

GloBall

a tool kit for youth workers
working with young migrants,
refugees and asylum seekers







GloBall: a tool kit for youth workers working with young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

The project 'Becoming part of Europe' focusses on the integration and social inclusion of young newcomers in youth work (migrants, refugees and asylum seekers). It is a cooperation project between the Erasmus+ youth National Agencies from Belgium-Flanders, the Netherlands, Sweden, Germany, Slovenia, Malta, Portugal and Italy.

'Becoming part of Europe' aims to develop new methods and activities (e.g. training) and to formulate policy recommendations. But the national expert groups in each partner country also collected good youth work practices.

JINT vzw is the Belgian-Flemish partner in this network project. It closely cooperated with partners from the GloBall project ('Wereldspelers' in Dutch) to collect good practices. GloBall was an initiative of 'De Ambassade', a support organisation for youth work in Flanders, Belgium.

The tool kit you are holding is the translation of a tool (in Dutch language) that was originally developed within and for Flemish youth work. It exists as a [website](#) (in Dutch language) and targets youth workers who have little experience in working with newcomers. This translation has been made possible within the 'Becoming part of Europe' project thanks to Erasmus+ Youth in Action funds.

This toolkit has been adapted, where possible, to make it a useful tool for the rest of Europe. It does however contain references to Flemish youth work. That's why we give you a little bit more background about youth work in Flanders:



There are over 100 registered youth organisations in the Flemish youth sector. These organisations coordinate more than 5000 local youth organisations (youth movements, youth clubs, play initiatives, initiatives for disadvantaged youth, youth work for young people with a disability, cultural youth organisations, amateur arts for young people, student organisations,...)

585,703 young people are in contact with those youth work organisations. Together, youth work in Flanders reaches more than 200,000 children in a wide variety of play initiatives. And the sector organises about 4,000 camps and youth holidays each year. 85% of Flemish children have participated in a camp before.

Flemish youth work also organises hundreds of training courses and qualifies 8,000 youth workers on a yearly basis. The sector organises social actions and engages 15,000 young people in European and international cooperation.

As mentioned above, camps are a common format of youth work in Flanders. That is why there is also a strong focus on camps in this tool kit. The definition of 'youth' in Flanders refers to young people from 6 to 30 years old. So that explains the many activities geared towards younger children and why we frequently talk about the importance of informing parents and mentors of participants.

The most important is to think outside this Flemish box and adapt whatever you can for use in your specific context! We hope this tool kit can inspire youth workers from different countries. It is a valuable resource for youth workers and youth organisations who are looking for guidance in their (future) work with young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (YMRA).

We would like to thank all partners who contributed to the tool kit in Dutch language and to 'De Ambrassade' for sharing the tool kit at European level.

Enjoy your reading!



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1 What is a refugee?


**Do you know everything about refugees and asylum seekers?
Read the facts below!**

1 | How many refugees are there?


 Worldwide, about 68 million people were forced to leave their homes. They fled from prosecution, violence or war. About 25 million from them found protection in another country. These are called refugees. This means the majority of people who flee are Internally Displaced People, living somewhere else within the border of their country.

You can find more statistics at [this link](#).

2 | Which are the countries of origin of refugees?


 In 2017, most refugees came from Syria (6.3 million), Afghanistan (2.6 million), South Sudan (2.4 million), Myanmar (1.2 million) and Somalia (986,400).

3 | Which countries are the refugees heading for?

 In 2017, most refugees were received in Turkey (3.5 million), Pakistan (1.4 million), Uganda (1.6 million), Lebanon (998,900), the Islamic Republic of Iran (979,400) and Germany (970,400).

4 | Which people are protected?

The difference between a migrant and a refugee

 Not everybody leaving their country is a refugee. Refugees and other migrants may travel in the same way, but there are some fundamental differences. Migrants, especially economic migrants, leave their country to improve their chances and the future of their family. Refugees, on the contrary, are forced to leave their country because their lives and freedom are in danger. They do not receive protection in their own country. Often, it is even their own public authorities who prosecute them. If they don't seek protection in another country, they risk to be killed or have their rights violated. What determines whether someone is eligible to be protected as a refugee?

→ **Recognised refugee status**


During the two world wars, many people in our area fled. To protect these refugees, the Geneva Convention saw the light on 28 July 1951. It was signed by 150 countries. The signatory states promised to protect everyone who does not get protection in their own country. Based on the definition in the convention, someone can be given refugee status. What are the criteria according to the Geneva Convention?

- When you flee your country because of a well-founded fear to be prosecuted because of your race, religion, nationality, political conviction.
- Because you are part of a social group (e.g. LGBT, women,...) and cannot receive protection in your own country.
- In general, fleeing people need to be able to show that they have been prosecuted individually because of whom they are, what they do or because of the group they belong to. Not everybody who flees is entitled to refugee status: war criminals, for instance, do not receive protection.


