

Evaluation of the realization of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) of the UN in Flanders May 2005

What is the WPAY and why evaluate?

In **1995** the **World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY)** was signed by the members of the United States (including Belgium). This programme of action is a kind of youth policy plan on UN-level.

The WPAY describes action on 10 areas:

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|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. education | 6. drug abuse |
| 2. employment | 7. juvenile delinquency |
| 3. hunger and poverty | 8. leisure-time activities |
| 4. health | 9. girls and young women |
| 5. environment | 10. participation of youth |

In **2003** the General Assembly formulated 5 additional priorities:

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|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| 11. globalization | 14. conflict prevention |
| 12. ICT | 15. intergenerational relations |
| 13. HIV/AIDS | |

The United Nations asked the governments and the civil society of the member states to make an evaluation of the progress on the field of youth policy to realise this action plan.

The Belgian government was also supposed to make his evaluation.

The civil society was asked to do this as well. It is possible to choose some topics from the WPAY and evaluate these. The Flemish Youth Council has chosen to evaluate the topics on which we work. On some of these topics we have already written advices in the past or we gave input to the policy makers on it in another way. We also used information from other youth organisations.

The Flemish Youth Council only 'found out' about the World Programme of Action for Youth as a result of this evaluation, although this document has already been effective for ten years now. The Flemish Youth Council wants to follow up this world youth policy plan.

General remarks to start the evaluation

- ▶ The World Programme of Action for Youth is 10 years old, but **the objectives from this plan are still current**. The priority areas on the field of youth policy are still areas of importance for young people on which policy has to be made with explicit attention for this target group.
- ▶ It is a **good thing that this action plan is being evaluated**, because an action plan is useless if nothing is done with it. An evaluation is a tool for that purpose. On one hand, to see how far we are and to adjust; on the other hand to stimulate further realization of the plan.
- ▶ The evaluation of the realization of the WPAY and the World youth reports (2003 and 2005) clearly recognize the importance of an **integrated youth policy** where all policy makers should work on.
- ▶ It is very important that this evaluation is made with **involvement of the youth sector**. When it concerns youth policy, this is the target group that should be involved in the making, following up, the realization and the evaluation of it.

Youth policy in Belgium and in Flanders

Youth policy as a policy area is a community matter in Belgium. This means that it is not made by the same minister in all parts of the country. The Flemish Youth Council aims at the Flemish minister of youth in the first place for this matter. At the moment that is minister Anciaux.

As Flemish Youth Council we aim at the Flemish government as a priority, and in 2nd place at the Belgian government. Youth policy may be a policy area that is in the package of one Flemish minister, but integrated youth policy is made by all minister on all levels. The WPAY itself is proof of that: most of the areas that are priorities in the plan, are the authority of another minister than the minister of Youth.

The WPAY as an instrument is actually the authority of the federal minister of Foreign Affairs (at the moment minister De Gucht). We wrote a letter to minister De Gucht to point out the agreed commitments of Belgium and to point out the importance of an integrated youth policy. We also asked the question to work on the evaluation of the implementation of the WPAY in Belgium. Minister De Gucht wants to formulate an answer, but doesn't find it his authority to comment on youth policy. That's why we wrote a letter to the Flemish minister of Youth to ask him to take the matter up.

The minister of Youth is working on a Flemish youth policy plan. This plan is comparable with the WPAY, but adapted to the Flemish situation. With the implementation of the Flemish Youth policy plan there should be a link between both plans and the objectives in it.

Both the Flemish youth policy plan and the WPAY clearly go beyond one limited area. Every minister is actually also minister of Youth. The WPAY, as a policy instrument of an umbrella organisation, could be an encouragement to work on this.

- ▶ We invite all policy makers in Flanders and Belgium to work on an integrated youth policy.
- ▶ We invite the minister of Youth to take initiative in the Flemish youth policy plan.

The priorities of the WPAY

General

- With the Flemish Youth Council we explain some priority areas further in this document from the WPAY to evaluate the implementation. Hunger and poverty, environment, girls and young woman, globalization, ICT, HIV/AIDS, conflict prevention and intergenerational relations are topics on which we don't evaluate. We will speak mostly about the topics education, employment, health, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, leisure-time activities and participation.
- Belgian is divided into communities and districts, which means that certain policy areas are arranged at federal level and other at the level of communities or districts. For Flanders it is a bit less complicated because the institutions of the Flemish community and the Flemish district are joined. We focus mostly on the **Flemish situation**.
At the beginning of each area we situate this domain in the Belgian state structure by declaring whose authority it is.

More about the Belgian state structure and institutions in appendix 1.

