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# Powerful Plan

## Policy note Steunpunt Jeugd 2009-2011

### Steunpunt Jeugd has a powerful plan

Since 2002 we've been committed to children, young people and their organisations. Our trajectory was sometimes bumpy, we headed out into familiar and unknown terrains, but most of all the ride was fascinating and educational. All of our experiences and our contacts with the youth sector in general have inspired us for our policy note 2009-2011. We're very proud of the result and are happy to unveil our plans. This brochure describes Steunpunt Jeugd's intended policy from 2009 through 2011. We'll guide you through our different goals and actions for this policy period.

**Our policy note is not just a plan, but also a multifunctional instrument...**

#### for a high-quality strategic policy

Two strategic lines emanate from our mission as a centre of knowledge and expertise: integrated youth policy and practical support.

#### for a high-quality operational and goal-oriented policy

Our strategic lines have in turn been translated into operational goals and concrete actions. The actions are signposts, not predetermined paths to be followed. Each year we will flexibly and dynamically design and develop actions in a concrete annual plan.

#### but mainly... for a high-quality quality policy!

Besides the legal obligation to do so we mainly wrote this policy note for ourselves. It offers us something to hold onto over the next few years, without serving as a strait jacket but instead allowing us the leeway to respond to current developments.

We haven't drawn up this plan on our own. Many youth workers and other great minds have participated in the process that preceded this policy note. We hope that working with these people to cook up the policy note will build the necessary support to translate our policy note into concrete actions. We want to use this policy note to work on quality planning, quality control and quality improvement. We want to work toward realizing our mission with this policy note. But most of all with this policy note we want to... work!



## Steunpunt Jeugd is an organisation with a mission!

Steunpunt Jeugd will – in collaboration with the various players in the field – clarify and strengthen the societal position of kids and young people and that of youth work. This is why we are working towards a dynamic and integral youth policy and why we support the youth sector.

### Our mission entails three tasks for Steunpunt Jeugd:

- 1 Steunpunt Jeugd is building an integrated youth policy within the framework of the Flemish Youth Policy Plan.
- 2 Steunpunt Jeugd, in its practical support role, offers different services to the sector.
- 3 Steunpunt Jeugd is the knowledge and expertise centre for youth, youth work and youth policy.

We've even managed to fit all of our activities in one diagram:

LOCAL FLEMISH INTERNATIONAL	PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT INTEGRATED YOUTH POLICY	PRACTICAL SUPPORT		
		basic needs	differentiated support	
			offer-driven	demand-driven
KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT		adding to the documentation centre		
COMMUNICATION	congress report		loslopend wild 1	
SERVICES		guidance towards recognition		interview at the sector's request
HELP DESK	fuifpunt help desk			
CONSULTATION			platform diversity	
RESEARCH		screening policy notes		

*Of course these activities are noted here purely for illustrative purposes. We do a whole lot more!*

Our **practice development** is aimed at working towards a Flemish integrated youth policy. Our **practical support** is divided into two main categories. We want to provide for the **basic needs of all organisations subsidized under the decree *Flemish youth and children's rights policy***: organisational development and regulation.

Furthermore we organise **offer-driven** support centred on the themes of local and provincial youth policy, space, diversity, youth tourism and management training. We realise that it is impossible to respond to all of the sector's questions and needs with offer-driven support alone. This is why we're setting up a **demand-driven** section in the new policy note, taking into account the diversity of our sector.

The left column contains a large part of the means we put towards practice development and practical support.

In addition to the horizontal integrated approach we want to make an effort to vertically – across different policy levels – strive towards an **integrated youth policy**. That's why we choose to remain committed to local and Flemish youth policy and to make extra efforts on the international level.



And now for something... concrete!

## Assignment 1: Steunpunt Jeugd is building an integrated youth policy within the framework of the Flemish Youth Policy Plan

The **Flemish Youth Policy Plan** offers a great context for the realization of our mission, since it explicitly works towards a policy for kids and young people. The decree Flemish youth and children's rights policy states that a Flemish Youth Policy Plan needs to be drawn up in the first year of a new legislative term of the Flemish Government. This policy plan is a guide for the youth policy during that legislative term. We explicitly choose to play a clear part in this Flemish Youth Policy Plan (in both the draft and execution phases) and wish to thus promote a Flemish integrated youth policy.

That's why, in the run-up to the new Flemish Youth Policy Plan, we are organising a congress, called **JET** (young, energetic and visionary) about and for an integrated youth policy with a clear focus on all fields of youth policy (horizontally with regards to themes and vertically with regards to policy levels). The report of the congress will afterwards be condensed into a publication designed to feed the Flemish Youth Policy Plan.

We are also explicitly choosing to help implement this Flemish Youth Policy Plan afterwards. We will do so by working around four themes from the plan, using **trajectories** that we will create with the sector and partners.

An integrated Flemish youth policy to us means a youth policy that is both thematically and geographically aligned. That is why we will, from a Flemish context, look for not only a topical deepening of content but also for **alignment with the local and international policy levels**. This way we will ensure that the Flemish youth policy remains in step with the local and international fields.

