Central Bureau for Statistics

Table 1

Population by age group and sex, Census 2011						
Age	Absolute			Relative (%)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
0 - 4	4518	4386	8904	6.6	5.4	5.9
5-9	5036	4752	9788	7.3	5.8	6.5
10-14	5577	5126	10703	8.1	6.3	7.1
15-19	5752	5651	11403	8.4	6.9	7.6
20-24	3897	4182	8079	5.7	5.1	5.4
25-29	3464	4248	7712	5.0	5.2	5.1
30-34	3353	4628	7981	4.9	5.7	5.3
35-39	4317	5625	9942	6.3	6.9	6.6
40-44	4845	6275	11120	7.0	7.7	7.4
45-49	5602	7179	12781	8.1	8.8	8.5
50-54	5186	6740	11926	7.5	8.2	7.9
55-59	4529	5849	10378	6.6	7.2	6.9
60-64	4125	4993	9118	6.0	6.1	6.1
65-69	3098	3995	7093	4.5	4.9	4.7
70-74	2308	3020	5328	3.4	3.7	3.5
75-79	1643	2198	3841	2.4	2.7	2.6
80-84	977	1456	2433	1.4	1.8	1.6
85-89	446	898	1344	0.6	1.1	0.9
90-94	139	378	517	0.2	0.5	0.3
95-99	32	98	130	0.0	0.1	0.1
100+	4	38	42	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>68848</b>	<b>81715</b>	<b>150563</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## 2.2 Economic Review

Curacao has one of the highest standards of living in the Caribbean, ranking 46th in the world in terms of GDP (PPP) per capita and 28th in the world in terms of nominal GDP per capita. It possesses a high income economy, as defined by the World Bank. The island has a well-developed infrastructure with strong tourism and financial services sectors. Shipping, international trade, oil refining, and other activities related to the port of Willemstad (like the Free Trade Zone) also make a significant contribution to the economy. To achieve the government's aim to make its economy more diverse, efforts are being made to attract more foreign investment. This policy, called the 'Open Arms' policy, features a heavy focus on information technology companies.<sup>6</sup>

Curacao has seen a 147 million increase in Gross Domestic product between 2009 (5136) and 2010 (5283), which is about 3% nominal. The real GDP/Economic Growth is found by calculating the change in volume of the goods and services a country produces, excluding price developments.

<sup>6</sup> 'Open Arms' policy

When Table 2 is observed, it shows that the real economic growth rate in 2010 has experienced a slight increase in 2010 after dropping 0.5% in 2009. In 2010, it grew with 0.1%, which is a 0.6 increase in comparison to 2009.

Table 2

**GDP Growth 2004 – 2010**

<b>Year</b>	<b>GDP Growth in %</b>
2004	0,2
2005	0,7
2006	1,6
2007	2,5
2008	2,2
2009	-0,5
2010	0,1

With regards to the resident institutional sectors, the non-financial sector has the greatest contribution in value added. This is due to the increased activities primarily in the areas of transport and communication (24.3%), catering (14.3%) and real estate, renting an business activities (9.7%). Even though the aforementioned industries have experienced expansion, they could not contribute significant growth to the economy due to the fact that economic activity dropped in other areas, such as manufacturing (17.6%) and utility (15.1%).

The factors that have contributed to growth from the demand side are final consumption expenditures and gross capital foundation. These have both shown an increase of 9% and nearly 15%. The export of goods and services has seen a decrease with almost 6%, due to a drop of 10% in the exports of goods and services. Analysis has shown that the levels of the imports of goods has increased with a greater amount than the imports of services; a 9.5% and 5% increase, respectively.<sup>7</sup>

The first preliminary calculations regarding economic development in Curacao show a decrease in 2013, taking inflation and purchasing power into consideration. Curacao's economy has been stagnating since 2009, which is influenced by, among others, 1.3% inflation in 2013.

The decrease in economic activity has taken place primarily in Trade, Government and Utility companies. Trade activities have experienced a decrease, due to a decrease in export and reduced trade activity in 2013. The added value of government activity decreased in comparison to 2012. The utility companies have decreased due to less activity from water and electrical companies.

Growth took place in transport en communication, hotels and restaurants en business services and industry. Air transport has decreased due to, among others reasons, DAE's bankruptcy.

Activities in industry increased slightly due to ship repair, oil refinery productions and other such activities in 2013. Curacao's economic growth has fallen behind in comparison to the rest of the Caribbean in 2013.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Central Bureau of Statistics

<sup>8</sup> Centra Bureau of Statistics

# The Educational System of Curacao

## Introduction

The education system of Curacao has largely been derived from the Dutch system. Education is largely funded by the government. In Curacao, both public and private (mainly religious) education are offered. There are currently seven private school boards on the island that are subsidized by the government

