

# Het Groot Debat/The Big Debate

**Name of the organisation**

Jeugdraad Stad Gent

**Website of the organisation**

<https://jeugdraadgent.weebly.com/>

**Location of the organisation**

Kammerstraat 10, 9000 Ghent, Belgium

**E-mail address of the organisation**

[info@jeugdraad.gent](mailto:info@jeugdraad.gent)

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**Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work**

- Participation of young people in decision making
- Active citizenship/activism
- Youth information and counselling

**Good practice category**

A practice of processes and methods

**Good practice aim & purpose**

“Het Groot Debat” is a project of the Youth Services of Ghent in collaboration with the Youth Council and Larf, Kopergietery and Viervulvier. It aims to inform young people about elections and political decision making, involves them in debate with peers and politicians. With this project, we want to evoke the curiosity and enthusiasm of youngsters for social challenges.

750 young people of the 5th, 6th and 7th year of high school, of 23 different schools in Ghent, participate. We want to create dialogue between young people, who never interact in other situations. This gives them the chance to learn other perspectives and reflect on their own views.

The youngsters of the Youth Council are involved in all important decisions about the project. Specifically, they take the lead in organizing the big final day of the project.

## **Good practice description**

The project consists of a class project and a big final day.

During the class project, each class works on a theme of their choice. Themes include climate, well-being, city of the future, democracy, living together and money.

The youngsters first receive input from an expert on this theme, after which they engage in their own discussion using statements. They process this theme in a creative way, guided by a creator.

During the closing day on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 2024, the 750 young people will gather.

They will discuss statements on the different topics with youngsters of different schools and backgrounds, engage with politicians themselves and admire each other's creative products.

In the afternoon, there will be a big final debate with party chairs. During that debate, young people will ask the questions themselves, guided by Prof Carl Devos. We involve the young participants in the public by questioning their opinions on the statements, and confront politicians with young people's voices.

Afterwards, we provide a recap and an overview of the statements and the opinions of youngsters and politicians on our website. We offer schools and youth organizations methods to discuss these with their groups of youngsters. That way, we want to include other youngsters of Ghent in this project.

## **Good practice result & concrete effects**

- Politicians get insights in views of youngsters.
- Youngsters are informed and motivated to go voting.
- Youngsters see the value of debate with people with different views.
- Youngsters debate about the statements on different social issues at school and in youth organisations.

## **Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work**

Youth work policy