

Youth Partnership

Partnership between the European Commission
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth



COUNTRY SHEET

ON YOUTH WORK

IN FLANDERS

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1. Aim of the exercise and guidance for completing

The purpose of this exercise is to gather knowledge on youth work that can support youth work development and the implementation of the main policy initiatives related to it. The country sheet will provide information on youth work for decision-makers, policy makers, implementers and practitioners as well as for the research and NGO communities. They are often the first source of information for thematic or cross-country analytical work. This analysis is then presented and discussed in symposia, seminars and supports European policy initiatives to develop youth work. It is hoped that over time this knowledge-gathering exercise will contribute to a monitoring process on youth work development.

When gathering information, the country correspondents can refer for definitions in the [Glossary on Youth](#) from the EKCYF website as well as to the [country histories](#) on youth work, to help clarify terms and contextualise the knowledge-gathering exercise in published research.

When completing the ten chapters of this country sheet, correspondents are encouraged to consult with youth sector stakeholders (including from policy, practice and research) to get as full a picture of youth work in their country as possible.

Finally, where numbers are provided, please include a proportionality reference so the readers can get a sense of the size (for example, as related to the total country budget or the number of young people benefitting as a % of the total youth population, etc.).

1. Context of youth work

What are the historic origins and traditions of youth work in your country and if it is rooted in other realms (for example, educational, social or social pedagogy) how are boundaries of youth work defined? For example, has there been any research on the tradition and developments of youth work (many have been published in the *History series* part of the *Youth Knowledge Books*)

Filip Coussée has written a chapter in the History series

Coussée, F. (2009). Youth work and its forgotten history: a view from Flanders. In G. Verschelden, F. Coussée, T. Van de Walle & H. Williamson (Eds.). *The history of youth work in Europe and its relevance for youth policy today* (pp. 41-56). Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Filip Coussée and Guy Redig have also written a chapter in the Youth Knowledge Books:

Redig, G. & Coussée, F. (2017). Youth work in Flanders – Playful usefulness and useful playfulness. In H. Schild, N. Connolly, F. Labadie, J. Vanhee and H. Williamson (Eds.). *Thinking seriously about youth work* (pp. 27-39). Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

We cite a part of the chapter ‘Youth work and its forgotten history: a view from Flanders.’ (Coussée, 2009, p. 42-43):

“From 1945 on, the government started to build a national youth policy in Belgium. A central place in this policy was allocated to youth work, more particularly to the youth movement. After the Second World War, the popularity of youth movements declined in most European countries. This was not the case in Flanders, for the government put the youth movement at the heart of its youth policy. [...] The youth movements were at that time among the most attractive leisure activities. They were well-known and eye-catching. [...] They were tightly integrated in their mother organisations, and their leaders had a fairly big influence on policymakers. The existing youth organisations, mainly Catholic, wanted the government not to set up new forms of youth work or its own youth organisations, but instead explicitly to orient “unattached young people” to the youth movements. It fully responded to their wishes.

The government recognised some other, more specific youth organisations and clubs, but it classified these youth work forms as “support services for social, technical or civic education”. They were supposed to refer their clients to the youth movements for “further harmonious education” (Deshormes 1953). Even the fresh air cures of the health insurance organisations were incited to win souls for the youth movement. Government did not interfere in the content of youth work practice. Therefore, Flemish youth policy was called neutral and a-pedagogical (Collard 1957, Peeters 1974). The question of what youth work is or can be, given the specific conditions in which different young people grow up, was left aside.

By the end of the 1950s, the conviction gained ground that the youth movement could not grow into a mass movement. The format was considered “too demanding”. Nevertheless, the government still had confidence in it. Existing youth movements developed new forms of work to attract unattached young people. Supported by policymakers and academics, the youth movement considered itself as the crux around which new forms of open youth work would take shape (Peeters 1963, Cammaer et al. 1967). However, the profile of the group reached by youth movements did not change a lot. Insofar as the new forms of youth work reached some of the unattached young people, they did not succeed in moving them on to the youth movement. At that time the national chaplain of Chiro launched his teabag metaphor. Members of Chiro should function as a teabag in the water and spread their beneficial influence to the masses. Cardijn, the founder of Christian Workers Youth, used a similar metaphor. He spoke about “the yeast and the bread”.

Nevertheless, inspired by British and Dutch examples, open youth work gained ground. Particularly in the bigger cities this happened increasingly without interference from the youth movement. Stimulated by a certain moral panic, local government started to focus more specifically on unattached, workless youth. Open youth work grew into an established youth work form. Thus youth work participation rates increased, but the politics of moving on (catching the unattached and guiding them into the youth movement) did not work.

Rather we saw the development of two kinds of open youth work: work with middle-class youth (often young people who grew too old for the youth movement) and work with particular target groups (jobless youth and later immigrant and underprivileged youth). These work forms soon started to employ professional youth workers. One could observe a growing gap between “general youth work” (working with middle-class children and young people, offering them meaningful leisure activities) and “specific youth work” (working with target groups, offering additional or compensatory educational support). For this kind of youth work, the gap between the lifeworld of these groups of young people and the lifeworld of the youth workers legitimised the professionalisation of youth work.

Broadly this is the situation today. Flanders has a high “youth work index”. For every 250 young people there is a youth work initiative. There are many work forms, but the distinction between the general youth work and specific youth work has remained. The former is labelled traditional or classic youth work; the latter is called “youth social work.”

Thus, during the last decades youth work has remained important in Flanders. Young people have a strong need to organise themselves but also the Flemish government and society recognises the important role of youth work. Flanders’ youth work history, and particularly youth movements, has made its mark on the contemporary Flemish youth work resulting in a strong focus on leisure and recreation. From a historical point of view, Flanders has always focussed on youth work as an emancipatory and empowerment instrument for young people rather than an instrument for prevention.

Sources:

- Bradt, L. (2017). Questionnaire mapping educational and career paths of youth workers in Europe.
- Coussée, F. (2009). Youth work and its forgotten history: a view from Flanders. In G. Verschelden, F. Coussée, T. Van de Walle & H. Williamson (Eds.), *The history of youth work in Europe and its relevance for youth policy today* (pp. 41-56). Strasbourg: Council of Europe publishing.
- Redig, G. & Coussée, F. (2017). Youth work in Flanders – Playful usefulness and useful playfulness. In H. Schild, N. Connolly, F. Labadie, J. Vanhee and H. Williamson (Eds.), *Thinking seriously about youth work* (pp. 27-39). Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

What is the context in which youth work happens in your country today, what is on the public policy agenda in general that may affect young people and youth policy?

The Flemish youth work policy is part of the 'general' youth policy. Youth policy and related government measures are based on a planned, comprehensive and integrated vision of youth. The various elements in this definition are significant. Youth policy refers to an interrelated body of elements set in a time perspective. It covers elements from every sphere of life deemed important for young people, in a coherent way. Youth policy is embedded in a model of society which expresses the desirable situation for young people (both as individuals and in terms of their group development), how they are expected to grow up and develop and the place they have in society.

Youth policy is implemented through explicit measures: the specific actions undertaken by the government focusing on a particular category of the population: 'youth'. For the Flemish Community, this means approximately the age group between 0 and 30 years old, although different definitions are used in specific contexts ("Parliament act of 20 January 2012 concerning a renewed youth and children's rights policy", 7 March 2012).

Youth policy is based on the assumption that it is possible to implement a group policy. This is not self-evident, because the government applies a sectorial approach in most other domains. A group policy is a different way of implementing policy: instead of focusing on one sector, the starting point is young people's lives across the board, their needs and requirements. That is why youth policy permeates almost every other policy sector.

