NEET in the Netherlands

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English summary

This dissertation provides a detailed look at problematic school-to-work transitions in the Netherlands. Problematic because after education, some young people do not make the transition to work and instead become NEET, sometimes for years (Not in Employment, Education, or Training). I propose a dynamic conceptualization of NEET which understands NEET not as a state or a group but as a trajectory. Using a combination of survey and register data, paired with innovative methods, I test different mechanisms to can explain these disrupted school-to-work transitions and explore who is it that becomes NEET in the Netherlands.

In **Chapter 2** I lay out the Dutch policy context and explore how young people move from school to work. I show that about half become NEET at least once and out of those, about 18% follow long-term and therefore problematic NEET trajectories. I also show that becoming long-term NEET in the Netherlands is at least partly a social class issue and that following these problematic trajectories lead to lower incomes at age 30. In **Chapter 3** I study how social class, human capital, personality, and aspirations are jointly related to unsuccessful school-to-work transitions. It shows that multiple risk factors are at play, an important one being early school leaving. While there is no evidence for a strong role of aspirations, it shows that young people with resilient personalities have a lower probability to become long-term NEET. **Chapter 4** investigates whether some vocational education programs lead to easier-to-automate occupations than others and investigates if such automation risks can be linked to differences in the early career of graduates from vocational education. Furthermore, it investigates whether social class, cognitive skills, or personality can alleviate the possible negative relationship of automation risk and early career success. It shows that automation risk is not associated with the early career trajectory, or NEET risks. However, the findings do suggest that graduates from easier-to-automate VET programs have lower starting wages. In **Chapter 5** I investigate how family networks and their availability to supply informal childcare as well as formal childcare availability can explain the labor market and education participation of young mothers. In line with previous research, it shows that young mothers with more of their child's grandparents living nearby are less likely to become NEET and more likely to exit NEET.

Overall, this dissertation shows that those young people who do become NEET for a long time are especially negatively selected and as such often are subjected to multiple risk factors at once. In the **Impact paragraph**, I will present some considerations for policies and possible interventions.