

# That's my opinion...



**First report  
by children and young people living in Belgium  
for the Committee on the Rights of the Child  
in Geneva**

Written within the framework of the "What Do you Think?"-project,  
subsidised by the Ministry of Justice.



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## MESSAGE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

We, children and young people living in Belgium, are addressing this report primarily to the Committee for the Rights of the Child in Geneva. But we sincerely hope that policy-makers in Belgium will read our report, and draw the necessary conclusions to make their policy really child-friendly, and enable the rights of all children respected in and by Belgium.

We also hope that our report will be read by adults as well as by children and young people, so that we can ensure together that the rights of all children are respected.

In our report, wishes and ideas are mentioned on all sorts of topics that disturb us. We realise that all our wishes cannot be satisfied overnight. Or even in a year. Some adults will tell us that it is not realistic to want all this. But there is no ban on dreaming, is there? Indeed, if all our dreams are realised, then we will be living in a real children's paradise. But is there anything wrong in demanding the best? And a paradise for children would also be a real paradise for adults.

What are all these wishes? You can read about them in our report, but perhaps we should summarise the most important ones.

First of all, there are a number of topics that run through our report like a guiding theme. We call for more participation and information at all levels (in the local authority, at school, in the family, etc.) We consider that we should be informed more about everything going on around us. We have the right to express our opinion and to take part in decisions about matters that affect us. On the other hand, we also attach great importance to freedom of opinion and choice. And we believe that the right to privacy is important, too. At home, as well as at school, within the social services, etc. Finally, the call for greater solidarity between children and adults also runs as a guiding theme through the whole report. Adults must get to know our world better, and we must collaborate more in tackling problems.

What are the most important problems that we see? What areas are most in need of attention?

We want to grow up in a safe and decent environment. Lack of road safety and pollution are two topics that are close to our hearts, and two problems that unfortunately are of enormous importance in Belgium.

We call for better quality of education and genuinely free education for all children in primary and secondary education. When we are talking about the quality of education, we mean the way lessons are taught, the content of lessons, the lack of practical activities, training about society and democracy at school. We have the right to a good education. At school, we want to be able to participate, and receive information about everything going on in the world around us.

Discrimination is also one of the major problems in Belgium today. Many children, for example children of immigrants, children with disabilities and refugee children

suffer discrimination. That is intolerable. We have the right to be treated equally. We want to live, study and grow up together so that we get to know and respect each other more.

There must be more and better help for refugees. Refugee children are entitled to be received in a dignified manner.

Child abuse and exploitation is, in our opinion, still a problem in Belgium. We must be better informed about where we can turn in the event of problems and abuse.

On a world scale, we see a large number of problems that must be dealt with immediately. We call for more attention to health care, education, poverty, abuse, child labour and devastating wars. We call for greater international solidarity. We often feel powerless to deal with many of the problems surrounding us. We want to do something, but have the feeling that as children and young people, we have little impact in changing these problems on a global scale. We call on the government and adults to spring into action, and jointly tackle these problems. In our opinion, many of these problems could be solved if there was more solidarity and dialogue between children and adults, between children from various cultures and if there were more international solidarity.

A better world tomorrow begins today. Therefore, we hope that our ideas will be heard by the Committee in Geneva, but also by adults in Belgium, and that they will want to ensure, together with us, that the problems are tackled. So that living in Belgium is better for all of us, as well as in the rest of the world. For children, but also for adults.

Finally, we want to make one observation. In general, we feel that it is great to live in Belgium. Certainly in comparison with some other countries, most of our rights are already respected. Adults try to protect us and give us a great deal of scope to express our opinion. So we are actually very happy. But there are still a number of major problems. There are many situations in which our rights are not fully respected. And it is precisely these situations that are described in our report. If, after reading this report, you have the impression that we see nothing but problems, then that impression is incorrect. In this report, for practical reasons we have only included wishes and ideas about things that we want to change. But of course, there are a whole range of things where we are very satisfied. So it would be wrong to judge after reading this report that we are very unhappy with the policy being carried out. Far from it. We are very satisfied, but there are still a number of stumbling blocks, that we would like to work together to change.



## INTRODUCTION

Before you begin to read, you might want to know who wrote the report and how it came about. This introduction will answer these questions.

This is the report of thousands of children and young people who are involved in the "What Do you Think?"-project and who formulated their opinion and suggestions.

Together with a smaller group, the steering group, we have included all the opinions and ideas in this report.

Perhaps we should start by introducing ourselves. We are a group of around 40 children and young people. The youngest of us is 9 years old, while the oldest is now 20. Since the beginning of 1999, we have been meeting regularly in order to work on this report. Together, we form the "What Do You Think?" project steering group, and we contribute to deciding where the project is going and how this report should look.

In those two years, we have already done a lot of work together. We met in various locations for a day or a weekend. We spent a weekend in Brussels, Antwerp, at the seaside, in Lokeren, etc. In fact, we have been just about everywhere. We also come from just about everywhere in Belgium. Some of us speak Dutch, and some French, so it is not always easy to discuss things together.

How did we start on this report? First of all, we sat around the table to think about what we wanted to include in this report and how we were going to do that. Because it is not always possible to spring into action immediately. We listened about the actual meaning of "What Do You Think", what children's rights are, why we were going to make a report and who the experts in the Committee for the Rights of the Child in Geneva are.

But then it was up to us. We discussed and thought out together how we would make this report and what we would need to do. We thought about the topics that should appear in the report, and how our report should look. But above all, where would we get all the ideas of children and young people? Of course, it was not the intention that only the ideas of our group should appear in the report.

We tried to recruit new young people to the steering group, but that was not always easy. We are still looking for new young people, because our attitude is the more the merrier. And above all, the more different ideas we have to discuss, the more lively the discussion will be.

Finally, we attempted to find as many different ideas from children and young people as possible. Via our site, via the Averbode newspapers. And naturally, via The March, on which we all collaborated actively.

But then we had all the ideas. Nicely bundled into the Package of Wishes and Ideas. But that was a long way from the report that we wanted.

So we started to summarise everything. We looked together at which ideas recurred frequently, what seemed to us to be important, and what was less so, and so we tried to boil down the various ideas into a summary, which grew into our report.

But that was not always easy. Because the ideas often come from very different children. There are children of 6 years old who sent in their ideas. But children, or rather young people, aged 17. And they talk differently. They put their ideas down on paper differently. And we had to make a text out of it. We really toiled hard. And yet you will still notice when you read the report that it contains different styles. We didn't want to summarise, delete and generalise too much. That would also detract from the force of our report.

Another problem that we encountered was that for some subjects, we had a lot of information (such as about school, the family, the environment), while for other subjects (such as the topic of children and social assistance) there was very little. We found that there was never too much. If there were really so many different ideas to protect the environment, then we need to know. But where we had little information, we went looking for more. Normally, we went out ourselves looking for information, but due to lack of time, the adult staff of "What Do You Think?" picked up the phone and called a number of specific organisations and asked them to send extra information and opinions of the young people that they knew.

So the report was not ready in a day. It took us a lot of work. But of course, it was not just our work. And that is a good thing too. The report is not just by young people in the "What Do You Think" steering group, but of all children and young people who cooperated in one way or another in the project. And there are very many of them.

But of course, there are never enough. We think that is a real pity, but it was not possible to interview all children and young people. We will never be able to speak on behalf of all children and young people. Because we are so different. We can already see that in our little group. However, that makes our discussions twice as interesting. It would be a pity if all children thought alike.

Although our report is not a scientific study or anything like that, we still hope that all our work will produce something. That we can change something together. That the experts on the Committee will read our report and take account of what

we said when making their recommendations. And naturally, that policy-makers in Belgium read our report. And really listen. And try to take account of what we said in making policy. We hope that a number of the concrete proposals that we make will be carried out. Then we would really have the feeling that our report has produced something.

For the future, of course we hope that we will be able to continue discussing with our little group. Especially about the question of how we can check that the content of our report has really been taken into account. Because that is obviously the next step. Making sure that something is done with it.

But before that, we hope that you enjoy reading it.

The "What Do You Think?" children and young people



## REACTIONS BY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE TO THE COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Children seeking asylum

As refugee children, we should have the same rights as Belgian children. For example, the right to education and the right to medical care, to recreation and training. We need a roof over our head, we have to be able to attend school and visit the doctor when we are sick. The government must develop a decent policy for providing relief and assistance to us. (This point is dealt with in more detail in Part Eight, I.A)

As unaccompanied minors seeking asylum, we must receive extra attention in policy and special treatment.

- We must not be locked up in closed detention centres.
- The government must help us to trace our parents in our country of origin.
- When we have to go to the Aliens Office, or to another official body, we must have the assistance of an interpreter, and the person who interviews us must know how to deal with children.
- We are entitled to guardianship status, with the appointment of a guardian to support us with practical and other problems.
- We call for more reception possibilities for unaccompanied minor refugees.
- The Aliens Office should refer us more efficiently. Administrative files should be kept together in a single place.
- Even after we reach 18 years of age, and therefore the age of majority, we must still receive help in finding our way in society, so that we do not disappear into a black hole, or become involved in illegal activities, prostitution or crime.

The increasing flows of refugees are an enormous problem all over the world. In Belgium too, this is creating a large number of problems and tensions. The problem of refugees is, in our opinion, one of the most important problems, that should be dealt with first and foremost, and the Belgian government should play a pioneering role. (This point is dealt with in more detail in Part 8, I.A.).

### 2. Placement

For us, the family is of enormous importance. Without a family, we cannot live or grow up. We need our parents, who give us love and trust.

But sometimes, it is not possible to stay in our own family. Placement should only occur in cases of extreme need, where there are no other solutions for the problems. The youth courts sometimes decide too quickly to place us. There should be more help for families, in the families themselves, so that we can stay with our families if there are problems.

### **3. Examination of the statements**

#### **1. Non-discrimination:**

All of us should be able to enjoy the same rights. We must be treated equally.

#### **2. and 3. Articles 13, 14 and 15<sup>1</sup>**

Freedom of expression and freedom of thought, conscience and religious beliefs are of major importance to us. We attach a great deal of importance to both provisions, and want them to be applied without restriction. We feel that it is necessary for us to be able to choose our beliefs, in total freedom, without the intervention of our parents.

We also feel that freedom of association is an important article.

We also feel that freedom of association is an important article. We want to be able to set up projects ourselves, be able to set up our own small group and become members of a non-profit organisation.

#### **4. Mechanisms for coordination and collaboration**

Solidarity between children and adults, and more specifically between children and policy-makers is a recurring theme in our report. We call for more solidarity, more meetings and collaboration, to stimulate understanding and tolerance. On the other hand, we also call for more input and participation.

On the other hand, we feel that it is important when we are talking about coordination and collaboration that international collaboration and solidarity should not be forgotten.

Finally we would like to mention the "What Do You think?"-project. Within the framework of this project we collaborate with adults from other organisations and people from the government. A first step towards a further collaboration.

#### **5. Permanent mechanism for data collection**

There is a tremendous shortage of information and data about us. We notice that adults often do not understand our environment, because insufficient data is available.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 13: Freedom of expression. (The child has the right to obtain information or make information public, and express his or her opinion, unless this would offend the views of others). Article 14: the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religious beliefs. Article 15: Freedom of association. (The right of children to meet with others, and set up or join associations).

We were confronted with this problem ourselves when producing this report. Sometimes it was not sufficiently clear what some children and young people wanted to say, but we had no study results to fall back on, in order to make a correct interpretation.

6. **Coordination of national legislation with the provisions of the Convention - abolition of the death penalty - ban on corporal punishment in the family**

**Harmonisation of the national legislation**

We must never be locked up in prison.

**Ban on corporal punishment in the family**

We must never be beaten. Not even by our parents.

7. **Input by children**

Input and participation are the most important elements of our report. Both concepts form a recurring theme through our report, and arise in one form or another. Within the family, at school, in leisure time, in dealings with the local authority, etc.

We feel that it is unfortunate that participation is often viewed negatively. On the one hand, many adults think that if we have our say, we will take control, which is an absurd idea, really laughable. Participation is often only seen in conjunction with problem situations: we only have our say when we are confronted with problem situations (on divorce, before the courts). We want to have our say in our daily lives, even when we are not facing immediate problems. Ask our opinion, listen to us, and many problems will be solved preventively.

We must be able to contribute to decisions in society, to participate in decisions that directly affect us, and contribute our ideas about everything that is going on in society. We must be able to participate in decisions within our family. We also call for more participation and input at school. We want to be able to take part in decisions and be present in the media. And our voices must be heard in court. (This point is discussed in greater detail in Part 3: IV).

8. **Spreading the principles of the Convention**

We must be better informed about our rights. There are still far too many children who have no idea that children's rights exist. And even adults, our parents and teachers often are unaware of exactly what is contained in the

Convention. Knowing our rights is a necessary first step towards enforcing them. And if adults do not know our rights, how can they respect them?

For this reason, many more initiatives must be taken to make children's rights known everywhere and to everyone. Here are some of our ideas:

- a children's rights tram. The most important rights would be listed on the side of the tram;
- information buses that drive around the country. Activities relating to children's rights could be held on the buses;
- one day per year, a children's rights day should be organised. On that day, all pupils from the various types of education and different schools should organise activities on the subject of children's rights;
- launch an official children's rights day, with activities all over the country on the subject of children's rights;
- an identity card with the children's rights on it. All children should receive this card automatically;
- much more information should be disseminated via various channels: via schools, the media, every possible kind of youth association.

At school in particular, there is still far too little discussion about children's rights. Children's rights should be a compulsory subject taught to all pupils of all ages.

## **9. Integration of those principles into education programmes**

Many adults who work with us are inadequately informed about our rights.

Teachers should learn about children's rights during their training. Lawyers who work with us, and especially those hearing testimony from us in court cases must know children's rights from A to Z.

Nurses and doctors who are treating children must know children's rights.

The immigration service that interviews and advises refugees who are under the age of majority must know every detail of the Convention.

But most of all, these adults who have to help and advise us should be more familiar with our social environment, and understand it. That is why it is a pity that so little information and research is available about our social environment.

## **10. Signing the Convention on the protection of the rights of all immigrant workers and their families**

As children of immigrants, we still have problems in Belgium. Often, we are subject to discrimination, bullying at school, etc. We receive far too little understanding. And something needs to be done about it fast. In our opinion,



discrimination is one of the main problems that Belgium has to contend with nowadays.

#### **11. Increasing awareness of the original report<sup>2</sup>**

The first and the second government report are much too difficult for us to read and understand. Therefore, our starting point was not these reports, but we based our own report on our own social environment instead. The government reports are too difficult for us to read and understand.

It is a pity that we do not have the opportunity to actually read the government report, and react directly to it. Would it not be possible to produce a child-friendly version of the report?

#### **12. Conclusion**

In general, we are very satisfied with what is happening around us, with how our rights are protected and defended here in Belgium. But it could still be better. In our reactions to the recommendations, we also indicate where it could be better. But we have not mentioned areas where we are already satisfied. That may give the incorrect impression that we are not at all satisfied with the situation in Belgium, that we are unhappy and only want to criticise. But that is certainly not the case. Here in the report, we have mainly focused on points where we want to see some changes, and where there is certainly room for improvement.

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<sup>2</sup> Here, we are referring to the first government report submitted to the Committee in Geneva in 1994. The second government report was submitted in 1999, five years later, and will be discussed by the Committee in 2002, together with our report by children and young people.



**PART ONE: GENERAL MEASURES OF IMPLEMENTATION**  
**(Articles 4, 42 and 44 paragraph 6)<sup>3</sup>**

In general, we feel that there is a tremendous lack of information about children's rights, as well as more extensive information about our social environment, such as our free time and our choices of the courses we study.

Besides a lack of information, there is first and foremost a lack of access to information. There are excellent initiatives to explain children's rights to us and answer all our questions. . But often we do not know where to find these initiatives or where to find the information. Often the barriers to asking information are much too high.

In general, many more initiatives should be taken to make the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the articles of that Convention widely known to children and adults. It is important that these initiatives should reach as many children as possible, because it is often children from privileged families who are already informed to some extent who are the first to be given more information. Many other children miss out completely.

On this point, it is important to mention that we feel the government must make an effort to make the official report readable and comprehensible for children and young people.

**International solidarity**

We see problems all around us. Children in other countries that are much worse off than we are (child soldiers, poverty, child labor). We want to do something about it, but we cannot solve all the all by ourselves. We want the world to be informed about the situation of children who are experiencing problems, so that they no longer feel alone, and ultimately a solution can be found to improve their lives.

Adults can learn a lot about dealing with the problems from children. Cooperation is the key word in eradicating poverty and the problems in the world. We are often already getting involved at school or in our local community to collect money and make other children and adults aware of the problems that exist. But these initiatives remain limited to our school or the local authority. Government must help to take things a step further. In the same way as we work together with our

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3 Article 4 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 42 and Article 44 (paragraph 6) are discussed in this section. The three articles deal with generally-applicable rules, and the entry into force of the Convention. Article 4 deals with the implementation of rights (the obligation for States Parties to turn the rights enshrined in the Convention into reality). Article 42 deals with the obligation of States Parties to make the rights under the Convention widely known to children and adults. Article 44 paragraph 6 obliges States Parties to make the official reports available to everyone.

classmates, the government should cooperate with other countries in eradicating world poverty. We must join forces, children and adults, to ensure that all the rights of all children are respected. Because all children, everywhere in the world, have the right to food, drink, education, medicines, leisure time, etc.