A group-oriented implementation of policy creates a number of policy crossroads, where it encounters sectorial policies. Youth policy is based on an interactive, participatory style of government and a comprehensive or inclusive approach to policy. This makes youth policy a special and supplementary policy. It provides many opportunities for a more democratic and improved governance of policy implementation.

In the frame of a programme for 'Better Administrative Policy' the Flemish public administration has been subjected to a reform in 2006 (Flemish government, s.d.). This programme was designed to make the public administration more efficient, to make Flanders a place where people enjoy working and living.

The tasks of the Flemish public administration are now organised on the basis of 11 policy areas. Each policy area is supported by a civil service department and a number of autonomous agencies. The departments support and advice the Government on policymaking, whereas the agencies apply the policy through services to citizens, companies and organisations. These agencies operate with a big degree of autonomy depending on their terms of reference.

One of these policy areas is "Culture, Youth, and Media".

The Division knowledge and policy, team transversal and international, within the department of Culture, Youth and Media is responsible for implementing the youth and children's rights policy of the Flemish government. It promotes and stimulates a rich and various offer of non-profit socio-cultural activities for children and young people between 3 and 30 years old. It provides operational subventions and project grants to youth organisations, it supports and guides local authorities in developing their own local youth policy. Furthermore, it plays a coordinating role in developing the Flemish youth and children's rights policy plan and in monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in all Flemish policy domains. It also closely observes international youth policy by its presence at many bi- and multilateral fora. Finally, it is responsible for managing the camping equipment lending service.

Source:

www.cjasm.be

<https://www.vlaanderen.be/organisaties/administratieve-diensten-van-de-vlaamse-overheid/beleidsdomein-cultuur-jeugd-sport-en-media/departement-cultuur-jeugd-en-media/afdeling-kennis-en-beleid/team-transversaal-en-internationaal>

However, youth work in Flanders mainly takes place in the local context. Organisations and youth work activities operate at a local level and receive funding (or are organised) by the municipalities. Youth organisations play an important role in the implementation of Flanders' youth policy. Dozens of accredited youth organisations are active at Flemish level dedicated to youth work and young people in many different ways in a leisure time setting.

Since the Flemish Parliament Act on local and provincial youth (work) policy came into force in 1993, steps were taken towards a decentralised and complementary youth policy. Since 2016, the municipalities are no longer granted funding that is specifically meant for youth policy. The funds are integrated in one overarching dotation to local governments (Community fund/Gemeentefonds). The aim was to increase the integration of policy making across different sectors. It also strengthened the autonomous authority of the municipalities concerning youth policy.

The public policy agenda in general that may affect young people and youth policy

Based on the Great Priority Debate, which is a milestone in the preparation of the Flemish Youth and Children's Rights Policy Plan 2020 (Department for Culture, Youth and Media, s.d.), we illustrate the main topics that Flanders wants to address. The Flemish Youth and Children's Rights Policy Plan outlines all the concerns regarding children and young people and their rights which the Flemish Ministers will pay attention to in their policies in the coming years. The plan pursues four large societal objectives: (1) equal opportunities, (2) broad development, (3) space and (4) greater involvement in society for all children and young people.

On Friday 26 April 2019, about 150 young people, youth workers, children's rights actors, middle field actors, researchers, local and Flemish civil servants and policy makers came to the Grand Priority Debate in the Herman Teirlinck building in Brussels. They debated the major challenges facing children and young people and ranked the thirteen targets for the new Flemish youth and children's rights policy plan 2020-2024. After a day of listening to motivating stories, exchanging arguments for or against the different goals, thinking about doomsday scenarios, speed dating and lobbying, the following five goals were considered the most priority:

1. Reducing child and youth poverty
2. Strengthening psychological well-being and positive identity development
3. Creating sustainable and safe neighbourhoods
4. Giving children and young people a voice in the future of the planet
5. Ensuring that children and young people can actively contribute to society

The complete order is as follows:

6. Inclusive use of leisure time across policy areas
7. Development of anti-discrimination strategy

8. Representative images of children and young people in all their diversity
9. Stimulate critical thinking and media literacy
10. Tailor-made careers and reducing early school leavers
11. Well-being of underage newcomers
12. Safeguarding the rights of children and young people placed away from home
13. Access to quality jobs

This ranking is passed on to the government negotiators and to the new Flemish Government (*since 2 October 2019*). The intention is that, in preparation of the new Flemish youth and children's rights policy plan, the Flemish Government selects a maximum of five priority transversal objectives for children and young people within six months after the start of the coalition period, based on the environmental analysis provided by the CJM Department to the Flemish Government.

Sources:

Van der Eecken, A., Kemper, R. & Bradt, L. (2016). Country Sheet on youth policy in Flanders. Retrieved from <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/9038134/Flanders-Country-Sheet-2016.pdf/67a6a22b-0b36-48d4-966c-d2098f5d3188>

Flemish Youth and Children's Rights Policy Plan 2015-2019. Retrieved from http://www.jkp.vlaanderen/assets/downloads/JKP_summary_digital_version.pdf

http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/vjkb_beleidsplan_jkp2020_2024.aspx#Meerinformatie

2. Strategic and legislative framework of youth work

Are there one or more policy and/or legislative frameworks guiding youth work in your country?

If yes, please reference the documents and feel free to quote relevant provisions. How does it define the purpose and value of youth work? In the absence of such formal acts, how does the state define the purpose and value of youth work?

Who is youth work meant for (all young people or specific groups?).

How is youth work defined by law (in legislation, in policy or programmes)?

Since 1 January 2013, the Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 on a revised youth and children's rights policy (decreet houdende vernieuwd jeugd en kinderechtenbeleid) as amended, has come into force. This act describes the basic instruments to implement youth policy and specifies the conditions for accreditation and funding of a large number of private organisations and youth-related associations operating on a Flemish level (i.e. not organisations operating on a regional or a local level as these receive funding by the municipalities):

Definitions according to the Flemish Parliament Act of January 20, 2012 on a revised youth and children's rights:

- youth work: socio-cultural work based on noncommercial purposes by or for young people of three to thirty years, during leisure time, with educational guidance and to promote the general and integral development of the young people who participate in it on a voluntarily basis
- youth worker: any person who takes responsibility in youth work and who has verifiable experience, or makes efforts in the area of education and training in relation to youth (work)

"Youth work" or "youth worker" is not defined or included in any other legislation or national policy document.

The Flemish Parliament Acts are published in Dutch (original language) and French translation in the Belgian Bulletin of Acts, Orders and Decrees: www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/doc/rech_f.htm. The Division Youth of the Agency for Socio-Cultural Work for Youth and Adults provides an English version of the Flemish Parliament Acts on demand.

Sources:

Bradt, L. (2017). Questionnaire mapping educational and career paths of youth workers in Europe.

http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/regelgeving_VJKB/BVR_decreet_vernieuwdJKRB_def_goedkeuring_VR.pdf

How do youth workers themselves define youth work in your country/what do they understand by it?

How youth workers define youth work heavily depends on the youth work context. The Ambrassade, an organisation that supports the recognised youth work organisations, asked 100 youth workers how they define “youth work” and they received 100 different answers. This illustrates the diversity of the Flemish youth work.

Source:

<https://ambrassade.be/eng>

3. Recognition

According to the definition of [recognition](#) there is **self, social, formal and political recognition** of youth work and of youth workers (professionals or volunteers). What is the situation in your country on these different dimensions of recognition of youth work?

The Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 on a renewed Flemish policy on youth and children's rights includes the legislation about the training programme 'Kadervorming'.

