

Conference

“The integration of young people excluded by early school leaving and unemployment: challenges and solutions”

Context

Young people are the first victims of the wave of unemployment which has struck Europe and its major cities and most vulnerable people. In December 2014, 21.4% of young people (aged 15 -24) in Europe were without work. In some countries and major cities, youth unemployment has even hit more than 50%. It affects all young people, but those with the fewest qualifications are hit hardest. In Europe, one young person in eight leaves secondary education without a diploma. Many fear a 'lost generation' which will see its chances for a better future diminish through a combination of school drop-out and unemployment. Keeping young people in school and helping them enter the labour market is therefore a fundamental challenge and priority for European society, and therefore also for Belgium and its social actors.

For the reasons outlined above, the Foundation P&V has launched an extensive programme which combines scientific research with concrete action. The programme started in 2012 with an appeal to thousands of social scientists and research institutions across the whole of Europe. From the more than 40 submissions, an international panel selected 9 winning contributions which distinguished themselves through their original and informed take on the issue. These contributions were collected in the book *Early school leaving & Youth unemployment*, published by Lannoo Campus and Amsterdam University Press, and presented in the European Parliament on 7 and 8 March 2013 in the presence of European Commissioner László Andor, various ministers and important stakeholders. These debates led to a broad call for projects that work on this issue within Belgium, which was launched on 5 June 2013. By 5 October 2013, we had received 245 dossiers from all over Belgium. After various evaluation rounds, a jury composed of Belgian experts (from the education, employment and poverty reduction sectors) selected 6 projects from these dossiers to receive grants of between €10,000 and €50,000. Two projects came from Brussels, two from Flanders and two from Wallonia. In 2014, these projects were closely monitored by the Foundation P&V.

The conference of 8 May 2015 aims to present and discuss about the best practices of those awarded Belgian organizations and several other national and international projects. This event will engage policy makers, project managers, academics and the general public to co-create a shared vision on how Belgium and Europe can address the challenges of early school leaving and youth unemployment.

About the Foundation P&V

The cornerstone of the P&V Foundation is the fight against the exclusion of young people. The Foundation wants to guide young people regarding different aspects of social life. By giving them the necessary opportunities and by actively involving them, it helps them take their lives into their own hands. The main values of social economy drive the actions of the Foundation: solidarity, emancipation, citizenship and participation.

Draft programme

Friday **8 May 2015**

The Egg

Bara Street 175, 1070 Brussels

Interpretation into English

08h45 **Registration and welcome coffee**

9h15 **Welcome address**

Mark Elchardus, President of Foundation P&V

9h40-10h40 **Inspiring speeches**

- **Céline Alvarez**, Pedagogical innovator
- **Hiltje Roomaker**, Principal Leon van Gelder Reitdiep School in Groningen
- **Pierre Pirard**, CEO Teach for Belgium
- **Siham El Kaouakibi**, Coordinator Let's Go Urban

10h40-11h **Coffee break**

11h-13h **Parallel workshops**

Early school-leaving and youth unemployment are strongly related. Indeed, employability greatly depends on the level of competence and qualifications achieved and early school leavers are therefore most at risk of unemployment. Early school leaving can be tackled by prevention, intervention and/or compensation. Preventive policies try to avoid situations or conditions that can lead to early school-leaving. Intervention strategies try to detect and address emerging difficulties related to early school-leaving. Finally, compensation mechanisms offer opportunities for education, training or working experiences for those who have already dropped out.

Workshop I: Prevention

*Moderator/Rapporteur: **Dirk Jacobs** (ULB) / **Dimokritos Kavadias** (VUB)*

- *Scientific Reflection: **Mieke Van Houtte**, University of Ghent.*
- *Interventions from:*
 - **Chris Bryssinckx**, coordinator Werkvormm & **Axel Dingemans**, director Formaat Antwerpen
 - **Sofie Foets**, coordinator ToekomstAtelierDuFutur
 - **Pierre Pirard & Laurane Vanderbecken**, Teach for Belgium
 - **Emmy Proost**, director education policy of city of Antwerp
 - **Fadie Hanna**, education lecturer at teacher training primary schools University of Amsterdam

Workshop II: Intervention

*Moderator/Rapporteur: **Ariane Baye** (ULG) / **Carl Lamote** (KU Leuven, Flemish Department of Education)*

- *Scientific Reflection: **Louise Elffers**, Academic Workplace Education, University of Maastricht & Inspectorate of Education.*
- *Interventions from:*

- **Katleen Van de Velde**, coordinator vzw Schoolbrug
- **Catherine Sztencel**, director asbl Odyssée
- **Sebastien Hardy**, director La Teignouse AMO
- **Sylvia Ruge**, director of the DKJS regional office in Saxony-Anhalt and programm manager of „Schulerfolg sichern!“ (Assuring Success in School)

Workshop III: Compensation

*Moderator/Rapporteur: **Greet Van Dooren** (HIVA Leuven) / **Audrey Grandjean** (Instance bassin EFE Bruxelles)*

- *Scientific Reflection: **Pierre-Yves Bernard**, University of Nantes.*
- *Interventions from:*
 - **Katelijan Schevelenbos**, coordinator Vormingscentrum Molenbeek (Foyer)
 - **Bruno Schneider**, director asbl Perspectives
 - **Patrick Manghelinckx**, director JES
 - **Jens Bjornavold**, senior expert European Centre for Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)
 - **Wolfgang Müller**, director at German Public Employment Centre, heading the European Representation

13h-14h **Lunch**

14h-14h30 **Keynote speech**

On early school leaving and youth unemployment in comparative perspective

14h30-15h50 **Reactions and reflections on policy recommendations from workshops**

- **Grégor Chapelle**, General Director Actiris (Brussels' Public Employment Service)
- **Fons Leroy**, Delegate Administrator VDAB (Flemish Public Employment Service)
- **Jo Libeer**, Delegate Administrator VOKA (Flanders' Chamber of Commerce and Industry)
- **Joëlle Milquet**, Vice-President, Minister of Education, Culture and Childhood of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation.
- **Micheline Scheys**, General Secretary of the Education and Training Department of the Flemish Community
- **Olivier Willocx**, Delegate Administrator BECI (Brussels' Chamber of Commerce and Industry) & President Economic and Social Council Brussels

15h50-16h **Closing remarks**

Mark Elchardus, President of the Foundation P&V

16h **End of the conference**

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