We are disturbed by the problems that we see around us in the world. But we also feel small and powerless to do anything about those problems. We do not seem to get a grip on them. We call on the government to do something about the problems of the world, to help children worldwide.

In the rest of our report, this international dimension is given less coverage. But that is not because we feel it is unimportant, but rather because we feel powerless and seem to have more control over what goes on in our immediate environment. That is why we have chosen to talk mainly about that.

## **PART TWO: DEFINITION OF THE CHILD (Article 1)<sup>4</sup>**

### **I. Definition**

In the Convention on the rights of the child we read : a child is any person under 18 years of age. We find that it is very strange to call someone aged 13 or 17 a child. We usually refer to older children as young people. That is why we use both terms, children and young people, together in this report. But whether we are referring to children or young people, we actually intend that our proposal should apply to all children, to all persons under 18 years of age.

On the other hand, we do not believe that once you become 18, you become an adult overnight. Many problems experienced by 17 year-olds are the same as those facing an 18 year-old. We feel that children's rights are still important to 18 and 19 year-olds. Certainly on particular issues, such as the right to have space to play and relax, and the right to a fairly-paid holiday job. So a young person can be someone older than 18 years of age, but always younger than 25.

'The child' does not exist. There are enormous differences, starting with differences in age (someone who is 2 years old does not have the same needs and wishes as a 17 year-old, and a 10 year-old has different ideas from a 15 year-old). But it is not only age that plays a role. Differences in our social background, education, the school we attend, the neighbourhood where we live, all contribute to determining how someone feels and thinks.

In our report, we are not attempting to interpret the opinion of the child in Belgium, because that is impossible. We are trying to reflect a cross-section of how we, the children and young people involved to a greater or lesser extent in the project experience their social environment and the respect for our rights in Belgium.

### **II. Minimum legal age for the exercise of certain rights and obligations**

#### **1. Consultation of a lawyer without parents' consent**

If we have problems, or we have questions about our rights and obligations, we must be able to ask a competent person about these, without needing to ask for the consent of adults (for example our parents).

It is important that the information should be suitable for us, that we know where we can go for which information, and that the threshold for asking for information somewhere is kept as low as possible.

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<sup>4</sup> Article 1: a child is any person under 18 years of age, unless the legal age of majority is earlier by law.

We also have the right to privacy, so nobody needs to know what problems we have, and nobody should inform our parents without our consent about the information that we have asked for, or the help that we have requested.

For example, we should be able to consult a lawyer to find out more about our rights and obligations, without having to inform our parents.

## **2. Freedom to testify before the courts**

We call for earlier legal competence, as from 16 years of age, and a right for all children to testify in cases of divorce, marital disputes between adults and all other judicial proceedings where we are involved. This should considerably strengthen the legal position of us.

We think that decisions are often taken without our knowledge. We want more say, and have more of a feeling that we are really being listened to by our adviser, our lawyer or the judge in the juvenile court. At present, our opinion is too often sought via our lawyer. We can answer for ourselves.

When our opinion is sought, this is often done in the wrong way. Too many difficult questions are asked, we don't really understand the questions or too many different people ask us the same questions.

It is often not easy for us to talk about problems at home. The person who interviews us must be familiar with our social environment and trust us. And what we have said should not just be passed on.

We also find it unfortunate that if our opinion is sought, it is not really taken into account sufficiently. We sometimes have the feeling that juvenile court judges only ask our opinion because it is a requirement, but that they do not actually listen to what we have to say.

## **3. Deprivation of liberty - imprisonment**

Following a serious offence, we are entitled to a fair trial.

We must not be locked up in prison. Nobody under 18 years of age should be locked up in a prison for adults. Not even for one day. Adult prison is not suitable for locking us up. Because there we come into contact with crime and there is the risk that we will go further astray. We must be given another chance. We do not belong just among adults. Locking us up in a prison will not help us find the right path. We need more coaching to achieve that. There must be more space in enclosed institutions so that no child is locked up in an adult prison.

Where should a minor go after a serious offence? An enclosed institution or a juvenile prison could be a solution. Alternative sentences should also be considered.





## PART THREE: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

### I. Non-discrimination (Article 2)<sup>5</sup>

We do not wish to be discriminated against or bullied (by other children or adults) because of our social background, origin, skin colour, personal opinions, appearance or (good or bad) school results, religious beliefs, customs or disabilities. We do not want to be discriminated against because of our age. Often we are not taken seriously, adults do not trust us, and we cannot do certain things because of our age.

We want to have no discrimination at school. We see a number of ways to solve the problem of discrimination in education:

- provide mixed schools, with pupils and teachers of different backgrounds, so that schools do not become ghettos of children from good families and less gifted children;
- teachers must intervene more quickly when children discriminate against or taunt each other. Teachers must be trained for this. They must not vent their own frustrations on us;
- respect and friendship must be promoted at school.

We call for more tolerance from adults for us. We must be given the same respect as adults. We have the right to be different from adults.

The wealth of the multi-cultural Belgium must also be promoted. It must be endeavoured to achieve an open and tolerant society free of discrimination. A step in the right direction would be to organise more debates about multicultural society, teach foreign languages and encourage people to get to know foreign cultures, and promote contact between various cultural groups.

In our opinion, an overall solution to prevent discrimination is more meetings and contacts between people. Contact between people of different origins, with different religious beliefs, of various cultures, between young people and adults, will cause less discrimination.

These meetings should be able to take place in community centres. Therefore, we propose to set up a community centre in every municipality, where children and adults are welcome for various activities. Everyone would be able to get to know each other better, and this would dispel many prejudices. There could also be discussions about discrimination and about children's rights.

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<sup>5</sup> Article 2: Non-discrimination. (The principle that all rights are applicable to all children, without exception, and the obligation on the States Parties to protect children from all forms of discrimination. The State cannot infringe any right, and must take positive actions to promote all the rights).

## **II. Best interests of the child (Article 3)<sup>6</sup>**

Our interests must be taken into account much more. Today, decisions are often taken for us without consulting us. We are only rarely consulted about our opinion.

For every decision taken, first of all it should be considered what the consequences are for us, and if necessary, we should be consulted before a decision is taken.

We also request that the help that we can request should be more suitable to our needs. We would like to have easier access to help. More information needs to be available about the provision of assistance for us. Often, we do not know where to turn when we are looking for help. There should be a permanent help line available for young people. Day and night.

We also request more discreet assistance. Confidential information must remain confidential. If we have problems that we do not want to discuss with our parents, we must be able to call on advisers that we can trust.

But don't take us away from our friends, and particularly not when we have problems. If we have problems, it would be much easier to talk with friends and peers. Involve our friends or peers in the provision of help. Friendship as prevention. Therefore more young people should be trained as youth advisers<sup>7</sup>

When we do contact social services, sometimes we have the feeling that we are being listened to, but that nothing happens.

## **III. Right to development (Article 6)<sup>8</sup>**

We must be able to grow up (both physically and mentally) in a healthy environment (i.e. a roof over our head, but also an environment where we feel at ease, where we find love, where we can have fun), in an environment that is suitable for us. We must also have opportunities to develop all our capacities and qualities.

The government must also take measures to make our environment as liveable as possible.

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6 Article 3: The interests of the child (All actions relating to the child must take full account of his or her interests. States Parties are bound to provide adequate care when parents or other persons responsible fail to live up to their obligations).

7 Youth advisers are young people between 15 and 19 years of age, trained by the YAC (Young People's Advice Centre, a centre for providing assistance) and coached to support other people in their own environment (school, leisure time), to help them and if necessary introduce professional assistance.

8 Article 6: Survival and development (The inherent right to life, and the obligation of States Parties to guarantee the survival and development of the child).

## Healthy environment

We want more greenery, more nature, a more healthy environment.

We want more "beautiful" environments to live in.

Some neighbourhoods are dirty and shabby (litter, dog faeces, etc.). Something needs to be done about it:

- install more litter bins;
- teach people not to throw away their litter;
- with the school, we can clean up the woods quarterly.

Some homes are dilapidated. We can fight against this dilapidation:

- together with us, a new purpose can be found for empty or abandoned land;
- the environment can be brightened-up with paintings by children.

In the city, there is often too much noise. We want more quiet (peace) in neighbourhoods. Fewer cars should be driving around, and noise at night should be curbed.

We must ensure that we do not become intolerant. That means that we can get together sometimes in the evening in our neighbourhood, so that everyone complains and says "today's young people are too noisy!"

In the cities, there is too little green open space. We call for more parks, better maintained (landscaped) parks, more woods and flowers.

- Some sick trees should be cut down.
- For every tree that is cut down, a new tree should be planted.
- Combat deforestation.
- Nature should not disappear to make way for building houses.
- More flowerbeds should be planted near houses.

Air and water are polluted. In some neighbourhoods, you can barely breathe normally. We want clean air and pure water again (no acid rain).

- Less pollution.
- Plastic should no longer be incinerated.
- More filters should be fitted to factory chimneys.
- Exhaust gases from cars should be curbed.
- Use of cycles should be stimulated and subsidised.
- More sun, water and wind energy and alternative and environmentally friendly energy should be stimulated (double glazing, etc.).
- Less spraying: crop spraying should be controlled and organic food production must be stimulated.
- Everyone needs to make more effort to counter pollution.
- Less production of harmful packaging.

Together, we can do something about pollution. But for that to happen, everyone has to feel concerned, both young and old. More awareness campaigns about respect for the environment are necessary.

- More information campaigns (posters, etc.) to convince people to buy products with the least possible packaging.
- People should be encouraged to take their waste to recycling containers.
- More initiatives must be set up in schools to urge pupils and teachers to live in a more healthy and environmentally aware way (bread box campaign, nature walks, etc.).

Recycling must be stimulated and promoted more.

- More recycling centres should be built, but above all, more information is needed about where you can take your waste.
- Computers can be recycled.
- Recycling must be made more attractive (cheaper, simpler, better opening hours for recycling centres, better situated containers, etc.). It must be made as easy as possible to combat pollution. Then everyone will have to play their part.

The greenhouse effect and the hole in the ozone layer are enormous problems that we cannot deal with alone. A powerful response is needed.

- People who have no respect for nature must be severely punished, both with conventional fines and alternative penalties.
- There must be more cooperation between North and South concerning climate change and the greenhouse effect, because we cannot solve these problems alone. Everyone must cooperate and show solidarity.
- A compulsory energy tax could be one way of dealing with the problem.

## **Road Safety**

When we are talking about the right to development, we are not only calling for a healthier environment, but also a safer environment.

Our greatest concern is the lack of road safety. We want to advocate safer traffic:

- less use of cars;
- car-free Sundays;
- driving slower in residential areas (for example speed bumps, flower boxes so that drivers just cannot drive faster, otherwise that is what they will do);
- playing streets free of traffic during the holidays, where we can play safely;
- more car-pooling;
- more and safer, genuinely protected cycle paths;
- traffic lights at every school where they are necessary;
- volunteers (authorised supervisors) at every school to control the traffic;

- cars must be compelled to stop at pedestrian crossings. If they fail to stop, fines must be very high;
- we must be taught how to behave in traffic. Traffic lessons must become compulsory at school. But the lessons must be more dynamic and more fun than is currently the case. Just learning the highway code outside the school gives us the shivers, and then we just don't remember any of it.
- More people should use public transport. To achieve that, public transport must be made more attractive. Free public transport for everyone is the most radical solution. But it would certainly work. The buses should run at nights and at the weekends, otherwise we will have to be driven when we want to go somewhere. If an event is taking place, special buses and trains must be laid on.

### **Playground safety**

Where safety is concerned, we are also worried about playground safety. This can be improved by ensuring that we have our own place to have fun (because often there is a lack of safety because we are playing or hanging around in places that are unsuitable, or because older children are running around the playground intended for young children). We notice that efforts are often made to improve the safety of the youngest children, but young people also like hanging out around playgrounds, if we have nowhere else to go in the area.

### **IV. Respect for the views of the child (Article 12)<sup>9</sup>**

Our opinions are still not heard enough these days. It is true that there are many initiatives aimed at giving us the opportunity to express our opinion, but unfortunately, these initiatives are often inadequately known.

We appeal to adults: listen to us, let us give our opinion, and take account of what we have to say. We can learn from each other.

There are a lot of areas in which we want to participate. In society, in the local authority, as well as at school, in our family, in the media and in the legal system.

### **In Society**

To be able to participate in society, a lot still needs to happen.

- Policy makers must react to the proposals that we are making. They must get to know us, so that they can take decisions in our interest. Therefore, politicians must come to community centres and youth centres as well as schools, to talk to us about everything and to explain their views to us, and listen to what we have to say.

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<sup>9</sup> Article 12: The opinion of the child. (The right of each child to give his opinion and the right to the fact that this opinion should be taken into account in any matter or procedure that concerns the child).

- On our part, we need to be taught to participate. Our interest must be aroused in social issues, politics and culture. We must be supported, trained and informed about the importance of participating. This can be done at school by paying more attention to political education. For example, a youth parliament could help. We find it extremely important that this participation should first be organised at local level, and thereafter at national level.

### **At local level**

It appears to us to be ideal to start with a children's and young people's local council. From the local authority level, children could then sit in the children's provincial council, and then in the national children's parliament. But, we haven't reached that stage yet. We feel it is tremendously important to start at local level. In that way, it can be ensured that there is genuine input. And that we are not just sitting in one political body or another for show.

Whenever a decision is taken by the local authority, it should be examined what are the consequences for us. We must be able to make proposals, and get our views heard in the local authority area. The local authorities must listen to us, and allow us to contribute to building the future. We must be able to decide jointly about projects that are to be carried out in our neighbourhood (e.g. projects relating to road safety, playgrounds and meeting places).

### **At School**

At school too, we want to be more involved. We must be able to give our opinion about matters that concern us. We want to have our say about punishments, school and study trips, the volume of homework, classroom and playground equipment, the examination schedule, clothes and school uniform and the content of the lessons.

- We want to have our say at school via properly-functioning student councils. Student councils must have more than just advisory powers.
- We want our own school magazine, written by and for children and young people.
- We call for a student charter.
- The pupils must be represented in the participation council. Cooperation is tremendously important. The powers of the participation council must be extended.

### **Within our family**

Within our family too, we want to be heard more. But it is not always easy to give our own opinion. We do not want to hurt our parents if our opinions contradict theirs. We want to have our say when it is a matter of what clothes we wear, how our bedroom is furnished, how much pocket money we can use, where we go on

holiday, what child allowances should be used for. Please note that giving your opinion does not mean that our opinion suddenly becomes law. Ultimately, it will always be our parents who decide, we only ask that they should seek our opinion, and try and take it into account.

However, there are a number of crucial subjects which we do want to decide for ourselves, without our parents' involvement. For example, we would prefer to choose our own religious beliefs and which subjects to study at school.

A very specific example of input within the family concerns adoption. We feel that we, as soon as we can form an opinion, irrespective of our age, must give our consent in order to be adopted, and that when we are 12 years old and upwards, we should be able to examine the adoption dossier.

### **The media**

While we are on the subject of input and participation, we also want to consider the media. We do not feature anywhere near enough in the media. And when we do appear in the media, it is usually the subject of negative reporting and people talking about us, instead of us talking about ourselves. We want our opinions to be heard in the media, and be involved in developing children's programmes. We want children's programmes made by and for children.

### **Legal proceedings**

We also want to give our opinion in legal proceedings. For example, if our parents divorce, we should be asked who we want to live with, or who we want to visit. We call for a right to be heard for all children, regardless of age, in cases of divorce, marital disputes between adults and all other legal proceedings in which we are involved.

All children must be able to participate. That is why we ask that extra efforts should be made to allow weaker groups to participate too. It is often more difficult for disabled children to give their opinion. Foreigners are often listened to less. So for these groups, we ask for extra efforts to be made. So that all children can give their opinion and be heard.





## PART FOUR: CIVIL LIBERTIES AND RIGHTS

### **I. Name and nationality (Article 7)<sup>10</sup>**

As adoptive children, we have the right to know where we come from and what our real name is.

### **II. Freedom of expression (Article 13)<sup>11</sup>**

We must be free to offer our opinion. Therefore, we ask for an extra effort for channels through which we can do so. For example, a children's newspaper, a school newspaper, or children's TV news programme.

It is tremendously important that if we have the possibility of expressing our opinion, we should be able to do so freely. Unfortunately, censorship still exists, especially where school magazines are concerned.

Locally, there are quite a number of channels through which we can express our opinion: a local children's newspaper, a school magazine, etc. It is unfortunate that these initiatives do not exist everywhere, and that they are not publicised. We could learn a great deal from initiatives that already exist.

### **III. Access to information (Article 17)<sup>12</sup>**

We receive far too little information about what is going on around us. Therefore, it can be quite difficult to participate, because we do not know what the possibilities are. More information is the first step to greater participation and is one of the recurrent themes in our report.

We must be better informed about our rights. (A number of examples of how we can do this can be found in the section: Reactions to the Committee's Recommendations, point 8).

Information must be available for all of us, as well as affordable, accessible, usable and comprehensible.

Sometimes there is a profusion of information, and there are a large number of initiatives and activities, giving us the possibility of informing ourselves, expressing ourselves or seeking assistance. However, we often do not know where

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10 Article 7: Name and nationality. (The right to have a name from birth and acquire a nationality).