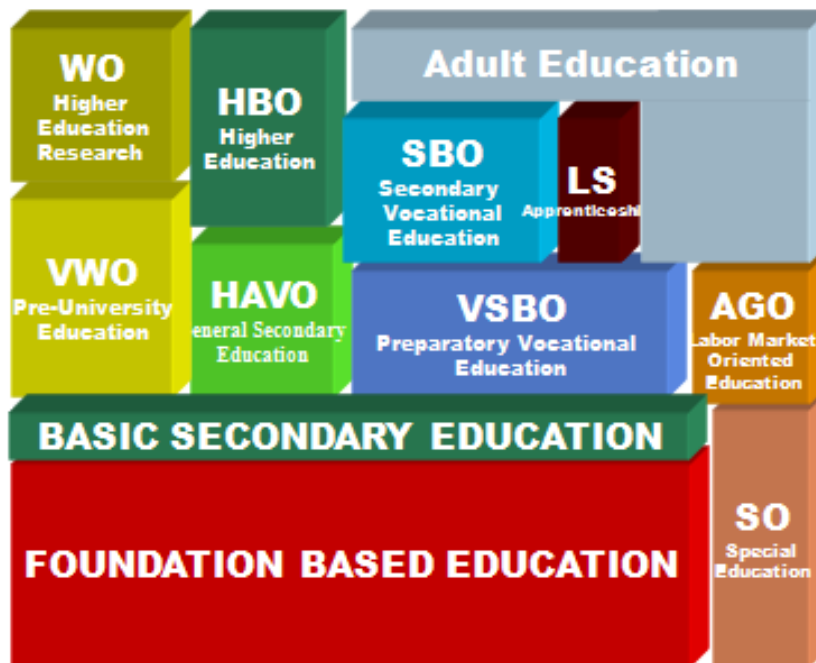
Three official languages are spoken in Curacao: Dutch, Papiamentu and English.

In primary education, Papiamentu and Dutch are the languages of instruction. In secondary education, Dutch is the main language of instruction and examination. There is one secondary school which offers vocational education where the language of instruction is Papiamentu.

The language of instruction and examination in secondary vocational education (SBO) is Dutch. For level 1 and 2, school authorities can decide to select Papiamentu as instruction and examination language.

Education is compulsory for the age group of 4 to 18 year olds. The Federal Ordinance Compulsory Education has been adapted in 2008 to include children from 4 to 18 years. The academic year runs from early August to late June.

Figure 2



## **Foundation Based Education**

Curacao has been in the process of innovating and restructuring its educational system since the early eighties. In 2002, however, the decision was made to start with a new system of primary education and a mayor restructure took place. The former pre-primary (ages 4-6) and primary education (ages 6 to 11) were linked together to form an 8 year primary education called Foundation Based Education. Foundation Based Education consists of 2 cycles. Cycle one covers the ages of 4 to 8 and Cycle two covers the ages of 8 to 12 and it departs from the premise of an uninterrupted learning route for each student. The idea is for it to be a continuous learning pathway for children aged 4 to 12. The ordinance of Foundation Based Education was voted upon and accepted in parliament in 2008.

With the introduction of this new system, modern teaching methods are applied to facilitate individualized and group teaching to secure an uninterrupted development for all children throughout their school career. Evaluations are carried out at regular intervals for the purpose of monitoring both the quality and the levels.

Foundation Based Education is aimed at instilling into the young child knowledge, insights, skills and values which lay a foundation for his/her personal development and optimal participation in society. At the same time it lays the foundation on which secondary education can continue to build. In addition, Foundation Based Education is seeking to achieve further democratization of the present education system. This means the abolishing of inequality of opportunity between students, with special attention to children coming from underprivileged families.<sup>9</sup>

## **Special Needs Education**

The policy with regards to special needs education has been completed this year. The innovative idea of this type of education lies in the fact that basically all children go to Foundation Based Education. The education of children with learning and behavioral problems (LOM) and children with difficulties to learn will form part of Foundation Based Education. The education of children that falls in the other categories (DSM-IV) will continue to exist as special primary education (SFO). This involves the following clusters:

1. Visually impaired students
2. Auditory and communicative limited students
3. Mental and/or physically challenged and chronically sick students
4. Students with severe behavioral problems, developmental problems, psychiatric disorders or psychosocial problems.

The policy is based on the inclusive principle and the policy is that basically children go to Foundation Based Education to enjoy as much as education as possible. Children who have difficulties or get into difficulties will be supported by a student care system. When after getting all the possible support, it is still not possible for the student to learn in Foundation Based Education, than the student can get ambulatory support at the school or the student can be referred to a school for special needs education. This help and support is offered through a central organization, the Centrum for Special Education Services (CDSO).

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<sup>9</sup> Nuffic

Another innovation aspect is that special needs education will be regulated by law in the sense that there will be a Federal Ordinance specifically for only special needs education. Until now, special needs education falls under the old Federal Ordinance that regulates basic education. Besides this legislative process there is also a curriculum pathway in which the teachers will be retrained. The funding of special needs education will be adapted to the new organization of this type of education.

### **General Secondary Education**

Senior general secondary education (HAVO) and pre-university education (VWO) start with a 2-year period with a basic curriculum, Basic Secondary Education, followed by a year in preparation for the subject cluster stage. The structure of the second stage is similar to that in the Netherlands with its four subject clusters, on the understanding that Papiamentu is also a compulsory subject within the common part in addition to English and Dutch.