1. Education

Authority

In Belgium, education is a matter of communities, which means that this policy is drawn out by different policymakers for Flanders, the Walloon provinces and the German-speaking provinces. Here we are only talking about the situation in Flanders.

State of affairs and possible objectives and actions

Despite the fact that, in Flanders, all children and young people are obliged to go to school until they're 18, and that the education has to be for free in principle, not everybody benefits of the advantages the education should offer. Besides that, the current education system even creates social inequality.

- ▶ The government has to work on **equal opportunities for all children** in education. One aspect hereof is the principle of the **free compulsory education**, this has to be guarded and assured.

International studies tell us that education in Flanders is at a very high level as far as knowledge acquisition goes. Yet there are still young people whose level of literacy is too low (this means that they don't have enough knowledge and skills to be able to keep up with the society of today). Partly this can be blamed on the computerization of society to which our educational system is not adapted.

In the education of Flanders also skipping school and the cascade system are known problems, that point to it that the educational system is not a good one for all children and young people.

- ▶ The government has to work on the approach of **skipping school**, not necessarily the approach of the people who skip school, but they have to look at the **causes**, with **involvement** of those people that skip school.
- ▶ Also the **cascade system** has to be solved: we have to look for alternatives for the current system of partitions, where the education is divided in ASO (General Secondary Education), KSO (Art Secondary Education), BSO (Vocational Secondary Education) and TSO (Technical Secondary Education). The trajectories in BSO and TSO have to be revalued. Young people have to be able to follow a trajectory that fits their interests and possibilities.
- ▶ Just like looking for a job, school careers could also work with some kind of **guidance** (the current system has to be elaborated on). Both trajectories can connect to each other and even form a continuum. (the current minister of education has written a similar idea in his policy plan).
- ▶ Also the evolutions of the validation of non-formal learning have to be followed and framed within these trajectories. There has to be searched for a good way to validate knowledge and skills, that were not acquired at school, in the search for a job. Young people that don't get their degree through school, still have to get opportunities. In this, there has to be attention for the youth work sector, for the risk on exclusion of certain young people and for the extra administrative burden.
- ▶ Another new phenomenon is the concept of the '**community school**'. This concept is not very well known yet, and therefore the first step is research.

With a lot of problems, education is looked upon as a crucial actor in the search for and the offer of solutions, especially while looking for a channel to reach young people. If young people have to be informed about alcohol, sustainable mobility, relationships and sexuality, politics,... often the education is looked at.

- ▶ Education is an important partner in the information of young people, but this has to frame in a wider information policy, where other actors are involved as well. Since the current educational system isn't the good system for all children and young people, the information won't reach all children and young people through this channel.
(More about the information policy under the theme "drugs".)
- ▶ In the school system, the information of young people about social themes (health education, environmental education,...) is often poured into area-transgressing final terms. A good interpretation of these area-transgressing final terms is not obvious. This system has to be evaluated and, if necessary, adjusted.

Here, participation also has to be the leading thread. Participation cannot be seen as a learning process in education. It has to be real participation, here and now. Especially in education, young people are experience experts that have to be complete actors in the making of policy. Participation is not a project, or is not only present in the student council: participation is a climate. They have already worked on legislative instruments: the decree for equal opportunities and the decree for participation.

- ▶ The policy still has to look for actions and possible support that can create a participative climate in schools. (This was reduced rather than elaborated lately.)
(More about participation further on.)

Every young person should get the opportunity to have an international experience. Similar experiences are interesting for more than one reason: academic, educational, linguistic, cultural,... in the current economy of knowledge that Europe wants to be, a similar experience is an opportunity. For the moment there are a lot of thresholds to allow students to be internationally mobile, for the higher education as well as for secondary education: the financial aspect, lack of information, the inequality between the different levels of education, the inadequate harmonization of degrees and trainings...

- ▶ The policy has to do away with these thresholds.

2. Employment

Authority

Employment is a shared authority of Flanders and the federal government. In Flanders the authority for employment is in the same hands than the authority for education, which gives the possibility to tackle the trajectory employment-education as one entity.

State of affairs and possible objectives and actions

In Belgium and Flanders, young people are still too largely represented in the unemployment figures. There are initiatives on both policy levels to work on the employment of young people.

‘Learning and working’ for some young people is the solution to combine an education and working, which gives them a better chance on the labour market. The partial trainings have a negative image right now and young people often end up here through a negative choice (the falling back to a ‘lower’ level). Besides that, there aren’t enough jobs to get all partial students working besides their theoretical training, to acquire knowledge, skills and experience.

▶ ‘Learning and working has to be a complete education, where you can effectively start working part-time. The government has to have an **information and encouragement policy** for this.