→ **War refugees and subsidiary protection**

But what if a country is in war or arbitrary violence is part of daily life? When all citizens are exposed to this danger, the individual principle of prosecution does not count (i.e. the Geneva Convention). The people from these countries nevertheless have a clear need for protection. That's why the European Union decided to introduce a new type of protection: the subsidiary protection. This status offers temporary protection to people who flee war, civil war, torture or inhuman treatment and death penalty or execution.

5 | Asylum seeker or refugee?

 Fleeing people are only officially granted refugee status when the country to which they have fled has investigated their entitlement to refugee status. The country investigates this during the asylum procedure. During the procedure, asylum seekers are entitled to subsistence and guidance.


6 | How does the asylum procedure works?

 When fleeing people seek protection, they have to request asylum in the first country where they arrive in the European Union. The reasons for their fleeing are recorded and the Immigration Office will analyse whether their country is authorised to process the asylum request.


After the visit to the Immigration Office, a case worker takes over. This person investigates the reasons for fleeing in an asylum interview. They ask questions such as 'What country do you come from?', 'In which city or village did you live?' or 'What do you think will happen if you would return to your home country?' The questions can be very detailed and

difficult. They also ask asylum seekers for evidence. At this interview, a lawyer, interpreters and a trusted person can be present. After the interview, it is decided whether the asylum seeker will be granted refugee status or subsidiary protection. This decision can take weeks, months or sometimes even more than a year.

7 | Appeal against a negative decision

 When asylum seekers don't agree with the decision, they can appeal at court. Asylum seekers who received a negative decision will not receive protection anymore once they have exhausted all procedures. From that moment on, these people lose their legal residence status, they will not be granted any documents and will not receive any support anymore. The rejected asylum seeker receives the order to leave the country.

8 | Recognised as refugee. What's next?

 People whom are granted refugee status cannot be sent back to their home country. This is principle of 'non-refoulement' is part of the Refugee Treaty. This Refugee Treaty also stipulates other rights and duties of refugees such as education, employment and the fight against discrimination.



2 What is the added value of involving young refugees in youth work?

There are benefits for the young persons but also for your organisation.

Relax and have fun

It is important that all young persons can simply be young and feel free to enjoy themselves. Also young people who have fled to Europe have the need to relax and have fun. In youth work, young people can forget their worries for a while. Because of their specific situation, they did not get that opportunity so often. Your youth activities are maybe the only moments where they will really get this chance. You support young people to develop and give them a fun time. This is invaluable for these young persons.

Get to know new people and maintain contacts

For many young people, participating in activities of a sports club, youth centre or youth movement goes beyond simply forgetting their worries. Organised leisure-time activities bring them in touch with other young people. This can lead to friendships, a network and relationships, which are important for everyone. And even more for young people who fled their country.

Learning the language and local habits

Young people run the risk of feeling isolated when they don't speak the local language. In general, young people are capable of learning a new language relatively quickly. They learn the language at school, but the learning process is accelerated when they have the opportunity to practice with native speakers. By taking part in organised leisure-time activities, the young people get in contact with people from the neighbourhood. This will help them speak the local language more often and better. Often they don't have so many chances to practice outside of school.

And what's more, they learn to deal with local norms and values too while participating. So this is a clear benefit for their integration.

What do you gain as an organisation?

Youth work aims to welcome all young people. But far too many youth work organisations recruit their members amongst the middle class. As long as this is the case, you unconsciously exclude a number of groups. In principle all youth work organisations welcome all young people. But despite this principle of openness, certain target groups are underrepresented in youth work. Young refugees is one of these groups.

Not only for the young refugees, but also for yourself and your current members, it will be an enriching experience. You get a chance to practice how to deal with diversity. You learn to see the world through different glasses and get to know different cultural habits...

You've probably noticed that the extra energy you will in it, will be well worth its while. It is a true win-win situation that is fun, both for young refugees as well as your current members and yourself. And a great occasion to learn something new for all.







3 Assessing the capacity of your group: the importance of reflection and evaluation

Take sufficient time beforehand to discuss with your team of youth workers about this commitment. These are some questions to consider:

- Why do you want to work with this target group? What do you expect from this?
- How much time can you dedicate to this target group?
- To which degree are you prepared to adapt your habits and traditions?
- Can you support them financially when needed?
- What advantages do you see?
- What disadvantages can you foresee?

Learn from situations

Both after a one-off activity as well as a camp with young refugees, it is important to evaluate. Evaluate both within your team of youth workers, as well as with the young people themselves and their parents or mentors. Ask the following questions openly:

- Was it what everybody expected from this experience?
- What went well? And what were the reasons for this?
- What didn't go so well? And what were the reasons for this?

Instead of answering these questions, you can also use some creative methods in your evaluation. You can find a lot of inspiration for this online.



4 How do you reach young refugees?

A lot of young refugees come from a culture in which youth work, as you know it in your local context, doesn't exist. So you better approach them differently from young people who are familiar with your youth work. You will need to go out and actively look for them.