### **Preparatory secondary vocational education**

The VSBO consists of a two year basic secondary education and two years of learning routes, the theoretical advanced vocational track (TKL), the practical advanced vocational track (PKL) and the practical basic vocational track (PBL) After the first two years of basic secondary education students are assigned in a learning route based on their academic qualifications and they can choose between one of the following sectors, namely: Technology, Care and Welfare, and Economics. The type of sector they can choose also depends on their academic qualifications in certain subjects. VSBO is not intended to be final education. The aim of VSBO is intended for the student to transit to Secondary Vocational Education (SBO). Students can also go to general secondary education (Havo) depending on their final examination grades and the amount of subjects they have taken. The Secondary Education Ordinance passed Parliament in 2008. The Secondary Vocational Education Ordinance also was also voted and accepted in Parliament in 2008.

### **Secondary vocational education**

Secondary vocational education (SBO) also extends to programs for which a preparatory secondary vocational education diploma (VSBO diploma) is not necessarily required. There are two SBO learning tracks: learning through practical experience and practical experience through learning and four qualification levels (assistant, professional, skilled worker and middle manager). SBO was introduced during the 2004-2005 academic year. The program last between 1 and 4 years.

The following table (Table 3) shows the amount students in primary, secondary and senior secondary vocational education. The student population shows a downward trend and a negative growth rate in the amount of students. This corroborates with the general trend of an aging population in Curacao.

Table 3

<b>Total students Primary and Secondary Education</b>				
<b>Primary education</b>	<b>2010/2011</b>	<b>2011/2012</b>	<b>2012/2013</b>	<b>2013/2014</b>
Foundation Based Education	17652	17361	17131	16840
Basic Special Education	1160	1122	1127	1127
<b>Secondary education</b>				
Special Secondary Education (VSO;AGO, ZMLK)	1210	1225	1121	1006
Basic Secondary Education (VSBO)	7577	7269	7077	6913
Basic Secondary Education (HAVO/VWO 1,2)	1079	1044	936	984
Senior High School (HAVO/VWO 3,4,5,6)	2371	2308	2194	2121
<b>Senior Secondary Vocational Education (SBO)</b>	3395	3510	3621	3779
<b>Total students</b>	34444	33839	33207	32770

### Tertiary Education

The Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports (OWCS) is currently in the process of developing a Higher Education Ordinance. This ordinance will replace the 1979 University Ordinance of the Netherlands Antilles (LUNA). The University of the Netherlands Antilles has been renamed in the University of Curacao (UoC).

The UoC has five faculties, namely:

1. The School of Law,
2. The General Faculty,
3. The Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences,
4. The Faculty of society and Behavioral Sciences.
5. The Faculty of Technical Sciences.

The UoC in Curacao offers mainly higher professional education and is the only full fledged university recognized by law and offers both academic and professional education. Currently there are several private institutions of higher learning that have various types of recognition and accreditation. Others like the medical schools on the island have the permission to operate but do not have any type of accreditation from the OWCS such as the AVALON University, the St. Martinus University, The Caribbean Medical University.

The new higher Education Ordinance will reflect the current policy on higher education as envisioned by the OWCS and will encompass besides de UoC all institutions of higher learning.

Table 4 shows the graduates and number of students at UoC.





## Section II

### Main EFA challenges in 2000 and targets for 2015

Despite the economic crisis that has been affecting the world, the government has maintained its commitment and has continued to increase the budget for education.

#### Early Childhood Education

The study *Early Childhood Programs in Other Nations : Goals and Outcomes of 2000* shows that preschool programs in England, the United States, France and Germany contribute to :

- ♣ Preparing the child for school entry ;
- ♣ The language development of the child;
- ♣ Reducing early school leaving ;
- ♣ Successful career in primary and secondary education.

Early Childhood Education is considered in the context of Curacao as the most important foundation for the formal educational process and it encompasses ages 0-4. The minister of education has put pre-school education as first priority considering the vulnerability and dependence of this group on the one hand and the role of the parents on the other side. This is the period where parents have the most important influence and research has shown that it is difficult to catch up at a later age with the developmental backlogs that have taken place in that age period.

It is important that Early Childhood Education takes place before the child begins with primary school and through a continuous line of signaling (e.g. consultation bureaus), that early childhood education be faced into group 1 and 2 of Foundation Based Education.

In 2003 the government of the island territory of Curacao approved the Early Childhood Policy and it has been the guiding rule up to the year 2012.

The general assumptions of this policy were:

1. The child is entitled to maximum opportunities and the community should create those opportunities;
2. The level of health and well-being of children contributes significantly to the level of development or the standard of living of a community;
3. Children up to the fourth year of development should be offered an environment that provides adequate incentives for further development. Partly because of this the child will be able to unfold in order to have enough baggage to go into the next phases of development and the requirements posed by the (learning) environment.
4. The facilities need to be child-centered, parent or educator focused and neighborhood-oriented and should respond to the priorities set by the government based on the needs of the community;
5. The rights of the child must be guaranteed.

The following policy proposals were made:

### Policy proposal 1: Needs assessment

A needs assessment was done in 2006 that showed that there were 9055 children in the age of 0-4 years, of which 3517 were attending a center for early childhood education. This means that there were more than 5000 children that are not attending any early childhood facility. Of those that were visiting a center, 1500 (43%) come from a socially weak environment from whose parents have an income of between Naf.1000 and Naf. 2500.