Besides that, this frames in the evaluation of the different educational directions in our current school system (see “education”).

The step from school to labour market is not obvious for young people. Our employment system is very complicated, and young people aren’t always prepared sufficiently for the labour market.

▶ Here an enforced **information policy** is necessary. (More about youth information policy under “drug abuse”)

▶ Something has to be done about **trajectory guidance** for every young person (not that every young person needs this, but every young person that does need this, has to receive an invitation to this).

Trajectory guidance has to meet a few requirements:

- low threshold;
- transparency and uniformity;
- made to fit young people;
- through the entire job career.

Actually this trajectory for young people already starts in education and that’s when the work has to start on a good orientation. There has to be guidance in choosing a study direction or in job orientation.

3. Hunger and poverty

Authority

This theme is situated on a community level in Belgium under the denominator ‘welfare’.

The Flemish Youth Council has insufficient data to be able to speak out about the condition in Flanders when it comes to hunger and poverty. This problem is not negligible, and the target group of children and young people cannot be forgotten in a policy around this theme. Here, participation of young people is also important to make a good policy.

4. Health

Authority

Both on the federal and the Flemish level there is a minister for public health.

State of affairs and possible objectives and actions

Prevention

An important component within the health policy is prevention when it comes to prevention with young people we see prohibitions cropping up everywhere. To solve the problem of weekend accidents, young people are prohibited to drive during weekend nights. Piercings, tattoos and tobacco are prohibited to minors. School going young people see the vending machines for soft drinks being banned from schools. These reasonings are not only simplistic and fundamentally wrong; it produces wrong policy choices as well. Everything that is wrong or unhealthy is thrown onto one big pile and made prohibited for young people.

This is not good policy according to us. We want to list our arguments here:

- Something that is prohibited, becomes more attractive; this is not the way to teach children and young people to handle matters;
- The government keeps taking tasks out of the hands of the parents. The controversial issues, that belong in the interesting conversations of a family with growing young people are taken away and are prohibited from above.
- All these prohibitions lead to more regulitis instead of leading to administrative simplification.

- In this way, young people that do want to smoke, that do want a piercing ... are pushed into the criminal atmosphere, while such things are often a part of the youth culture.
- The question remains whether such regulations can be executed and controlled.
- Age limits are very arbitrary as well: does everyone know how to deal with alcohol from the day they turn 16? The day you turn 18 you do realize all of a sudden that tattoos are permanent?

Prevention has to start from a positive emancipated image of children and young people. Besides the fact that this gives children and young people a place in society, this seems much more effective to us.

Prevention has to be aimed on raising the defensiveness of the target groups, so they are more able to make conscious choices. Prevention doesn't mean the same as 'the battle against ...'; but does mean the empowerment, the making more defensive. Prevention often means that you want to prevent a certain behaviour / problem situation. According to us, you can only attain this when you make people more defensible and reinforce them, and not when you simply prohibit everything that might just be bad for them.

Of course it isn't that simple to find a balance between the giving of space, freedom and trust on one side, and the setting of certain limits. Yet it is important not to end up with an all too easy policy of prohibition.

Prevention also has to rely on the responsibility of everyone. It cannot be aimed on one segment of age from a bigger target group. This does not mean that prevention policy shouldn't be diversified. Prevention for young people can be perfectly framed within a wider prevention policy.

- ▶ A prevention policy has to work on **empowering** people, **setting a good example**, making certain things **discussible**, **informing** people ... In this also young people have to be involved.

Representation

This can only happen when we start from the competence approach of young people. The point of view in the media that creates problems for young people (like headlines as "Young people drink more and more" or "Drug users get younger and younger") leads to a wrong representation. Alarming news about alcohol consumption causes fragmented policy initiatives that focus on 1 target group without an integrated approach. Such policymaking is not embedded in a wider prevention plan and confirms the negative representation of young people.

- ▶ Policy makers also have a task in the **representation** of young people. Policy cannot be based on headlines.

5. Environment

Authority

The policy area environment is situated on the Flemish level. Sustainable development is a federal authority.

We don't have enough information about this to formulate a state of affairs or necessary policy actions.

6. Drug abuse

Authority

The (il)legality of (soft)drugs is an authority of the federal minister of Justice in Belgium.

The assistance (from information to relief) is under the authority of the Flemish minister of welfare.

Prevention of drug use is both a federal as a community matter. We have a minister of Public Health on both levels.

State of affairs and possible objectives and actions

Legislative framework

For the moment there's a problem since the legislative frame isn't completely clear. There is still some vagueness in the legislation. Not so long ago the policymakers have tried to adapt the legislation, but this hasn't led to more clarity.

