Informatics Education at the Crossroads: Round Table on the Dutch Case

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There is a strong consensus among IT and computing professionals from industry, research and development, and education, that computing education of the general public is essential for society. In many countries, however, computing education is inadequate and out of date. This alarming situation has been described in various reports [2, 5]).

In the Netherlands, the present situation is precarious as well [7]. Informatics has been introduced as an elective subject in the 10th and higher grades of pre-vocational and senior general secondary education in 1998 [4] and has not received much attention since. A recent report by The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences [1] summarizes the problems with current informatics education and suggests a redesign of the informatics curriculum and introduction of a new compulsory digital literacy subjects in lower grades of secondary education.

This report has led to two initiatives. First, a research by the Netherlands Institute for Curriculum Development among the practicing Informatics teachers about their enacted curriculum and their ideas about a desirable Informatics curriculum and its implementation. This research resulted in a report for the ministry of education containing a number of recommendations for the future development of the Informatics education in higher grades of secondary education [6]. The second initiative is the workshop Computing in Secondary Education at the Lorentz Center in September 2014. During this week long workshop, leading national and international experts discuss the curriculum and (re)design issues concerning Informatics education in general and in the Netherlands in particular.

In the ISSEP workshop we will report on the outcomes of the two initiatives, ask the participant for feedback and discuss the national and international implications.

References


