A short presentation of Ronse

Ronse is a small town (+/- 25.000 inhabitants) in Belgium, about 60 km away from the capital, which is Brussels. Ronse is situated in the western part of the country, at the border of the Flemish and the French region. In the past century it was a prosperous city, in consequence of an important textile industry. Because of the collapse of this industry, Ronse is looking for new economic sources.

Nowadays, future isn’t always shining for a part of the young people. In comparison of other cities in the region, there is a lot more (youth)unemployment, more adolescents - whatever the reason- don’t finish their school career killing time by hanging around in the neighbourhood and the number of children growing up in poverty still increases.

Changing this situation

Buurtsport Ronse is a governmental organisation who brings Doorstep sport to the subordinate neighbourhoods of Ronse. Buurtsport Ronse started some years ago a project called **Street Action**, which is specific orientated to the youth living in this area’s. The main activities of Street Action are sports and games in several parks and playing fields around the corner. Street Action also participate in a national competition of street soccer (panna), it organise regular sessions of ropeskipping, breakdance and free running, organises some futsal tournaments and other sportive activities for young people. The age of the participants varies from 7 to 19 years old.

The NGO LEJO is an independent youth organisation engaged within the policy fields of Youthwork and Education and Training. It is recognized and funded to a large extent by the Flemish Government and has different programmes: Youthwork, Education & training, teenage-parents programme, social tourism, intercultural exchanges programs. A strong believe in Experiential Learning is one of the premises of LEJO. More information is available via the internet: <https://www.lejo.be/over-lejo/english/>
**LEJO Ronse** is a part of the NGO LEJO, commissioned by the government of Ronse, to work at the well-being of the vulnerable youth of Ronse. Started from several separated activities for different groups, they are growing to an open youth house where all vulnerable youth of Ronse is welcome and feel comfortable.

Common methods

Both organisations have in common they start from the ideas, needs and capacities of the young public to develop a wide range of (sport)activities. At the same time the development of the activities is seen as a process and a possibility to get the participants involved.

Another common point is both organisations work with young volunteers. At the age of 16 years old, youngsters are stimulated to participate at a training program giving them the tools to accompany all kind of (sport) activities. Volunteers always work together with a professional. The professional offers a safe framework for the volunteers giving them the possibility to grow by means of evaluations, individual coaching and feedback of peers. Developing competences is the keyword in this.

Street Action and LEJO Ronse not only use the same methods, almost all the volunteers of Street Action are also active in LEJO Ronse and both organisations are working in the same neighbourhoods.

International exchange

For the team of volunteers, we want to organise an international exchange together with similar organisations. Our objective is to create an extra perspective for the volunteers. We want to encourage them in their engagement as a volunteer. Secondly we want to give them a chance to learn from peers in other countries. The volunteers asked themselves for this.They are hungry to discover new games and sports, other or new methods in group work in a non-formal education setting. But they also wishes to be active as volunteers by giving a helping hand to a humanitarian project or by organising some activities for disadvantaged children. At last we are all looking forward to the enrichment of all participants by bringing different cultures together.

So we are looking for a partner who wants to host our group during a period of 5 untill 14 days between the 1st of july and 31th of august 2018 or from 29th of October until 4th of November 2018. If you are interested in our project, I hope you will contact us to share more information about each other. You can contact us by mail: buurtsport@ronse.be or by phone at the number 00 32 55 33 99 24.

PS: If this letter is sent to a federation, a board, a league, an institute or a leading organisation, please can you send us the information of one of your members who will be interested to organise an exchange together with us. Key points are empowering young volunteers, developing competences, doorstep sport setting and learning in a non-formal way.

With kind regards,

Filip Neuville