At the beginning of your search, you will need to distinguish different categories:

- **Asylum seekers** live in reception and care centres or local host initiatives while they wait for an answer regarding their asylum procedure.
- Once asylum seekers are granted refugee status, they are officially '**refugees**'. Recognised refugees can maybe stay for another short period in the reception centre, but they need to look for their own housing after that period. So most of the refugees live in regular houses.

The first group is easiest to reach, as they are living in an existing structure, supported by staff that often also has the task to guide them to leisure time activities. You can reach young asylum seekers in different ways:

Reception centres

In Belgium, many youth movements organise a games afternoon in schools after summer holidays, to introduce their organisation and activities to the pupils. If there is a reception and care centre in your area, it is definitely worth to organise a games day there too. That way you don't only reach the young people, but also their parents and mentors.

If you cooperate with such centres, it is a good idea to work with one contact person. You'll notice that this can avoid many misunderstandings. Reception and care centres have integration officers who will gladly act as your contact person. Don't hesitate to pick up the phone and call the reception centre near you.

Despite the fact that this group is easiest to reach, it still remains difficult to create a sustainable relationship with them. These young people will only remain in the reception and care centre during their asylum procedure. Once they receive their decision, they will have to move on. In the case of a positive decision, they will move to appropriate accommodation (and that can be anywhere in the country). In case the decision is negative, they will have to go back to their country of origin...

Local host initiatives

Welfare offices may organise local host initiatives in furnished private accommodation. Chances are that local host initiatives exist in your municipality. A phone call to the welfare or social office of your municipality can give you valuable information about the young people who are new in your municipality. Ask for the person responsible for the local Hosting Initiatives in your town and explain your proposal.

The second group, refugees who are no longer living in a centre, are most difficult to reach. How can you reach out to them? Best is to consult organisations that already work with them. This can be welfare offices, specialised youth work, municipal services, integration offices,... It is also worth your while to contact other groups of volunteers who actively support asylum seekers and refugees.

How to communicate to young refugees about youth work

Make clear what youth work is

In many European countries, it is common for young people to be involved in youth work. Most young people who fled to Europe are not familiar with the concept of organised leisure-time activities. That's why you need to explain this concept in places where young refugees meet, like the reception centre for instance. Explain clearly what youth work is and what kind of activities you do. Images and pictures can help you to clarify things. When you are organising activities for young people who fled, the information about these activities should of course reach them. Don't hesitate to contact key figures with direct access to the young people.

Young refugees also indicate that they don't like to go alone to activities. When at least one friend would come along, this gives them a safer feeling, especially when they go somewhere for the first time.

Promotional material

“ When Mustafa came home from school and eagerly showed the leaflet of the local youth movement, his mother perused it with lots of curiosity. The pictures in the leaflet showed playing, happy, white children. Very nice, but was that something for them? Maybe it is explained in the leaflet, but it is three pages long and contained

far too much text. And to register, the leaflet referred to a website. Mum didn't quite understand it. And what's more, the family only has internet access at the local library. So all that youth work stuff is probably not meant for them? A pity because it seemed something fun to Mustafa.

Did you ever ask yourself why that one boy or girl of colour who was so active at your open day, never showed up again? It is important that your promotional material reaches your target group in the right way and that it is instantly clear. Ask a 'bridge person' to give your leaflets to the target group with some more explanation. But also make the flyer itself more accessible. Someone who barely understands your local language will not feel very attracted to long texts. And if the leaflet contains only pictures of white kids, then it probably doesn't appeal much to other groups.

How do you communicate about young refugees towards your members?

Prepare your members for the cooperation with young refugees. Give them the opportunity to ask questions, and especially to explore.

Some young persons can experience difficulties relating to people with a different skin colour or culture. If you decide to invite young people with migration backgrounds in your group or if you organise an activity together, you'll automatically come to a mix of skin colours and cultures. Pay extra attention to discrimination and bullying. Refugees often get the feeling that they don't belong and can therefore be extra sensitive to this. Apply zero tolerance for negative behaviours.

Are you confronted with hate speech in your youth work? Read more about hate speech and how to tackle it on page 37.

How do you communicate about young refugees to the parents of your members?

Discuss in your youth workers' team in advance whether you will inform the parents of your current members that you will be doing activities with young refugees. You can also consciously take the decision not to do so, because you wouldn't do this either when other new members would join your activities. But if you are unsure about this, you can opt to organise an information session for the parents.

Always respond to all parents who have questions. Try to find out through an open dialogue what they would see as possible objections. Explain clearly what your plans are and why you choose to have young persons with a refugee background as members. Don't question the decision you took. Simply share your decision and what your arguments are to do so.

Also prepare answers to potential questions of the parents (e.g. about material needs, financial problems, language issues,...).