11 Article 13: Freedom of expression (see footnote 1)

12 Article 17: Access to appropriate information. (The role of the media in relation to disseminating information among children in a way that corresponds to moral welfare, with mutual knowledge and understanding between peoples and that respects the cultural background of the child. States Parties must take measures to encourage this, and to protect children from harmful material).

to turn, because all the information is too disparate or because the barriers to walking in somewhere and asking for information is still too high. That is why we ask that information should be brought even closer to us:

- more information should be disseminated via schools;
- always inform people we trust (for example, workers at the youth centre, youth leaders, etc.). They can inform us in turn.
- install info booths at school, at meeting places where we often come and where we can read the information at our ease in a familiar environment;
- lower the barriers for us to enter an information centre (for example a YIP<sup>13</sup>). For example, by visiting it together with a class.

## **Internet**

An important means for making information accessible to all is the Internet. We feel that it is important to give it closer consideration here.

It must be ensured that all of us have access to a computer and the Internet. We must have the same opportunities to prepare our IT (and other) lessons on a computer. How can we ensure this?

- Schools must help us to obtain licences on preferential terms for home use of the software packages that are on the curriculum.
- Expand bulk purchases of computers by the school to include us.
- More computers in the library and at school (where we can also work during breaks).
- We call for Internet access without call charges for us, because for the lessons, we may have to retrieve information on the Internet. The high level of telephone charges constantly brings us into conflict with our parents. Therefore we propose free dial-up to the Internet (for example, free surfing via an 0800 number during off-peak hours. Those who want to surf at faster speeds can continue to pay for it).
- Business PCs that are no longer used could be given to schools.
- Start up a PC recycling shop.
- More subsidies for schools for the purchase of computers, software packages and re-training of teachers.
- Subsidies for less well-off families to buy a computer.
- Schools must be equipped with modern infrastructure and devote more attention to IT. Young people must learn to work with computers and the Internet at school (and teachers need extra training for this purpose).
- Different schools could collaborate and invest in the building of a computer room that is also accessible to pupils during the holidays.

If it is ensured that we can have access to the Internet, we can help older people along the information superhighway. Give us free Internet and we will retrieve the necessary information for grandma and grandpa.

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13 YIP: (Youth Information Point)

The Internet is a fantastic source of information, but it also offers a lot of information that is unsuitable for us. However, we find that the Internet offers too many advantages to forbid us to have access to it (there is a vast amount of information on it, and we can contact children from all over the world, etc.). It is not really possible to control information on the Internet. However, we do wish to be protected up to a certain point from particular types of information that we may encounter.

- Therefore we call for Internet lessons at school, so that we can learn our way around the Internet, and not come across sites unnecessarily that we do not want to see.
- Our parents should inform us about pornographic sites.
- Family filters should be able to be installed against pornographic sites.

Most of us feel it is important that all children should have access to the Internet and computers. Because it is a tremendous information source. However, we must be careful that we are not constantly sitting at our computers, otherwise we will turn into computer nerds and lose contact with the real world.

### **Media**

As far as the media are concerned, we call for positive reporting about what we do, and want to have our say. We are often portrayed too negatively in the media. We want to see more positive news, and we also want to hear the opinions of other children, not just adults.

Therefore, we want news reporting for adults to be more positive about us, and we call for our own news reporting. We want more appropriate information, by and for children and young people. There are already many excellent initiatives which should receive more support and be emulated in other places.

There is too much violence on television. Films shown should be less violent, and the broadcasting of violent images should be banned.

On radio too, we want a specific channel. A channel by and for young people (and at school, we should be able to listen to it at lunchtime).

We also find that the media are too negative in coverage of foreigners, which contributes to intolerance. So we call not only for more positive reporting about children, but also about foreigners. There should be more positive reporting about different cultures and immigrants should be allowed more say in the media.

#### **IV. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 14)<sup>14</sup>**

As far as freedom of choice is concerned, two subjects are of vital importance to us: choice of religious beliefs and choice of subjects to study at school. Religious beliefs is something that we must be able to decide completely independently, without our parents intervening or imposing a faith. We must also be free to practise that faith.

#### **V. Freedom of association and of peaceful assembly (Article 15)<sup>15</sup>**

We want to set up projects ourselves, and want to be able to form our own little groups, and even set up a non-profit body.

#### **VI. Protection of privacy (Article 16)<sup>16</sup>**

Privacy is of enormous importance. We are entitled to our own space, our own thoughts and our own personal privacy.

We have the right to privacy. In a specific area of the house, which must be respected by our parents. We have the right to our own life. Nobody, not even our parents, should be allowed to pry into our correspondence, or read our diary.

We have the right to our own intellectual space. We do not want our parents to over-protect us.

Even when we take up assistance, we are entitled to privacy. We must be able to ask the relevant bodies for help, without our parents being informed immediately.

#### **VII. The right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Article 37a)<sup>17</sup>**

We must not be locked up in prison.

We must not be beaten, not even by our parents.

We do not want tyrannical teachers, or teachers who will break us physically or mentally.

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14 Article 14: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (see footnote 1)

15 Article 15: Freedom of association (see footnote 1).

16 Article 16: Protection of privacy. (The right to be protected against interference with privacy, family, home and correspondence, or attacks on honour or reputation).

17 Article 37a: Torture and deprivation of liberty (No child may be subject to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age.

## PART FIVE: FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AND ALTERNATIVE CARE

### I. Parental guidance (Article 5)<sup>18</sup>

The family is of enormous importance to us. Without family, we cannot live or grow up. This is a very important subject for us, and we have a lot to say about it.

We are entitled to a family: we must be able to live in familiar surroundings, with people we trust. We must be able to grow up in our family, in a house, not on the street. We have a right to love. The right to give and receive love.

We ask parents to make more time for us. It is not normal that parents cannot spare any time for their children, because they have to work too much.

We want our parents to take good care of us, but of course, we must also "take care of" our parents.

When conflicts arise at home, we sometimes want to call in help, but we do not always find that help easily. Mainly for small problems, it is difficult to find help. And there is too little help that is permanently available. A permanent emergency number should be available for young people.

If we can no longer stay at home, it should first be examined whether we can join a foster family, rather than being placed in an institution. Because a family remains important to us.

Although there are often conflicts at home, and for some of us it is no longer possible to live at home, life without our parents is very difficult. We need our parents. We still love our parents and brothers and sisters, despite the problems. We miss our parents, their love and their appreciation.

If there are serious problems in the family, children from 16 years of age upwards should be able to go and live on their own in a communal arrangement with other young people. The local authority should make dwellings available for this purpose. The young person should be able to express the wish to live on their own, but ultimately, an independent body should decide whether or not this is really necessary (so that young people do not leave home too early).

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18 Article 5: Parental guidance

Guidance by parents and the evolving capacities of the child. (The people with whom you grow up, your home, your family, and the atmosphere in which you live every day, are very important for every child. Parents have prime responsibility for this. But States Parties must support them in the task of bringing up children, and ensure that parents are able to do it properly).

## **II. Common parental responsibilities for the upbringing of the child (Article 18)<sup>19</sup>**

If our parents are happy, we are happy.

Therefore, it is important that our parents should have work, in order to help us grow up and have a decent upbringing. Parents have the right to honest work (not stealing) and work that leaves them time to devote to us.

Parents are often unsure about the way in which they are bringing us up. Therefore, support for child-raising is desirable (financial, logistical and psychological). This support must be entirely free, so that all families can make use of it. The threshold must be kept as low as possible so that parents are not afraid to ask for advice.

There should also be extra support for young couples with children and for large families.

## **III. Separation from parents (article 9)<sup>20</sup>**

Unfortunately, we are increasingly faced with cases of divorce. And it is not always easy to cope with such a break-up. It is important that in case of divorce, our opinion is also asked, and that our opinion is taken into account. It should also be taken into account that it is tremendously difficult for us to choose to live with one parent. Therefore, it is very important that the person who listens to us should really listen, and know how to deal with children, and be able to understand our world. It must also be ensured that if our opinion is sought, this is done in good time. Once everything has been decided, if our opinion is only sought at that stage, there is not really much we can say. Involve us from the beginning.

Even after the divorce, we must be able to continue to see both our parents.

What can we do to prevent divorce?

- Adults should not get married so quickly, and live together first.
- Parents should think of their children first before they start fighting.
- If we ensure that children are happy first and have no problems, parents will also have fewer fights and be less inclined to divorce.
- Some people get on well with each other while there are no children, but start fighting once they have children. These people would be better not to have children.

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19 Article 18: Parental responsibilities. (The principle that both parents share the prime responsibility for bringing up their children, and States Parties should support them in this task).

20 Article 9: Separation from parents. (The child's right to live with his/her parents, unless it is judged in accordance with the applicable proceedings that this is irreconcilable with his/her interests. The rights of all concerned (including the child) to take part in these proceedings. The right to maintain contact with both parents, if the child lives apart from one of the parents).

#### **IV. Family reunification (Article 10)<sup>21</sup>**

As unaccompanied children, we ask the government to help us to trace our parents in the country where we come from.

#### **V. Recovery of maintenance for the child (Article 27§4)**

It is not always easy for our parents to take care of us if they do not have enough money. Everything costs so much. Our parents should receive more (financial) support so that they can take care of us, so that we have enough to eat, have clean clothes and a decent home.

#### **VI. Children deprived of a family environment (Article 20)<sup>22</sup>**

If we cannot stay at home any longer, we first have to see whether we can be taken into a foster family, before being placed in institutional care. A family remains very important to us.

Although there are often conflicts at home, and living at home is no longer possible for some of us, life without our parents is difficult. We still need our parents. We still love our parents and brothers and sisters, despite the problems at home. We miss our parents, their love and their appreciation.

Living in an institution is not always pleasant, but sometimes it is better. If you can see your parents from time to time, that also makes living in an institution easier.

There should be more social workers so that we receive more attention in the institution and so that they can work on our problems. Our social workers should have less paperwork.

There should be more institutions. At present, they are overcrowded, and there are long waiting lists. There are still too many young people with problems, who cannot be helped because there is no room.

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21 Article 10: Family reunification. The right of children and their parents to leave any country and enter their own country with a view to reunification or to maintain the parent-child relationship.

22 Article 20: Protection of children outside their family. (The duty of States Parties to offer special protection to children who cannot live in their family environment, and to ensure that they can call on appropriate child fostering alternatives or placement in an institution. In doing this, the cultural background of the child should be taken into account).

## **VII. Adoption (Article 21)**<sup>23</sup>

For us adopted children, growing up in our own family is of enormous importance. However, adoption may be a good thing, because it enables us to have opportunities that we might not otherwise have.

We believe that we should be able to give our consent to the adoption.

We all have the right to know our parents. Therefore, we must have the right to go searching for our roots once we are 12 years old. However, we need some support in this.

The resources need to be made available so that all children can take advantage of this right, even those whose adoptive parents do not want to pay the costs involved. Therefore, a fund must be set up by the government, whether or not this is supported by adoptive parents.

We want to be able to inspect our adoption dossiers. Often this is difficult, because of the obscure relationship with the adoption centre. Therefore, we call for an adoption register to be set up in addition to the register of births (also in our country of origin). This adoption register must be managed by an independent government department.

## **VIII. Illicit transfer and non-return (Article 11)**<sup>24</sup>

In our opinion, the most important problem is not abduction, but divorce. The fact that our parents are no longer together and that we have to do without one of them.

We have a right to contact with both our parents and want to maintain contact with our Mum and Dad. However difficult that may be, due to distance, cultural differences or tension between our parents.

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23 Article 21: Adoption. (In countries where adoption is recognised, it can only be practised in the interests of the child, with all the necessary guarantees for the child, and with the approval of the competent authorities).

24 Article 11: Illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad. On this subject, the abduction of children, we have not included any information, because we did not receive any reactions from children facing this problem.



**IX. Abuse and neglect (Article 19)<sup>25</sup>, including physical and psychological recovery and reintegration into society (article 39)<sup>26</sup>**

We say no to all forms of violence. We do not want violence at school or violence at home. Problems should be solved by dialogue, not fighting. There should be more campaigns against violence (for example at school, in the media).

Especially at school, more effort must be made to put a stop to violence (at school, as well as in society in general).

- Special campaigns should be started in school to make violence a subject that can be discussed, and to counter violence at school (for example, anti-bullying campaigns). At school, non-violent solutions to conflicts must be taught.
- The teacher must not vent his/her own frustrations on pupils. The teacher should visit a psychiatrist so that he/she can talk problems over, and not take them out on the pupils.

We see far too much violence on television. Less violent films should be shown and the broadcasting of violent images should be banned.

No cruelty to children! No child abuse!

We call on adults to treat us with respect and protect us against abuse and cruelty.

- Cruelty and child abuse must be severely punished.
- We must not be beaten. Not even by our parents.
- Sexual abuse must be more effectively detected, notified and dealt with. We often do not know where to turn for help.
- In cases of incest, the provision of help must be organised independently from the parents.
- General practitioners must watch for problems of sexual abuse.
- Contact between fellow-sufferers is of paramount importance. Victims of sexual abuse who have been able to deal with their problem positively should be brought in to help.
- The perpetrators also have a right to receive help. More work should be done on young abusers.

We do not know enough about who to contact when we are faced with abuse! We do not know exactly what to do. Therefore, more information should be provided, especially via channels with which all children have contact (school and media). At school, more work needs to be done to detect and combat the problem of child abuse.

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<sup>25</sup> Article 19: Protection against abuse and neglect (The obligation for States Parties to protect children against any form of abuse by parents or other persons responsible for the care of the child, and in this regard, take preventive measures and set up treatment programmes.

<sup>26</sup> Article 39: Recovery and reintegration. (The duty for States Parties to ensure that children that have been victims of armed conflicts, torture, neglect, abuse or exploitation receive appropriate treatment with a view to recovery and reintegration into society).

- Special training is necessary for teachers, linked with additional in-service training via the Ministry.
- Education authorities and school management should receive training about sexual abuse of children and young people.
- In the school policy plan, there must be measures relating to this issue.
- CPCs (Centres for Pupil Counselling) could play an important role in detecting problems and referring the victims to the appropriate authorities.

**X. Periodic review of placement (Article 25)<sup>27</sup>**

We want to receive more and clearer information. Such as how long we will have to stay in the institution and exactly why we are there. Who decided that we should be placed in care and why. We find it a pity that everything is decided without us being consulted, without asking our opinion and without informing us.

We also want to know what is in the reports that our social workers hold about our condition. Because if there are any mistakes in there, we must be able to say so.

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<sup>27</sup> Article 25: Periodic review of placement. (The right of a child who is placed by the State Party for care, protection or treatment, to a regular review of all aspects of the placement).

## **PART SIX: HEALTH AND WELFARE**

### **I. Survival and development (Article 6)<sup>28</sup>**

We want to grow up in a safe and healthy environment. Road safety and environment must be priorities for the government.

In addition, we call for safety to be improved in playgrounds and on playing fields. (both points are dealt with in Part 3: II.)

### **II. Disabled children (Article 23)<sup>29</sup>**

As disabled children, we often have a hard time in Belgium. We are discriminated against, we find it hard to integrate because the infrastructure is not adapted to our needs, etc. We should be given many more opportunities in society and society should be more aware of our problems.

If we want, we should be able to go to an "ordinary school". More resources should be made available to provide extra support and infrastructure to integrate disabled children into school. (For example, sign-language interpreters for deaf children).

We are entitled to support. For example, we call for more sign-language interpreters for the deaf and hard of hearing, suitable infrastructure for wheelchair-users and public faxes and deaf and phones for the deaf and hard of hearing.

We must have more opportunities to integrate into society. A number of changes need to be made:

- everyone must learn social skills at school;
- people need to be receptive towards people who are different;
- inaccessible buildings must be included in the list of building regulation infringements, and fined;
- in teacher training and refresher courses for doctors, more attention must be paid to the detection of problems of people with disabilities;
- more financial support for initiatives aimed at people with disabilities;

As disabled children, we are given too few opportunities for creative expression. Therefore, we call for a sheltered workshop for music and the visual arts to be set up, where we can express our creativity.

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<sup>28</sup> Article 6: see footnote 8.

<sup>29</sup> Article 23: Disabled children. (The right of disabled children to special care, education and training, intended to help them achieve the greatest possible independence and lead a full and active life in society).

The media should take greater account of the problems facing us.

- In the media, more information must be given about the problems of disabled people.
- Specific solutions must be sought so that we have access to all information (for example, a small box inset into the TV picture with simultaneous sign-language interpretation for the deaf and hard of hearing).

### **III. Health and medical services (Article 24)<sup>30</sup>**

We want safe and high-quality food. Therefore, controls on food must be made tighter.

We call for medical care (both physical and psychological) for all children who need it, for an affordable price.

We call for appropriate treatment and information for sick children. If we are sick, we want to feel a little bit at home even in hospital. And we don't want doctors only to talk to Mum and Dad, but to tell us how our health is doing.

We call for cheaper prescription medicines. Over-the-counter medicines must become more expensive (to counter addiction and habituation).

We want to be protected from harmful influences (mobile phone masts, smoke)

- more no-smoking areas in public places;
- no mobile phone masts near playgrounds.

AIDS is one of the deadliest diseases in the world today, and costs the lives of millions of children every year. The problem must be made easier to discuss in Belgium, and young people should be better informed about the dangers of this deadly disease. Installing more condom vending machines could be a first step, but above all, we think that more information is necessary to tackle the problem.