Table 5

Participation in Early Childhood Education per Rayon in 2006

Rayon Distribution	Amount of 0 – 4 years old	Amount of children in Centers	Amount of children as a % of total amount of children
Rayon 1: Brevengat to Oostpunt	2873	1188	41,3%
Rayon 2: Souax, Sta. Maria and surroundings	2262	855	37,7%
Rayon 3: St. Michiel to Mundu Nobo andOtrobanda	1913	736	8,4%
Rayon 4: Asiento, Punda and Steenrijk	1148	447	38,9%
Rayon 5: Westpunt to Tera Kòrá	859	291	33,8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>9055</b>	<b>3517</b>	<b>38.8%</b>

Table 6

Amount of Centers by Rayon in 2012

Rayon Distribution	Total amount of Centers
Rayon 1: Brevengat tot Oostpunt	36
Rayon 2: Souax, Sta. Maria en omgeving	44
Rayon 3: St. Michiel tot Mundu Nobo en Otrobanda	25
Rayon 4: Asiento, Punda en Steenrijk	25
Rayon 5: Westpunt tot Tera Kòrá	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>

The study further indicates that the childcare centers do not meet the minimum requirements. Also, there appears to be a great difference in the level of income of the various centers due to the widely varying rate per center.

### Challenges for new policy

- Increase the number of places for children so that more children can participate in a preschool education program.
- Strive that all childcare centers will meet the minimum requirements set by the government within a period of three years

## **Policy Proposal 2: Separation of licensing and subsidy**

A line should be drawn between subsidy and licensing, where subsidy is aimed at ensuring child care for children of less wealthy parents and the licensing policies aimed at ensuring the minimum quality requirements.

The obtaining and maintaining of a license to operate a nursery facilities should be linked to meeting the minimum quality criteria. The aspects of teacher, child ratio, staff qualifications, housing, safety, hygiene and health, developmental and teaching approach should be included.

Within the subsidy policy the subject subsidy should be elaborated and then actually operationalized. For parents, it must be clear where to go for funding and under what conditions they can get qualify for any subsidy. This can be done through a single office.

### **Challenges for new policy**

- Revision of the minimum quality criteria in the context of licensing based on the current reality.
- An inspection body has to be set up and made operational.
- Revision of subject subsidy where necessary.
- A central office has to be set up to provide information for permits.

## **Policy Proposal 3: Evaluation tasks Coordination Centre for Child and Adolescent Care**

Aimed at improving the situation in childcare after an implementation period of two years, the results of the Coordination Centre for Child and Youth Care will be evaluated. The following aspects will be included in the evaluation.

- Results
- Experience with subject subsidies
- One-stop window
- Relationship between the Coordination Centre and the crèches
- Relationship between the Coordination Centre and the Federation Childcare
- Relationship between the Coordination Centre and the - Sentro di Informashon i Formashon di Mucha ( SIFMA )

### **Challenges for new policy**

- The implementation of the subject grant ( system ) needs to be improved.
- For the purpose of information should be a central office to be set up for subject grant.

## **Policy Proposal 4: Optimizing Financing**

a. In 2003 research was done to explore into the possibilities of childcare funded businesses in Curacao. Based on the results of this study a formula is established for the distribution of the contributions of the three funding parties of child care: government, private initiative and business. The government budget available for childcare should be linked to this.

b. To create clarity and uniformity, the real cost price of a child has to be provided.

c. For make the most effective use of the limited grant funds, a uniform system of parental contribution that is based on income and taking into account the number of children in a family that make use of the center.

#### **Challenges for new policy**

- To get a decision from the Minister on proposals for organizing company funded childcare.

#### **Policy Proposal 5: Protocol child abuse**

The Implementation Organization Culture and Sports explores the possibilities for setting up and establishing a protocol for child care facilities in Curacao. The service does this by actively participating in the working group Advice and Reporting Centre (AMK) and in consultation with the child care centers.

#### **Challenge for new policy**

- Ensuring collaboration between the Foundation and Child Guardianship Board, in order for the Central Reporting Center to become operational.

#### **Policy Proposal 6: Specifying products parenting**

The product parental support for 0-4 year olds should be specified as such explicitly in the contract with the health care clinics via the Departamentu Salú Hubenil (Youth Health Department and the Wit Gele Krius. The pilot project "parenting support centers for 0-4 year olds", started in 2003 with the Wit Gele Kruis and deserves the needed attention.

#### **Challenge for new policy**

In the context of in service training should the workers of the children's centers should be trained to better support parents in their parenting role.

#### **Policy Proposal 7: Consultation**

The government can stimulate this whole process by establishing a consultative body consisting of all actors involved in the early childhood care and development. Within this consultative body they will not only focus on concept development, but will also deal with targeting and distribution of tasks to avoid overlap and gaps.

#### **Challenge for new policy:**

To revitalize the consultation platform in another form and ensure that it remains active.

### **Policy Proposal 8: Expansion L.B.O. / S.B.O. training for teachers of childcare centers**

The Implementation Organization Culture and Sports in consultation with SIFMA will investigate the expansion possibilities of the number of LBO/M.B.O training places and formulate it as a specific deliverable in care contract.