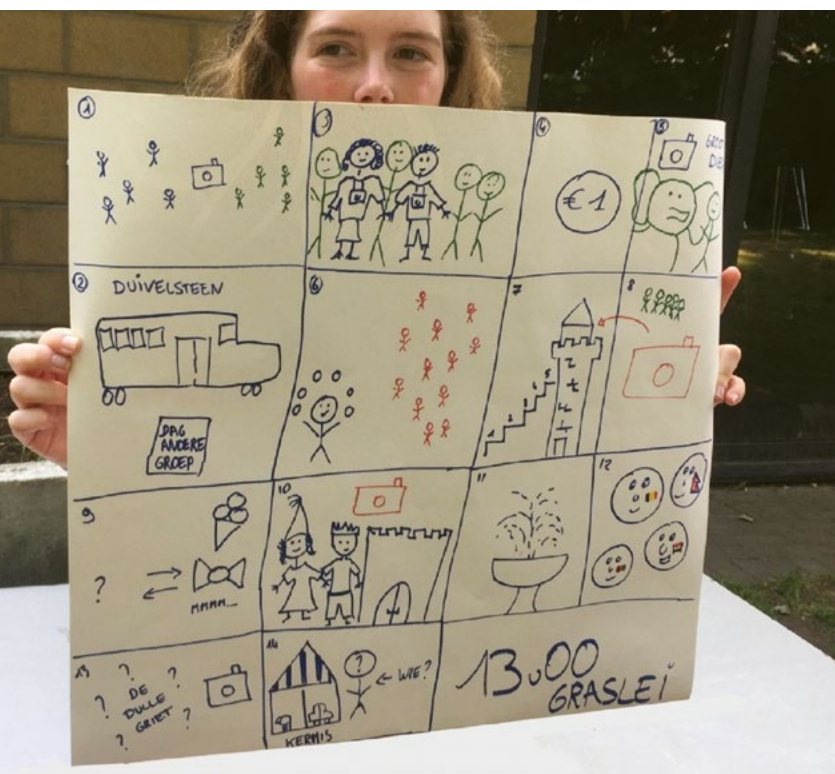
5 Language

If you are going to work with young people who are not in your country for a long time yet, chances are they will not speak the local language well enough to understand the explanations of an activity. On top of that, it is not so easy to learn a new language. And some persons are quicker to learn a new language than others...

We want to stress that language doesn't have to be a big obstacle. Youth work methods are universal! With these few pointers, you can perfectly do the activity that you had in mind.

- 💬 When you talk, use **short sentences, speak slowly and clearly**. Make sure that you speak loud enough, so that the young people at least don't need to concentrate extra on that. Articulate well, even exaggerate.
- 💬 Prefer the **same simple words** rather than synonyms and variations. Otherwise young people might think you are talking about something different. E.g. always say 'shoe' and don't mix shoe, boot, sneaker, sandal.
Repetition of the most important words can help.
- 💬 Be aware of the **vocabulary** that you are using. Words that are very familiar for you are maybe uncommon to young people who have another mother tongue. A 'scouts meeting' might sound boring to them, whereas you really mean a fun activity.
- 💬 Try to explain the instructions **visually**. Print images if you want to explain important words. You can also make drawings. That's a nice way to clarify different stages of a game.
 - E.g. 1st drawing: find one of the youth workers hidden in the forest.
 - 2nd drawing: each youth worker has an assignment for you and will give you a card in exchange.
 - 3rd drawing: take that card to the central basecamp to exchange it for money.
 - 4th drawing: the group with most money wins!

-  Exaggerate your **movements** when explaining something. Mime what you mean: run, jump, tag,... Feel free to exaggerate. Run to the other side of the field if that is the aim of the game. Don't say "stand still once you have been tagged" but **demonstrate** it while explaining so that the players see immediately how it works. It is always useful if more than one volunteer can explain the activity: one can explain while the other illustrates it.
-  Make **eye contact** with the young people to see more quickly whether they have understood or not. Also ask whether they understood and leave sufficient time and look long enough around the group, so that everybody gets the chance to say 'no' if need be. That way they also feel that it would be ok if they wouldn't have understood. Make clear that a request for more explanation is no problem!
-  Or don't ask "Did everybody understand?", but **ask a few persons directly**: "Ahmed, what do we start with?" – "Lynn, what do you do if you earned 5 coins?" Make sure that nobody feels ashamed if they don't know the answer.
-  To be sure that someone understands, you can also **ask them to repeat** the explanation. But make sure they don't feel embarrassed. You can also take someone aside to repeat the explanation. Anyway, once you start, you'll quickly notice whether they understood. It might also help if you explain the activity **in smaller groups**. The young people are less easily distracted, they understand you more easily, you can see more quickly if they understand and they dare to ask more questions.
-  Repeat also the same activities, so you don't always have to re-explain. It also gives young people more confidence.
-  Consider to **gradually build on your explanations**. First explain the basic version of the activity and start with that. After a while, add extra elements.
-  Don't hesitate to make use of the young people who master both languages. They can **translate** parts of the instructions to their own language for their friends. As long as the use of other languages doesn't exclude anyone and helps the game along, that is fine. If you forbid them to speak other languages, you might give some of them the feeling that their language is inferior. Young people will most likely speak their own language amongst each other and that is completely normal. Don't distrust them when it happens. They can more easily help each other in their own language. And by the way, you are leading an activity and not a class in school.
-  **Just start!** Sometimes, you can also start an activity and let the young people discover how it works as they go along. Involve those with experience: some young people are better at your local language or have done the activity before. If they participate well from the start, the others will also know more quickly what to do. You boost the self-confidence and the ownership of those who are more experienced. Also participate yourself. That motivates others and gives the players more clarity and guidance.