- ▶ There has to be worked on a **closing and clear legislation**. There has to be a wide **communication** about this.

Assistance

When it comes to assistance, there is a new decree on integral youth assistance, that has to be carried into effect. This should make assistance for young people more accessible, more transparent, faster and made to their size.

That **participation** is a crucial factor in this, both on policy level as within the assistance trajectory, is very important, but not always that easy to realise.

- ▶ On the Flemish and the regional level, there's representation of young people in the **formal advisory channels**. This **participation has to be sufficiently framed and supported** to be effective participation.
- ▶ Next to that, we also have to search for **other means of participation** (structural and informal).
- ▶ There also has to be attention for **participation of young people within their own assistance**. For this we have to look for methodologies, training for relief workers...

Prevention

In the broad range of assistance that is offered within the integral youth assistance, the aspect of prevention is left out.

- ▶ Within the assistance, attention has to go to **prevention**.
- ▶ For this, the **youth work sector** can be a **partner**.

(More about prevention under "health".)

Information

The most approachable form of assistance is the giving of information. This doesn't only count for drugs, but for all themes young people need to be informed on. In an information policy young people are a specific target group. About drugs, but also about other themes that are important in the life of children and young people, not all information reaches all young people.

- ▶ For this all policymakers need to work on a **youth information policy**. Youth information has to be **sized to the children and young people**: in understandable language, attractive and easily findable, directly usable and offering concrete information. A good information policy requires an **integral and categorical approach** from a vision that focuses attention on the **empowerment** of young people.

Youth assistance versus youth justice

The division between assistance and youth justice - that does not only mean different policy domains with different ministers, but even different policy levels - makes it very difficult to pursue a coherent policy. (More about youth justice under "youth delinquency".)

- ▶ There has to be searched for a way to pursue a **coherent policy** in the field of assistance and youth justice.

7. Juvenile delinquency

Authority

In Belgium youth justice is under the authority of the federal minister of Justice. The execution of the measures as they are regulated for the moment in the legislation happens on community level and in Flanders this is under the authority of the minister of Welfare.

State of affairs and possible objectives and actions

Young people in Belgium are still seen as incompetent people that have to be protected. Young people do have to be protected to a certain extent, but the current youth protection right doesn't offer any legal security within justice.

Since no punishments are given, but measures, young people have no legal security at the moment.

We plea for a youth justice...

- that applies to all **young people**. We plea for a system wherein there's a place for all minor delinquents, which makes the referral of juvenile offenders to adult court no longer necessary.

- that applies **restorative justice** as a starting point.
 - wherein young people are held responsible for their actions and where measures are:
 1. **linked to the crime** committed (there has to be a clear relation between the crime committed and the measure);
 2. **constructive**;
 3. **measured to young people**.
 - where the committed offence is taken into account, and the complete **context** the young person is in for the moment.
 - where there's a balance between **making responsible, protection** and **education**.
 - where young people can also enjoy the same legal guarantees as adults:
 - o the **principle of legality**;
 - o the **principle of equality**;
 - o the principle of **proportionality**.
 - where young people have the **right to a good defence** by a lawyer that has had a specific training.
- The current legislation is being reformed. The new proposals we were able to read about this don't meet the said needs. A lot of political and communal elements see to it that the policy does not become a **youth right which is good for young people**.

8. Leisure-time activities

Authority

The Flemish minister of youth is authorised for Sports and Culture as well, and is also the authorised minister for the theme leisure-time activities.

State of affairs and possible objectives and actions

In what ways does the government promote leisure-time activities for youth? How are these activities supported by the government? What about NGO programmes?

The government promotes activities in the leisure-time for young people in different ways. For this purpose it gives subsidies to organizations to pay for their working.

In what follows we approach the 3 most important domains for young people:

1. Sports
2. Culture
3. Youth work

1. Sports

Concerning leisure-time, Flanders supported projects like neighbourhood sports and a project to use teachers of physical education in after school sports at school. This to make as much young people as possible move in a responsible way. 17 teachers took part in the project in 2001. in 2003, a new accent is introduced: the connection between school sports and club sports.

In **Neighbourhood sports**, the sectors Sports, Youth and Welfare want to work together to *“stimulate and promote recreational sports of children and young people in their own district and their own living environment. This is done with the accent on the approach of underprivileged young people in the field of sports.”*

The Flemish sports policy and the development thereof is mainly carried by the Flemish government institution **BLOSO**: the Administration of Physical Education, Sports and Outdoor life.