#### **Challenge for new policy:**

To coordinate with the schools for SBO the supply of trained teachers (levels 2 and 4 of SBO).

### **Policy Proposal 9: Expanding educational guidance**

The Implementation Organization Culture and Sports in consultation with SIFMA will evaluate and take a closer look to the expansion of pedagogical guidance and formulate it as a concrete product in the care contract.

#### **Challenge for new policy:**

It should be evaluated whether there are sufficient resources are available to let SIFMA continue to execute aforementioned task. With sufficient resources, the SIFMA will execute this task commissioned and managed by the Implementation Organization of Culture and Sport. The curriculum of High Scope/Kaleidoscope will be the starting point.

### **Policy Proposal 10: Curriculum early childhood care and development**

The Implementation Organization Culture and Sports will set up a plan in consultation with child care centers and SIFMA to encourage all centers to have at the end of the policy period designed and implemented a curriculum in early childhood care and development.

#### **Challenge for new policy**

- Formulation proposal where the training platform should be placed after the termination of funding by USONA .
- In addition to basic training, it is necessary that further training and guidance are given for internalization and consolidation of the methods and the curriculum by the teachers. This means that:
  - The first round basic training to teachers in childcare centers should be completed;
  - The curriculum needs to be deepened and
  - Team training should be given.
- The goal should be that teachers in all centers have a minimum LBO level in terms of education and a certificate of the curriculum that is used by the childcare center .
- Working on the needs of the child care centers that has been established.

The enforcement of the law should be strengthened through the appointment of inspectors for early childhood education. Attention should be given to the fact that in many instances the ones that need it most cannot pay for it.

## Section III

### Progress towards the EFA goals

**Goal 1: Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.**

The major issues and challenges were related to the learning environment, the curriculum, and the level of training of teachers. In general pre-school education has been a private initiative with some of the centers being subsidized by the government. The quality of pre-school centers varies enormously.

Since 1997 the government of island territory of Curacao has passed a law that regulates the facilities, preparation of teachers.

Curacao is divided in 5 geographical areas for the purpose of attending children in pre-school age, namely:

- Rayon 1: Brievengat to Oostpunt
- Rayon 2: Souax, Sta. Maria and vicinity
- Rayon 3: St. Michiel to Mundu Nobo and Otrabanda
- Rayon 4: Asiento, Punda and Steenrijk
- Rayon 5: Westpunt to Tera Kora.

The following table shows that of the 9401 children that were born in 2011, 3292 (35%) were making use of the 107 centers on the island in 2013 and they are being taking care of by 431 teachers. This shows an average of 4 teachers per center and approximately 8 children per teacher.

<b>POPULATION 0-4 years</b>					
	<b>Amount of 0 – 4 years ( 2011 )</b>	<b>Amount of Visitors ( 2013 )</b>	<b>% Visitors</b>	<b>Amount of centers per Rayon ( 2013 )</b>	<b>Amount of teachers</b>
Rayon 1: Brievengat to Oostpunt	±3229*	861	27 %	28	108
Rayon 2: Souax, Sta. Maria and omgeving	±2343	982	42 %	30	136
Rayon 3: St. Michiel to Mundu Nobo en Otrabanda	±1717	672	39 %	19	79
Rayon 4: Asiento, Punda and Steenrijk	±1034	673	65 %	24	89
Rayon 5: Westpunt to Tera Kōrā	±819	104	13 %	6	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>9401</b>	<b>3292</b>		<b>107</b>	<b>431</b>

According to the 2011 census 5259 children were making use of the centers of which 2695 are males.

The following table (Table 7) shows that 2.8% of the teachers have a bachelor degree while 22.1% a secondary vocational education degree and a large majority 53.8% have a lower professional education degree while 21.3% have an unknown degree.

Table 7

Teachers Academic Preparation<sup>10</sup>

<b>HBO</b>	<b>MBO</b>	<b>LBO</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Total</b>
0	6	29	14	49 rayon 1
6	25	54	12	97 rayon 2
0	12	29	8	49 rayon 3
1	10	16	10	37 rayon 4
0	2	6	9	17 rayon 5
7 : 2.8%	55 : 22.1%	134: 53.8%	53: 21.3 %	249 : 100%

Table 8

Distribution of children ages 0-4 years old in 2013

<b>Leeftijd</b>	<b>Gender</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Boys</b>	<b>Girls</b>	
0 year	1060	961	2021
1 years	992	970	1962
2 years	892	895	1787
3 years	941	827	1768
4 years	969	894	1863
<b>Total</b>	<b>4854</b>	<b>4547</b>	<b>9401</b>

### 1.1 Target group, participation and distribution childcare centers

Preschool education on Curaçao in recent years has undergone many changes. There is a greater degree of consciousness about the role that preschool education can play in preparing children for primary and secondary education. The number of children, which in recent years have visited a childcare has increased each year.

The preliminary results of the 2011 Census shows that the number of parents to a center for preschool education sends their child in 2011 is 3,919.

Table 9 provides an overview of the development of the size of the target group for preschool education.