We gladly give you some extra tools:

- If you don't know what language a young person speaks, you can use a [language poster](#).
- For quick translations, you can use Google Translate or apps like 'refuchat' which are both available in the App Store for Apple and in the Play Store for Android.
- For young persons who don't master the local language yet, you can use 'point it' booklets with pictures and pictograms to understand each other better. You can literally show what you mean. On this website you can download an [example](#) made by a Flemish youth organisation.
- When communication is difficult and you feel you need more support, you can make use of social interpreters that can help you with interacting.



6 How to deal with difficult experiences of young refugees?

Young people with a refugee background potentially experienced difficult situations, which makes them vulnerable. Their position in our host society makes them even more vulnerable. But that doesn't mean you should treat them as 'victims'. These young people managed to get here after a long trip and are very independent, resilient and full of power. The younger they are, the faster they adapt to new situations. That often makes it easier for young people to get used to a new country, compared to adults.

Do take into account however that these young people can be insecure. Everything is new to them. This might have a negative effect on their self-esteem. **Put their talents in the spotlights** during your activities.

You could also notice that, because of their vulnerability, **they react more strongly** to situations than you would think. Therefore, gradually increase the intensity of your activities once you sufficiently know the young people.

Maybe you'll be confronted with one of their stories. Show **empathy**, listen and make time for it. But don't exacerbate their negative feelings. **Always end a talk on a positive note.** Don't fish for juicy stories about their refugee experience. If the young person indicates that s/he does not want talk about the experience, respect that. The longer you know the young person, the opener your chats will be. Let it be a spontaneous process.

The young people sometimes have **trust** issues. It probably has been difficult for them to trust people before they fled and during their trip. Sharing information with people might have been dangerous for them. But still they will have a big need for social contacts. It is therefore very important for them to build a **network**.

But above all, these young people are kids and adolescents like their local peers. They have many talents and strengths. They have the right **to simply have fun**. And they want to be treated like any other young persons.

And what if you get into a situation that you don't know how to handle?

Make sure that you always stay within your **role as youth worker**. You are not a professional carer. For young people it is not always easy to see the difference between a carer or social worker and a youth worker organising activities. So it is up to you to safeguard the limits and indicate clearly that they need to address their social workers with specific requests for help. The survival instinct of these young people is very active and they will search and accept all the help they can get. They would definitely also like to activate your help if they see a chance. **So it is important never to offer or promise any help that you are unable to deliver.** And don't promise that everything will be ok and that they will be able to stay in Europe, because you cannot know.

Refer the young people, when needed, to their mentors or to a welfare or health organisation.

In short:

- Don't try to be a psychologist.
- Don't dramatise the situation.
- Don't panic.
- Make them feel welcome.
- Treat them like you treat the others.
- Show interest for their world, but respect when they don't want to talk about certain things.
- Let them enjoy. Let them be young again!







7 Overcoming practical obstacles

If young refugees express interest in youth work, they should not be held back by obstacles to fully participate. That's why we give you some tips below to remove or overcome practical obstacles.

Registration?

Start with the beginning and have a look at your registration possibilities for becoming a member/for participating in your activities. Do you need internet to register? Chances are that many refugees will not have such an easy access to the Internet. How can they pay? Only via bank transfer? Many refugees don't have a local bank account. Does the registration require a lot of paperwork? That is not really encouraging for people who don't understand (much) of the local language.

Ask the parents or social workers of the young people whether you can come for a house visit. Walk them through the different steps to register for your activities. At the same time, you will find out many other things about your new member. Or think about making your registration easier: maybe it is not necessary to be registered?

Financially?

Because of the vulnerable situation that refugees find themselves in, it might well be that they don't have much money to go around. Besides food, every person in the reception centre gets pocket money. But this is a very small amount of money. It would be sad that a young person cannot join your activity because of limited financial resources. But also refugees have their pride. So don't assume that simply paying for all activities for them is a good solution. Now, how can you deal with this?

- You can ask to pay in several instalments. In some groups this has become a habit.
- In case they need material for your activities: organise a market where uniforms and camp material can be bought second-hand. You can also encourage second-hand gear towards your other members as a sustainable alternative. That way, it is not a measure only for refugee youth. Someone who has experienced already so many difficulties because of living in a foreign context and having

left his family and culture behind can feel excluded if also in the youth movement he or she is the only one not wearing a new uniform.

