

example of good practice:
Youth Initiative

Title “De Werkmobiel / Work-out”

Aims & objectives

- To inform and make youngsters aware of how the labour market works.
- To show youngsters the negative and positive consequences of labour and unemployment.
- To raise their awareness about the different obstructions and opportunities that are likely to cross their paths.
- To help them make choices that are best for them.
- To raise their awareness on these issues and find ways to make their voices heard by policymakers.

Target group

Youngsters who are unemployed, working in interim jobs or are likely to leave school very soon.

Description

We created an online game. The game takes 15 minutes to play. It tells the story of four very different people, who all run into their own difficulties when looking for (or being in) work.

The youngsters are asked to give their opinions on what happens to the four people, and in this way, they learn about how the labour market works. We want to reach 500 youngsters with this online game.

We engage youngsters to play the game with us in public places (Gentse Feesten, employment events, ...).

We organised an interactive debate featuring real specialists and policymakers in the Flemish region, and the youngsters themselves.

We will summarise our findings in a report that can be brought to the attention of politicians and social partners.

Challenges in this project and how to overcome them.

What approach was particularly **successful** or very **difficult**?

It is not easy to engage youngsters in this theme in a structural way. Even though everybody knows that work is a vital issue, young people are more likely to look for work than to properly find out all the facts, unless they go through the VDAB, trade unions or their own network.

The online game was a way around this problem. It is based on four very recognisable stories, which makes it more likely that youngsters will take part and learn more about the subject.

A very important step was to involve several co-organisers in the debate, particularly those who are working on the same issue and who reach young people in their own way: KAJ, Minderhedenforum, Vlaamse Jeugdraad, ACV, ABVV, Victoria Deluxe ...

The debate was designed to be very interactive. We invited professionals such as the director of the Flemish Service for Labour Market Mediation (VDAB), and the deputy Flemish labour minister. We chose methods that would give all the youngsters an equal chance in the debate, instead of having a debate just between specialists. Even the specialists themselves liked this (sometimes confrontational) approach.

Tips, hints

What to keep in mind when organising a similar project

- Make contact with other organisations.
- Find attractive ways of presenting your information to the youngsters (without lowering the tone of the issues to the point of entertainment).
- Organise debates in interactive ways.

Outcomes, results, effects

- So far, 300 people have taken part in the online game. We have a database recording their input/opinions.
- Our project has taken the lead in a partnership between different labour market and youth initiatives.
- Together with those partners, we organised a well-attended (100 people) and very qualitative debate on the issue in Ghent.

More information

- SALTO toolbox
- National Agency
- Website
- ...

National Agency of Belgium-Flanders

www.work-out.be