At school, there is still far too little sex education. More and better (modern) sex education should be one of the priorities in health care. Sex education at school should be given by experienced instructors (for example the school doctor). And we think it is important that every subject that comes up is discussed in an open manner, so that sex education not only remains limited to biology, but that there is also discussion about sexual contact, relationships, etc.

There should be more work on the principle of peer education. We want to receive information and education from our peers.

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30 Article 24: Health and medical services. (The right to the highest possible standard of health, and the right to access to health care and medical services, with particular emphasis on the development of primary care and preventive health care, to health information and education and the reduction of infant mortality).

**IV. Social security and child-care services and facilities (Article 26, Article 18 para. 3)<sup>31</sup>**

We would like to give our opinion about the quality of child care facilities outside school. At present, it is often only our parents who are consulted about whether we feel happy with after-school facilities. We think that is a pity.

We like day nurseries because of the toys we can play with there, and the friends that we have there. But it is not nice when our friends have gone home, and we are left behind. We want the care not to be too strict and that we should not be given any extra tasks or assignments. We also want to be able to choose which games we play.

We feel it is important that the staff should listen to us, talk to us, use humour and care for us. A bit like at home.

We also want to give our opinion on how child allowances are used. We feel, for example, that our parents should not use child allowances to buy alcohol, so that we don't get a decent meal to eat, and there is no money left over.

**V. Standard of living (Article 27)<sup>32</sup>**

In Belgium, we don't all have the same chances of survival and development. Too many children live in poverty. Something must be done about it.

- Poor children must receive as much attention as rich ones.
- We can organise collections of clothes, food and toys.
- Sports centres can lend equipment free of charge so that all children can play sports.
- We call for more equal pay, lower taxes, more child allowances and social equality.

We, but also our parents often do not know what welfare facilities exist, and where we should go. Better information is needed. The barriers for asking help should be lowered as much as possible.

Fighting poverty not only involves material welfare, but also the quality of life.

We conceal our poverty because otherwise we would be bullied and teased. So we cannot reveal our true selves. And that is a pity.

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31 Article 26: The right of children to enjoy social security cover. Article 18 para. 3: States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible.

32 Article 27: Standard of living. (The right of the child to enjoy an adequate standard of living, the parents' prime responsibility for ensuring this, and the duty of States Parties to ensure that this responsibility can be and is fulfilled, if necessary by recovering maintenance.

It is not always easy for our parents to look after us, if they don't have enough money. Everything costs so much. Our parents must try to meet our basic needs (food, clothing), but they should not be expected to find money for everything that we want.

## PART SEVEN: EDUCATION, LEISURE AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

### I. Education, including vocational training and careers guidance (Article 28)<sup>33</sup>

We spend a lot of time behind our school desks, which means that the theme of education is close to our hearts, and it is very important to us that education should meet our needs. In general, we call for a better quality of education, a greater say at school, and ask that schools should disseminate more information about all kinds of (input) activities that already exist. We feel that there is a lack of information, and in our opinion, school is the right place to inform young people. Because that is the way to reach everyone.

All of us must go to school. Additional attention must be paid to children in Belgium who opt out. We are thinking of the following groups: children of immigrants, children with disabilities, illegal refugees and the Fourth World. Sometimes they cannot go to school, or they do not receive the same quality of education as many other children.

We must receive a comprehensive and high-quality education. More attention needs to be paid to disadvantaged groups, more financial resources and better trained teachers.

There needs to be a solution to dropping-out of school. Perhaps one should consider that we should be able to leave school before 18 years of age. But we must ensure that when we leave school earlier we do not subsequently regret not finishing our schooling. There are also intermediate solutions such as part-time education to partially solve the problem. If school is made more attractive for us, and if we have more of a say, we would be less keen to leave school.

Adequate help should be provided after school hours when doing homework (if our parents have no time). There are already many initiatives, but unfortunately, these are not familiar to all of us. The school must therefore disseminate more information about the initiatives that already exist, such as the "homework line", Teleblok and web sites for help with homework.

School must be made more attractive for us. This is closely related to the next point. If you give a greater say to pupils, school will become more attractive for us.

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<sup>33</sup> Article 28: Right to education. (The right of the child to education and States Parties' duty to ensure that at least primary education is free and compulsory. The organisation of free secondary education must be encouraged. Discipline must be maintained at school in a way that reflects the child's human dignity. Therefore, corporal punishment must be avoided, and other forms of education should be sought. The Convention urges that every child should be able to attend the various types of education. That education must be free of charge. If it is not, the parents should receive financial support from the States Party).

It is very important that we should be able to participate in school. We must be able to give our opinion at school, and contribute to decisions about things that concern us. Every school should have a student council and it must be ensured that it actually has a say in what happens at school. More information should be disseminated about what the purpose of the student council is, and the pupils and teachers involved must be able to obtain appropriate training, so that the student council really works properly. The pupils should also be represented in the participation council. (This point was already dealt with comprehensively in Part Three, point IV).

We call for adequate financial resources for education: for better classrooms, for more playgrounds, for computers, for toys, for proper showers and toilets and to train good teachers.

School must be free for all of us. Activities like swimming, skating, nature field classes must be free so that all children can take part. If the school does not have the funds to pay for everything itself, then other solutions should be sought. Such as:

- making the existence of social funds more widely known (so that parents can call the school management to ask whether a subsidy can be paid for travel expenses. Of course, discretion is very important!)
- study trip bursaries;
- parents who only pay a token contribution;
- school books should also be cheaper. The idea is to introduce a national lending system for books at school, for which a modest amount must be paid.

We want less homework. So that there is time to relax and play. We also want appropriate homework, so that we can really learn to work independently and we really learn something more. So it would be good to reduce homework but in our opinion, it would make no sense to eliminate it completely in some school years, because that would only increase the gap in the following year when we do have homework.

We call for better teachers. Teachers must keep up with the times: teachers who know how to deal with young people, who know the world that young people live in, not tyrannical teachers, and not racist teachers. The schools inspectorate should not only be paying attention to the content of lessons and teaching methods, but should also pay attention to the relationship between teachers and pupils. This would enable them to check whether teachers are really up to the mark. Our teachers must pass on more information about all sorts of initiatives that already exist. The teacher must ensure that we know where to go for more information. Teachers must have an opportunity to vent their psychological frustrations about problems at school or at home, so that they do not take it out on us. Why



shouldn't a psychologist visit the school every month to be available to any teacher who wants to "let off steam"?

We call for greater collaboration between schools. School cooperatives should be set up (for example to cooperate on setting up a computer room for all). Together, many more activities can be organised.

We want more sport at school.

We call for greater equality at school. No discrimination against pupils for whatever reason. Teachers and pupils must have the same rights. There must be equality between the various types of education. Awareness campaigns pointing out the equivalence between General Secondary Education, Technical Secondary Education and Vocational Secondary Education (at present, people look down on pupils who study TSE and VSE). We also want equivalence of diplomas, and the right to a diploma in teaching the deaf.

Less bullying at school! Teachers must pay more attention to children who are being bullied. There are many initiatives to combat bullying, but they are often not very well known. An example is the children and young people's telephone, green teachers, games and campaigns at school to counter bullying, godfathers and godmothers (pupils from the sixth year who mentor someone from the first year). We can also contact the Centres for Pupil Counselling, but the step to a CPC (for all sorts of problems) is often still too much. These people usually do not know the pupils, and trust is often not that great.

School must also provide information about what one can do after secondary school: what if we go to work, where can we continue to study? Periods of work experience can be a way of preparing for work, but it is important that there should be more controls over work experience, and that trainees really are learning something and not being exploited.

Finally, we want to point out that for us, contact with our peers at school is crucial. The reason why we like going to school is first and foremost related to the friends that we have there.

## **II. Aims of education (Article 29)<sup>34</sup>**

We feel that too little time at school is devoted to discussions on current affairs and practical lessons. The content of lessons must be adapted. Political education must be organised. We want to learn what democracy is, and peace education should be included in the curriculum. Therefore, we call for:

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34 Article 29: Purpose of education (The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. Furthermore the education should teach the children respect. (Respect for human rights, for their parents, for other children and for the environment).

- more current affairs at school;
- more practice-oriented lessons;
- attention to new media (adapt teaching package, pupils often know more about new media than their teachers);
- leave more scope for creativity;
- teach more social skills.

More attention also needs to be paid to environmental awareness and road safety. In that regard, it is important that not only the content of the lessons should be appropriate, but also the way in which the lessons are taught.

### **III. Leisure, recreation and cultural activities (Article 31)<sup>35</sup>**

We would like more leisure time and more opportunities to have fun, develop, and just do things during that leisure time.

We call for space to play: more space to play in, to meet each other, to play sports. We call for more playgrounds, more public open space, more forests (in which we can play), and more youth centres. We call for a play street during the summer (with a ban on cars). Why not leave the school playground open during holidays? In every local authority area, there should be an informal meeting and recreation room for us (e.g. a youth centre, youth cafe, children's cafe). We also want more benches in the city, on which we can sit and chat and have fun.

We call for more security when playing. There should be controls on the safety of playgrounds. The streets must also be safer (so that we can play in the street): traffic is a problem, but so are assaults, vandalism, harassment and drugs.

We call for cheaper leisure facilities:

- affordable prices for us (for swimming pools, cinemas, sports clubs);
- one day per month when the cinema, theatre and museums are free;
- more subsidies for youth centres;
- for parents experiencing financial hardship, a token amount should be charged.

We call for greater choice: more sport for girls, more activities during the holidays, more activities close to home, more new sports. The municipal administration must stimulate new trends in sport among organisers, or organise them itself.

We call for more information about the existing offering. It is up to the local authority and schools to disseminate that information.

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<sup>35</sup> Article 31: The child's right to leisure, recreation and participation in cultural and artistic events.

We want cleaner playgrounds. It would be better to clean up the existing playgrounds first, before the new ones are added. We must be involved in designing the playgrounds.

We ask for more time to play and relax. For that reason, we want less homework, so that there is more time left to play.

We also have the right to "do nothing", "hang around", and "fool around".

We want more support from the municipal administration for youth associations and youth centres.

- The accommodation situation must be reviewed.
- There must be financial and design support for the building work.
- Free and flexible use of municipal accommodation and meeting rooms.
- Free rental of municipal equipment.
- Free camp transport.
- Subsidy arrangements for youth centres.

Young people must have the opportunity to participate actively in cultural activities. There is a need for more diversity and creativity and events specially designed for us (low admission charges, more local initiatives, no initiatives late at night).

We want better facilities for when we go out, i.e.:

- better and free public transport. Buses and trains that also run at night;
- more meeting rooms and party facilities;
- sufficient attention to music;
- tolerance and accessibility for all.

We call for more music facilities: free stages, pop centre.  
Information provision, more rehearsal facilities.

We call for more say and participation where our leisure time is concerned.

We want to organise activities for ourselves. So we would like a little support. (Financial support, equipment and infrastructure that we can use, coaching where necessary).

We want more say where our leisure time is concerned. For example when laying out a new playground. We want the local authority to listen to our wishes when our leisure time is concerned.

Some children find it more difficult than others to take part in many activities, as do children who live in more remote areas. For that reason, schools in the south of Belgium and in rural areas should be given a special budget to organise

excursions, to attend performances, visit other schools, etc. Another proposal is the organisation of a videoconference to enable young people to communicate with each other.

Above all, there should be more solidarity between the generations. When we are having fun or just hanging around in the city, adults are far too quick to view us as troublemakers or riff-raff. That is why young people and adults should get to know each other better. Then adults will see that we are just having a bit of fun and nothing more.

That is why we want a meeting and recreation centre in every local authority area, where young people and adults can take part in activities, in order to get to know and appreciate each other more. The authorities should allow us to have access to buildings that are unoccupied or neglected and which we can clean up ourselves to use as a community centre.

## PART EIGHT: SPECIAL PROTECTIVE MEASURES

### I. Children in emergency situations

#### 1. Children with refugee status (Article 22)<sup>36</sup>

As refugee children, we should have the same rights as Belgian children. For example, the right to education and the right to medical care, to recreation and training. We need a roof over our heads, we have to be able to attend school and visit the doctor when we are sick. The government must develop a decent policy for providing relief and assistance to refugee children. How can it do this?

- Belgian policy on refugees and the administrative procedures must be tested in all areas in comparison with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- The procedure to be recognised as a refugee must be drastically shortened, but not at the expense of quality.
- More account must be taken of the fact that what is being decided is the fate of people and children, not just numbers. A humane policy is essential.
- Refugees' stay in the local authority areas to which they are assigned must be made more attractive. This could be done by, for example, setting up a mentoring system, providing better housing, running awareness campaigns for the indigenous population, offering free language and skills courses and giving tax breaks to businesses that recruit recognised refugees.
- Broadly disseminated information to local people, so that they are not "afraid" of the refugees in their community.
- Asylum seekers whose application has been rejected should be detained as soon as possible in secure centres, and repatriated as soon as possible. During that process, humane treatment must be explicitly provided. Here, international non-governmental organisations such as the Red Cross could oversee the operations (both on the return journey and on arrival in their country of origin).

Unaccompanied minors seeking asylum should receive extra attention in policy, and be given special treatment. (You can find more information on this point at the beginning of the report under the reactions of children and young people to the Committee's recommendations).

The increasing flows of refugees form a major problem all over the world. This problem must be addressed, and Belgium must play a pioneering role, both in domestic and foreign policy.

- There must be more international cooperation and Belgian policy must be fully coordinated with European and UN policy.

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<sup>36</sup> Article 22: Refugee children. (Children who are considered as refugees, or who have applied for refugee status, should enjoy particular attention. States Parties have the duty to cooperate with the competent authorities which offer such protection and support).

- In the first place, efficient material and financial aid must be provided in the country of origin. The causes of the refugee flow must be addressed: the inequalities between Western and poorer countries must be eliminated. This can be done by supporting local economies, getting a grip on the arms trade, and introducing the Tobin tax<sup>37</sup>.
- The distribution plan is a good principle, but it has to be implemented in a social Europe. Agreements will have to be reached between European member states about how many refugees each member state takes. The number of economic migrants that each member state takes, on the other hand, must be proportionate to the amount donated to development aid (So the less is spent on development aid, the more a country is bound to invest in relief for refugees at home).

2. **Children in armed conflicts (Art. 38)<sup>38</sup>, including physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration (Art. 39)<sup>39</sup>**

We must not be used in the army, or be conscripted under 18 years of age. We call for a worldwide ban on child soldiers.

We don't want any more wars, so that all children can live in peace, all over the world.

Therefore, we urge countries to pursue dialogue and cooperation, by committing ourselves resolutely to disarmament, and endeavouring so that money destined for arms should be used for peaceful purposes.

At school, non-violent solutions to conflicts should be taught.

The arms industry must be cut back.

Politicians must sit around the table and agree, instead of fighting out their disputes with weapons.

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37 The Tobin tax is a tax on international currency speculation (the name comes from Mr. Tobin who thought up the idea). The revenue of this tax would be used to mitigate world poverty. Belgium must seek political support within the European Union for the introduction of this tax.

38 Article 38: Armed conflict: States Parties' duty to respect the prevailing rules of humanitarian law and have them respected. The principle that no child under 15 years of age should be directly involved in hostilities or be conscripted into the army and that all children who are victims of armed conflicts should be able to enjoy protection and care).

39 Article 39: Recovery and social integration.. (States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts).

## II. Children in conflict with the law

### 1. Administration of juvenile justice (Article 40)<sup>40</sup>

There are a number of specific problems that face children and young people.

Young people do not understand the language used in the administration of justice. Society is based on rules, but young people do not know the law.

We think that far too often, decisions are taken without consulting us. We want more say, but have the feeling that we are not being listened to by our advisers, our lawyers or the juvenile court judge. Too often, our opinion is sought via our lawyers. We are perfectly capable of answering for ourselves.

If our opinion is asked, that is often done in the wrong way. Too many, too difficult questions are asked, we do not really understand the questions, or too many different people ask us the same questions.

We also find it a pity that when our opinion is asked, it is still barely taken into account. We sometimes have the feeling that the juvenile courts only ask our opinion because they are forced to, but actually they are not listening to what we have to say.

We usually see ourselves as victims, although we are actually perceived as criminals. Society's perception of security is not very clear.

The police sometimes behave in a very racist manner. In checks on the street, the always pick out the immigrants. There is a lot of verbal harassment. Beatings are part of the routine.

We see a number of possible solutions to these problems:

- Treat us like children!
- There is a blatant requirement for specialised and trained juvenile lawyers and juvenile judges.
- Earlier legal competence from the age of 16 and a right to a hearing for all children in divorce cases and marital conflicts between adults and all other legal proceedings where young people are involved.
- The system of alternative sentences must be extended.

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<sup>40</sup> Article 40: Dealing with youth crime. (The right of children suspected of or convicted of committing a crime to their human rights and, in particular, to enjoy all the aspects of a fair trial, including legal counsel and other assistance in preparing and presenting their defence. The principle of the use of judicial procedures and placement in a custodial institution must be avoided whenever this is possible and appropriate.

- The police must learn to respect us and distinguish between the guilty and young people who are just walking down the street. This should be a special part of their training.
- A police officer who harasses someone should be tried just like anyone else. We are worth just as much as other people.
- We should be able to call on the services of a lawyer, free of charge.

2. **Children who are deprived of their liberty, including any form of detention, imprisonment or placement in custodial settings (Article 37)**<sup>41</sup>

We must not be locked up in prison. Adult prison is not suitable for locking us away.