Always give the young persons a clear list of material they should bring (with pictures or images). Walk them through the list and check which things they can provide and where you maybe can chip in.

- You also have to take into account that young people often don't have enough money to buy food and drinks themselves. So it is a good idea that you foresee snacks and drinks for the whole group, especially when the activities last the whole day, or when the young people only return to the reception centre after dinner time.

Transport & mobility?

The pocket money young people receive from the reception centre is most likely not enough for the young person to take the public transport to your activity. So think about finding a location closer to the reception centres or organise transport yourself.

Be aware that not everybody takes the bike or bus with as much ease as you do. Things that seem very normal to us, like biking or taking the bus, train or tram, are not always familiar to them. When young people have just arrived in Europe, it might be difficult for them to find their way on their own. They don't necessarily know where to buy a ticket, how to look up which bus or train to take, etc. You can overcome this obstacle by going together the first few times or by making sure that they can come to your venue together with more experienced young people.

It is very important to communicate about your venue and the possibilities to get there, alone or with an accompanying person. Tell the young people explicitly what the easiest way is to go to and from the activity. Check if it is feasible for the young persons to reach the venue. If necessary and possible, you can offer to pick them up in the reception centre or at their house or ask another parent to do so.

Pictures?

Just like for other members, always ask for approval before you use pictures on your website, in your magazine and so on. If they are minors, ask their parents or mentors. Be aware that many reception centres have very strict rules when it comes to depicting underage refugees. Often photos are not allowed because of their safety.

Explain them that you will be mostly using group pictures. Tell them clearly where you will use the pictures and who can see them... Maybe this is a good moment to visit your website together, so that they know they can find lots of information there too.

Insurance?

If your local initiative is part of an umbrella organisation, get information from the central secretariat about insurance regulations for asylum seekers and refugees in your activities. Especially in larger youth movements, you can rest assured that new members are covered, no matter if they have legal residence status or not. Smaller organisations better double check with their insurance company. One phone call usually suffices to find out.

Medical assistance?

Youth without papers – those who don't have refugee status yet – should take along a 'certificate for urgent medical assistance'. They can get this document at the welfare office of the municipality where they reside. They need it in case of accidents or medical emergencies. Also if the young person ('s family) is not entitled to welfare support, they can still get such a 'certificate for urgent medical assistance' of their local welfare office. If young people living in a reception centre would have an accident, always contact the reception centre.

Going abroad?

As usual, you need the consent of a parent or guardian for minors before you can take them abroad. In the case of asylum seekers – those people who did not get a decision on their refugee status yet – this is more complicated. They cannot travel abroad. People who have refugee status or subsidiary protection can travel abroad but not to their country of origin.

Did you forget what is the difference between an asylum seeker, a person under subsidiary protection or someone with recognised refugee status? Have a look at page 7 'what is a refugee'.

Communication?

As said, reading long texts in a new language is not easy for newcomers. Agree on ways that are okay for both sides to communicate: phone calls, emails... Give clear information about phone contacts: whom can the parents or mentors call in case of need? This is especially important for activities of several days, such as a camp. Be aware that parents/mentors can get worried when they have to go without their child for a number of days.



8 Overcoming cultural barriers

Before you read the text below, you can take a challenge and think:

- Which things in your youth organisation could cause refugees to pull out?
- What do you think you can and want to adapt to make your activities more accessible for this target group and what not?

Remember, there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Most important is that you as a group feel ok with the possible changes you would introduce. This reflection can be rewarding in the long run, as it makes your activities accessible to other target groups besides refugees too. Many of these adaptations are also relevant for young people who are not refugees but who come from another culture too.

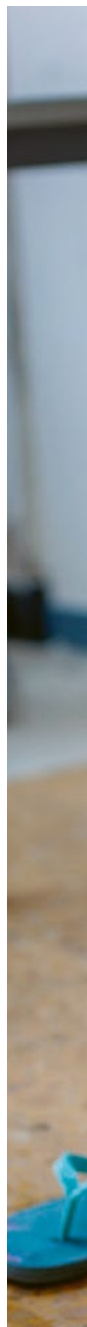
Young refugees choose your organisation because they think your activities are fun. So you don't have to completely reorganise your activity calendar and way of working, but there are a few issues you can keep in mind.

Mind you, this section is quite specific to some Flemish youth work traditions, so it might be that the cultural habits in your youth work are very different as well!

