

9.4 Raising awareness about global issues

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Formal, non-formal and informal learning

Formal learning

Sustainable development is a cross-curricular attainment target (VOET), which refers to the definition of the so-called Brundtland report: “development provides in the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of the future generation”.

Secondary schools are not expected to solve sustainability issues, but they have to offer opportunities for self-development to students. These opportunities enable young people to look for solutions with each other. Regarding the characteristics of sustainability issues, the cross-curricular attainment targets focus on:

- learning to think in terms of systems and to look at problems from different perspectives
- the fact that sustainability issues have local and global characteristics
- knowledge and understanding, but also the development of values and norms
- the importance of an adapted individual lifestyle if young people want to look for solutions for sustainability issues
- participation in the societal debate
- the understanding that sustainable development is a continuous learning process

Furthermore, there is the project MOS ([Milieuzorg Op School](#), Environmental Care on School) of the Flemish Department of Environment and Spatial Development. The MOS-project supports primary and secondary schools in making schools environmentally friendly and in providing a sustainable learning and living environment.

Non-formal learning

The Flemish Government will support projects and initiatives in all kinds of areas which will make sure that sustainable choices are deliberate choices. These projects must devote special attention to young people. Either because they (help) implement the project, or because it is specifically targeted at them.

The Flemish Department of Environment and Spatial Development focuses on (pilot projects regarding) Education for Sustainable Development and care for nature. A platform and working groups for 'green' education in formal and non-formal education exists, a.o. in youth work. A whole series of actions are organised, e.g. to stimulate green camps, green infrastructure, more nature to play in, playing in woods....

Educators' support

In Flanders, there are various types of educational materials on sustainable development that were developed by Flemish-funded youth organisations, such as [Globelink](#), [JNM](#) (Youth Federation for Nature and Environment), [Studio Globo](#), the Flemish Youth Support Centre, [Mediaraven](#).

Furthermore, the project MOS offers teaching materials, information and training to teachers of secondary schools. MOS belongs to a global network of schools who work towards environmental care and sustainability.

Informal learning

Youth organisations whose core activities concentrate on topics related to youth and the world

The Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 supports and subsidises different organisations, such as national organised youth associations, associations information and participation and associations cultural education. It also provides the funding of organisations that focus on sustainability. The Flemish Government registers which organisations indicate in their annual report to work on sustainability.

Projects

Music for Life, for example, is an annual initiative organised by the radio station Studio Brussel and the Red Cross Flanders. It is a fundraising event for which many (youth) organisations set up activities to raise money for, amongst others, developing countries.

Youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues

Thick Sweater Day

Thick Sweater Day ([Dikke truiendag](#)) is an awareness raising campaign organised by the

Flemish Government.

In 2005, MOS (Milieuzorg Op School, Environmental Care at School) of the Department of Environment and Spatial Development organised the first Thick Sweater Day in response to the Kyoto Protocol. The protocol's objective was to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change.

Since 2005, Thick Sweater Day has reminded us of the agreements made under this crucial treaty with a few simple activities: wear a warm sweater and turn down the heat, take your bike more often, eat locally grown food, reduce standby power and so on. On Thick Sweater Day Flanders massively reduced CO2 emissions as well as raised awareness of school-going children, businesses and the authorities.

National Children's Rights Day

On 20 November, it is National Children's Rights Day. There are a lot of activities to promote (the understanding) of children's rights.

In Flanders, the Flemish Office of the Children's Rights Commissioner (see 4.2.2) also presents its annual report on this day.

Campaign 'Work for Change' by YOUCA

YOUCA, Youth for Change and Action - formerly "Zuiddag" - is an organisation, supported by the Flemish Government, for and by young people that encourages them to work together towards a sustainable and just society. They do this by making them aware of important social challenges and by supporting them in their commitment. In addition, we provide unique encounters with impact on cultural, business and public life.

17 October 2019 is the YOUCA Action Day, formerly "Zuiddag". For the thirteenth time, more than 15,000 young people from Flanders and Brussels have committed themselves to work for a day for a company, an organisation, a government or a private individual. The wages they earn on that school day go to projects of committed young people all over the world.