The missions of BLOSO are:

- the promotion of sports (study, planning, development) in Belgium and abroad;
- guidance, coordination and stimulation of activities of local, provincial and national sports associations;
- general sports guidance through subsidizing of public and private initiatives;
- control and spending of the money of the Sports fund;
- organisation of sports lessons, sports camps, sports classes and national sports promotional campaigns;
- organisation of sports management training, coach trainings and training courses for sports technical and management frames;

- elaboration of top sports policy.

Bert Anciaux, the Flemish minister of Culture, Youth, Sports and Brussels, has filed his policy note for Sports 2004 - 2009 in November of 2004 with the Flemish Parliament. In that he sets forward 8 strategic objectives:

1. The optimisation of the sports climate.
2. The raising of the (policy) recognition of the (large social meaning of) sports by the Flemish government.
3. The raising of the efficiency and effectivity by striving for an optimized structure for sports with clearly set limits concerning policy responsibilities.
4. The raising of the sports participation through a policy for 'sports for all'.
5. The improving of the quality of the sports offer on all levels.
6. The pursuit a methodical policy for sports infrastructure.
7. The pursuit an integral top sports policy that creates conditions.
8. The preservation of the integrity of sports on all levels.

2. Culture

In the decree on arts, the Flemish government supports artists and companies that aim at young people explicitly. Besides that they also support art educative organisations that don't explicitly or exclusively aim at youth, but make products for young people and/or develop art educational activities once in a while. These workings are part of their policy plan and can be considered for the calculation of their structural subsidy. The Flemish government gives specific attention to the offer of arts for youth through culture awards (for example: literature prize, 1000 Watt-prize for youth theatre), festivals (for example youth film festival, TweekTakt) and participation actions (for example Youth book week, De Kunstbende, Tinteltenen, Krokuskriebels). For more, see www.cjp.be.

3. Youth work

Youth Work is seen in Flanders as:

- socio-cultural initiatives;
- for young people aged between 3 and 30;
- takes place in leisure time;
- participation on a voluntary basis;
- takes place under educational supervision.

The Flemish government invests in 3 different areas:

- subsidies to municipal administrations and provinces;
- subsidies to youth organisations and young people;
- subsidies to youth accommodation centres.

Youth work is situated on **3 different levels: national, provincial and local**. (A schematic overview of the Flemish Youth work framework in these 3 levels can be found in appendix 2.)

There are almost **5,500 local private youth work initiatives in Flanders**. (In appendix 2 you can find an overview of the numbers and types of youth work initiatives in Flanders.)

The **decrees**:

- decree on municipal, intermunicipal and provincial youth and youth work policy;
- decree on Flemish youth policy;
- decree on youth accommodation.

The decree on the local youth work raised the decentralisation and created a wider frame for the needs of youth work. The strength of this decree is in the possibilities for participation and the communicative planning: children and young people can make their needs and requirements clear, although this often is limited to writing the municipal youth work policy plan.

Also in the decree on the Flemish youth policy they changed to the systematic approach for youth organisations.

More explanation about the contents of the decrees and the linked budgets can be found in appendix 2.

Has your government established public libraries, cultural centres and other cultural facilities in rural and urban areas? How are young people encouraged to be active in the fields of drama, the fine arts, music and other forms of cultural expression? What about NGO involvement?

Libraries

Every municipality is obliged to (alone or in cooperation with other municipalities) build a public library. The spreading of the library provisions is stronger still because in a lot of municipalities, lending posts are organised. The library has a broad assignment, it's a basic provision where every citizen can go with his questions about knowledge, information and relaxation; it's active concerning the spreading of culture and participation. The Flemish community gives a fixed subsidy for the library personnel. Youth is a priority target group for the libraries

Culture and community centres

In more than 60 of over 300 Flemish municipalities there's a subsidised culture centre. On top of that, 26 municipalities receive a project grant for their community centre, which means that the centre shows a versatile working. Over 200 municipalities send in an application for the local culture policy and have a minimal cultural infrastructure (polyvalent hall, exposition space, meeting place).¹

The culture and community centres consider youth as a priority target group. They cater a special offer; pursue target aimed communication and promotion and give reductions to young people.

The combination of the support of artists and the spreading policy leads to a wide and accessible cultural offer for the young people. As illustration: the database of the news paper 'De Tijd' contains about 16750 podium activities for young people annually. This is 28% of the total annual number of performances. That's a lot, knowing that only 16% of the population is younger than 16 years. In other words: the youth are served well.

There are organisations (both in youth work as in the cultural sector) with as primary objective to have art education. In this they put several accents: drama, music and expression are parts of this. An overview of the art educative organizations can be found on www.veerman.be

In what ways are young people encouraged to participate in tourism, international cultural events, sports and all other activities of special interest to youth?