- When your activities are **mixed for boys and girls**, make sure you announce this clearly in advance. Mixing genders is not usual in all cultures, especially when it comes to washing and sleeping. Mostly it is enough to tell the parents/mentors of the young persons that there is permanent supervision to put them at ease.
- Ask the young persons about special wishes concerning food. Muslims for example **don't eat pork**. Practically it is not always possible to foresee **halal meat**, but instead you could foresee a vegetarian alternative.
- After a meeting, some youth leaders in Flanders like to have a beer together. Or **a few beers**. They will not actively oblige other youth leaders to drink along, but the group pressure can be very big. If it's always Mohammed who doesn't drink along because of his religion, he can quickly feel like an outsider. Make sure young people who don't want to join in for whatever reason, always get the feeling that they also belong to the group. They are part of the group because of who they are and not because the number of pints they can drink.

- Also be aware that a **uniform** can come across very strangely to people who are new in Europe. Refugees often don't have positive experiences with uniforms. They potentially associate them with the military or the police. But on the other side, uniforms can also create a 'feeling of belonging'. It creates a connection between people. If you already speak a different language and come from a different background, the same uniform might create some feeling of togetherness. Talk to the young people about it: how do they feel about wearing a uniform? Do they have enough financial means to pay for it? You can for example only require certain parts of the uniform to make it cheaper.
- **Greeting the flag, yells, formation...** it can all be part of your youth work! It might however make your youth movement look a bit militaristic. Explain to the young people why you do it and what it actually symbolises. It won't be a big pitfall, but it is good to know that these youth work customs might come across strangely for people who are not familiar with youth work.
- Be aware of their background. It is not wise to play **war games** if you know that a person has experienced war up close. Better don't play games that involve imaginary bombs, shooting, etc.
- Playing with food might also puzzle refugees. Many cannot understand that you do so. The same with balloons filled with water. It might come across to newcomers as a true **waste of resources**.
- Emphasise that young persons should wear clothes that can get dirty. In youth work a lot of the activities are carried out in nature. They better keep their best clothes for school. If you plan a day or game in which the young people will get very **dirty**, prepare them for it.
- If you sleep in tents (e.g. during a camp), make sure the young people and their parents/mentors know in advance! Show your tents beforehand or show some pictures. Be aware that tents might trigger unpleasant memories of refugee camps and all their negative connotations.

The bottom line is that the habits that are normal to you, are not necessarily all that normal for newcomers. Have a good chat together to find out how they would do things differently. This will also get you valuable insights into their culture. Enriching!







9 No Hate Speech

“Dirty faggot” • “All Muslims are terrorists” • “Oo oo oo, black monkey!”

Unfortunately, we encounter such hate speech all too often, both online and offline. Migrants, asylum seekers and refugees often fall victim to hate speech. That is why we address it here.

What is hate speech?

Hate speech refers to: statements, drawings, images, clips... that attack a group or a person on the basis of their race, religion, origin, sexual orientation, gender...

Some types of hate speech are punishable by law (e.g. instigating violence), but there is also hate speech that is legally accepted (e.g. telling that LGBT persons that they are ‘sick’ because of their sexual orientation). Nevertheless, both are completely despicable!

Three actors are present (both online and offline) in hate speech situations:

- **The target** can be both an individual as well as a group. Groups or persons with specific characteristics are unfortunately more easily targeted by hate speech than others.
- **The hate messenger** can be someone you know or not, even someone who tries to remain anonymous. The hate messenger can also be a known or public person. Hate speech can be spread occasionally or on a regular basis.
- **The bystanders** are the biggest group in this whole story. Bystanders comprise anybody who witnesses a hate situation or hate message. Bystanders can be friends of the target or the hate messenger, but they can also be completely disconnected. Besides these persons, also the moderator or creator of a forum (e.g. Facebook group or Twitter account) is a bystander.

Why is it important to react?

It goes without saying that hate speech hurts and has substantial consequences. Hate speech leads to feelings of inferiority, alienation (one of the motives for radicalisation), insecurity, exclusion, low self-esteem but also aggression out of frustration. Moreover, it

comes across as silent approval if nobody reacts against hate speech, and this accentuates the effects above even more.

We also run the risk that people might start believing hate messages if they are repeated frequently and if nobody contradicts them (e.g. are women really inferior? Are Muslims really violent?). Finally, groups that receive a lot of hate are excluded more frequently, because hate speech (un)consciously influences behaviour.

How to counter hate speech?

There are 5 choices that can help you create a reaction. These 5 choices are not a chronological list of steps. The order of the choices contains a certain logic, but we don't exclude any other order and you can even skip certain choices. It is not a flowchart in which your first choice determines the options of your second choice. All combinations are possible!

1. Who and what do you want to reach?

In this choice, you determine whom to address and why. There are different possibilities.

Whom do you address

Why?

The target

→

To voice support/to cheer up the target/ to show that you don't agree with hate speech

The bystanders

→

To support the target together/to reject the hate message/to avoid polarisation/to call for a more positive Internet climate/to counter lies or incorrect information

The hate messenger

→

To stop the hate/to find out why this is being said

2. Time?

A second choice you have to make is the time you want/can spend to (re)act. It is important to think this through because some strategies take more time than others.

3. What do you want to react against?

For this choice, the image of the iceberg comes in useful.



