

1.7 Funding youth policy

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How Youth policy is funded

Every year, the Flemish Government estimates the budget for the next year. This budget allocation will be presented to the Flemish Parliament and will be discussed in parliamentary committees. First, the Flemish Parliament has to accept the budget allocation and then the Flemish Government can use the budget. This budget allocation also contains the means for Youth policy.

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

The budget in 2016 In 2016, the budget allocation of the Division Youth was 42.266.000 euros. There is a decline from the budget allocation of 2015. The budget allocated to the Act on local and provincial youth policy have been reduced compared to the budget allocation of 2015. The remaining budget (1.254.000 euros) will 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 is 32.509.000 euros and has been reduced by 21.000 euros.

The budget in 2017

In 2017, the budget allocated to youth within the Policy area Culture, Youth, Sport and Media was 42.462.000 euros. The budget allocated to the Act on local and provincial youth policy was still 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 is 33.057.000 euros.

The budget in 2018

In 2018, the budget allocated to youth within the Policy area Culture, Youth, Sport and Media 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 Division Youth of the Department of Culture, Youth and Media was 69.550.000 euro. The budget allocated to the Act on the Flemish policy on youth and children's rights is 34.530.000 euro.

References:

<https://www.vlaanderen.be/nl/vlaamse-overheid/werking-van-de-vlaamse-overheid/de-vlaamse-begroting-cijfers-2018#187606>

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

What is funded?

Decrees 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. **Recent developments**

- A recent Parliament Act on 'the support and stimulation of the municipal youth policy and the determination of provincial youth policy' of 6 July 2012 came partially into force in October 2012 and replaced the former Parliament Act of 2003 in its entirety by the end of 2013. The most notable change is the integration of the former youth policy plans in an all-encompassing and long-term municipal policy plan for the entire legislation (in accordance with a new Parliament Act on the alleviation of regulations concerning local policy planning and reporting (Planlastendecreet)).
- The Flemish Government agreed on 25 June 2010 on the decision on the policy and management cycle ('Beleids- en beheerscyclus' or 'BBC') of the municipalities, the provinces and the public centres for social welfare. It contains a set of rules for the multiannual plan, budget, accounting and the financial statements of the local authorities and provinces. The BBC decision entered into force on 1 January 2014.

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 legislation.

Youth organisations or youth associations receiving an operational grant on the basis of the Flemish Parliament Act of 20 January 2012 on 'conducting a renewed policy on youth and children's rights' need to submit every year a financial report and a report of an independent auditor, who's a member of the Institute of auditors, to the Flemish administration. The date and formal requirements of the reports will be defined by the Flemish government.

Use of EU Funds

The Flemish Youth and Children's rights Policy Plan doesn't (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 euros. 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 euros. In 2018, there was a budget of 2.875.748 euros.

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 2014-2010

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 euros. 600 million euros is financed through the Flemish budget and 400 million euros through the

European budget.

The 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"