<sup>10</sup> Quick scan Dienst Cultuur en Educatie 2005



Table 9

Attendance of 0 – 4 years old to Centers

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total amount 0 t/m 4 years old	9100	8883	90919401	9401
Op een kindercentrum	3910 ( 42 % )	3919 (44%)	+/- 4000 (38%)	3910 (45%)

The number of children that visits a childcare center, is 44% of the total population. There are 4964 children who do not attend childcare. It is unknown where more than half of the target is located but it is estimated that they are at home or by a family member during the day

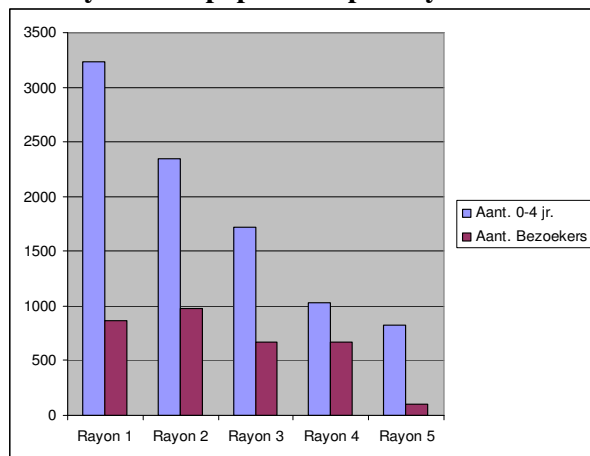
Table 10

Amount of students 0 – 4 years old per rayon

	Aantal 0 – 4 years ( 2011 )	Amount of Attendance ( 2013 )	% Attendance	Amount of Centers per rayon ( 2013 )	Amount of Teachers
Rayon 1: Brievengat to Oostpunt	±3229*	861	27 %	28	108
Rayon 2: Souax, Sta. Maria and surroundings	±2343	982	42 %	30	136
Rayon 3: St. Michiel to Mundu Nobo and Otrobanda	±1717	672	39 %	19	79
Rayon 4: Asiento, Punda and Steenrijk	±1034	673	65 %	24	89
Rayon 5: Westpunt to Tera Kōrā	±819	104	13 %	6	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>9401</b>	<b>3292</b>		<b>107</b>	<b>431</b>

Figure 3

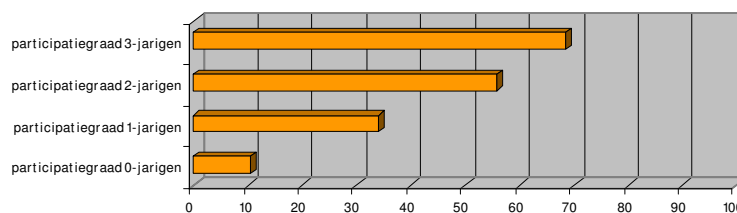
Amount of attendance 0-4 years versus the 0-4 years old population per rayon



The above chart and graph in accordance with census data show a distribution in the number of pre-school education participating children about the rayons. It is noteworthy that the differences in size of the target group in the territories are large. In particular, District 1 and 2 stand out as the target group for pre-school education in these districts are very large. Additionally Banda'bou shows a significantly lower number of VSE participating children in the age group above to see compared to the baseline survey conducted in 2006, namely 291.

Participation in pre-school education increases as the child gets older. In other words, parents are less likely to make use of the centers for babies. The chart below shows that of the 3-year-olds, a large percentage visit a day care facility.

Figure 4



**Goal 2: Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and compete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.**

According to the constitution the care of the government has to focus on the protection of the youth and leisure the promotion of the right to receive education, cultural formation, sports and use of free time. Education is as such a continued concern of the government. Everybody has a right to education. Education is accessible to everyone. There is no distinction between religion, sex ethnicity, immigration status, etc.

The government has therefore provided the necessary laws and regulations. The compulsory education ordinance prescribes that students from age 4 to 18 should follow education. These are the children of primary and secondary education. This ordinance also prescribes that a regulation should be put in place with regards to the provision of food, clothing and transportation for those compulsory education age children that without such a support, most probably would not be able to follow education.

Recently we have formulated a policy with regards to special education needs, namely primary and secondary special education. It is the intention that in 2014 it will be formalize with the corresponding law and regulations.

The accessibility and opportunity for participation has further increased with the introduction of 'Free Education'. This is a provision for teaching materials, additional costs and parent contribution, which means that parents no longer have to pay these costs. A formulation by law has yet to take place.

Free Education has been implemented for the first time in the school year 2012/2013. This provision applies to pupils of primary, secondary general education and secondary vocational education.

Furthermore, recently policies regarding special education has also been formulated. Special education was until a few years ago, very limited regulated in the old law of primary education. With the introduction of foundation based education that law has ceased to exist. But the part which relates to special education is still in force.

The policy provides that all students in special education, receive education and upbringing in a proper manner, taking in account the shortcomings and disabilities of the child.

There is also the possibility that children of parents with limited income may become eligible to receive school transportation and clothing.

Children that participate in after school programs, are provided with a meal.

Starting this school year 2014/2015, the student care will receive special attention. Both in primary as in secondary education, a system for integrated special care will be set up. This action is undertaken in order to provide to the student the care and support needed in order to increase the chances of success in their school career.

In the school 2012/2013 the 'free schools' initiative has been implemented for the first time. This provision applies to pupils of primary, general secondary, vocational and secondary vocational education.