All four dimensions are present in this legislation:

- Formal recognition: a certificate is delivered.
- Political recognition: non-formal education is recognised in legislation.
- Social recognition: social actors such as the youth sector and local authorities acknowledge the certificates.
- Self recognition: the training programme ('Kadervorming') contributes to participants' awareness of their competences.

Source:

<http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/regelgeving/attestenjeugdwerkers.aspx>

Is there any formal validation system of non-formal education and learning in youth work contexts implemented in your country?

Formal and accredited courses in youth work

In Flanders, there is no separate educational pathway for youth workers. Youth worker as such is not an officially recognised profession and therefore no targeted youth work training programmes and qualifications exist. However, most youth workers are trained via other professions such as socio-cultural worker (as part of the wider social work bachelor study programme) or pedagogy. Youth workers also have other educational backgrounds, mainly due to the non-existence of a youth worker qualification.

Non-formal education/training for youth workers

Although formal youth worker qualifications do not exist, youth workers, both professional staff and volunteers, can obtain youth worker certificates. The certificates are awarded by the Department of Culture, Youth and Media after completion of an approved training programme ('Kadervorming').

'Kadervorming' specifies the competences the young people have to acquire during a course/internship and results in a certificate. Both the trajectories and competences are incorporated in a parliament act and decision.

Source:

http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/kadervorming_regelgeving.aspx

Besides these certificates of training programmes ('Kadervorming'), there are also other training mechanisms, such as a tailor-made training courses of one day, congresses, etc.

The following types of youth worker certificates are awarded by the Department:

- Animator: the animator training programme aims to train candidates in supporting young people in youth work. The programme focuses on developing understanding, attitudes and skills necessary to work with young people. It is based on a theoretical part (participation (50 hours) in a recognised training programme) and a practical part (50 hours internship). There is also an evaluation moment of 4 hours.
- Senior animator: the senior animator training programme aims to further train candidates in supporting young people in youth work and to take up responsibilities within a coaching team. The programme focuses on strengthening the understanding, attitudes and skills necessary to work with young people. It is based on a theoretical part and a practical part.
- Instructor: the instructor training programme aims to develop participants in taking up responsibilities in youth organisations. The programme focuses on developing an understanding and skills in group dynamics, in communication skills and conflict management. It is comprised of a theoretical part (50 hours) and a practical part (50 hours internship). There is also an evaluation moment of 4 hours.

Source:

Bradt, L. (2017). Questionnaire mapping educational and career paths of youth workers in Europe.

If there is a legal framework for the profession of youth work per se or embedded in other fields, please explain briefly and reference it.

There is no legal or regulatory authority for youth work as a profession. The Department Culture, Youth and Media stimulates and supports a rich and varied offer of non-commercial socio-cultural activities for young people, mainly through subsidies to organisations on national and regional level.

Source:

Bradt, L. (2017). Questionnaire mapping educational and career paths of youth workers in Europe.

<https://cism.be/>

Is your country involved in any European or applying any national initiatives to support youth work (for example, Council of Europe Youth Work Portfolio, Council of Europe quality label for youth centres, Erasmus + Youthpass, European Youth Capitals, Youth Friendly Cities, others)?

'Kadervorming' is a certified training explicitly meant for youngsters who (will) have leadership responsibilities in the context of youth work. The main goal is to strenghten their competences. One trajectory consists of a theoretical part, an internship and an evaluation. The training may lead to a certificate (animator, chief instructor) delivered by the Division Policy and Knowledge, team transversal and international.

Source:

Bradt, L. (2017). Questionnaire mapping educational and career paths of youth workers in Europe.

<https://www.vlaanderen.be/kadervorming-en-attesten-voor-jeugdwerkers>

4. Funding youth work

If you are able to include numbers, what is the national or local budgetary allocation for youth work in your country? If there are specific national programmes supporting youth work, what is their main aim and budget (please indicate proportionality)? In other words, how is funding for youth work organised in your country? What are the funding opportunities, who are the main funders and what are the guiding principles in allocating that funding?

How important are international funding sources for youth work activities in your countries (Erasmus+, European Youth Foundation, UN System or other sources?)

Legislation

In the Flemish community, since 1 January 2013, the Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 on a revised youth and children's rights policy as amended, came into force. This Act specifies the conditions for accreditation and funding of a large number of private organisations and youth-related associations operating at a Flemish level (i.e. not organisations operating at a regional or a local level as these receive funding by the municipalities).

Since the Flemish Parliament Act on local and provincial youth (work) policy came into force in 1993, steps were taken towards a decentralised and complementary youth policy. Since 2016, the municipalities are no longer granted funding that is specifically meant for youth policy. The funds are integrated in one overarching dotation to local governments (Community fund/Gemeentefonds). The aim was to increase the integration of policy making across different sectors. It also strengthened the autonomous authority of the municipalities concerning youth policy.

From 2018, the person-oriented responsibilities will be transferred to the local and regional level. Transitional measures are foreseen for 2018 and 2019. From 2020 a parliament act to support regional youth work will enter into force.

The Flemish Parliament Acts are published in Dutch (original language) and French translation in the Belgian Bulletin of Acts, Orders and Decrees: www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/doc/rech_f.htm

Every year, the government of Flanders estimates the budget for the next year. This budget allocation is presented to the Flemish Parliament and is discussed in parliamentary committees. The Flemish Parliament has to accept the budget allocation, before the Flemish government can use the budget for expenditure. This budget allocation also contains the means for Youth policy.

How youth policy is funded

The budget in 2015

In 2015, the Division Youth had a budget of 67.500.000 euro to achieve its objectives. Most of the money was allocated to the Act on local and provincial youth policy (18.877.000 euro) and the Act on the Flemish policy on youth and children's rights (32.610.000 euro). Local and regional level have their own budget, next to the subventions of the Flemish government.

The budget in 2016

In 2016, the budget of the Division Youth was 42.266.000 euro. There was a decline from the budget allocation of 2015. The budget allocated to the Act on local and provincial youth policy had been reduced compared to the budget allocation of 2015. The remaining budget (1.254.000) would help support youth policy in Brussels and De Rand ('the rim'). In 2016, the budget allocated to the Act on the Flemish policy on youth and children's rights was 32.509.000 euro and had been reduced by 21.000 euro.

The budget in 2017

In 2017, the budget allocation to the Division Youth is 42.462.000 euro. The budget allocated to the Act on local and provincial youth policy was very low (1.185.000) and uniquely to support youth policy in Brussels and De Rand ('The Rim'). In 2017, the budget allocated to the Act on the Flemish policy on youth and children's rights has risen to 33.037.000 euro.

The budget in 2018

In 2018, the budget allocated to the Division Youth was 50.209.000 euros. The allocated budget increased because of the transfer of provincial responsibilities to the Flemish Community. This extra fund is needed to pay overcoming personnel and to subsidise those organisations that were initially subsidised by the provinces. In 2018, the budget allocated to the Act on the Flemish policy on youth and children's rights is 37.003.000 euros.

The budget in 2019

In 2019, the budget allocated to youth within the Policy area Culture, Youth, Sport and Media was 1,28 miljard euros.

What is funded?

Parliament acts define the instruments of youth and children's rights policy and the funding of local and provincial authorities and youth organisations. The Act on Flemish Youth and Children's Rights Policy defines instances of youth work and recognises institutions and organisations involved with

young people and also children's rights policy, defining at the same time the allocation of finances within the system.

Since 2015 the Division policy and knowledge, team transversal and international also subsidises youth houses. Youth houses are open and informal meeting places for young people. They reach every week thousands of young people and volunteers. In almost every Flemish municipality there is a youth house.