If we can no longer stay at home, it must first be examined whether we could not join a foster family, rather than being placed in an institution. Because a family is important to us.

Living in an institution is not always pleasant, but it is sometimes better. If we can see our parents from time to time, that makes living in an institution easier.

Visiting is tremendously important to us. We think that it is important that we should be able to receive visits, and be able to visit our friends and family. We understand that there are rules for this which we have to follow. But we feel it is unfortunate that these rules are often so strict. Certainly if there are friends who want to come and visit us. Or if we want to go somewhere with our friends. Then we have to apply weeks before, and it is not always allowed.

We also attach great importance to privacy. We want to be able to receive visits in our own rooms, not in a visiting room so that we can have a little privacy. We want to be able to make phone calls undisturbed, and not have the feeling that someone is listening in to our conversation. We want to be able to write and receive letters undisturbed. And we also want to know what is written in reports about us. Because if there are mistakes in them, we have to be able to say so. We want to have a specific area within the institution where we can be alone if we want. It would be great if the staff would knock on the door before entering our room.

We want to decide for ourselves what we do with our pocket money. We find it tedious to have to prove all our purchases with cash register tickets. Because you have to explain in the shop why you want the cash register ticket, and you have to explain that you live in an institution.

We would like to receive more, clear information. Such as how long we will have to stay in an institution, and exactly why we are there. Who decided that we should

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<sup>41</sup> Article 37: see footnote 17.



be placed there and why. We feel it is a pity that everything is decided without consulting us, without asking our opinion and without informing us.

We would like to have a greater say in the institution. For example, about the type of activities that we can do in our free time.

### **III. Children in situations of exploitation, including physical and psychological recovery, and social reintegration**

#### **1. Drug abuse (Article 33)<sup>42</sup>**

In drugs policy, special attention should be devoted to us. Children must be protected against drugs. Young people must be involved in the discussion.

There is a clear lack of information about the dangers of drugs. There is too little discussion with us about drugs. Or if it happens at all, it is done in a patronising manner. Here are a number of ideas for dealing with the problem:

- organise a national drugs week;
- run better campaigns (aimed at the young). Involve us in thinking up the campaign.
- Produce appropriate campaigns for our parents and teachers. Because they have a very different view of the problem than we do.

On the other hand, there is a lack of support. We ask for more subsidies for treatment and prevention.

There is also a lack of penalties. Small users must be given preventive help, but drugs dealers and organised crime should be dealt with more severely.

A balance should be sought between prevention and repression.

We must be more involved in the discussion about drugs. And in prevention. One of the possible solutions is to train more youth advisers. Young people who inform other young people about the dangers of drugs are often more effective than an information course at school.

#### **2. Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (Article 34)<sup>43</sup>**

Sexual exploitation and commercial exploitation of children must be stopped.

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42 Article 33: Drug abuse. (The right of the child to be protected against the use of narcotics and drugs that have an influence on the brain, and against involvement in their production and distribution).

43 Article 34: Sexual exploitation. (The right of the child to be protected from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography).

- The issue of sexual exploitation should be raised during lessons (in secondary education, higher education, secondary schools and high schools, tourism department)
- More people should know about the legislation on sexual exploitation of children in Belgium and abroad. In other words, more information.
- The law on abuse abroad should be improved (tightened).

### 3. Child labour (Article 32)<sup>44</sup>

We do not want any more exploitation of children! Not in Belgium, and not elsewhere in the world.

We must ensure that parents of children who work are given sufficient financial resources so that their children can stop working.

Many children and young people as well as adults do not understand that child labour still exists, in Africa, Asia, ... but also in Belgium. We must disseminate more information about this, so that we can all bring pressure to bear to tackle this problem.

A boycott should be organised against products made by exploiting child labour.

Belgium must acknowledge that in our country too, child labour is still a problem (flower sellers, fashion, prostitution, etc.). The government must outline an effective policy to combat child labour by giving the means of subsistence to all children who live on Belgian soil.

We want sufficient funds to be made available at international level for development aid so that all children have access to education; so that everyone receives fair pay; that facilities and care for child workers is possible and everyone can make use of the social services.

While we are on the subject of labour, we do not just want to talk about the ban on child labour, there is also the demand from children and young people for work. When we mentioned child labour above, we were talking about exploitation of children. Children that are forced to work in terrible conditions doing jobs that are not suitable for children. But there is also demand from children for work. This problem is not given sufficient coverage in the government report, in our opinion.

The right to work must be guaranteed for all young people. All young people are entitled to decent work. Often there is enough work, but not all of us find it

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<sup>44</sup> Article 32: Child labour. (The duty of States Parties to protect children against employment in activities that may jeopardise their health, education and development, to lay down minimum age requirements for access to employment, and regulate working conditions).

equally easy to enter the labour market. This problem must be addressed before we enter the labour market, and this is where the state comes in.

- As General Secondary Education and Technical Secondary Education students, we find work more easily than Vocational Secondary Education students. Students from part-time education also find it more difficult to obtain work. So more attention should be devoted to helping those students into work. For example, there is an initiative in part-time education in the town of Dendermonde where students have developed their own newspaper and a video to publicise part-time education and themselves to potential employers.
- As children of immigrants, we find it harder to get work. The temporary employment sector can help us to find a place in the labour market.
- The cultural gap between youngsters on the margins of society and the business world must be closed. Companies should play a decisive role in community work and other youth initiatives in training and coaching projects for and with groups with low prospects and from minorities. Experiments along these lines should be given every encouragement.
- More training places should be created for girls and these places should be made more attractive.

The rights of young trainees should be respected more.

- It should be verified that the instructor responsible for the trainee is actually supervising the young person's training and acting as an intermediary if problems arise between the trainee and the employer.
- The interval between the signing and approval of the training contract must be reduced.
- The trainee must be better informed about his or her rights and responsibilities.
- It must be checked that the work that the trainee is doing actually corresponds to the training plan.
- The pay of the trainee must be updated.

Pupils and students must have the opportunity of earning money for themselves, so that we have a little money to do what we want.

- Laws and inspections must provide the necessary protection (against exploitation, acceptable pay, acceptable working hours).
- The state should pay the young people pocket money. In exchange, young people would work in social institutions.

Also younger children must be able to earn pocket money for themselves. We want to have the right to earn money, for example by selling products that we have made.

#### **IV. Children belonging to a minority or an indigenous group (Article 30)<sup>45</sup>**

We have the right to think freely and to dream. Every child has the right to his/her own culture, beliefs and language. As immigrant children, we must be free to practise our own language, culture and beliefs. We feel it is very important that we should choose our own religious beliefs, and not have them forced on us by our parents.

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45 Article 30: Children from minorities or from the indigenous peoples. (The right of children from minority groups and the indigenous peoples to practise their own culture and religious beliefs and speak their own language).

## APPENDIX I: A FEW MORE WORDS OF EXPLANATION ABOUT THE PROJECT AND THE REPORT

The text that you have now read is the report by children and young people living in Belgium, and is intended for the Committee for the Rights of the Child in Geneva. This report was produced in the context of the "What Do You Think?" project. The project was started in 1999 by UNICEF Belgium. The aim is to ensure that children's rights to their own opinion and the right to participate are promoted. In particular, the "What Do You Think?" project aims to give children and young people a voice in the process of reporting to the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child in Geneva. The "What Do You Think?" project is coordinated by UNICEF Belgium, but from the outset, a large number of partners were involved: non-governmental organisations, academics, government and, of course, children and young people themselves.

"What Do You Think?" gives children and young people the opportunity to shout their views from the rooftops, to say what they think, and put their wishes, ideas and proposals on the table. We collect all these ideas and wishes, and pass them on to the Committee for the Rights of the Child in Geneva. Because the Committee monitors respect for the rights of children all over the world, the rights that are laid down in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In 1989, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Convention lists the rights of children all over the world, without distinction on grounds of colour, religion or anything else. This text was adopted (ratified) by all countries (except Somalia and the United States). That means that all those countries have declared that they are willing to ensure that the rights of all children are respected.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is an important document. It is a legally binding document. So States that have ratified the Convention must respect the rights laid down in it. In reality, there is a great deal of room for improvement. In Belgium too, not all the rights of children are respected. Many children do not even know that they have rights. And many adults do not know that either.

That is why a Committee for the Rights of the Child was set up in Geneva. This Committee has to verify whether the rights that are listed in the Convention are also being applied in reality. The members of this Committee are experts, people who are very knowledgeable about children's rights.

Every 5 years, the countries that have signed the Convention on Children's Rights must submit a report to the Committee, telling them about the situation of children and whether their rights are being respected. The government is therefore obliged to submit a report to the Committee. In addition to this report

by the government, non-governmental organisations working in the field with children and dealing with children's rights submit an alternative report to the Committee. The Committee reads these 2 reports and tells the government where they have done good things for children and young people, and where they still have things that they need to change or improve.

These recommendations are made solely on the basis of information given to the Committee by adults. Therefore, within the "What Do You Think" project, a report is drawn up for the Committee in Geneva jointly with children and young people. Who better than children and young people themselves to tell what is happening with their rights?

That is the report that you have just read. It is a report by children and young people, drawn up jointly with children and young people on the basis of hundreds of ideas, wishes and observations sent in by children and young people. At the end of October 2001, it was submitted to the Committee in Geneva.

What exactly is in the report?

To find out how things are going with children's rights in Belgium, "What Do You Think?" listened to children and young people. Nobody knows more about the situation of children and young people in a country than ... those children and young people themselves. Nobody knows better than children and young people how they feel about their neighbourhood, how they spend their time, what opportunities they do and don't have.

The report by children and young people is based on the following elements.

Some children have started up a project themselves, in which they carry out activities (e.g. a children's newspaper produced by and for children). Other children take part in projects where they can have their voice heard about various subjects that they consider important. Whether this relates to school, the family or the place where they live. Young people like to talk about what is going on around them. We have made a list of all these initiatives where young people are running the show or where young people have their say, a list with participation initiatives. We have tried to include in our report the wishes and ideas of the children and young people taking part in these projects.

In addition, we surveyed children about various subjects together with the Uitgeverij Averbode publishing group. In various of their magazines (for example Zonneland and Zonnestraal), questions appear about children's rights, children and school, the family, spare time, refugees, children with disabilities, health, etc. In addition, a booklet called "Dat recht heb ik" ("I have that right") was published which includes a large number of stories and questions. The answers that we received from children to all these questions were processed by the

Onderzoekscentrum Kind en Samenleving (Child and Society Research Centre) and summarised in a brief report. This was also used in producing our report to the Committee in Geneva.

Finally, on 19 November 2000, we organised a March of children and young people in Brussels. During that March, children and young people could share and discuss their wishes and ideas about respect for their rights in Belgium. They met various politicians and all their wishes and ideas were compiled into a package. This Package of Wishes and Ideas was also used to produce this report.

So our report consists of ideas, wishes, proposals and observations by children. Children were asked in various ways to let us know what they thought about the respect for their rights in Belgium, what they consider to be important subjects, how they see Belgium, and what the role of children and young people is in Belgium. All the topics that are dealt with in this report were therefore raised by the children and young people themselves.

So we didn't ask the children to react directly to the government report or to the recommendations by the Committee to the previous government report. What we did do was to ask the children to react from their own social environment, and let us know what they thought about everything going on around them. Only in this way could children and young people let us know what they really think.

Together with the children and young people of the steering group of "What Do You Think?" we have already processed all this information, all those ideas, wishes and proposals from children and young people into the report that you are reading. The steering group is a group of around 40 children and young people between 9 and 20 years of age, with different backgrounds, who have been monitoring the project and helped to shape it. Together with these children and young people, we examined how we could summarise all those wishes and ideas into a report of some 50 pages.

We are aware that this report is not representative of all children and young people. There is no single opinion of "the" child. There is a tremendous difference between the wishes and ideas of someone aged 6 and someone aged 17. Their social background also plays a role. In this project, we did not attempt to involve all groups of children and young people. For some groups that normally have fewer opportunities to have their say, we made extra efforts to ensure that their voice could be heard in our report (for example, children in care, deaf children, children of immigrants).

So without having any pretensions that we now have a compilation that represents "the" opinion of "the" child, we are convinced that this report offers an excellent cross-section of what is going on with children and young people living in Belgium and their ideas about respect for their rights.

So we are convinced that this report for the Committee in Geneva is an important source of information to look at the government report from a different angle. And with regard to the policy level in Belgium, we are sure that this report is a source of information that can be exploited if the government wants to adopt a child-friendly policy.

In addition to the report that you have in your hands now, there are two other important documents that we believe are well worth looking at.

The Package of Wishes and Ideas was compiled as a result of the Children's and Young People's March of 19 November 2000. Since the report is a summary of the ideas and wishes that were put forward in the package, and since any summary inevitably entails some loss of information, we feel it would be useful to browse through the Package of Wishes and Ideas. You will see immediately that "the" opinion of "the" child is an illusion.

In addition to this report, in addition to our "official" report by children and young people, on 20 November 2001, a document will be published for the general public. The reason for this is that the children and young people from the steering group itself chose a clearly-defined structure for the report (i.e. a subdivision by topic, such as school, family, violence, town), whereas in the official report, for pragmatic reasons, the same structure was adopted as in the government report. The report which will be published on 20 November 2001 will therefore have the structure that the young people chose for themselves, and leaves scope for including quotes from children, to give more explanation about the link with the Convention. In that way, we hope to contribute to the report being read by as many children and young people as possible, as well as adults.

We hope that you read this report attentively, and hope that the ideas, wishes and observations of children and young people will inspire you to take action or actions aimed at giving children and young people in our society the voice to which they are entitled.

Charlotte Van den Abeele, Maud Dominicy and Yves Willemot  
"What Do You Think?" project  
Coordinated by UNICEF Belgium



## APPENDIX II : PARTICIPATION ORGANISATIONS & PARTICIPATION INITIATIVES

- ABVV-jongeren Kortrijk  
Rijselsestraat 19, 8500 Kortrijk  
Wie ? 5 jongeren tussen 13 en 17 jaar  
Wat ? Neerslag van groepsgesprek ter voorbereiding van debat 19/11/00
- ABVV-jongeren  
Watteestraat 10, 1000 Brussel  
Wie ? Een aantal vrijwilligers van de ABVV-jongeren  
Wat ? Na een aantal workshops en weekends rond kinderarbeid, hebben een aantal ABVV-jongeren samen een « Jongerenstatement over kinderarbeid » uitgewerkt, in de vorm van een petitie-actie voor leeftijdsgenoten.
- Adoptielijn vzw  
Postbus 111, 9030 Gent  
Wie ? Geadopteerde jongeren  
Wat ? Eisenbundel adoptiekinderen  
Hoe ? Voorbereidende gesprekken voor debat 19/11/00
- Amnesty International Condroz - Groupe de Ciney  
Rue Rebompré 11, 5590 Ciney  
Qui ? Groupe Amnesty International de l'Athénée royal du Condroz, 6 jeunes de 16 ans  
Quoi ? Recueil d'opinions, résultat d'une réflexion de groupe
- APAJ-AMO  
Avenue Rogier 235, 1030 Schaerbeek  
Qui ? Les enfants de l'APAJ - AMO (une vingtaine d'enfants).  
Quoi ? Idées, opinions et propositions recueillies lors d'une animation en quatre thèmes: la culture, la famille, le quartier et les nouvelles technologies. Les enfants ont ensuite voté 7 points principaux parmi ceux qui étaient ressortis de leur animation.
- Association des amis du Dr Janusz Korczak  
Rue du Faisan 13, 1420 Braine l'Alleud  
Qui ? 409 élèves de l'école primaire et 129 de l'école secondaire  
Quoi ? Sondage réalisé auprès des jeunes d'école primaire et d'école secondaire dans le cadre d'un projet de journal par et pour les jeunes et les enfants
- Averbode Editions  
Boîte postale 54, 3271 Averbode  
Qui ? Des enfants individuellement et des classes, de 10 à 14 ans

Quoi ? Questionnement d'enfants et de classes sur les droits de l'enfant via différentes publications des Editions Averbode (Zonneland, Tremplin).

- Badje - Bruxelles Accueil et Développement pour la jeunesse et l'enfance  
Square Riga 39, 1030 Bruxelles

Qui ? Des enfants encadrés par les animateurs de Badje et des réalisateurs.

Quoi ? La réalisation d'un film vidéo sur les droits de l'enfant pour l'anniversaire de la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant. Les séquences vidéos seront présentées à la télévision le 17 et le 21 novembre dans l'émission « coup de pouce » spéciale sur les droits de l'enfant. Autre projet : un concours photo pour les enfants jusqu'à 12 ans sur les droits de l'enfant.

- Basisschool Leefschool 'De Pluishoek'  
Pluishoekstraat 1-3, 2220 Heist-op-den-Berg

Wie ? 100 jongeren van minstens 2,5 jaar en ongeveer 60 volwassenen

Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: Leefregels - kinderen en inspraak. De leefregels en de leerstof worden mee door de kinderen bepaald.

- Basisschool van het Gemeenschapsonderwijs 'Hoevenzavel'  
Halmstraat 12, 3600 Genk

Wie ? 1) 150 volwassenen, 1500 tot 2000 jongeren 2) 100-tal volwassenen, 1500 tot 2000 jongeren

Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: 1) Taallokaal: een lokaal ingericht met ICT ten behoeve van leerlingen, ouders, wijkbewoners, jeugdorganisaties, navormingsinstanties e.d. met de bedoeling de Nederlandse taal aan te leren.