Poverty reduction requires an integrated approach, since several factors different fields can lead to poverty in. These include education, social economic aspects, health, housing etc. This means that different agencies will need to work together, to arrive at a structural approach.

The Ministry of Social Development, Labor and Welfare has developed a policy in September 2012, calling for a holistic and integrated approach to tackle poverty. The ministries that should cooperate with each other in this area are Ministry of Social Development, Labor and Welfare, Ministry of Economic Development, Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports, Ministry of Health, Nature and Environment and the Ministry of Traffic, Transport and Urban Planning. With regards to education the medium-term goal that is mentioned is informal education that is based on content knowledge, technical skills and social skills.

Recently, four ministries, namely the ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, the ministry of Social Development, Labor and Welfare, the ministry of Justice and the ministry of Health, Nature and Environment signed a cooperation protocol. The intent is to provide funds that can be spent on fighting crime together.

Conform policy all students go on to secondary education at the end of foundation based education (primary education). Depending on the final outcome of the Eindtoets Funderend Onderwijs (EFO)/Final Test Foundation Based Education, the students are referred to and placed in a secondary school. They move on to basic secondary education, the first two years of secondary education.

Table 11 gives an indication of how the students score on the EFO test and it shows that 22 % of the students went to general secondary education and 77 % went to vocational education,

while 1% had to repeat the eight grade (last year of primary school) in the school year 2012/20-13. There was a slight improvement in 2013/2014 when 23 % went on to general secondary school and 73 % went to vocational education and 4% had to repeat the grade. The goal of the government is raise the percentage of those that go to general secondary education to a minimum of 25%.

Table 11

Number of students that go to secondary school per school type

2012/2013	HAVO		VSBO		AGO		Repeaters	
	boys	girls	boys	girls	boys	girls	boys	girls
	199	260	784	784	34	10	25	8
<b>Total</b>	459		1568		44		33	
2013/2014	HAVO		VSBO		AGO		Repeaters	
	boys	girls	boys	girls	boys	girls	boys	girls
	211	236	668	741	73	40	59	28
<b>Total</b>	447		1309		113		87	

The policy with regards to basic secondary education has been modified a few years ago on some points with the overall objectives being:

- To improve the connection foundation based education -- secondary education
- To improve the flow; an effective and fair referral to a particular learning path, or school type.
- More attention to students in need of special care.
- Promoting social inclusion (inclusive education)
- A common core curriculum.

**Goal 5: Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.**

The national education policy of Curacao (and also the former Netherlands Antilles) and the education innovation policy depart from the premise of equal educational opportunity for all children. This means that education is available for all children, regardless of their background, gender, religion, social economic status, etc. However, the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport doesn't have a specific legislation, policy and or other mechanism in place regarding gender equality.

The research entitled 'The Boy Problem. Gender differences in the educational career on the Netherlands Antilles Island.' (Nairan, 2010), has examined closely the differences in the school careers of boys and girls in the Netherlands Antilles. Aside from using the educational career as one of the research variables, the paper also considers the following research variables:

- educational-related factors that impact learning performance;
- the tendency in the Netherlands Antilles of leaving school prematurely;

- the role that upbringing and education plays in encouraging discriminatory choices between boys and girls;
- gender division in job market participation.

The problems surrounding gender differences in the Netherlands Antilles are already visible in primary education. In high school, these problems become more prominent. Narain (2010) points out the following tendencies:

1. reading and writing education: boys are lagging behind girls in the areas of fine-motor skills and oral communication capabilities;
2. boys are overrepresented in special education and underrepresented in SBO, HAVO and VWO.

Narain (2010, pp. 13) concludes: "Based on the data we can conclude that there are large gender differences in the educational careers on the islands and that less men seem to be taking advantage of the opportunities that education offers; which can lead to an under-utilization of their potential."

Table 11 shows that in Curacao a higher percentage of girls (57 %) going to the academic stream and an equal percentage of boys (50%) going to vocational education in 2012/2013. In 2013/2014 53 % of girls go to academic stream of secondary education and 48 % of girls going to vocational education. Education has an emancipating role. Based on the aforementioned information, stimulating boys to take advantage of the opportunities that education offers should be one of the main pillars of policies, knowledge and educational practice. By taking full advantage of their educational opportunities, boys will be able to use their potential optimally.

In order to support this policy we can conduct scientific research into gender differences where we will measure whether the discrepancies between boys and girls has leveled out. These results can then be used to adjust the policy systematically so that we can guarantee the inclusion of boys in education.

Education for all is a fundamental human right and essential for the ability to exercise other rights. Education enables girls and boys, women and men to participate in social, economic and political life and is a foundation for the development of a democratic society.<sup>11</sup>

The following tables show the total number of students by gender at the UoC.