Youth houses can contribute to several Flemish policy objectives. For example, youth houses contribute to young people's social, cultural and educative development and offer opportunities to work on issues such as diversity, youth culture, vulnerable young people, creativity and enterprise. At 19 June 2013, the Flemish Parliament asked the Flemish government to acknowledge youth houses as anchor points in local communities and to see them as partners in working on such issues.

The subsidy scheme for supra local projects is developed by the Flemish government to respond to changes in the youth house sector and to stimulate creativity and innovation. Youth houses that fulfill the conditions can receive funding for the implementation of:

- a supra local project to stimulate young people's artistic expression
- a supra local project to promote young people's entrepreneurship

Each project can receive a staff grant of maximum 40.000 euros and an operating grant of maximum 5.000 euros.

Source:

http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/jeugdhuizen_gesubsidieerd.aspx

Recent developments

Since the Flemish Parliament Act on local and provincial youth (work) policy came into force in 1993, steps have been taken towards a decentralised and complementary youth policy. Since 2016, the municipalities are no longer granted funding that is specifically meant for youth policy. The funds are integrated in one overarching dotation to local governments (Community fund/Gemeentefonds). The aim was to increase the integration of policy making across different sectors. It also strengthened the autonomous authority of the municipalities concerning youth policy.

The Flemish government accepted at 9 December 2016 a new executive order for the parliament act local youth policy, after a recommendation of the SARC, the Flemish Youth Council and the State Council. More concretely, the executive order combines the provisions set out in two existing executive

orders and ensures the further development of decretal rules that were maintained after the changes of the parliament act (3 July 2015 and 20 Mai 2016).

The executive order does not contain substantive changes and does not imply changes in procedure. Only in the article about the criteria for the Price Youth Municipality of Flanders there are some substantive changes, to better meet the intentions of the policy paper Youth.

Sources:

http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/regelgeving_lokaal/2016_nieuwUB_decreet_lokaal_jeugd-beleid_definitief.pdf

http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/regelgeving_lokaal/2016_nieuwUB_decreet_lokaal_jeugd-beleid_toelichting.pdf

Explanation:

The parliament act of 3 July 2015 arranges the integration of sectoral means for local authorities in the Community fund (Gemeentefonds). Consequently, a separate decretal legislation was no longer needed for the allocation of means for the support of the municipal youth policy on the basis of the Flemish policy priorities. An exception was the six municipalities with (linguistic) facilities of the Flemish periphery of Brussels and the Flemish Community commission. For them, it remained unchanged. The provision with regard to the local youth council has changed very little. Also the allocation of the Price Youth Municipality of Flanders was maintained.

The parliament act of 20 May 2016 adapted the modalities for measuring the means for the peripheral municipalities and the Flemish Community commission to the new reality. One of the Flemish policy priorities was also deleted for the peripheral municipalities.

The new executive order brings the provisions of two existing executive orders together and adapts them to the decretal changes of 2015 and 2016.

16 November 2015: Parliament act downsizing the provinces, accepted by the Flemish Parliament.

On November 9, the Flemish Parliament accepted 'the parliament act concerning the renewed mandate and changed funding of the provinces'. This parliament act arranges the downsizing of provincial authorities from 1 January 2018. The person-oriented matters – and its means, staff and infrastructure - will be transferred to the Flemish government and the local authorities. The parliament act also changes the funding of the provinces.

With this parliament act the Flemish government wants to implement the coalition agreement as well as contribute to a more streamlined administrative organisation in Flanders. From 2018, only two levels

of government will be responsible for person-oriented matters: (1) the Flemish government for the provision of the general framework and (2) the local authorities (close to the citizens) for the local policy. Thus strong local authorities with more responsibilities and administrative efficiency as well as a framework-setting government is central here. The downsized provincial level will only be concerned with land-related matters.

This parliament act also changes the 'parliament act of 6 July 2012 concerning the support and promotion of local youth policy and the provision of provincial youth work policy'. All provisions that refer to provincial responsibilities are deleted.

Sources:

<http://docs.vlaamsparlement.be/docs/stukken/2015-2016/g880-3.pdf>

<http://docs.vlaamsparlement.be/docs/stukken/2015-2016/g880-2.pdf>

Parliament act supra local youth work, youth houses and targeted youth work.

At October 27, the Flemish government accepted the draft 'parliament act supra local youth work, youth houses and targeted youth work'. The parliament act stipulates that from 2020, youth work that is not directed at the whole Flemish community but that does respond to Flemish government priorities will be supported. The parliament act brings together different subsidy channels and supports youth work that is focused on the realisation of youth work for all young people. Thereby, attention was paid to recommendations of the Council for Culture, Youth and Media, the Flemish Youth Council, the social partners and the State Council. The draft will be submitted to the Flemish Parliament.

Sources:

http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/regelgeving_bovenlokaal/20171027_decreet-bovenlokaal_def.pdf

http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/regelgeving_bovenlokaal/20171027_decreet-bovenlokaal_memorie.pdf

The parliament act brings together different subsidy channels and is targeted at four groups:

- Professional youth houses that are focused on the Flemish youth policy priorities
- Professional youth work with vulnerable children and young people
- Supra local youth work with children and young people with a disability

- Inter-municipal cooperation that stimulates cooperation and networking between the local authorities and youth associations

The support of supra local youth work with children and young people with a disability and of inter-municipal cooperation are new tasks of the Flemish government, given the new tasks assigned to the provinces.

Main aspects

The main aspects of the parliament act are:

- A multi annual structural support for associations that anticipate the priorities of the Flemish youth policy or that develop a supra local activity
- Project funds that provide associations opportunities to correspond to new developments
- Limiting the administrative work for the initiators
- Conducting a complementary policy in respect to the local authorities

Timing

The parliament act will enter into force in different stages. For the subsidy channel 'supra local youth work with children and young people with a disability', transitional measures will be foreseen in 2018 and 2019 and the funding on the basis of this parliament act will start at 1 January 2020. For the subsidy channel about inter-municipal cooperation, transitional measures will be foreseen and the funding on the basis of this parliament act will start at 1 January 2021.

Financial accountability

Youth organisations play an important role in the implementation of Flanders' youth policy. Youth organisations or youth associations usually receive funding based on specific funding regulations or grant schemes. The criteria for types of organisations funded is described in the Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012:

- Nationally organised youth associations
- Associations for participation and information
- Cultural education associations

Youth organisations or youth associations receiving an operational grant on the basis of the Flemish Parliament Act of 11 January 2012 on 'conducting a renewed policy on youth and children's rights'

need to submit a financial report and a report of an independent auditor, who's a member of the Institute of auditors, to the Flemish administration every year. The date and formal requirements of the reports are defined by the Flemish government.

Use of EU Funds

The Flemish Youth and Children's rights Policy Plan does not (directly) use EU funds.

Some youth organisations or youth associations are supported through EU funds. EU funds that have been used are:

- Erasmus+: Erasmus+ is the EU funding programme for education, training, youth and sport in Europe. It runs from 2014 till the end of 2020 with a total budget of 14.7 billion euro. Within Erasmus+ there are different sections: one for education and training, one for sport and one for youth projects. The youth section of Erasmus+ is called Youth in Action. It funds projects for and by young people and youth organisations. It has a separate budget and specific project possibilities. In 2016, the Youth in Action-programme in Flanders has a budget of 2.445.718 euro. The Flemish government has designated Jint vzw to coordinate and to implement the youth programme in Flanders. Jint vzw is in charge of information and promoting, training, funding and assessment.
- ESF 2014-2020: The Operational Programme for the implementation of the European Social Fund (ESF) in Flanders in the 2014-2020 period supports initiatives that increase employment and improve social cohesion in Flanders. In the years to come, 1 billion euro will be invested. The ESF programme lays down the priorities for the expenditure of 1 billion euro. 600 million euro is financed through the Flemish budget and 400 million euro through the European budget. The current Flemish labour minister, Philippe Muyters, states: "We have made up a balanced investment programme, which enjoys the support from the European Commission. The programme places the right focus on creating the best opportunities for people in their search for a job, with specific attention for youngsters and the most disadvantaged people."