Flanders subsidizes individual young people and associations for the realisation of an international project. The new subsidy regulation contains 5 parts:

1. **International cultural projects:** setting up international cultural activities for the youth or for participation by young people in international festivals, large international competitions or exhibitions abroad, on the condition that they are invited for these.

Both individual young people (under 25 years) as associations are eligible for subsidy.

2. **Humanitarian projects:** have the purpose to improve the solidarity with the youth in disaster stricken areas. These subsidies are given to associations that organise reception programs in Flanders for children and young people from regions that were hit by disaster or that organise bi- or multilateral training projects with young people or youth workers from those countries.

3. **Initiatives to enlarge the chances for individual participation of the youth in international initiatives:** these subsidies are given to associations, to offer young people coming from situations of social exclusion and poverty the chance to have an international experience. The participating young people are between 16 and 25 years old.

4. **Subsidies for international projects** initiated by the youth (extra-time) for young people between 16 and 25 years that want to set up a project abroad, individually or with a maximum of 4 other young people. The project lasts for a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 13 weeks. There are a number of basic conditions: the learning of each other's culture is central; it has to be a meaningful project organised by the young person himself; the young person looks for local partners to cooperate with himself; they have to be leisure-time projects (no school projects or commercial initiatives); after the project the young person shares his experience with others through a reciprocation.

5. **Subsidies of priority projects:** these subsidies are given to associations for the realisation of special international projects that meet the priorities as set in the Flemish youth policy plan.

Does the government provide funding to educational institutions for the establishment of leisure-time activities? Are these activities integrated into the regular school curriculum?

No, although there are a number of youth work organisations that have a partnership with schools. In fact, the youth work organizations use youth work methodology in educational institutions. For instance, art educational organizations are often (but not systematically) used in education in the framework of the final terms of musical formation.

There is the **part-time art education**, which is in the leisure-time, but is under the authority of Education. The part-time art education (DKO in short) aims at the artistic training of mankind and wants to contribute to its total shaping of personality. This formation contains the fact that students learn to critically approach art in all its shapes and learn to practice these forms of art as well, individually or in group (an orchestra, a dance group, a theatre group). For young people (under 18 years) DKO can be a preparation for the higher art education.

The DKO is additional education that aims at motivated students, young people and adults, which register on a voluntary basis and pay an entry fee (varying between € 32 and € 162). The DKO separates 4 study directions: expressive arts, music, word arts and dance. Every study direction has its own structure with degrees and options that are set by the decrees of the organization of July 31st 1990 that became of force on the 1st of September 1990.

Has the government incorporated leisure-time activity programmes and facilities in urban planning? What about rural development programmes?

Youth work? Youth work has its own development in city and countryside. The spreading in Flanders is rather satisfactory. The fact that all municipalities can make up a youth work policy plan, means that all municipalities are stimulated to work on leisure-time for young people.

Flanders and environmental planning: one chaos. High population density, houses everywhere, a lot of ribbon building, very little order... In the environmental planning Flanders they tried to bring a little more structure into it and to work out more of a vision.

In a lot of nature areas there still are some activities and even buildings for youth work. This problem of zone strangeness is rather considerable and rather wide.

In the development of environmental plans the Flemish Youth Council asks to take into account the wishes of children and young people, for example while involving them in the making of such a plan.

Finally, there is also the possibility to delimit play zones in forests.

The starting point has to be that children and young people have the right to play in forest and nature. For children and young people freely accessible zones should be more rule than exception. With the demarcation of freely accessible zones they have the intention of safeguarding forest and nature zones with a high ecological value.

In the decree concerning the accessibility and the occasional use of the forests we can read the definition of play zone: a certain part of the forest, on some cases, the entire forest, that is permanently or during a set period accessible for -18 year olds and their accompanists. Play zones are meant for children and young people and we would like to keep it that way.

How has the government encouraged the media to promote youth understanding and awareness of all aspects of social integration, including tolerance and non-violent behaviour

The media are autonomous in Flanders, which makes that there's nothing really structural in the management agreements about the asked themes. Sometimes there are campaigns about the themes, financed by the Flemish government, where they use different kinds of media.

There have been a number of campaigns about diversity, where the media played an important role.

In the policy note 2004 - 2009 of minister of Youth, Bert Anciaux, information policy is called one of the priorities for this policy period. *"Information is a policy exceeding given ... the concretisation of an information policy will be a matter of measuring and networking, wherein also other governments and*

the different relevant information givers have to take their responsibility. This has to result in communal strategies for cooperation and finishing. “

In the last policy period the importance of an information policy was accented. In one of the common objectives in the first Flemish youth policy plan is said: *communication is crucial in the realisation of a Flemish youth policy about and with the children and young people on one hand, and a good child friendly information policy on the other hand. When we work on communication and information lines it has to be sized to children and young people.*

Next to information for the youth, we also think information about the youth is important. This is when the Youth Research Platform shows up. Information for youth workers is one of the assignments of the Support Point Youth. There is also information from the children and young people themselves collected through, among other things, youth councils and questionnaires such as the 'Kliksons'.