Table 12

Total number of students by gender at the UoC 2012/2013

	Law	Engineering	Soc. Sc & Ec	General	Soc. & Beh Sc
Male	24% (50)	81% (229)	31% (311)	12% (39)	7% (26)

<sup>11</sup> Villalobos, V. M. (2006) *Girls' Right to Education* Report submitted by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education United Nations Economic and Social Council. E/CN.4/2006/45

Female	76% (162)	19% (55)	69% (698)	88% (297)	93% (329)
Total	10 % (212)	13 % (284)	46% (1009)	15% (336)	16% (355)

Total numbers of students (Excl. Certificate and audit students): 2196

Table 13

Total number of students by gender 2013/2014

	Law	Engineering	Soc. Sc & Ec	General	Soc. & Beh Sc
Male	25% (52)	79% (203)	32% (323)	10% (37)	10% (40)
Female	75% (154)	21% (53)	68% (694)	90% (336)	90% (362)
Total	9 % (206)	11 % (256)	45 % (1017)	17% (373)	18 % (402)

Total numbers of students (Excl. Certificate and audit students): 2254

As can be seen from above information the gender parity in the school year 2012/2013 was 2.35 with a female student ratio of 70 % while in 2013/2014 it was 2.44 with a female student ratio of 71 %. This is a challenge that Curacao has to deal with and encourage stimulate our boys to continue on with tertiary education.

The Pro Alfa foundation offers courses to functionally illiterate adults so they can learn how to read and write. The foundation also works on teaching mathematics, computer skills, social skills and job skills.

**Goal 6: Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.**

In Curacao all teachers need to have a certificate of proficiency and a bachelor degree to be able to stand in the classroom and teach in Foundation Based Education. In the general education section of secondary education a teacher needs a bachelor degree and a certificate of proficiency to teach the lower grades (1-3) and a master degree and a certificate of proficiency to teach the higher grades (4-6).

Quality assurance takes place at the SBO level via the ETE, the Examination Bureau. The exams are coordinated by the ETE with the input from the schools.

Curacao has a total amount of 1841 teachers teaching at the various levels of non-tertiary education. Table 14 shows the amount of teachers by school type.

Table 14

Foundation Based	776
Special needs	112
Secondary Special Needs	11
Vocational Education	534
General Secondary	200
Secondary Vocational	207
<b>Total</b>	<b>1841</b>

Each Foundation Based Education school has a principal and an assistant principal and both of them are ambulatory. At the general secondary school level there is a rector, and two assistant rectors, one for the lower grades and one for the higher grades and all of them are ambulatory. The vocational secondary education schools have a director and one or more assistant directors depending on the amount of students.

Currently we are in the process of making a Supervision Ordinance to be executed by the inspectorate of education.

## Section IV

### Important Developments

#### 4.1 Stimulating studying in the region

The government of Curacao provides study financing for students to pursue their higher education at the UoC and also other private tertiary institutions in Curacao and also tertiary institutions in the Netherlands. This is done via a governmental private institution the Stichting Studiefinanciering Curacao (SSC). The majority of our students that go abroad go to pursue tertiary education go The Netherlands. Since 2012 the SSC has also begun providing study financing also for the region. Region is defined as North America, Central America, South America and the Caribbean. The Dutch government is also encouraging this initiative considering the high failure rate of students especially in their first year of study in The Netherlands. In that context the Dutch government has signed a protocol with the government of Curacao in 2011 and in subsequent years to stimulate studying in Curacao and the region of Curacao.

The starting points of the protocol are:

- Stimulate studying in Curacao (UoC) and in the region of Curacao (HBO and WO)
  - Students studying at the UoC receive a one time gift of US 4113.00
  - Students studying at a university in the region of Curacao received a one time gift of US 15000.00.
- This gift was deducted from their outstanding debt at SSC.
- Stimulate remigration
- Stimulate internships in Curacao for Curacaoean vocational students that are studying in The Netherlands
- Stimulate our UoC students to do their internship in the region
- Stimulate knowledge exchange in the region

The Minister appointed a taskforce to implement the protocol. During the past years 102 students benefited from the program in the following areas:

- Knowledge exchange programs in Suriname, Colombia, Panama and the USA
- Internship in the region for UoC students took place in Aruba, Colombia, Bonaire and Sint Maarten.
- Internship in Curacao for 100 vocational students studying in The Netherlands.
- 73 students of the UoC received a stimulating scholarship and 29 students studying in the region of Curacao received a stimulating scholarship.



## 4.2 Management Information System

As was mentioned before, education is an important condition for economic growth, productivity gains, personal and social development and a healthy society. Furthermore education also reduces social inequality.<sup>12</sup> In this context, educational statistics is a condition sine qua non for effective education. Statistical information provides a quantitative description of the educational reality; it allows us to measure the current situation and helps us to understand exactly the developments and processes that are taking place in education.

As such, timely education statistics are necessary in the context of policy components, problem analysis, policy, decision making, planning, monitoring, quality control and evaluation. The statistical information, however, should meet a number of quality requirements. It should be among other things:

- Socially relevant
- Open to all
- Objective
- Reliable
- Timely
- Complete
- Integrated

A weak infrastructure, management and administration of education data and information on Curaçao have led to the absence of reliable data and statistics, which has made the evaluation of the internal and external efficiency of the education system more difficult.

The OWCS has started the project to set up a Management Information System (MIS). The MIS aims at developing and implementing a digital integrated and interconnected system for the recording, analysis and exchange of educational information by and between stakeholders. The overall objective of the system is to achieve a systematic collection, recording, processing and analysis of education data and statistics of education in Curacao. The intention is to have the MIS operational by the end of 2014.

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<sup>12</sup> Education At a Glance , OECD 1997