No Hate Speech Movement

The No Hate Speech Movement is a campaign for online human rights and against fear for young people who want to stop discrimination and hate speech online. The campaign started in 2013 and is initiated by the Council of Europe but it is based on national campaigns run in the member states of the Council of Europe. National committees will operate their own national online Campaign platforms and online tools.

In Flanders, the No Hate Speech Movement Flanders, supported by the Division Knowledge and policy and youth organisations, calls on young people, youth workers, teachers, parents... and sensitize, train and support them to take actions against (online and offline) hate speech ([No Hate Speech Movement Vlaanderen](#)). [A No Hate Speech Platform](#) has been created to provide some tips and advise. From 2018 onwards No Hate Speech platform will be supported

through the masterplan Diversity in Youth work. The department will adjudge a public procurement to an organisation that coordinates the youth work campaign against hate speech and exclusion.

GoodFood@School

[GoodFood@School](#) is an initiative of Rikolto, Fairtrade Belgium and GoodPlanet to realise – by 2021 – a healthy and sustainable nutrition policy in all Flemish schools, both in the kitchen and in the classroom. The underlying idea is that food at school can make our nutrition more environmentally responsible, fairer and healthier. Such projects are believed to be necessary if we want to feed the growing world population in a sustainable manner. The initiative involves the development of school food councils and school food labs.

Information providers

The Department of Environment and Spatial Development of the Flemish Government

The Department of Environment and Spatial Development promotes policy initiatives through a specific target-group policy.

Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 on conducting a renewed policy on youth and children's rights

The Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 ([decreet 20 januari 2012](#)) supports and subsidises organisations (see informal learning) that focus on sustainability.

Organisations that are funded this way are e.g.

- Globelink

[Globelink](#) is a national organised youth association and sets up global and sustainable projects together with young people. Globelink aims at a sustainable, humane and fair world by developing competences among young people. These competences should enable young people to make sustainable choices.

Globelink has projects for schools, youth organisations and everyone who is enthusiastic about the climate.

The Flemish Youth Council

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 is the **official advisory body** of the Flemish Government on all matters concerning children and young people and informs children and young people.

The Ambrassade

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 Ambrassade offers, together with other youth information actors, a wide variety of information for children and young people.

Key initiatives

See also youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues.

The Department of Environment and Spatial Development of the Flemish Government

The Department is responsible for environmental education and provides training for teachers and lecturers. It also offers projects such as MOS and Ecocampus. These projects support schools to make schools an environment-friendly and sustainable learning environment.

Globelink

The youth organisation Globelink disseminates information and raises the awareness of young people about global issues through different leisure time projects, such as:

- [Kras](#) for schools
- [Ecoshizzel](#) for animated playgrounds and youth camps
- [9400 Toeren](#), a project on mobility, for youth associations

The Flemish Youth Council

The UN representatives of the Flemish Youth Council launched the project and toolkit "[Flemish youth 4 global goals](#)" (only in Dutch). The toolkit explains the Global Goals for Sustainable Development to young people and youth organisations. The Flemish Youth Council believes that the Global Goals for Sustainable Development are important for young people and hopes that these goals will motivate the Flemish Government to work towards a sustainable world for young people and youth organisations. The toolkit has been updated in 2018.

The UN representatives of the Flemish Youth Council also offer a workshop on sustainability to teachers and students of upper secondary education.

Ambrassade

Youth work fights for social change. In 2015 and 2016, the Ambrassade has launched the initiative "Attention for poverty" ([Oog voor armoede](#)) to stimulate youth organisations to make a

difference for children in poverty. In 2017, they introduced a guide to facilitate the dialogue between youth workers and guiders of children, young people and families in poverty. The guide provides youth workers with good examples and tips to stimulate them to engage in a dialogue with organisations working on poverty.

The Ambrassade also coordinates [WAT WAT](#) (What What), a project commissioned by the Flemish Government. WAT WAT aims to provide young people between 11 and 24 years old with information on different topics for young people, including environment and sustainability. The goal is to tackle the fragmentation of initiatives, websites and campaigns targeted at young people.