In the future the government wants to install a central information point (Flemish Information Point), directed by the government and co-managed by experts and users.

9. Girls and young women

Authority

The target group girls and young women is a specific target group for the Flemish and the federal minister of Equal Opportunities.

State of affairs and possible objectives and actions

In Flanders this is not the most priority target group for the policy because the feeling exists that the inequality is not that big anymore. Yet there still is inequality and for young women there are specific issues. For example, also in Belgium and Flanders we speak about a glass ceiling: men are still overrepresented in leading functions and the wages for women (in comparison to men in the same positions) are still considerably lower.

Sexual violence is a problem that mainly hits women and an important target group for the poverty policy are single mothers.

The Flemish Youth Council hasn't formulated any objectives or actions on this domain yet.

10. Participation of youth

Authority

Participation is not an authority of one minister. This is a theme that every policymaker has to incorporate.

State of affairs and possible objectives and actions

The notion participation is rather incorporated in our society. There is work being done on it in several places. Yet participation is often limited to the most obvious youth areas (leisure-time, culture, ...). On top of that adults consider the participation of children and young people to be a learning process. But that's not how it goes. Children and young people have to be able to participate here and now in the society wherein they too are actors and experience experts.

Participation of children and young people is a leading thread through a good youth policy. For this they have to be informed and heard. The input of children and young people has to be taken into account and there has to be feedback. This can happen through youth councils, but participation goes further than traditional channels.

- ▶ Just like every minister works on his policy domain and can't forget the point of view of children and young people in this, every minister has to work on the participation of children and young people.
- ▶ There has to be searched for **structural and more informal ways of participation**.

In Flanders there are youth councils on all levels: at the communal, provincial and local level. Also in schools they often work with a student council. These formal channels don't always work perfectly.

- ▶ There has to be worked on support of the participation channels if we want to arrive at real participation.

11. globalization

About this theme we don't give our opinion in this evaluation.

12. ICT

We don't comment on this theme in this evaluation either.

13. HIV/AIDS

State of affairs and possible objectives and actions

On this theme we can use the principles about prevention and information. Prevention and information about HIV and AIDS are very important. It appears from information from other organisations that the number of infections isn't dropping (on the contrary, the last years a rise was noticed in the number of newly detected cases).

Prevention and information campaigns are not adapted to children and young people, while they are one of the most important target groups. Still, some young people don't know how to use a condom, they don't know that the pill doesn't offer enough protection against aids, they don't know that they can have themselves tested freely and anonymously. A lot of young people don't dare to talk about it or to buy condoms. Despite the fact that people can talk about this, there's still a taboo about it.

- ▶ The government has to work on sufficient information and prevention around this theme, made to fit young people. Young people need to have sufficient and correct information about this so they can protect themselves.

14. Conflict prevention

We do not discuss this theme in this evaluation.

15. Intergenerational relations

Because of the deterioration of nature and the ageing of the population of our society the aspect intergenerational relations comes into the spotlight more and more. The term intergenerational pops up more and more in the media, in policy documents ... the demand for attention for the category youth is actually an implicit form of intergenerational working. Young people and older people have more in common than springs to mind at first. They both make it clear that they are not happy with the unilateral reporting about them. The indebtedness, the pension system and the silver fund (a reserve fund to keep pensions payable in the future, even with the ageing of the population) are topics that are important to all age categories. Younger and older employees could be used in a complementary way on the work floor. In the housing policy there is some talk of 'kangaroo-living', where young people and older people share a house.

- ▶ With this we want to accent the importance of this theme and also the importance of a positive look towards specific generations, like young people and older people.

Finally

- ▶ There has to be worked on an integrated youth policy that crosses all policy domains and this has to happen on all levels. For this, the WPAY is a good thing.
- ▶ This evaluation can be seen as a wake up call for the governments to work on this action plan. With the Flemish Youth Council we want to work on this in the future as well.

Appendix 1 The Belgian state structure and institutions

Belgium is a federal state divided into communities and regions. Communities include all inhabitants of a language area. Regions refer to demarcated territories.