2) Sport- en Spelcampus Hoevenzavel: scheppen van nieuwe ontmoetingskansen voor jongeren, verenigingen e.d. met de bedoeling de integratie met behoud van de eigenheden te bevorderen.

- Basisschool Sint-Fransiscus  
Kloosterstraat 40, 9910 Knesselare

Wie ? De leerlingen van het vijfde leerjaar.

Wat ? Groepswork waarbij de leerlingen per 2 een bepaald kinderrecht moesten uitdiepen en voorstellen aan de andere kinderen.

- Basisschool De vrijdagmarkt  
Vrijdagmarkt 12, 8000 Brugge

Wie ? De leerlingen van de basisschool

Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief

Initiatief ? Sinds 1993 worden in de school verschillende projecten opgezet om de participatie van kinderen te bevorderen. Zo konden alle leerlingen (van het eerste kleuterklasje tot het zesde leerjaar) in 1994 hun speelplaats in een maquette

uitwerken, waarmee rekening gehouden werd bij het herinrichten van de speelplaats. In 1996 werd een schoolparlement opgericht. Er werd een kinderrechtenkalender gemaakt met de leerlingen, enz.

- Beeldenstorm

Chaussée de Mons 145, 1070 Anderlecht

Qui ? Des jeunes de deux groupes de danse Hip Hop « Swing Step » et « Légitime Défense »

Quoi ? Démarche pour obtenir un accès libre et gratuit pour les cours de danse afin de rassembler les jeunes du quartier de Cureghem et d'autres quartiers autour d'une même passion qui est la danse hip-hop pendant leur temps libre, plutôt que de traîner dans les rues. Dans ce cadre, ils tiennent des ateliers de danse et produisent des spectacles portés par les jeunes du groupe.

- Bischöfliches Institut Büllingen

Schulweg 29, 4760 Büllingen

Wer ? Die Schüler des 1. u. 2. Mittelschulfahren (2000-2001)

Was ? Vorschläge

- Bond van Grote en van Jonge Gezinnen vzw

Troonstraat 125, 1050 Brussel

Wie ? kinderen tussen 3 en 12 jaar, 30 deelnemende afdelingen

Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: De straat is (OOK) voor kinderen. Een actie waarbij de afdelingen van de Bond uitgenodigd worden om te ijveren voor meer verkeersveiligheid. Hiervoor wordt symbolisch een straat afgesloten en ter beschikking gesteld van kinderen. De voorbereiding gebeurt via een knelpuntentocht waarbij kinderen de gevaarlijke plekken in kaart brengen. De activiteit wordt afgesloten met een overhandiging van de knelpunten- en eisenbundel aan de gemeentelijke overheid.

- Bond voor Grote en van Jonge Gezinnen vzw

Troonstraat 125, 1050 Brussel

Wie ? 85 (stemgerechtigde) kinderen tussen 9 en 14 jaar; 15 vrienden broers en zussen;

ouders/begeleiders

Wat ? Persmap met voorstellen van kinderen, 1999

Hoe ? Via initiatief "Senator voor één dag". Kinderen werden uitgenodigd om zelf (wets)voorstellen te formuleren om de toepassing van het Kinderrechtenverdrag in Vlaanderen te verbeteren. Een jury selecteerde 71 indieners van voorstellen. Zij werden samen met hun ouders of begeleiders uitgenodigd op 20 november 1999 in de Belgische Senaat om 26 voorstellen te bespreken en te stemmen.

- Bond voor Grote en van Jonge Gezinnen vzw

Troonstraat 125, 1050 Brussel

Wie ? kinderen tussen 7 en 17 jaar

Wat ? Inzendingen van kinderen van Turnhout

Hoe ? Via initiatief "Kinderen hebben (OOK) een stem", 2000. Kinderen van het vijfde en zesde leerjaar werden uitgenodigd om hun voorstellen rond het thema "Kinderen hebben (OOK) een stem" op papier te zetten onder de vorm van een tekst, een tekening, een collage.

In verschillende gemeenten werd op 18/11/00 een kindergemeenteraad georganiseerd waar de voorstellen besproken werden.

- Casa Locale - Cité Chavepeyer à Châtelet

(CP: 6200, Bloc 400)

Qui ? Les jeunes de la cité.

Quoi ? Un ensemble de réflexions issues d'une discussion avec leurs animateurs et les Étudiants FGTB. Ces réflexions ont été transmises à "What do you think?" via les Étudiants FGTB.

- Centre Public Aide Sociale/ CPAS Charleroi

13, Boulevard Joseph II, 6000 Charleroi

Qui ? 6 enfants entre 7 et 16 ans

Quoi ? Ils ont répondu au questionnaire sur les thèmes suivants : les enfants et l'école, les enfants et leur temps libre, les jeunes et la justice, les enfants et les services d'aide, les enfants et la pauvreté et les enfants et la famille.

- Centre de Développement et d'Animation Schaerbeekois

Qui ? Des jeunes de 17 à 25 ans

Quoi ? Fiche initiative de participation

Initiative ? Parlementaire d'un jour. Projet sur le droit de vote : interviews et rencontres de politiciens, de philosophes, ... .

- Chicago - Centre culturel pour jeunes

Rue du Canal 47, 1000 Bruxelles

Qui ? Des enfants de "Little Chicago" de 6 à 11 ans et des jeunes de « Chicago »

Quoi ? Des dessins et des lettres d'enfants

Comment ? Durant leurs réunions, les enfants et les jeunes ont pensé et discuté de leurs propositions. Les enfants ont fait des dessins et écrit des lettres au Roi.

- Centre d'Infor Jeunes Eupen

Qui ? Des jeunes de Eupen

Quoi ? Fiche initiative participation

Initiative: Je vote donc je suis. Une soirée électorale : information, participation et rencontre entre jeunes et politiciens.

- Cité de l'Espoir/ Institut médico-pédagogique

Domaine des Croisiers 2, 4821 Andrimont

Qui ? Des enfants de moins de 18 ans de Cité de l'Espoir

Quoi ? Une enquête concernant la qualité de vie des jeunes âgés de moins de 18 ans résidants au sein de leur milieu d'accueil, à l'aide d'un support vidéo, vu que les enfants ne savent pas s'exprimer verbalement.

- Comité voor Bijzondere Jeugdzorg Dendermonde

Noordlaan 111 bus 2, 9200 Dendermonde

Wie ? Ongeveer 150 jongeren en tussen de 1000 en 2000 intermediairen

Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: Traject: met Deeltijds Onderwijs op weg naar werk. Leerlingen

Deeltijds Onderwijs ontwikkelen eigen materiaal, namelijk een krant en een video om het Deeltijds Onderwijs en zichzelf beter bekend te maken bij de tewerkstellingswereld.

- Comité voor Bijzondere Jeugdzorg Brussel

Antwerpselaan 20, 1000 Brussel

Wie ? kinderen tussen 10 en 12 jaar

Wat ? Fiche Participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: Filo Kids, stem geven aan Brusselse kinderen. Aan de hand van de methodiek 'filosoferen met kinderen' en een belevingsonderzoek worden de Brusselse beleidsactoren (politici en ambtenaren) gevoelig gemaakt voor de maatschappelijke positie van kinderen en hun perspectief. Er wordt gestreefd naar een rechtstreekse en permanente dialoog in de Brusselse structuren (Brusselse Raad).

Via 8 lokale werkingen wordt een netwerk opgezet van kinderen (jeugdwerk, school, theater,...). Er worden trefdagen tussen kinderen en beleidsmensen georganiseerd.

- Conseil Communal des jeunes de la ville d'Andenne

La ville d'Andenne, place Tilleuls 1, 5300 Andenne

Qui ? Le conseil est composé de 23 membres

Quoi ? Fiche initiative de participation

Initiative: Création d'une maison de jeunes à Andenne avec et pour des jeunes.

- Conseil Communal pour les Enfants de Seraing

Esplanade de la Mairie 1, 4120 Ougrée

Qui ? Les enfants élus démocratiquement dans les écoles des trois réseaux d'enseignement pour représenter les enfants au sein de leur Conseil Communal.

Quoi ? Manifeste des enfants de Seraing, déposé entre les mains du bourgmestre Guy Mathot, en séance publique du conseil communal, le 26 juin 2000. Enquête réalisée auprès de 1069 enfants.

Une enquête spécifique pour « What do you think? » portant sur « La qualité de ma vie d'enfant à l'école en dehors du temps scolaire » à laquelle ont participé 29 enfants consultés en séance publique du CCE le 25 octobre 2000.

- Conseil Provincial des Jeunes du Brabant Wallon  
Province du Brabant wallon, chaussée des Nerviens 25, 1300 Wavre  
Qui ? Des jeunes de 12 à 16 ans  
Quoi ? Fiche initiative de participation
- CREFI vzw  
Troonstraat 125, 1050 Brussel  
Wie ? 20-tal jongeren  
Wat ? Neerslag van discussieronde  
Hoe ? Tijdens de jaarlijkse CREFI-dag hebben een vijftigtal vrijwilligers van CREFI van 16 tot 18 jaar een discussieronde gehouden rond kinderrechten.
- CSC-vormingswerk vzw  
Grasmarkt 105 bus 41, 1000 Brussel  
Wie ? 10 tot 15 jongeren per gemeente. Uitvoering van het spel: tussen 150 en 250 jongeren per gemeente. JAM-fuif: 150 tot 300 jongeren per gemeente  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: JAM-party (Jongeren aan de Macht). JAM-party is een inspraakmoment waar jongeren hun mening kwijt kunnen over een verscheidenheid aan discussiepunten. JAM-party bestaat uit drie onderdelen: JAM-spel: het spel wordt uitgewerkt rond de onderwerpen die de jongeren van de deelnemende gemeenten bepalen. In de 'speakers corner' presenteren de jongeren de onderwerpen die hun het meest aanbelangen. Er wordt gestemd en de 'Burgemeester voor één nacht' wordt verkozen. Vervolgens is er het Jam-optreden en de JAM-fuif.
- Defence for Children International - Jidee  
P/a Achterstraat 112, 9040 Sint-Amandsberg  
Wie ? 194 kinderen tussen 7 en 12 jaar - 11 klassen en 2 jeugdbewegingen  
Wat ? Ingestuurde ideeën van kinderen  
Hoe ? Via het initiatief "Jidee regio Lokeren". Jidee is een kinderparticipatiefonds waar kinderen tussen 8 en 12 jaar bij terecht kunnen met hun ideeën. Het Jidee kinderteam selecteert de ideeën die financieel en praktisch ondersteund worden. Kinderen kunnen hun ideeën zelfstandig uitwerken.
- Der Bund der Familien Eupen  
Hisselgasse 5, 4700 Eupen  
Qui ? Les membres der Bund  
Quoi ? Une enquête menée dans les écoles en Communauté Germanophone à l'occasion des 10 ans de la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant. Les questions portaient sur la perception des différents droits et sur les attentes des enfants interrogés.

- Dienst Alternatieve Sanctie en Voogdijraad vzw  
De pintelaan 185 - UZ, K4, derde verdieping, 9000 Gent  
Wie ? 9 jongeren die doorverwezen werden naar de Dienst Alternatieve Sanctie en Voogdijraad.  
Wat ? Een bevraging rond het thema jongeren en justitie in het kader van de verrijking van het rapport.
- Dienst Welzijn Jeugd en Cultuur  
Markt 1, 2460 Kasterlee  
Wie ? 14 kinderen tussen 8 en 14 jaar  
Wat ? Geselecteerde ideeën van kinderen  
Hoe ? Via initiatief: Jidee-Kasterlee '99
- École communale de Bovigny  
Bovigny 59, 6671 Gouvy  
Qui ? Les élèves de 5<sup>e</sup> et 6<sup>e</sup> année primaire (année 2000-2001)  
Quoi ? Une liste d'idées et de suggestions pour améliorer le bien-être des enfants
- École Communale Libre de Martelange  
Grand Rue 33, 6630 Martelange  
Qui ? Les enfants de 3<sup>e</sup> et 4<sup>e</sup> année primaire (année 2000-2001)  
Quoi ? Une liste de souhaits.  
Initiative: L'école a organisé, dans le cadre du projet « What do you Think? » une Marche des enfants et des jeunes à Martelange le 19 novembre, pour accompagner celle de Bruxelles.
- École Saint Joseph  
Chaussée de Waterloo 1190, 1180 Uccle  
1/ Qui ? Des élèves de 5<sup>e</sup> année (année 1998-1999)  
Quoi ? Une participation au projet du Media Lab Massachusetts Institute of Technology d'éducation à la citoyenneté et de formation aux techniques avancées : par groupe de discussion, approfondir un sujet et mener différents projets sur le thème (sensibilisation, action, information, récolte d'argent....). L'initiative, la réalisation, la gestion et l'évaluation est entièrement confiée aux enfants.  
Présentation sur des CD-rom réalisés entièrement par les enfants de l'école et qui présentent leurs questions, leurs recherches et leurs actions sur différents thèmes.  
Présentation sur un site Internet - un CD-rom « antiguerre »  
2/ Qui ? 650 enfants de 3 à 13 ans de l'école Saint-Joseph, mais également de nombreuses autres écoles dans le pays.  
Quoi ? Participation au projet « Battre tambour pour la Paix, pour l'amour » de la Maison Internationale de la Poésie. Outre les différentes actions menées dans le cadre de ce projet (approche pédagogique, composition de poèmes, créations de tambours, sensibilisation et promotion du projet (site Internet...), appel aux autres

écoles, enquête sur la paix), les enfants de plusieurs pays dans le monde entier battent tambour le 21 mars, tous à la même heure, pour la paix.

- ECPAT-België

(End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography & Trafficking of Children for sexual Purposes)

Rue des Tanneurs 165 Huidvetterstraat, 1000 Bruxelles-Brussel

Wie ? 250 Belgische jongeren tussen 16 tot 25 jaar

Wat ? Eisenpakket Nederlandstalig en Franstalig - Le rapport national Belge - « Jeunes menacés » ou « Jeunes menaçants »? - il s'agit d'un dossier d'action reprenant les propositions et recommandations émises par les jeunes.

Hoe ? Via het initiatief "Jongeren nemen het woord. Jongeren uit de marge"

Een Nationaal Jongeren Congres werd georganiseerd. Samen met jongeren uit risicosituaties werd in werkgroepen gediscussieerd over hun rechten vertrekkende vanuit vooraf afgebakende thema's. Na deze nationale dag was er een Internationaal Congres in Manilla.

- Enfants de la Commune d'Estinnes

P/A L'Administration Communale, Chaussée de Brunehaut 232, 7120 Estinnes

Qui ? Les enfants de la commune (102)

Quoi ? Réalisation d'un cahier de revendications des enfants sur base d'une enquête. Ce cahier a été présenté aux autorités communales le 19 octobre 2000 par 11 représentants des enfants de la commune.

Initiative: Les enfants proposent de faire eux-mêmes une campagne d'information et de sensibilisation à propos de la pollution, et de créer un journal des enfants (pour les enfants et les adultes) afin de les informer de leurs souhaits, leurs demandes et leurs projets.

- Enfants de la région d'Arlon

Rue Hamélius 19, 6700 Arlon

Qui ? Des enfants de 7 à 11 ans de la région d'Arlon

Quoi ? Une réflexion de groupe

- Etudiants FGTB et Jeunesse Syndicales FGTB

Rue Haute 42, 1000 Bruxelles

Qui ? 11 étudiants de 13 à 16 ans (thème école), groupe de jeunes de moins de 30 ans (thème travail des enfants), groupe d'apprentis (thème apprentis)

Quoi ? Cahiers de revendications issues de travaux de réflexion en groupe sur chacun des thèmes

- BICE

Rue Stévin 16, 1000 Bruxelles

Qui ? Réunion d'enfants et de jeunes Européens à Madrid en octobre 2000 pour travailler sur "l'Agenda Européen" pour les enfants et les jeunes

Quoi ? Fiche initiative de participation



Initiative : Agenda 2000 for Children and young people in Europe

- Fédération Belge des Maisons et des Centres de Jeunes

Place Saint-Christophe 8, 4000 Liège

Qui ? Les maisons et centres de jeunes Antirides (Bruxelles), La Bicoque (Liège), La Cabane (Ganshoren), Espace Jeune (Quiévrain), Copainville (Watermael-Boitsfort), Ecoute voir (Liège), Foyer des Jeunes (Havelange), La Ferme 1313 (Angleur), La Mézon (Huy), Maison des jeunes (Auderghem), MJ 404 (Couvin), MJ de Hodimont (Verviers), MJC ( Rochefort), Le Prisme (Braine l'Alleud) ; des jeunes entre 14 et 22 ans.

Quoi ? Message et revendications destinés aux autorités publiques, sous la forme d'un « Manifeste des Jeunes » réalisé dans le cadre de l'opération « Prise de ton, prise de voix, prise de tête » et des tables rondes de la jeunesse (Forum J) 1997-1998. Ce projet a permis aux jeunes de faire part de leurs constats, de leurs désirs et leurs revendications qu'ils envisagent pour la société en général, mais surtout pour leur commune, leur quartier.

- Fondation Rurale de Wallonie

Qui ? Des enfants et des jeunes à partir de 7 ans dans des communes rurales

Quoi ? Fiche initiative de participation

Initiative ? Opération de développement rural. Systématiquement, les enfants et les jeunes sont consultés sur ce qu'ils apprécient ou pas dans leur commune. Ils sont invités à faire part de leurs souhaits, de leurs projets. Au moment des réalisations, les enfants sont associés également.