You can distinguish the hate message (the visible part of the iceberg) and the story of oppression (the part of the hate message that lies below the surface).

→ The hate message: When worried about the offensive language, the used medium or the person responsible for the hate speech.

- The story of oppression: When disagreeing with the vision behind the hate message or with the stereotypes/generalisations in the hate message. This choice will help you determine what you want to tackle.

4. What do you want to do? (Strategy)

Under this choice, you determine which strategy you will follow!

- Counter: you want to counter a hate message or a story of oppression, because what is being said is not correct.
- Alternative: you want to show that it is possible to act differently.
- Ignore: you don't want to give hate speech any attention.
- Dialogue: you want to know what another person thinks so that we can come to a shared solution.
- Put boundaries: you want to indicate that certain language is not desirable/acceptable. Or indicate that this is not compatible with your vision/the vision of your organisation.
- Report: you want the hate speech to be removed

5. What tone do you use in my reaction?

This 5th choice helps you determine which tone to use in your (re)action. Each tone has of course its own effects depending on the context. The choice of tone will depend on your personal judgement and feeling. Still, it can be useful to consider different possibilities.

- Humour: you want to react in a funny way (But be careful, because humour is very subjective!)
- Factual: you want to stick to the facts and avoid giving a value judgement.
- Positive: you don't want to deny or forbid anything and encourage people to positive behaviour.
- Emotional: you want to strike a sensitive cord with the receiver of my message.

More information?

- the Ø No Hate Speech Movement, a youth campaign by the Council of Europe
- Ø AlterNarratief (AlterNarrative) a cooperation project of Ø Orbit vzw, Ø Mediaraven, Ø Mediawijs and Ø Tumult vzw which developed the five choices explained here above.



10 International inspiration

Are you looking for funding possibilities? Or you are interested in other projects to get inspired? Then this is the place to be. On European level, there are quite some projects about and with refugees.

- Would you like to organise an international project involving refugees yourself? Then you definitely have to take a look at the Erasmus+ Youth in Action programme [website](#).
Erasmus+ is the EU funding programme for education, training, youth and sport. The youth section of Erasmus+ is called Youth in Action. It funds projects for and by young people and youth organisations. The European Commission made refugees one of their priorities. So there are many funding options. A few projects that already took place within this frame are [Yep4Europe](#) and [Beyond Boundaries](#).
- Building Bridges is a [toolkit](#) in English made by Service Civil International (SCI). It gives you lots of information and tips for activities with newcomers.
- [STEP-by-STEP Together](#) - Support, Tips, Examples and Possibilities for youth work with young refugees, is a publication by the Partnership between the Council of Europe and European Commission in the field of youth. The partnership and the The European Knowledge Centre on Youth Policy has more publications ([here](#)) on the topic of young refugees.



11 About the Flemish GloBall experiment

GloBall (Wereldspelers in Dutch) is a joint project of many Flemish youth organisations, co-ordinated by De Ambrassade. GloBall wants all reception centres to cooperate with youth work in their area. This cooperation started during the peak of the so-called 'refugee crisis'. The youth sector wanted to contribute to welcoming and integrating young refugees. Youth work excels in making children and young people stronger. Youth work is the place where young people can be carefree and young, where they can have fun and create contacts. We want to use these strengths to the benefit of the young refugees who found their place here.

Since April 2016, every two weeks, a team of volunteers of youth work organisations set up camp for the weekend in a reception centre. They did so in the reception centre for non-accompanied minors of Dendermonde and in the reception centre of Lint. During these weekends, over 300 young youth workers gained experience in working with this target group. Each weekend of activities was thoroughly evaluated and the experiences were shared with other young people on the GloBall website. You'll also find visual footage of these weekends on [the pageflow](#). Dive into a wealth of information, practical tips and clever tricks!

Besides these activities, GloBall also supported cooperation projects between residential groups of refugees and local youth work. All these experiences generated a lot of new knowledge about the needs of young refugees, but as well about the questions youth workers have when working with them.

This tool kit is based on those experiences. Besides the experiences from the project, we also got inspiration from the [booklet 'Samen één' \(Together one\)](#), published by Tumult vzw. We also took inspiration from a [brochure](#) of the provincial diversity centre of East-Flanders and we cooperated closely with [the Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen \(Refugee Support Flanders\)](#). Thanks to their youth [project 'Al-tochtonen van de toekomst'](#) we got a better insight in the world of young newcomers. Of course, we also built on the rich expertise of different youth work [partners](#) and concrete experiences and questions we gathered from numerous other youth work organisations.

CONTACTS

Do you want to know more about the project GloBall (Wereldspelers in Dutch)? Then contact De Ambrassade, the organisation coordinating the GloBall/Wereldspelers project. De Ambrassade puts youth, youth work, youth information and youth policy on the map in Flanders.

You can find more information about De Ambrassade [here](#).
Send a mail to wereldspelers@ambrassade.be.