Sources:

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/17-funding-youth-policy-belgium-flemish-community>

<http://www.esf-vlaanderen.be/nl/inspiratiebron/themas/jeugd/jeugd>

http://www.esf-vlaanderen.be/sites/default/files/attachments/articles/op_esf_2014-2020_versie_20160201.pdf

<https://www.youthinaction.be/english>

5. Structures, actors and levels in youth work provision

5.1 State structures/public authorities deciding on or providing youth work

Which government levels are involved in planning, supporting and delivering youth work? If there are separate agencies, please mention them here. Please include numbers of people or entities where data is available

National public authorities

Department in charge of youth

Minister Benjamin Dalle, Flemish Minister for Youth, Media & Brussels

Flemish Minister-President, Jan Jambon, is responsible for the division Culture

5 years: from 2019 until 2024

Department of Culture, Youth and Media

Main tasks of the Youth Division

The 'Division Policy and Knowledge, team transversal and international' ensures the administrative follow-up of the Flemish policy on youth and children's rights. Furthermore, the Division implements youth policy as a socio-cultural matter. It stimulates and supports a rich and varied offer of non-commercial socio-cultural activities for young people, mainly through subsidising organisations and local authorities.

In short, the Division Policy and Knowledge has the following authorities:

1. Initiating and coordinating policy
2. development of priority cross-sectoral and transversal policy themes (project operation):
 - culture and economy
 - e-culture / digitization
 - Volunteering
 - cultural education
 - Transition 2050
3. Continuous coordination and monitoring of cross-policy themes:
 - youth and children's rights policy
 - poverty
 - level playing field
 - geriatric policy
 - trade agreements
4. Development and follow-up of the archive policy and information security policy

5. Ensure interaction between the development of Flemish and international policy frameworks and the own sectoral or broader cultural youth and media policy to be developed
6. Data and research
7. Knowledge management
8. Legal services for the department of culture, youth and media
9. Building, unlocking and sharing policy-relevant knowledge in function of policy advice and relevant (policy) projects

Source:

<http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/index.aspx>

The Flemish government develops youth policy documents which present the overall vision for youth and children's rights policy. An essential characteristic of Flemish youth policy is implementation through explicit measures – acts or decrees. The Flemish government tends to regulate every specific field of youth policy, as defined by its Youth Policy Plan, with decrees, which creates a complex and closed structure of regulations, leaving unrecognised forms of youth work without support. Decrees define the instruments of the youth and children's rights policy and the funding of local and provincial authorities and youth organisations.

Source:

http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/internationalesamenwerking_doc/CoE_policy-reviewEN.pdf

Director responsible for Youth in the Department

Johan Van Gaens, Head of Division (johan.vangaens@cjsm.vlaanderen.be)

Contact person in the youth department competent for European youth policy

Lieve Caluwaerts, Youth Policy Unit (lieve.caluwaerts@cjsm.vlaanderen.be)

Jan Vanhee, Youth Policy Unit – EU Youth Affairs Attaché (PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF BELGIUM TO THE EU - General Representation of the Government of Flanders) | Member of the CDEJ of the Council of Europe (jan.vanhee@cjsm.vlaanderen.be)

Regional public authorities with competencies in the youth field

Belgium is a federal state, consisting of 3 Communities (the Flemish Community, the French Community and the German-Speaking Community) and 3 Regions (the Flemish Region, the Walloon Region

and the Brussels Capital Region). There is no hierarchy between the federal, the Community and the Regional levels.

This division into three Communities and three Regions is a unique characteristic of Belgian federalism. Both types of entities have their own exclusive competencies. Their territories overlap geographically, since in fact they correspond to different combinations of Belgium's four linguistic areas (the Dutch language area, the French language area, the German language area and the French-Dutch bilingual area).

Each entity has its specific area of responsibility.

- The federal level has the competence on important policy fields such as justice, social security, employment and tax legislation.
- The responsibilities of the Region are linked to its "territory" and include environment, agriculture, urban planning, housing,...
- The competences of the Communities are "person-related" matters such as education, health care, culture, youth,...

Three Ministers for Youth

The federal 'Belgian' level of government only has limited competence in youth matters (e.g. some aspects of judicial youth protection), but there is no youth policy at the Belgian level. The Communities are competent for youth and youth policy, so it is on this level that most explicit 'youth policy instruments' can be found. The Communities have a minister responsible for Youth, a parliamentary commission and a number of administrative departments with 'youth' in their title and a large number of specific youth-related budget items. Given the fact that every Community has its own Minister for Youth, this means Belgium has three.

The three Communities, and thus also the Flemish Community, are represented in the different international forums with a youth agenda.

Source:

<http://www.flanders.be/en/publications/detail/youthpolicy-in-the-three-communities-of-belgium>

Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field

5 provinces and 308 local authorities fall within the administrative supervision of the Flemish Region.

Since the coming into force of the Flemish Parliament Act on local and provincial youth (work) policy in 1993, steps were taken towards a decentralised and complementary youth policy.

Most local authorities nowadays have youth services or at least one officer who is responsible for youth matters.

Since the Flemish Parliament Act on local and provincial youth (work) policy came into force in 1993, steps were taken towards a decentralised and complementary youth policy. Since 2016, the municipalities are no longer granted funding that is specifically meant for youth policy. The funds are integrated in one overarching dotation to local governments (Community fund/Gemeentefonds). The aim was to increase the integration of policy making across different sectors. It also strengthened the autonomous authority of the municipalities concerning youth policy

From 2018, the person-oriented responsibilities will be transferred to the local and regional level. Transitional measures are foreseen for 2018 and 2019. From 2020, a parliament act to support regional youth work will enter into force.

Source:

http://www.vvsg.be/Werking_Organisatie/bbc/Pages/regelgeving.aspx

5.2 National or local youth councils

National youth councils

The Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 on Flemish Youth Policy sets out a legislative framework for the Flemish Youth Council ('Vlaamse Jeugdraad').

The Flemish Youth Council, an advisory body of the Government of Flanders, gives policy advices on all youth-related issues. It has been established under Flemish legislation. Every month, twenty-four individual youngsters and representatives of youth organisations gather for the General Assembly. During this meeting, they discuss policy developments relevant to youth and approve proposals. According to the law, the Flemish Youth Council shall be elected every three years. Following an online voting procedure, a new youth council has been elected at the end of last year.

The Youth Council shall be composed of at least 16 and at most 24 members, at least one third of whom shall be younger than 25 at the start of the mandate. Maximum two thirds of the members shall be of the same gender.

With regard to its advisory task, the Flemish Youth Council can give advice at its own discretion or at the request of the Government of Flanders or the Flemish Parliament. As stipulated by law, the government of Flanders shall request advice when making legislation implementing the Flemish Youth Policy Plan. The Flemish Youth Council shall approve its advices at the General Assembly with a two-

third majority of the attendees. Importantly, the Government of Flanders shall explain its decision on the policy proposals relating to its competences to the Flemish Youth Council.

The Flemish Youth Council is supported in its work by the Youth Work Commission. It is a monthly meeting place for youth work organisations of Flanders. The meeting can be attended by youth workers from any organisation funded by the Flemish Parliament Act of 2012 on Flemish youth and children's rights policy. This Commission carries out important work in support of the youth council. It follows-up on youth work policies and prepares policy proposals, in which the interests of youth work organisations are reflected, for the General Assembly of the Flemish Youth Council.