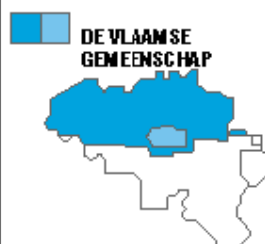
Belgium	the communities	the regions
the federal state	the Flemish community	the Flemish region
	the French community	the Brussels capital region
	the german-speaking community	the Walloon region

BELGIE

DE FEDERALE STAAT



DE GEMEENSCHAPPEN



DE GEWESTEN



The institutions in Belgium

Federal level	The federal institutions: <i>The Chamber of Representatives, the Senate</i>				
Regional level	Walloon Region		The Brussels Capital Region		Flemish Community
Community level	German-speaking Community	French Community	Joint Community Committee		together with
			French-speaking CC	Dutch-speaking CC	Flemish Region
Provincial level	10 provinces (5 Flemish provinces)				
Municipal level	589 municipalities (308 Flemish municipalities)				

Appendix 2 Data on youth work, decrees and the budget of youth work
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Flemish youth work framework on the 3 different levels:

	non governmental	mixed administration	governmental	youth participation structures
national	- Youth movements and federations - Services for youth work - Working directly with young people	ADJ JINT	Youth and Sport Division	Flemish Youth Council
provincial	- Regional branches of youth movements and youth services		provincial youth services	provincial youth councils
lokaal	- Local initiatives of youth movements/youth houses,... - Youth houses - Playground activities		municipal youth service with, amongst others: - Municipal youth centres - Municipal playgrounds	municipal youth councils

Local private types of youth work in the Flemish Region: types and numbers

(measured in 307 of the 308 municipalities in 2001)

Flemish region	number	%
youth movements	1891	35,07
movements of young people	976	18,10
political movements of young people	459	8,51
youth houses / clubs	436	8,09
amateur arts	307	5,69
playground associations	268	4,97
centres for music activities of young people	130	2,41
students' associations	116	2,15
centres for artistic activities of young people	108	2,00
initiatives for deprived young people	90	1,67
youth associations for disabled young people	59	1,09
self-organisations of foreign young people	41	0,76
training initiatives for employed young people	38	0,70
children's farms	26	0,48
cinemas for young people	18	0,33
other types of youth work	429	7,96
total	5392	100,00

The decree on municipal, intermunicipal and provincial youth and youth work policy (14/02/2003)

Local part (308 municipalities)

- Age : 3 to 25 years
- Initial impetus to an integrated youth policy
 - horizontal
 - between the policy domains (youth/sport/culture...) and policy levels (intermunicipal/interprovincial)

- vertical
 - complementarity between policy levels
 - complementarity for specific target groups
- Offensive youth policy
- Subsidiarity
- Local Youth Work Policy Plan(every three years)
 - social framework
 - 8 policy domains
 - support youth work
 - creation of a framework
 - accessibility
 - participation and feedback
 - youth work infrastructure
 - integrated youth work policy
 - space for youth
 - communication and information for the youth
- Every year
 - annual plan
 - performance report
- Participation procedure
 - private local youth work initiatives
 - children and youngsters
 - experts
- Priorities: determined every 3 years
 - 2005-2007: youth space

Provincial Part (5 provinces)

- Youth work policy plan every 6 years
- Social framework
- 8 policy domains
 - support youth work
 - training
 - accessibility
 - participation and feedback
 - youth space
 - guidance and information of the municipal youth (work) policy
 - youth culture
 - communication and information for youth
- Every year
 - annual plan
 - performance report
- Participation procedure
 - private provincial youth work initiatives
 - municipal youth councils
 - town councils from the province
 - experts

Decree on Flemish youth policy (29/03/2002)

National Youth Work

- Age: 3 to 30 years
- Working with or in favour of youth from at least 4 Flemish provinces
- Profiling the general conditions + action in at least one of the following modules:
 - guidance of local youth movements
 - provision of activities for youth
 - training of youth workers
 - product development
- Subsidies:
 - recognition for an indefinite period

- basic subsidy = 50,000 € a year + variable part (every 3 years, on the basis of a policy document, established on advice of the advisory committee)

International Youth Work

- Subsidy for international initiatives:
 - cultural projects
 - humanitarian projects
 - international projects set up by youngsters themselves
 - grants
 - priority projects
- International co-operation through partnership agreements
 - sending and hosting groups (civil servants and youth workers) in order to exchange expertise regarding youth (work) policy

Budget

▪ Decree on local and provincial youth work	17.855.000 €
▪ Decree Flemish youth policy	
➤ national youth work	18.363.000 €
➤ experimental and innovative youth work	202.000 €
➤ information, communication and participation projects	1.629.000 €
➤ youth culture	818.000 €
➤ International youth work	354.000 €
▪ Decree on youth accomodation	2.103.000 €