

Matching activities in relation to dropout and study progress

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Introduction

By legislation matching activities have recently been introduced at all institutions of Higher Education in the Netherlands for students to check if they fit with the study they signed up for. This should result in lower dropout rates and possibly increase study progress. Based on these matching activities students receive a non-binding personal advice regarding this fit. Dropout rates and credits (ECTS) were evaluated to see if they have changed compared to previous years and how they relate to the non-binding advice.

Method

Research was conducted at Inholland, University of Applied Sciences, by comparing data from first time, fulltime bachelor students from pre-matching cohort 2013 with post-matching cohort 2014.

Results

Table 1 and figures 1 and 3 show statistics regarding participation in matching activities in relation to dropout and ECTS. Table 2 and figures 2 and 4 show statistics regarding the advice students received in relation to dropout and ECTS.

Table 1: Participation in matching activities

	Cohort	
	2013 N = 4246	2014 N = 4509
No matching (fixus)	21%*	17%
Compulsory	79%*	81%
Voluntarily	-	2%
Total	100%	100%

Note: N '11 = 3205 and N '12 = 3625

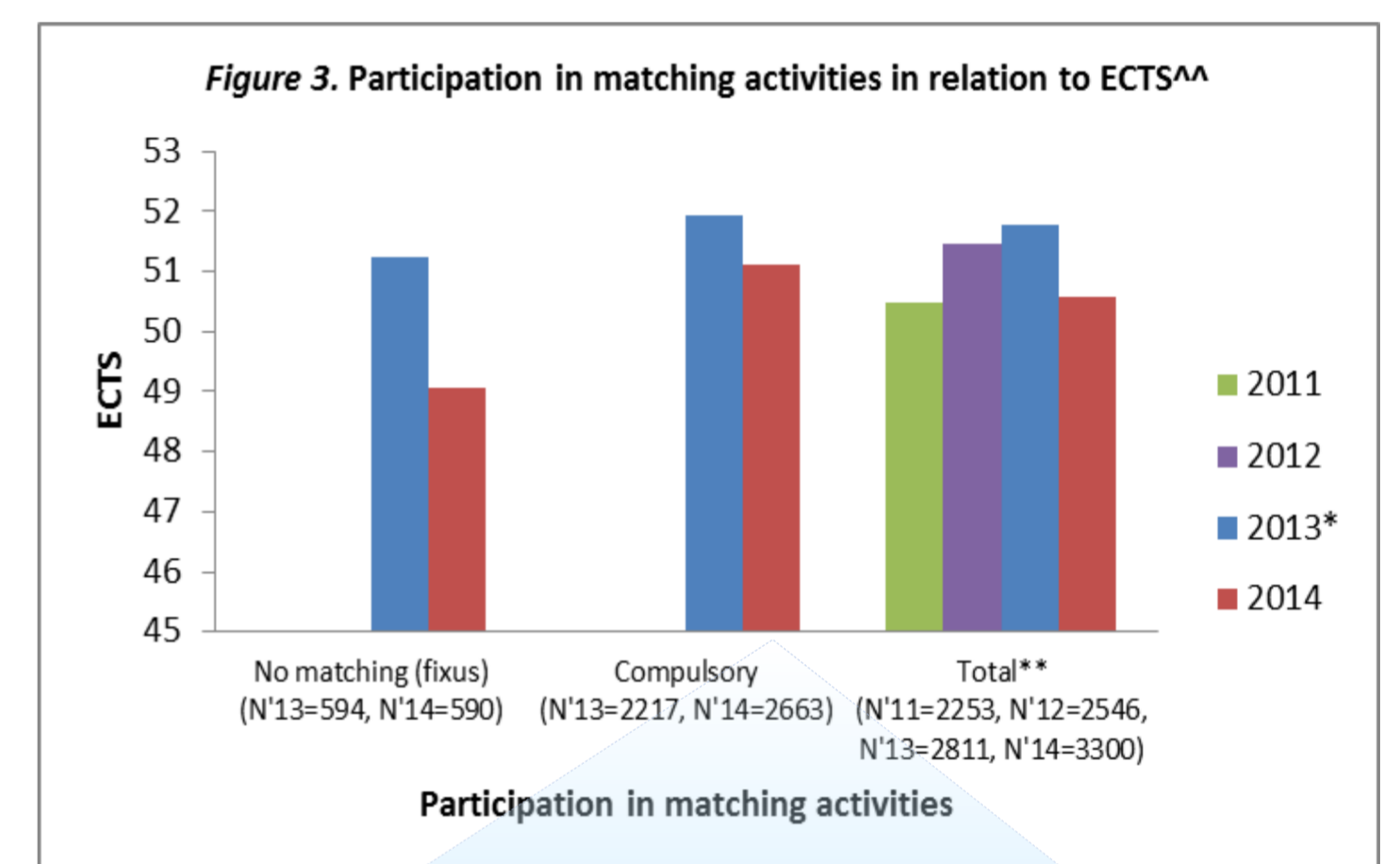
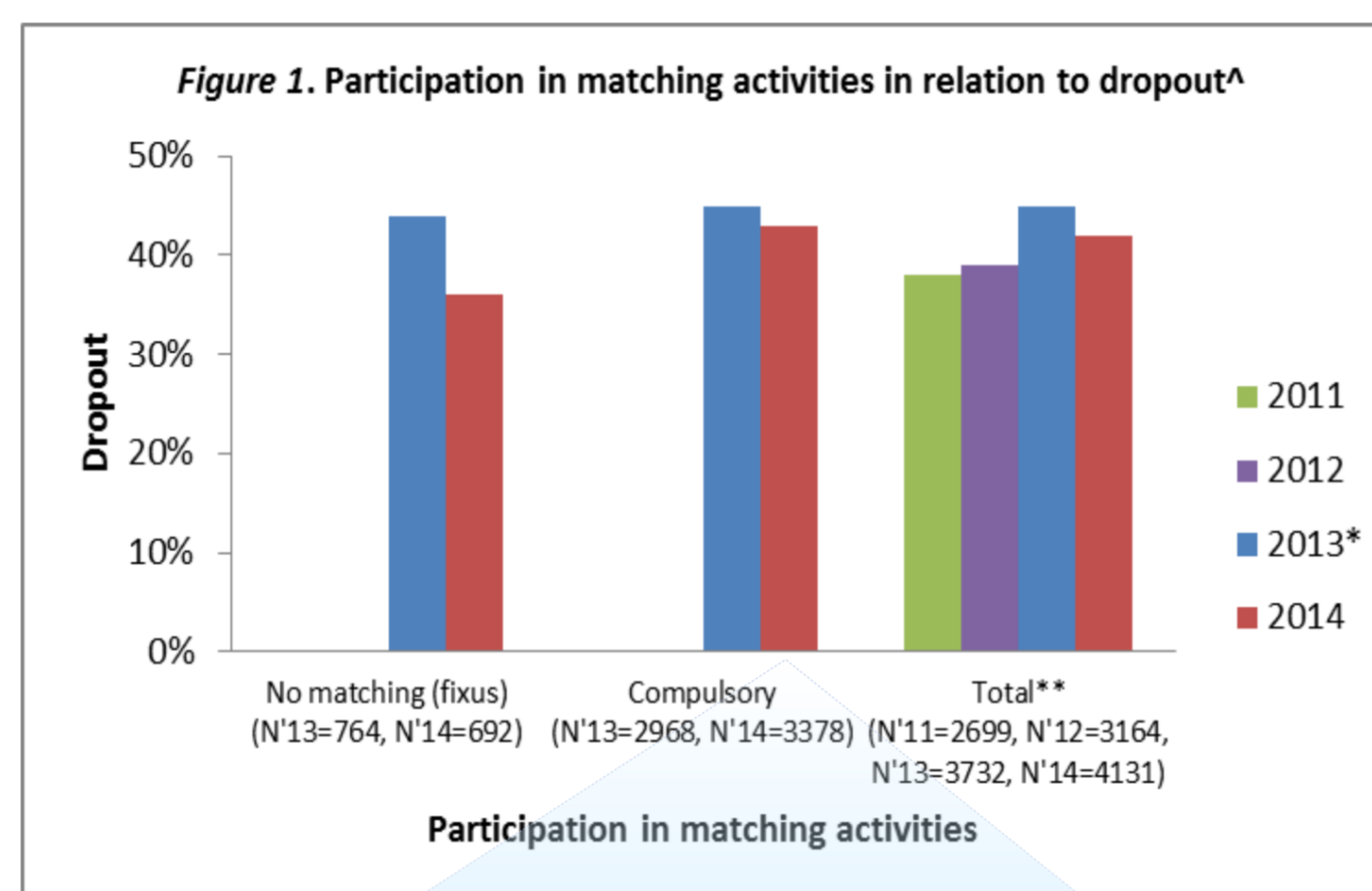
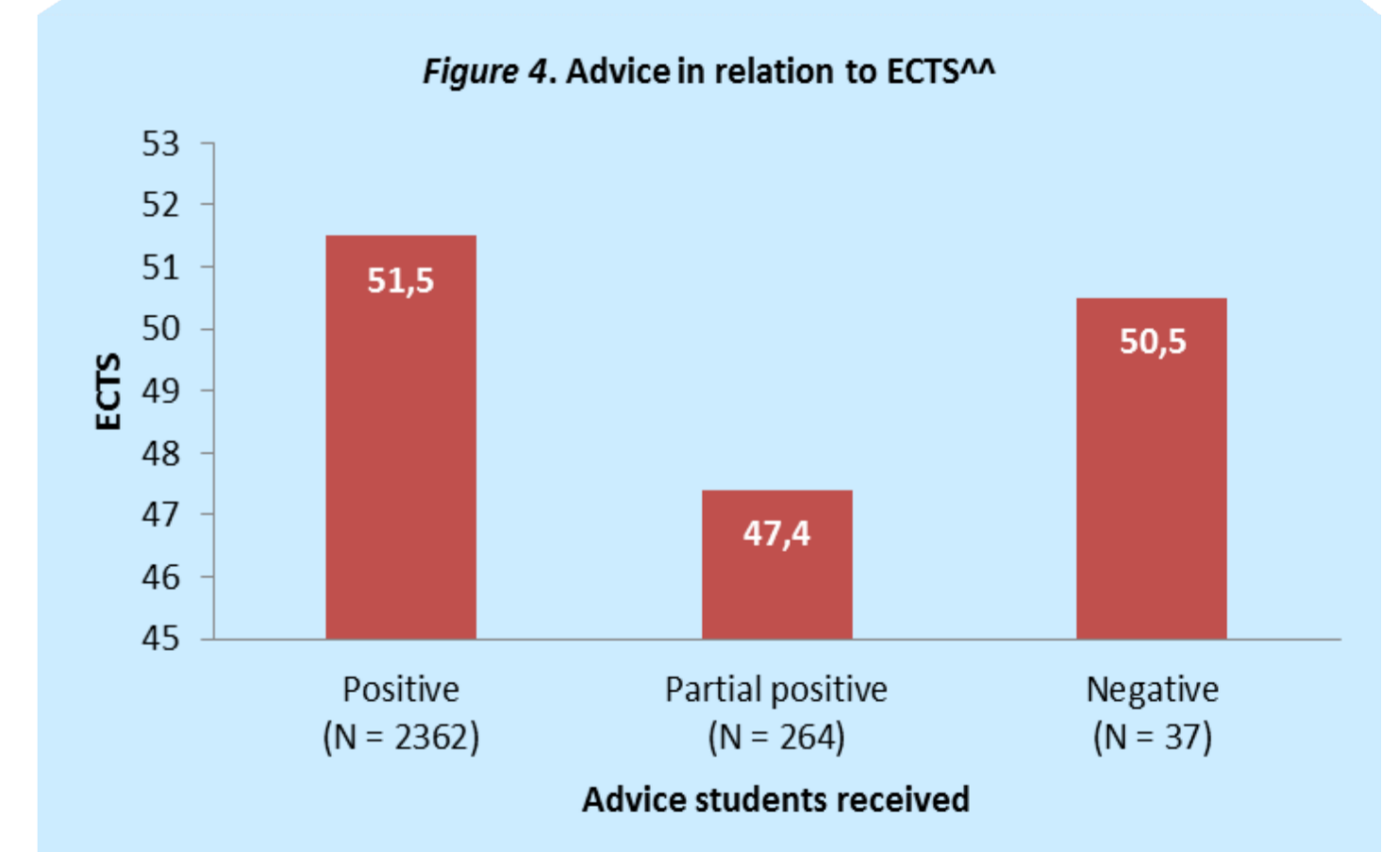
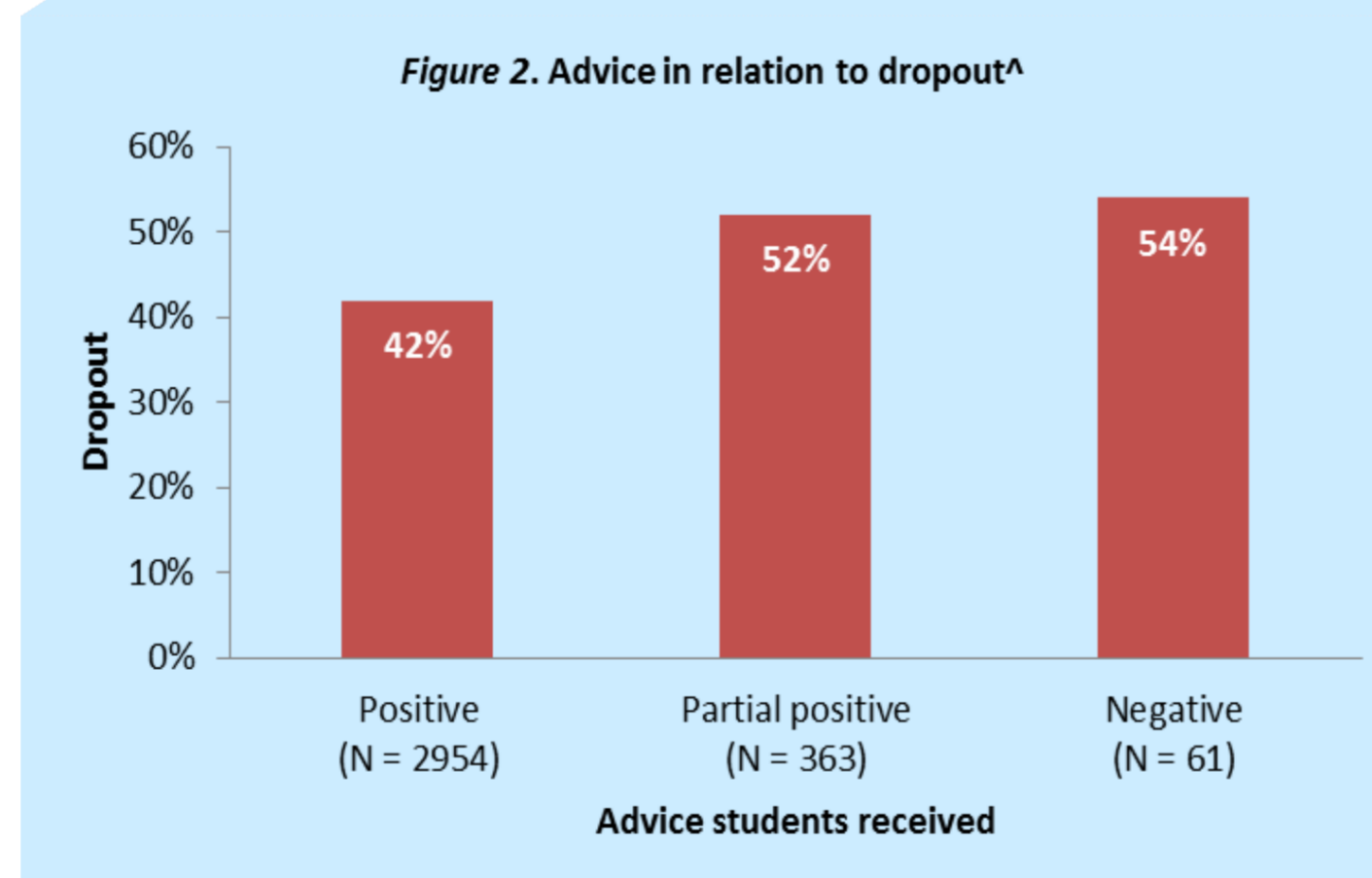


Table 2: Advice students received

Cohort 2014 N = 3649	
Positive	87%
Partial positive	11%
Negative	2%
Total	100%

Note: Only students with compulsory participation



^ Only students with ≥ 1 ECTS and no exemptions.

^^ Only students with ≥ 1 ECTS, no exemptions and enrolled for at least 12 months.

* Differentiation between participation (no matching / compulsory) is based on classification of studies in 2014.

** Total 2014 also includes voluntary participation in matching activities.

Explorative analyses were conducted on **gender**, **prior education** and **ethnicity**. Tables are available upon request.

Conclusions

- Dropout decreased compared to 2013, but is still higher than 2012.
- ECTS has decreased compared to 2013, however the decrease is smaller for students who participated in matching activities.
- Dropout was lowest and ECTS highest among students with a positive advice.
- Due to the observational and descriptive nature of this research, and annual fluctuations in ECTS and dropout, more research is needed to draw conclusions on the effects of matching activities.