At the Council of Europe level, the Flemish Youth Council has been actively engaged for many years. This because of the relevance of these European decisions for youngsters and youth work in Flanders. The Flemish Youth Council has been participating through the decision-making structures of the co-management system of the Council of Europe. Its representatives have sat with officials to agree on priorities of youngsters and the youth sector. Furthermore, the Flemish Youth Council is also member of the European Youth Forum working on Council of Europe youth matters. The Youth Council is supported by the "Ambrassade", an association recognised and funded by the Flemish government and also responsible for development, support and provision of information to the youth sector. The Youth Council and the Ambrassade provides support services for all 106 licensed youth organisations in Flanders.

On July 17, 2015, the Flemish government approved the aforementioned Flemish Youth and Children's Rights Policy Plan which outlines the main topics Flanders wants to address regarding children and youth. These (broad) themes are poverty, ecology, being young, mobility, education, space, well-being, housing, employment and youth culture.

Sources:

www.vlaamsejeugdraad.be

www.ambrassade.be

www.jkp.vlaanderen

Local youth councils

In the Flemish Parliament Act of 6 July 2012 on supporting and promoting local youth policy and youth work policy it is stated that a local youth council should be established and recognised in order to be eligible for subsidisation and in view of the organisation of the consultation and the participation of children and young people in the preparation and implementation of youth policy.

5.3 Youth and youth work NGOs

Youth organisations play an important role in the implementation of Flanders' youth policy. Dozens of accredited youth organisations are active at Flemish level dedicated to youth work and young people in many different ways in a leisure time setting.

Youth organisations or youth associations usually receive funding based on specific funding regulations or grant schemes (see above).

The legislator has assigned some specific tasks to the following organisations:

JINT (coordinating body for international youth work) was established to implement the European Youth programmes within the Flemish Community, to promote international exchange and co-operation of, for and by youth and to foster the reflection on youth, youth work a youth and children's rights policy by all actors involved on the basis of international exchange and cooperation.

De Ambrassade (Youth Support structure) carries out following tasks:

- practice development, practice support and the provision of information to and about the youth sector
- the provision of support to the Youth Council referred to in Article 7
- the provision of information to children and young people

VVJ (Association for Local Youth Services and Youth Coordinators) is an organisation, whose members are local authorities from the Dutch language area of Belgium and the bilingual Brussels Capital Region, the Flemish provincial authorities as well as the Flemish Community Commission in Brussels. Most of the municipal authorities are members of this support organisation. The association is granted in view of practice development, practice support and the provision of information to and about municipal and provincial youth policy. Virtually all Flemish municipalities (305 of 308) are members of the VVJ.

ADJ (General Service for Youth Tourism) manages two youth facilities of the Division Youth. It develops a policy paper to obtain an annual operating grant from the Division. The centres in question are:

- Training Centre Destelheide in Dworp focuses on management training initiatives for accredited youth associations and for consultation relating to young people and youth work:
- Youth Centre Hoge Rielen in Lichtaart hosts young people and associations for camping activities and educational initiatives. It is also suitable for nature classes, reflection or training sessions and seminars:
- From 1/1/2018 on, also the former provincial youth center Hanenbos will be part of ADJ

Sources:

www.jint.be

www.ambrassade.be

www.vvj.be

www.destelheide.be.

www.hogerielen.be

5.4 Other relevant actors

In addition, the Flemish authorities accredit and fund some 100 nationally organised youth organisations and organisations dealing with youth information, participation and associations for cultural education.

An overview can be found on the following website:

www.jeugdbeleid.be

Source:

Van der Eecken, A., Kemper, R. & Bradt, L. (2016). Country Sheet on youth policy in Flanders. Retrieved from <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/9038134/Flanders-Country-Sheet-2016.pdf/67a6a22b-0b36-48d4-966c-d2098f5d3188>

6. Forms and examples of youth work in your country

How is youth work happening in your country, for example, is it youth centre-based, online youth work, detached or outreach youth work, open youth work, are NGOs or local authorities the main providers etc.?

In Flanders, youth work is defined as non-commercial, voluntary socio-cultural work organised in the leisure sphere for or by young people between the age of three and thirty years old and under educational guidance. It promotes the advancement of the full development of young people.

The abovementioned definition applies to formal and non-formal youth work as both types of youth work are run by organisations with non-commercial purposes. Youth work in Flanders includes youth clubs, youth movements, youth work organisations, youth welfare organisations, youth services, etc.

Source:

Bradt, L. (2017). Questionnaire mapping educational and career paths of youth workers in Europe.

Are there specific forms the state encourages or supports more and why?

The following youth organisations or youth associations receive funding based on specific funding regulations or grant schemes:

- Nationally organised youth associations
- Associations for participation and information
- Cultural education associations

Is there support for youth work targeting specifically young people with fewer opportunities? If yes, who supports it and who carries it out?

Uit De Marge vzw supports youth initiatives targeted at vulnerable young people. They focus on building a high quality youth work with disadvantaged children and young people and guide and support local and regional youth initiatives that (among others) work with disadvantaged children and young people. Uit De Marge also supports youth work in general in his efforts towards socially vulnerable children and young people and other social sectors in their relation to socially vulnerable children and young people.

An example of an organisation that carries out youth (social) work and outreach youth work is Vzw Lejo. Other examples that are specifically targeted at young people with fewer opportunities are Arktos, Groep Intro, JES vzw, Hannibal, Kena, Akindo and Bizon.

Source:

Bradt, L. (2017). Questionnaire mapping educational and career paths of youth workers in Europe.

<https://www.uitdemarge.be/>

<https://www.lejo.be/>

Please give three examples of successful youth work practices representative of youth work in your country?

- Youth movements: Youth movements refer to the wide range of organisations that organise volunteer-led activities for young people once a week (usually Saturday or Sunday). Generally, the young people are grouped according to their age. Most have their own ideology and their own uniform. Membership dues are usually relatively low. Examples are Chiro and Scouts.
- Youth houses: Youth houses are open and informal meeting places for young people. They reach every week thousands of young people and volunteers. In almost every Flemish municipality there is a youth house.
- The animated playgrounds: Animated playgrounds offer children and young people between 3 and 14 years old an offer of adult-led activities. Most take place in the open air, some also have a room in a building. The animated playgrounds take place in schoolvacations.

Do you have examples of digital/online youth work developing?

There are examples of online youth work in Flanders but they do not receive funding.

7. Quality standards

Are there any competence frameworks or quality standards guiding youth workers and youth work activities in your country? Is there any structure involved in overseeing their implementation? If not, what guides the quality aspects of youth work? What evaluation references are used to assess the quality of youth work?

There is no national quality assurance framework for youth work. However, the parliament act of 20 January 2012 on a revised youth and children's rights policy plan ensures structural support for youth work organisations at community level. It sets out funding conditions for national-level (i.e. Flemish) youth organisations and requires that the organisations operate in line with the national-level priorities. In this connection, each structural subsidised youth organisation must submit an annual progress report which entails amongst others a financial report and an activity report.

(Source, only in Dutch: decreet houdende vernieuwd jeugd en kinderrechtenbeleid)

As already mentioned, youth worker is not an officially recognised profession in Flanders. Consequently, there is no national competency-based framework or there are no competency descriptors for youth workers. However, the notion of 'youth worker' is defined by law.

The Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 defines a youth worker as any person who takes responsibility in youth work and has demonstrable experience, or makes efforts in the area of education or training in relation to youth.