- Gemeentelijke buitenschoolse kinderopvang Brakel/Horebeke

Kasteelstraat 49, 9660 Brakel

Wie ? lagere schoolkinderen uit Brakel die van de buitenschoolse kinderopvang gebruik maken

Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: tevredenheidsonderzoek bij kinderen naar de buitenschoolse kinderopvang. Als resultaat van dit tevredenheidsonderzoek werd een spelcomputerruimte ingericht en een grootscheepse campagne opgezet rond pesten binnen de buitenschoolse kinderopvang.

- Globelink - Scholierenparlement

Lange Kievitstraat 74, 2018 Antwerpen.

Wie ? Jaarlijks 1200 jongeren, verspreid over 25 lokale parlementen - 16 tot 18 jarigen

Wat ? Resolutieteksten

Hoe ? Via het initiatief " Scholierenparlement". Het Scholierenparlement is een groot simulatiespel, bedoeld om jongeren meer interesse en inzicht te laten krijgen in politiek beleid en wereldproblemen. Elk plaatselijk parlement komt 6 keer samen om het thema te bediscussiëren. Aan het einde van het werkjaar komen al de 'parlementariërs' samen in het parlement in Brussel en gaan de

discussie aan met onze volksvertegenwoordigers. Er wordt telkens een slotresolutie opgemaakt.

- Heilig Hartschool - zesde leerjaar  
Cauwerburg 2, 9140 Temse  
Wie ? 18 leerlingen van 12 jaar (zesde leerjaar)  
Wat ? Neerslag van voorstellen en ideeën van wat de leerlingen graag willen zien op de lege terreinen van de Boelwerf.  
Hoe ? 1. Vrij gesprek in de klas omtrent de ideeën 2. Brieven geschreven naar de burgemeester en ideeën bekend gemaakt bij UNICEF - Gemeentebestuur, Cultuurraad van Temse, curator Dauwe, OVB-begeleidingsteam, directie van onze school.
- Home Magnolia/ vzw Ons Geluk  
Hogeweg 156, 9500 Geraardsbergen  
Wie ? 10 jongeren van Home Magnolia.  
Wat ? Een aantal jongeren van Home Magnolia hebben rond de thema's kinderen en Justitie, kinderen en het gezin, Kinderen en hulpverlening en Kinderen en armoede hun ideeën en reacties opgestuurd op basis van een algemene vragenlijst die werd opgesteld in het kader van de verrijking van dit rapport.
- In Petto, Jeugddienst Informatie en Preventie  
Diksmuidelaan 50, 2600 Berchem  
Wie ? jongeren (jeugdadviseurs) tussen 15 en 18 jaar  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: Project Jeugdadviseurs. Per jaar worden en ongeveer 200 tot 300 jongeren (15 tot 18 jarigen) door de JAC's opgeleid en begeleid. Onder de slogan 'Vriendschap als preventie' willen we de positieve invloeden binnen de 'peergroup' belichten en versterken. Jongeren ondersteunen en helpen mekaar. Indien nodig kunnen zij doorverwijzen naar de professionele hulpverlening in de Jongeren Advies Centra (JAC's). Zo participeren zij actief in hulpverlening en preventie van diverse jongerenproblemen.
- Inspraakraad/inspraaksite  
Tongersesteenweg 33, 3620 Lanaken  
Wie ? 12 jongeren vormen samen de inspraakraad  
Wat ? Een aantal jongeren hebben samen een site ontworpen ([www.inspraak.com](http://www.inspraak.com)) waarmee ze andere jongeren willen oproepen om ook hun recht op inspraak te gebruiken.
- Institut Maria Goretti  
Prümerstrasse 6, 4780 Sankt-Vith  
Wer ? Die Schuler des 2. Mittelschuljahres (Jahr 2000-2001)

Was ? Haben ein Interview in der Schule geführt, ihre Wünsche formuliert und danach auch noch eine einige Auseinandersetzungen über den Wahlen und den Kinderrechten formuliert.

- JEP!-project - Forum Pluralistisch Jeugdwerk

Paleizenstraat 91, 1000 Brussel

Wie ? 2000 jongeren tussen 14 en 24 jaar

Wat ? Dossier JEP !-reacties en visietekst

Hoe ? Via initiatief: Jep! Jongeren en Participatie! Jep! Versterkt de stem van jongeren (14-24j). Via een amalgaan van methodes werden van meer dan 2000 jongeren reacties op allerlei stellingen en enquêtes verzameld. Uit deze reacties trok een stuurgroep van jongeren conclusies. Afsluiting via JEP-moment (27/11/00): discussie tussen jongeren.

- JEP!-project - Forum Pluralistisch Jeugdwerk

Paleizenstraat 91, 1000 Brussel

Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: Verzameld Werk; 53 participatiemethoden. Een inventaristatie van participatiemethoden. Gekoppeld aan de site [www.jep.be](http://www.jep.be).

- Jeugdcentrum El Paso

Gebroeders Desmetstraat 108, 9000 Gent

Wie ? 15-tal 6 tot 14 jarigen (Rabot-wijk Gent)

Wat ? Video en schriftelijke neerslag

Hoe ? Via het maken van een video: kinderen maken hun beeld van hun buurt en leggen zowel de aangename als de minder leuke plekjes vast. De kinderen en tieners hebben in oktober 2000 in een tweede ronde hun eigen wensen die ze vastgelegd hadden op beeld (video) terug omgezet in woorden.

- Jeugdcentrum El Paso

Gebroeders Desmetstraat 108, 9000 Gent

Wie ? 6 jongeren (15 tot 18 jarigen) actief deelgenomen

Wat ? Video en schriftelijke neerslag

Hoe ? Jongeren formuleerden via een babbelbox hun verlangens en kritieken en maakten hiervan een videomontage. Daarnaast hebben ze gediscussieerd en luidop nagedacht.

- Jeugddienst Sint-Truiden

Gazometerstraat 3, 3800 Sint-Truiden

Wie ? 30 tot 40 kinderraadsleden tussen 10 en 12 jaar

Wat ? Verslagen Kinderraad en neerslag van infozuil

Hoe ? Via het initiatief Kinderraad. Samen met kinderen worden er projecten uitgewerkt die zij voorstellen om hun buurt of situatie te verbeteren of te optimaliseren. Organisatie van een kinderrechtenweek, een inspraakzuil,

verkeersborden met teksten van de kinderen die geplaatst worden tijdens de vakanties, de hondenpoepactie, de tabakspreventie actie,....

- Jeugd en Stad Antwerpen - Jeugdpeiling en Jeugdparagraaf  
Borgerhoutsestraat 34, 2018 Antwerpen  
Wie ? 6 tot 12 jarigen en tieners tot max. 24 jaar  
Wat ? Boek "Jeugdpeiling Jeugdparagraaf - kinderen vertellen hun verhaal. Het beleid luistert"  
Hoe ? Via de initiatieven Jeugdpeiling en jeugdparagraaf (3 jaar). Kinderen en jongeren geven hun mening over het leven in de stad Antwerpen. Via de computerbevraging « de muis »: 2081 (6-12 j). Via de computerbevraging « Jasper ». Via de website « Goesting »: 2500 jongeren (tieners). Via de telefonische bevraging: 1600 (tieners en jongeren) en via de postkaarten van 284 tieners. Op twee jaar tijd hebben er ongeveer 5000 kinderen en jongeren meegewerkt via één van de verschillende instrumenten.  
Jeugdparagraaf: Jongeren rechtstreeks en onrechtstreeks betrekken bij de beleidsvoorbereiding en de beleidsbeslissingen door middel van de 'Jeugdparagraaf'. Opmerkingen van jongeren worden in een advies gegoten, de 'Jeugdparagraaf' genoemd.
- Jeugd en Vrede vzw  
Van Elewijckstraat 35, 1050 Brussel  
Wie ? 20-tal kinderen  
Wat ? Verslag rondetafelgesprek  
Hoe ? Rondetafelgesprek met vluchtelingenkinderen in samenwerking met het Onthaalcentrum Vluchtelingen Bevingen.
- Jeugdraad Bree  
Stadsplein 1, 3960 Bree  
Wie ? Jongeren uit Bree  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: muurschrijfproject "Spoor 2000". Aan het stadhuis werden een aantal stellingen geplaatst, met plakkaats waarop de jongeren konden schrijven. Ze mochten er op aanbrengen wat zij relevante problemen en knelpunten vinden in de gemeente. Daarna werd die info samengebracht en gepresenteerd aan het schepencollege.
- Jeugdraad Roeselare  
Botermarkt 2, 8800 Roeselare  
Wie ? Werkgroep van de Jeugdraad - Gemeenteraadsverkiezingen 2000 - De stem van de jeugd  
Wat ? Witboek 2000  
Hoe ? Via het opstellen van een Witboek over de situatie van jongeren in Roeselare (bevindingen, voorstellen, initiatieven,..). Het witboek is bedoeld als een instrument

dat een voortdurend proces van creatieve en gezamenlijke beleidsplanning wil stimuleren en ondersteunen.

- Jeugdraad voor de Vlaamse Gemeenschap  
Markiesstraat 1, 1000 Brussel  
Wie ? Kinderen en jongeren in Vlaanderen  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: verzamelen van 50.000 krabbels voor meer en beter jeugdbeleid  
Geïnspireerd op de resultaten van het Vlaams Welzijnscongres "veer10 -act10" waar de leefwereld van jongeren in beeld werd gebracht stelde de Vlaamse Jeugdraad een petitie op. Jongeren konden een bolletje kleuren bij wat ze het belangrijkste vonden. Na voldoende handtekeningen verzameld te hebben, (50.000) worden de belangrijkste thema's voorgelegd aan het Vlaams Parlement.
- Jeunesse Etudiante Chrétienne  
Qui ? Des délégués de classes entre 12 et 22 ans  
Quoi ? Fiche initiative de participation  
Initiative: Former les délégués de classes à la participation. Des rencontres inter-écoles (forum d'étudiants) et week-end de formation.
- JINT vzw, VPIJ vzw en Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap afdeling  
Jeugd en Sport, Grétrystraat 26, 1000 Brussel  
Wie ? 700 tal jongeren rechtstreeks  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: Vlaamse bijdrage ter voorbereiding van het Europese Witboek "Vinger aan de Pols. Vlaamse 15-25 jarigen over hun ervaringen, verwachtingen en bezorgdheden"  
Hoe ? Via een meerzijdige aanpak: een kwalitatieve bevraging via 15 workshops met jongeren via verschillende methodieken. Een enquête afgenomen bij 423 jongeren tussen 15 en 25 jaar. Daarnaast kwamen er een 50-tal reacties via de website binnen. Tot slot werden ook de resultaten van recente onderzoeken en studies verwerkt (Zonder Maskers, Verslagboek veer10-acht10, conclusies JEP!, worldshake bevraging, Vrind 1999, ...).
- Jongeren maken plannen  
Martelaarsplein 7, 1000 Brussel  
Wie ? Jongeren tussen 12 en 25 jaar  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: jongeren maken plannen is een initiatief van Vlaams Minister voor Jeugd Bert Anciaux in samenwerking met de provincies, jongerenorganisaties, koepelorganisatie en het onderwijs. Het project gaat uit van de kracht van jongeren om projecten te realiseren en een positieve bijdrage te leveren aan de opbouw van de samenleving. Doel van het project is jongeren zelf input laten geven aan het jeugdbeleidsplan dat eind 2001 afgewerkt is.

- Juniors pour le futur  
Rue Engeland 332, 1180 Bruxelles  
Qui ? 213 juniors de 40 pays  
Quoi ? Recueil d'idées élaboré à l'issue de la Conférence des Juniors pour le Futur qui s'est tenue le 28 juillet 2000 à Chiba au Japon. Appel au soutien des chefs d'état, des responsables civils et religieux, des dirigeants des mass médias, des organisations nationales et internationales.
  
- Jour après jour - asbl  
Rue des Artistes 14, 1020 Bruxelles  
Qui ? Les adultes et les enfants de l'asbl  
Quoi ? La Charte des droits des enfants malades  
Initiative: Proposer la Charte à l'approbation des différents intervenants dans la prise en charge de la maladie de l'enfant. Ensuite, intégrer la Charte des droits de l'enfant malade à la Charte des droits du patient, actuellement en préparation. Et également adapter le texte de la Charte pour qu'il soit compréhensible par les enfants.
  
- Kadanz vzw  
Kadanz vzw De Poort Beraber, Sleepstraat 118, 9000 Gent  
Wie ? Taksi-redactie: 10-tal kinderen tussen 9 en 12 jaar  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: Taksi: de Gentse Kinderkrant op wielen  
Een gemengde groep (naar herkomst en geslacht) van 10 kinderen maakt samen een krant (4 per jaar).
  
- Kind en Samenleving  
Nieuwelaan 63, 1860 Meise  
Wat ? Onderzoeksrapport in opdracht van Averbode en UNICEF. Verwerking van de resultaten van de bevraging in het kader van "Dat recht heb ik"
  
- Marche des enfants et de jeunes  
Qui ? Les enfants et les jeunes qui ont participé aux débats du 19/11/2000  
Quoi: Un rapport des débats suivants a été réalisé:
  - ⇒ débat 1: les enfants et les jeunes et le handicap - la pauvreté - les services d'aide - l'adoption (Parlement flamand)
  - ⇒ débat 2: les jeunes et la pauvreté - la discrimination - les drogues - les institutions (Chambre et Sénat)
  - ⇒ débat 3: les jeunes et l'assistance - le droit d'être entendu - la politique (Ministère de la Justice)
  - ⇒ débat 4: les jeunes et les médias (Cabinet Van Mechelen)
  - ⇒ débat 5: l'opinion de l'enfant - philosopher avec les enfants (Kinderrechtencommissariaat)
  - ⇒ débat 6: la problématique des enfants réfugiés (Ministère de l'Intérieur)
  - ⇒ débat 7: l'enseignement et le statut d'élève - Vlaams Minister van Onderwijs

- ⇒ débat 9: les médias - Vlaams Parlement
- ⇒ débat 10: l'école et les loisirs - Vlaams Parlement

- Kinder- en Jongerentelefoon afdeling Limburg  
H. Van Veldesklingel 150, 3500 Hasselt.  
Wie ? 2000 jongeren tussen 12 en 16 jaar  
Wat ? Rapport "Tienerinspraak: wat zeggen ons de jongeren hierover?"  
Hoe ? Telefonische, maar vooral schriftelijke bevraging van ongeveer 2000 Limburgse tieners (12-16 jaar) naar hun participatie-ideeën en behoeftes thuis, op school, in de jeugdbeweging, de buurt en de provincie in samenwerking met de Provinciale Jeugddienst van Limburg.
- Kinder- en jongerentelefoon Vlaanderen  
Hallepoortlaan 27, 1060 Brussel.  
Wie ? 911 kinderen tussen 7 en 18 jaar  
Wat ? Rapport "Verkiezingen: wat denken jullie hiervan?"  
Hoe ? Een bevraging via een vragenlijst van ongeveer 1000 kinderen en jongeren naar hun ideeën over stemmen, verkiezingsinformatie en politieke onderwerpen.
- Kindergemeenteraad Herent  
Wilselsesteenweg 28, 3020 Herent  
Wie ? Kinderen tussen 6 en 14 jaar  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: meer speelruimte voor onze Herentse kinderen. Op vraag van een vijftal kinderen uit een bepaalde straat waar nergens in de buurt speelruimte is, werd beslist om hieraan iets te doen. Inspraak is hierbij heel belangrijk.
- Kinderrechtenboot  
Provinciebestuur van Antwerpen en NDO-onderzoekscentrum Kind en Samenleving  
Schranshoeve Rugeveldlaan 99, 2100 Deurne  
Wie ? 1000 kinderen tussen 9 en 12 jaar  
Wat ? Rapport (verwerking vragen, bedenkingen en suggesties kinderen)  
Hoe ? Via het initiatief "De kinderrechtenboot 'Jan Zonder Vrees'"  
In de periode 04/99-11/99 bezochten zo'n 3000 kinderen de kinderrechtenboot. Ze namen deel aan een programma waarbij zij nagingen hoe thuis, in de buurt, in de klas en op school hun rechten gerealiseerd worden. Zij dachten na, discussieerden, speelden toneel en stuurden briefkaarten naar schooldirecteurs, burgemeesters, de kinderrechtencommissaris,...
- Kinderrechtencommissariaat  
Hertogstraat 67/71, 1000 Brussel  
Wie ? 70.000 kinderen uit het vierde, vijfde en zesde leerjaar  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: stembiljetactie. Kinderen in alle Vlaamse Gemeenten via een stembiljet vragen naar prioritaire gemeentelijke beleidsthema's.