A theme we will certainly keep working on over the next three years is party policy. The amount of questions we receive about legislation and the drafting of a party policy keeps growing. That's why we feel we need to keep feeding and supporting a good **party policy** on all policy levels. We explicitly choose to give Fuifpunt a place among our activities.

Completely new in this policy note is the **theme incentive**. Each year we want to spotlight a theme that will run like a red thread through our activities. This theme will be determined annually, so that we can respond to current developments. The sole conditions for this theme are its absence from our theme-based offer and its relevance for the youth, youth work or youth policy in Flanders.



## Assignment 2: Steunpunt Jeugd offers different services

A second important part of our activities is **practical support**. First of all we want to support all organisations subsidized under the decree *Flemish youth and children's rights policy* during their **development into high-quality organizations**. Quality in youth work is mainly manifested in the boundless commitment of thousands of volunteer and professional collaborators. Our support focus is therefore on the adequate management of these youth workers' skills. Furthermore we follow up on the relevant legislation and try to help create a correct and good legal position for youth workers and their organisations.

We want to add content value to our organisational support. Through both demand- and offer-driven support we develop a service offer for all these subsidized organisations.

**Demand-driven:** we organise two round tables each year. The themes of these round tables will be distilled from the reactions we receive to our annual appeal to the sector. '**You ask, Steunpunt Jeugd gives:**' we want to permanently work around the needs of the sector.

In addition we keep working intensively around **five themes**: local and provincial youth policy, space, diversity, youth tourism and education. Each theme is embedded in a platform, where we stay up to date through dialogue.

Besides these platforms we also organise an offer based on these five themes. Highly valued: **TRIP Lokaal**, the provincial training days for local youth workers and youth council members, youth services and interested city council members. 'Do more of what works', and so from 2009 on TRIP Lokaal has been expanded into **TRIP Provinciaal**. These training days are aimed at provincial and regional players in the youth work sector.

Since 2008 we've been organizing the **Portfolioproject**, in association with SoCiuS. We've joined forces in this project in order to develop and introduce a portfolio to support non formal education in the social-cultural adult and youth work. Of course we will keep dedicating attention to this project in the years to come, and play our part once it's over.



## Assignment 3: Steunpunt Jeugd is the knowledge and expertise centre for youth, youth work and youth policy

A knowledge and expertise centre... Sounds ambitious. That's because we are! We specifically chose to emphasize this 'organisationally', in order to be able to manage the two other pillars – practice development and practical support – professionally and qualitatively. This section is mainly about 'how' we will do this. The answer has six components:

### Knowledge management

We want to secure the knowledge and expertise present in our organisation. We do so by means of an extensive documentation centre and by recording our internal processes.

### Communication

We want to inform the sector about what it is we are doing by using different forms of communication, including this brochure, our website and publications like Krax, Humus, Loslopend Wild...

### Services

We do a lot more than organising training days. We invest more clearly in guidance and intervision. This way we can support organisations à la carte. In addition we regularly invite everyone to come and talk about trends and contemporary themes in youth policy and youth research during our study days.

### Help desk

Along with our new plans for 2009-2011 we're launching our new website. A site with lots of information and an extensive search function. And of course we can also be reached by phone and email for more information about the themes we offer.

### Consultation

There is a lot of appreciation for the dialogues in the different platforms, so we will be expanding these in the future. We will also organize consultation rounds about the drafting of the new Flemish Youth Policy Plan, the theme incentive and the demand-driven support. Of course we're not just organizing consultation: we're also aiming to inspire others with our knowledge and expertise.

### Research

Ok, we'll admit: so far we've hardly done any research. All the more reason to step it up over the next few years – and the reason why we're explicitly mentioning it here. We want to be actively involved in research into youth, youth work and youth policy.



## **A powerful plan requires a strong approach!**

**For 2009-2011 we deliberately chose a powerful plan, not a strict plan.** That's why we wrote a strategic note that we will then translate into an annual plan each year. This way we want to respond to current developments from our role as a knowledge and expertise centre. Our annual plans are drawn up in agreement with our Board of Administrators and approved by our General Assembly.

Furthermore we will be strengthening each pillar of the knowledge and expertise centre (knowledge management, communication, services, help desk, consultation and research) from 2009 on. There's a person responsible for each pillar, as well as a plan containing coordination and guidelines. This way it becomes clear to everybody how we want to handle these pillars and how we want to guarantee practice development and practical support.

By using these two instruments – the annual plan and the plans per pillar – we want to make sure we do the right things. Through a needs survey in 2010, a permanent evaluation of our services, a demand-driven section and a sector helping to steer the annual plan through the General Assembly we create guarantees for our adequate response to the current trends in and needs of the sector.

On the other hand we want to guarantee quality. By recording the operations of the knowledge and expertise centre in a plan per pillar, we don't just want to do the right things, but also do things right.

**We're ready... and we feel like going for it!**

P.S.: Would you like to sink your teeth in our organisation? Make your way to [www.steunpuntjeugd.be](http://www.steunpuntjeugd.be)!