It is remarkable that the definition defined by the Flemish Parliament Act does not distinguish between professional youth worker or voluntary youth worker.

Source:

Bradt, L. (2017). Questionnaire mapping educational and career paths of youth workers in Eu-ropе.
http://www.sociaalcultureel.be/jeugd/regelgeving_VJKB/decreet_vernieuwdJKRB_tekstPLEN.pdf

8. Knowledge and data on youth work

Is there any research or a system of continuous documentation and study of youth work in your country? If there are national research structures researching youth work, please include their name and a link to their page.

The Flemish government is mapping the youth (work) policy of the local governments in the 'cijferboek' (book with quantitative figures). The 'cijferboek' appears every three years. It's a questionnaire, which monitors the policy of local governments concerning youth. This questionnaire results in quantitative figures on the local youth policy, such as political responsibilities, youth councils, presence and support of youth work, infrastructure of youth work, youth space, information for youth and communication and cooperation with other sectors.

The Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 on a renewed Flemish policy on youth and children's rights mentions that the Youth Monitor (JOP-monitor) is one of the instruments for a youth and children's right policy. The Youth Monitor is a scientific report with statistical data on youth gathered by the Youth Research Platform.

Before 2003 no systematic and coordinated efforts were made in youth research in Flanders, resulting in overlaps and gaps. Policy makers as well as practitioners and researchers experienced this as an obstacle. In order to overcome these obstacles, the Youth Research Platform (JOP) was established in Spring 2003 by the Flemish Minister for Home Affairs, Culture, Youth and the Civil Service. The Youth Research Platform (JOP) is an interdisciplinary and interuniversity collaboration between Ghent University, KU Leuven and Vrije Universiteit Brussel (www.jeugdonderzoeksplatform.be).

The JOP periodically gathers own empirical data on the conduct, convictions and life circumstances of contemporary Flemish youth through this Youth Monitor (JOP-monitor). Therefore, a standardised questionnaire has been developed, which monitors the life-conditions and activities of young people. The content of the survey is based on other research instruments and explicitly aims to document several topics relevant to Flemish youth, such as youth work, education, work, sociodemographic information, household, political attitude, leisure participation, media, (school) well-being and delinquency. The Youth Monitor appears at least every five years. The first Youth Monitor was conducted in 2005-2006. Since the administration of the first monitor in 2005, two new versions of the Youth Monitor have been administered, each also in a random sample of Flemish youth, both times between the ages of 12 and 30. In 2008, the second Youth-monitor was conducted by a mail survey and in 2013 the third version of the Youth Monitor was administered. The statistical data of these Youth Monitors can be explored through an interactive database.

Next to these general surveys, JOP city-monitors have been administered in several cities in Flanders. These surveys more specifically aim to bring more insight into the specificity of growing up and living in contemporary urban environments in Flanders. More specifically, a School Monitor was conducted in the city of Brussels in 2010. In 2012, a School Monitor was conducted in the cities of Antwerp and

Ghent. In 2013, a new school survey in the cities of Antwerp, Ghent and Brussels was administered. These studies offer a more comprehensive and more nuanced insight in the living conditions, attitudes and behaviour of young people growing up in Flemish cities. Participation in youth work is one of the topics covered in these monitors.

Further, also other research on specific themes concerning youth is executed ad hoc.

Furthermore, on a regular basis, the Division Youth is funding research on specific themes concerning children and young people or youth work (e.g. young people with disabilities, young people in a residential unit, etc.).

Sources:

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/overview-belgium-flemish-community>

Van der Eecken, A., Kemper, R. & Bradt, L. (2016). Country Sheet on youth policy in Flanders. Retrieved from <http://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/1017981/9038134/Flanders-Country-Sheet-2016.pdf/67a6a22b-0b36-48d4-966c-d2098f5d3188>

www.jeugdonderzoeksplatform.be

<http://databank.jeugdonderzoeksplatform.be/#>

<http://statistieken.vlaanderen.be/QvAJAXZfc/opendoc.htm?document=CJSM%2FCJSM%20-%20Cijferboek.qvw&host=QVS%40cwv100154&anonymous=true>).

<http://databank.jeugdonderzoeksplatform.be/>

If data is available, how many young people benefit from youth work in your country on an annual basis (proportional to the total youth population)?

There is no data available about how many young people benefit from youth work in Flanders.

If data is available, how many youth workers are employed and how many are volunteering in your country?

There is no data available.

Please include any available sources of information on youth work in your country.

In Flanders, there are no aggregate data on the number of youth workers, both professional staff and volunteers in youth work. Data from Sociare, the Socio-Cultural Employers' Federation, indicates that 1,579 persons were employed by their 149 member youth organisations in the first quarter of 2012. However, this does not only include youth workers employed by youth organisations but also other

staff such as administrative and management personnel. Flanders does not collect data on the number of professional or voluntary youth workers. The study 'Working with young people: the value of youth work in the EU' interviewed some Flemish youth organisations. The interviewees of this study suggest that the number of voluntary youth workers could be as large as 100 000 persons. The ratio professional versus voluntary youth worker is estimated to be 9:1, meaning that for nine voluntary youth workers there is one professional youth worker. This would suggest that there are between 1000 and 2000 professional youth workers in Flanders. This ratio very well reflects the structure of the sector which is mainly volunteer-led, occasionally supported by professional staff.

Source:

Bradt, L. (2017). Questionnaire mapping educational and career paths of youth workers in Europe.

9. European and International dimension of youth work in the country

Is there an international dimension to youth work policy in your country (for example, is your country implementing the Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec (2017)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on youth work, or relevant EU Council Conclusions?)

Cooperation with European countries

Council of Europe

The Flemish government gives a yearly contribution to the European Youth Foundation. The representative of the Flemish government is active in the CDEJ and in different expert groups. The Flemish government supports 'Perspectives on youth: European Partnership Series'. This series aims to function as an information, discussion, reflection and dialogue forum on European developments in the field of youth policy, youth research and youth work. The Flemish government supports the further exploration and development of the series 'history on youth work and youth policy in Europe'.

Follow up of the EU Youth Strategy (2010-2018) on the national level

The Flemish Youth Policy Plan has a European perspective. It was closely connected to the endeavours of the Belgian Presidency of the EU Council and to the 'European Youth Strategy 2010-2018'. After extensive consultations with young people and a series of youth policy stakeholders in the EU member states, eight priority themes were put forward. These themes provided an important framework for the development of the Youth Policy Plan. The Flemish government will use its international cultural cooperation agreements to collect expertise and exchange approaches on these topics.

Resolution on the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027

Building on the experiences and decisions taken in the framework of cooperation in the youth field in recent years, the new EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 focuses on existing and future challenges for young people across the Union. The EU Youth Strategy sets out a framework of objectives, principles, priorities, core areas and measures for youth policy cooperation for all stakeholders, while respecting each one's competences and the principle of subsidiarity. Stakeholders include the EU Member States, the relevant European institutions and other international organisations such as the Council of Europe, local and regional authorities, youth councils, youth organisations, organisations working with young people, youth workers, youth researchers and civil society organisations, as well as Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and the successors of these programmes. By involving young people and learning to take control, youth policy can contribute to fulfilling the vision of a continent where young people can seize opportunities and identify with European values.

The Division Policy and Knowledge is represented in the National Working Group of the Structured Dialogue.

The Division Policy and Knowledge foresees representation in most of the expert groups and peer-learning exercises set up in the framework of the EU Youth Strategy.

Bilateral cooperation

The Division Policy and Knowledge, team transversal and international, has a direct bilateral cooperation with Luxembourg, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Catalunya. Seminars and study visits on specific youth topics are organised in the framework of a two- or three year work programme. For example, a study visit to Latvia on increasing participation of all young people in different decision making processes on national level. This study visit is part of the bilateral cooperation with Latvia.