- Kinderrechtencommissariaat  
 Hertogstraat 67/71, 1000 Brussel  
 Wie ? leerlingen uit 30 lagere scholen  
 Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
 Initiatief: participatiebus. Een proefproject rond leerlingenparticipatie in de lagere school. Gedurende 3 keer een halve dag krijgen leerlingen van het eerste tot het zesde leerjaar de kans voorstellen te formuleren over wat beter kan op school. Doel is concrete inspraakcultuur bij leerlingen uit het lager onderwijs stimuleren.
- Kliksons  
 Jeugd & stad Brussel, Werkhuizenstraat 3-5, 1080 Brussel  
 Wie ? 31.000 tieners tussen 10 en 16 jaar  
 Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
 Initiatief: tienerbevraging over vrijetijdsbesteding en leefwereld, doormiddel van interactieve CD-ROM, opgestart door Jeugd en Stad Brussel en herwerkt door de Vlaamse Dienst Speelpleinwerking, de Vereniging Vlaamse Jeugddiensten en Consulanten en de 5 provinciale jeugddiensten tot een bruikbaar instrument voor de hele jeugdsector. Ondertussen reeds in 171 gemeenten gebruikt.
- Ligue des Familles  
 Qui ? Des enfants de 8 à 12 ans  
 Quoi ? Fiche initiative de participation  
 Initiative: Place aux enfants. Découverte de la commune par des enfants. Favoriser le participation du plus grand nombre dans la vie de tous les jours. Ouvrir le débat de la citoyenneté responsable et participative amenant un plus à la gestion de la Cité.
- Maison des jeunes « Le 404 »  
 Résidence Emile Donnay 404, 5680 Couvin  
 Qui ? Les enfants de la Maison des jeunes  
 Quoi ? Des ateliers sur les droits de l'enfant, dont un atelier « slogans », qui ont abouti à la mise en évidence des droits que les enfants jugeaient importants.
- Maison de L'eau et de la Vie  
 Rue Royale 171/3, 1210 Bruxelles  
 Qui ? des jeunes de 10 à 18 ans  
 Quoi ? Fiche initiative de participation  
 Initiative ? Programme des Jeunes Bruxellois pour l'Eau. Session du 16 mai 2001 au Parlement Bruxellois.
- Maison de Quartier Saint Antoine  
 Rue de Fierlant 2, 1190 Bruxelles  
 Qui ? Les jeunes et les enfants de la maison de quartier Saint-Antoine



Quoi ? Travail de réflexion sur la violence à partir du vécu des enfants à la maison, à l'école et dans la rue et sur base de la diffusion des normes humanitaires effectuée par la Croix Rouge.

Ce travail a donné lieu à une série de dessins, une fresque et une chanson rap sur la drogue.

- Het Megafoonproject

Kinderrechtencommissariaat, Hertogstraat 67/71, 1000 Brussel

Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: een initiatief van het Kinderrechtencommissariaat, de Kinder-en Jongeren telefoon, de Kinderrechtswinkels en Jeugd & Stad, met als doel actieve participatiekansen van kinderen in hun gemeente te helpen realiseren. Periode : 24 oktober 2000 tot 30 juni 2001.

- Minorius (Initiatief van het Vlaams Welzijnsverbond).

Guimardstraat 1, 1040 Brussel

Wie ? Jongeren vanaf 11 jaar uit voorzieningen bijzondere jeugdbijstand

Wat ? "Van mijn kant bekeken". Resultaat van groepsgesprekken met jongeren, verblijvend in Vlaamse voorzieningen voor bijzondere jeugdbijstand. Op een pro-actieve manier rechten van minderjarigen binnen voorzieningen bijzondere jeugdbijstand realiseren. Door jongeren zelf een stem te geven een stap zetten in het zoeken naar een nieuwe balans in het debat over de manier waarop jeugdbijstand ingevuld moet worden.

- Ouders van Dove Kinderen ODOK

Veldstraat 20, 2090 Stabroek

Wie ? Dove en slechthorende jongeren

Wat ? Neerslag voorbereiding debat 19/11/00

Hoe ? discussie/gesprek met de jongeren

- On Line Reporters

Franklin Roosevelt 12 bus 10, 1050 Brussel

Wie ? 4 jongeren tussen 15 en 18 jaar

Wat ? Tekst opgemaakt door jongeren

Hoe ? Vier jongeren (online reporters) discussieerden met elkaar over de thema's internet en media. Zij stuurden hun eindverslag met bedenkingen op.

Initiatief: On Line Reporters. Jongeren tussen 15 en 25 jaar, geboeid door actualiteit en pers schrijven voor de internetkrant 'De Middag'. De krant verschijnt dagelijks om 12 uur op het net. De databank van On Line Reporters speelt diezelfde artikels door naar de nationale pers, en wil zo een stem worden voor jongeren in de media. De jongeren worden hierbij bijgestaan door een team van journalisten en pedagogen die hen op weg helpen met ideeën en feedback.

- Organisatie- en Beleidsondersteuning voor scholen

Wie ? 3de graad basisonderwijs, 1ste en 2de graad SO

Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: verschillende activiteiten die zich toespitsen op leerlingenraden, individuele en gemeenschappelijke leerlingenbegeleiding, organisatie van leerlingenparticipatie, uitbouwen van een participatief klimaat tussen directie, leerkrachten en leerlingen. Via een systeem van schoolbegeleiding.

- Pedagogische begeleidingsdienst Gent

Stadhuis - Botermarkt 1, 9000 Gent

Wie ? Kinderen van verschillende scholen in het Gentse tussen 8 en 12 jaar

Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: filosoferen met kinderen over allerlei thema's. Het maken van de 100-krant samen met kinderen van andere landen. De kinderen van de filosoferende partnerscholen filosoferen rond dezelfde thema's en vragen en schrijven daarover nadien teksten. Soms worden er (gedeeltelijke) protocols van de gesprekken opgenomen in de krant. In sommige scholen bestaat een redactieraad samengesteld uit een paar kinderen per klas die de teksten nalezen en beoordelen en nadien een selectie opsturen naar de coördinator van de krant. Ook tekeningen en foto's vinden een plaats in de krant.

- Peacekids

Snuifmolenstraat 30, 9200 Dendermonde

Wie ? 1.) 2 klassen uit het 6'de leerjaar en 2.) 8 kinderen tussen 7-12 jaar

Wat ? Verslag van doorgeefrecorder

Hoe ? Via een gesprek in schoolverband en opnames met een cassette-recorder (doorgeven)

- Provinciale Jeugddienst Limburg (Kinderprovincieraad Limburg)

Universiteitslaan 1, 3500 Hasselt

Wie ? Ongeveer 250 kinderen tussen 10 en 12 jaar elk jaar

Wat ? De kindercourant + persmap

Hoe ? Via het initiatief de "Kinderprovincieraad Limburg". Tijdens de Kinderprovincieraad komen de kinderen van de verschillende Kindergemeenteraden van Limburg samen om over een thema te discussiëren en activiteiten te doen. De Kinderprovincieraad heeft twee zittingen per jaar. De verschillende Kindergemeenteraden doen hun inbreng.

- Rat Der Deutschsprachigen Jugend

Quantum Center - Hütte 79/16, 4700 Eupen

Wie ? kinderen en jongeren van de Duitstalige Gemeenschap

Wat ? Bijdrage van de Duitstalige Gemeenschap aan het Europees Witboek

- Robert Schuman Institut

Vervierser Strasse 89-93, 4700 Eupen

Wer ? Die Schüler des 1. Jahres der Sekundarschule

Was ? Liste d'idées et de suggestions - Das Leben wäre so schön, wenn... -

- Samenlevingsopbouw Roeselare- Tielt  
Hoogstraat 98 bus 2 , 8800 Rumbek  
Wie ? 350 jongeren tussen 16 en 19 jaar  
Wat ? Rapport (verwerking inzendingen)  
Hoe ? Via een kortlopend regionaal inspraakproject waarbij aan jongeren van het arrondissement Roeselare een stem gegeven werd via invulkaarten, een debat en een panelgesprek. 350 kaartjes werden ingevuld teruggestuurd.
- Secundaire School - College Heilig-Kruis Sint-Ursula 1  
Zandbergerstraat 21, 3680 Neeroeteren  
Wie ? leerlingen van eerste en tweede jaar (12 -13 jarigen)  
Wat ? Informatiebundel : een basistekst over een betere wereld vertaald in meer dan 200 talen. "Voor een Betere Wereld" heeft tot doel op een concrete manier te werken aan de vakoverschrijdende eindtermen en ontwikkelingsdoelen: opvoeding tot burgerzin en sociale vaardigheden. Continue bespreking van de basistekst, speekbeurten, acties, vertaling, ...
- Secundaire School IBSO De Horizon Aalst  
Molendreef 57, 9300 Aalst  
Wie ? 30-tal leerlingen  
Wat ? Tekst  
Hoe ? Ons Wensen- en Ideeënpakket vloeit voort uit de projectwerking op school: kleiatelier, theater en percussie.
- Secundaire School - Onze Lieve Vrouw Instituut Paal Beringen  
Schaffensesteenweg 2, 3583 Paal-Beringen.  
Wie ? 9 leerlingen tussen 13 en 14 jaar zijn rechtstreeks betrokken en ongeveer 153 leerlingen worden bereikt (eerste en tweede secundair)  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: sportraad, leerlingenraad, milieuraad. Verschillende initiatieven worden op touw gezet door de milieuraad, bijvoorbeeld: brooddozenactie, snoepvrije week, natuurwandeling. Hiervoor komen we 1 tot 2 keer per maand samen. De leerlingen dragen zelf zoveel mogelijk verantwoordelijkheid en fungeren als doorgeefluik naar de klasgenoten.
- Secundaire School - VTI-Gullegem  
Europalaan 17, 8560 Wevelgem - Gullegem  
Wie ? 12 leerlingen van 15 jaar en 8 leerlingen van 16 jaar - Klassen 3IW en 4IW  
Wat ? Eisenbundel  
Hoe ? Methode: De meningen van de jongeren werden verzameld in een groepsgesprek tijdens de lessen informatica

- Sporen vzw/ Centrum voor Integrale Jeugdzorg  
Geldenaaksebaan 428, 3001 Heverlee  
Wie ? 5 meisjes uit Jeugdooise, De Living.  
Wat ? Ze hebben een groepsgepraek gehad rond de thema's kinderen en justitie, kinderen en het gezin, kinderen en hulpverlening en kinderen en armoede. Hun ideeën werden door een stagiaire op papier gezet en opgestuurd voor het rapport.
- Stad Antwerpen  
Grote Markt 1, 2000 Antwerpen  
Wie ? Meer dan 500 kinderen uit Antwerpen  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief ? Leg je ei ! Kinderen en jongeren krijgen de kans om hun ding te doen in de stad op 29 juni 2001. Een Festival met meer dan 200 acts is het resultaat.
- Stedelijke Jeugdraad Gent  
Kammerstraat 10, 9000 Gent  
Wie ? De werkgroep Kies Kleurig om de gemeenteraadsverkiezingen voor te bereiden  
Wat ? Witboek van de Gentse Jeugd: "Mozes en de berg: de belangrijkste programmapunten van de jeugdraad".  
Hoe ? Via een samenwerking met jeugdhuizen, jeugdverenigingen en andere jongerenorganisaties werden de belangrijkste programmapunten (aangereikt door jongeren zelf) opgesteld. Deze punten werden geconfronteerd met de partijprogramma's om een discussie aan te gaan om jeugd(beleid) boven aan de agenda te plaatsen.
- Stedelijke Jeugdraad Sint-Niklaas  
Jeugddienst Sint-Niklaas, Grote Markt 1, 9100 Sint-Niklaas  
Wie ? Tientallen kinderen en jongeren uit Sint-Niklaas  
Wat ? Bevraging in het kader van het jeugdwerkbeleidsplan.
- Steunpunt leerlingenparticipatie  
Kernstraat 45, 1000 Brussel  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: sensibiliseren, stimuleren en ondersteunen van initiatieven voor leerlingenparticipatie. Verschillende vormen worden aangeboden. Voor het schooljaar 2001-2002 kunnen leerlingen(raden) met problemen rond de leerlingenraad terecht bij het Steunpunt. Een medewerker komt dan naar de school en stopt de leerlingen in een radiostudio. De uitzending komt live in alle lessen : de leerlingenraad stelt zich voor en elke leerling kan tijdens het programma vragen over en aan de leerlingenraad stellen.

- Strategisch Plan Kempen

Campus Blairon, Steenweg op Gierle 100, 230 Turnhout

Wie ? Kempense jongeren tussen 17 en 23 jaar

Wat ? Bundeling "prioriteiten van de Kempense Jongeren"

Initiatief: Keinijg! (Kempens inspraak initiatief voor jongeren aangaande streekontwikkeling!)

Keinijg! organiseert een mogelijkheid tot inspraak in het beleid van de Kempen voor jongeren. Aan de hand van discussiegroepen, website, kaartjes en het eindevenement worden de jongeren gestimuleerd hun mening te uiten. Hierbij worden ze bijgestaan door experts en een pakket informatie. De voorstellen van de jongeren worden verspreid naar alle overheden.

- Sur les chemins de la Solidarité

Rue de la Converserie 39, 6870 Saint-Hubert

Partenaires du projet : Le Comité UNICEF de Saint-Hubert, le Comité Communal de la Ligue des Familles de Saint-Hubert, Thibault et les écoles communales libres et de la Communauté française de Saint-Hubert.

Qui ? Les enfants des écoles de Saint-Hubert

Quoi ? Fiche initiative de participation

Initiative: CD avec des chansons et des textes écrits et chantés par les enfants mêmes sur le thème que eux ont choisi.

- Taponi

p/a ATD-Quart Monde

Avenue Victor Jacobs 12, 1050 Bruxelles

Qui ? Les enfants Taponi - 86 enfants de 37 délégations, venus de 24 pays, représentants des enfants du monde entier.

Quoi ? L'appel des enfants Taponi pour que cesse la misère, élaboré à l'occasion des 10 ans de la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant, à Genève, le 20 novembre 1999, lors du Forum International des enfants.

- 't Kompas/thuisbegeleidingsdienst Dendermonde

Kerkstraat 89, 9200 Dendermonde

Wie ? 4 jongeren uit de gezinnen die begeleid worden door 't Kompas.

Wat ? Gereageerd op een vragenlijst rond de thema's kinderen en het gezin, kinderen en hulpverlening, kinderen en justitie en kinderen en armoede in het kader van de verrijking van het rapport.

- Poing-R - Beeldenstorm

Rue de la Senne 21, 1000 Bruxelles

Qui ? Une 50taine de jeunes entre 10 et 19 ans

Quoi ? Fiche initiative de participation

Initiative : Beeldenstorm veut stimuler les jeunes bruxellois à développer les techniques multi-médias dans leur ville

Thème général : les jeunes et la ville.

- Vereniging voor Kind en Adoptiegezin  
Sulferbergstraat 38, 8000 Brugge  
Wie ? Adoptiekinderen in Vlaanderen  
Wat ? Meningen van adoptiekinderen in het trimestrieel VAG-Tijdschrift.
- VERder Kijken/ een initiatief van Virus en de Jeugdraad voor de Vlaamse  
Gemeenschap.  
Markiesstraat 1, 1000 Brussel  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: een campagne met het doel jongeren én politici bewust te maken van  
elkaar, opgestart naar aanloop van de gemeenteraadsverkiezingen van 8 oktober  
2000. Jongeren ertoe aan zetten politici te benaderen om jeugdthema's op de  
politieke agenda te krijgen, via verschillende kanalen.
- Vlaamse Scholierenkoepel  
Paleizenstraat 91, 1000 Brussel  
Wie ? Leerlingenvertegenwoordigers tussen 15 en 18 jaar. Overkoepelt meer dan  
200 leerlingenraden  
Wat ? Fiche participatie-initiatief  
Initiatief: de Vlaamse Scholierenkoepel is de nationale organisatie van scholieren  
verbonden aan de officieel erkende inrichtingen voor secundair onderwijs in de  
Vlaamse Gemeenschap. Via provinciale werkingen wordt vergaderd met de  
verschillende leerlingenraden. Vanuit de VSK werd heel wat lobbywerk verricht.  
Een rode kaartenactie tegen de toelatingsproef geneeskunde. In 1998 het  
organiseren van een congres 'Recht op inspraak'. De campagne 'Geweld is niet  
Geweldig'. De campagne "Sta op je rechten" in 2001. Het VSK ijvert voor een  
decreet op de rechtspositie van leerlingen (het leerlingenstatuut) en voor de  
verdieping en verbreding van de participatieraad (met leerlingen en meer  
bevoegdheden)
- Groupe de guidance des enfants du projet "What do you think?"  
UNICEF Belgique, Avenue des Arts 20 bte 18, 1000 Bruxelles  
Qui ? Une dizaine d'enfants entre 8 et 13 ans  
Quoi ? Discussion autour des opinions de chacun  
Comment ? Les enfants ont mis sur papier leurs opinions et ils en ont discuté en  
groupe.
- Groupe de guidance des jeunes du projet "What do you think?"  
UNICEF Belgique, Avenue des Arts 20 bte 18, 1000 Bruxelles  
Qui ? Une quarantaine de jeunes entre 13 et 18 ans  
Quoi ? Résultats des différents débats, discussions menées par les jeunes durant  
2 ans dans le cadre de la mise en place du projet WDYT?

- Worldshake

Wie ? 5400 jongeren tussen 15 en 25 jaar

Wat ? Fische participatie-initiatief

Initiatief: het campagnethema van Worldshake (de kloof tussen Noord en Zuid) werd door de jongeren zelf aangereikt. Dit via een onderzoek naar de belangrijkste problemen in de wereld en wat jongeren daar willen aan veranderen. Een initiatief van 35 organisaties uit het Vlaams Jeugdwerk en de Derdewereldbeweging.



**"What do you think?" Project  
UNICEF Belgium  
Avenue des Arts 20 bte 18  
1000 Brussels**

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Fax : 02/230.34.62  
E-mail : [info@whatdoyouthink.be](mailto:info@whatdoyouthink.be)  
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"What Do You Think?" is coordinated by **unicef** 