

## **1.9 Current debates and reforms**

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

This decree started in 2012. It allow a better transversal approach in order to respect in a more holistic way young people's life, enhance participation of young people and participation of the youth sector in the design and in the implementation of youth work, allow evaluation on the basis of quality and not only on the basis of quantity, reinforce the participation of the municipalities in design and implementation of youth policy.

### **Decentralisation (from 2017)**

The Parliament Act of 6 July 2012 on 'the support and stimulation of the municipal youth policy and the determination of provincial youth policy' came into place. An all-encompassing municipal policy plan (term = 6 year) will replace the former youth policy plan and other domain-specific plans. Municipalities don't have to submit a youth policy plan to the Flemish Government. All legislation concerning local sectoral support (youth, but also culture, sport, ...) from Flemish level will be eliminated and the budget will be allocated directly to the municipalities. Municipalities have an independent authority in developing youth policy and are responsible for the establishment of a Youth Council.

### **Provincial tasks limited to a closed list of grounded-tied competences (from 2017)**

The provincial governments will no longer grant 'provincial' funds to youth organisations. In accordance with a general political choice on the management of government, provincial youth policy too, is being confined within limits. Most competences that are person-oriented, such as youth and also culture and education, will be transferred to the regional or the local level.

### **Youth and Children's Rights Policy Plan 2020-2024**

The ranking of the Great Priority Debate (mentioned in section 1.3) that took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2019, will be communicated to the new Flemish Government. The aim is for the Flemish Government, in preparation for the new Flemish Youth and Children's Rights Policy Plan, to select a maximum of five priority, transversal objectives for children and young people, within six months of the start of the government's term, on the basis of the environmental analysis provided by the Youth, Media & Culture Department to the Flemish Government.

With regard to the results of the Great Priority Debate, the Flemish Youth Council noted that the objective of inclusive leisure time did not make it through the top 5 (see section 1.3). Nevertheless, for the Flemish Youth Council this is an essential theme that could not be missed in the new objectives of the new Youth and Children's Rights Policy Plan. It remains to be seen to what extent the new Flemish government will adopt the same top 5 that has emerged from

the Great Priority Debate or to what extent they will take into account the advice of the Flemish Youth Council regarding leisure time as part of active citizenship.