The Division Policy and Knowledge mostly also has a chapter in the cultural agreements the Flemish government has with different countries.

International cooperation beyond the EU

Since 1996 the Division Policy and Knowledge, team transversal and international has a direct bilateral cooperation with South-Africa. South Africa and the Flemish government cooperated in the areas of culture, art, sport and youth. The basis of this cooperation are the three year work programmes. Up to 2006 these programmes have focused on two aspects:

- Capacity building of libraries and non-formal adult education
- Capacity building of young South Africans who were designated to elaborate a strong youth policy

Since 2006 the initiatives of cooperation are characterised by a transversal approach. This is reflected in the 'adoption' of four local community centres in the field of Culture, Youth, and Heritage. At the end of the collaboration, the four local community centres have to be an example of an integrated community centre. In addition, the educated South Africans can pass their knowledge on to actors who are involved in the community centres. In this way, they inform and sensibilise the youth policy actors through activities and capacity building. The selected community centres have to obtain a connection in local culture and youth policy.

Sources:

www.sociaalcultureel.be

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/18-cross-border-cooperation-belgium-flemish-community>

What international youth work opportunities are present in your country for young people and for youth workers? What programmes are promoted? Which opportunities for exchange of experiences among youth work practitioners are included?

Intercontinental youth work cooperation

Bilateral cooperation between Flanders and South Africa

Since 1996, there is a cooperation on youth matters between Flanders and South Africa.

The cooperation between the Department of Culture, Youth and Media of the Flemish Community and the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) of South Africa focuses on voluntary work of young people and civil society.

They are also working on a publication about 20 years of cooperation.

Funding program global youth projects

The Flemish government had an additional funding program for youth projects in the context of North-South cooperation. It provided opportunities for youth groups to run a project with a partner from a country on the DAC list of the OECD.

This funding program stopped in 2012, because the Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 on conducting a renewed policy on youth and children's rights did not provide grants for international youth projects.

However, there are funding programs for international projects and youth work cooperation offered by JINT vzw.

JINT vzw

Since 1989, the Flemish government supports the Flemish coordinating agency for international youth work, JINT. The Flemish government subsidises JINT through the Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 on conducting a renewed policy on youth and children's rights.

JINT was established to implement the European Youth programmes within the Flemish Community, to promote international exchange and cooperation of, for and by youth and to foster the reflection on youth, youth work and youth and children's rights policy by all actors involved on the basis of international exchange and cooperation.

JINT does not only focus on projects within the EU, but promotes all international learning mobility through its websites, newsletters and publications.

In addition, JINT is the Flemish coordinating body for international youth work and the National Agency for the European Youth in Action Programme in Flanders. The youth section of Erasmus+ is called

Youth in Action. It funds projects for and by young people and youth organisations. It has a separate budget and specific project possibilities.

Development cooperation activities

Several Flemish-funded organisations encourage young people to participate in development cooperation activities either in their country of residence or abroad. For example:

Go strange

In Flanders, JINT guides young people across borders under the flag Go Strange. Young people with plans to travel abroad can find international exchange possibilities, such as volunteering, volunteering in development cooperation projects, studying and internships, on the website of Go Strange. Flemish organisations involve volunteers in their development cooperation projects. Sometimes, there are calls for volunteers to work in the South.

In 2015, there was a research (cijferonderzoek) on the numbers of Go Strange. 6442 Flemish young people aged between 14 and 30 went abroad for an international experience via a Flemish organisation. 23% of these young people (1512 young people) did international volunteer work.

JINT supports Go Strange and young people with plans to travel abroad through the Youth in Action-program of Erasmus+. It funds projects for and by young people and youth organisations. It has a separate budget and specific project possibilities.

Bouworde vzw (Building order)

Bouworde allows young people to approach the world differently by enabling them to volunteer in social, technical or ecological projects abroad. Bouworde strives for a world where basic rights for everyone will be respected. During a social 'building camp', volunteers help others. During a technical camp, volunteers help with building or renovation. An ecological camp focuses on working in and for nature.

Bouworde has different projects for 15-17 year olds, 18-30 year olds, groups and schools and organises active voluntarily trips. Bouworde owns 114 volunteer camps in 38 countries across Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

Bouworde is a national organised youth association funded by the Flemish government.

Youth service Don Bosco

Youth service Don Bosco (Jeugdendienst Don Bosco) supports young people to do volunteer work and offers training initiatives and various forms of leisure activities. Youth service Don Bosco also offers

youth projects, youth exchanges, training projects or individual volunteer work in Europe, Africa, Asia and South-America.

Every year, youth service Don Bosco prepares nearly five hundred young people to do voluntary youth work.

Youth service Don Bosco is a national organised youth association funded by the Flemish government. The international secretariat of Don Bosco is financially supported by the European Union, through its 'Erasmus+ Youth in Action'-programme.

Source:

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/96-intercontinental-youth-work-and-development-cooperation-belgium-flemish>

10. Current debates and open questions/policies on youth work

What are the open questions, debates and priorities around youth work development in your country?

A priority around youth work development is how youth work can deal with the growing diversity in our society.

Source: De Visscher, K. & Neyens, M. Visienota. Diversiteit in/en het jeugdwerk. Retrieved from https://ambrassade.be/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/visienota_diversiteit_deel1.pdf

A sticking point is the overregulation: as a result of the multitude of administrative procedures and regulations, there is little room for bottom-up initiatives and innovation in youth work.

Source: <https://docs.vlaamsparlement.be/docs/stukken/2014-2015/g127-1.pdf>

Is there any cross-sectoral cooperation with other fields? What is the role and what are the strengths of youth work in that cooperation?

Youth policy is a transversal policy, which is to include not only the area of 'culture, youth and media' (where the youth policy field sits, inside the 13 policy fields of the Flemish government), but also other policy fields such as social inclusion, employment, health, and housing. It is envisaged that each department takes its own responsibilities and defines tasks linked to the implementation of specific goals within the Youth Policy Plan, while the Minister for Youth is in charge of overseeing the process and reporting on the Plan's implementation to the government. Youth policy is based on the group policy approach, which permeates almost every other policy sector, focusing on youth as specific group.

Besides the Flemish Youth and Children's Rights Policy Plan, the Act on a renewed Flemish Youth and Children's Rights Policy envisages three more instruments of youth policy:

- Impact study of new legislation on children and youth (JoKER) – this specifies that any draft Act affecting the people under the age of 25 and submitted to the Flemish parliament has to be accompanied by a report regarding its impact on children and youth.
- Contact points for youth and children's rights and a coordinating administration – all bodies of the Flemish government have to appoint one staff member as the contact point for the youth policy. These individuals should be involved in the monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Youth Policy Plan and responsible for estimating the impact of the policy of their institution on young people. The Division Youth is the coordinating administration in all these matters.
- Youth Progress Report – a scientific report, to be produced every five years, describing the state of the youth in the Flemish community.

Sources:

<https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/en/content/youthwiki/15-cross-sectorial-approach-other-ministries-belgium-flemish-community>

www.sociaalcultureel.be

A good practice of a cross-sectoral approach is the project 'Werkpalet', whereby the youth social work organisation JES vzw cooperates with the public employment service of Flanders, VDAB. This to promote the employment of vulnerable young people. The strength of youth work in that cooperation is that they often know the young people and their overall situation very well. They often have a trusting relationship with young people. Youth workers of JES vzw meet the young people at their own territories and take the time to overcome (work-) obstacles together.

Source:

<http://www.jes.be/pagina/Werkpalet>