

KRAS

Name of the organisation

Globelink

Website of the organisation

www.globelink.be

Location of the organisation

Onderwijsstraat 126B, 1070 Anderlecht, Belgium

E-mail address of the organisation

globelink@globelink.be

Good practice aspect(s)/themes of youth work

- Participation of young people in decision making
- Non-formal education/-learning
- Active citizenship/activism
- Sustainable development

Good practice category

A practice of processes and methods

Good practice aim & purpose

Youth Service Globelink challenges young people to strive for a sustainable, inclusive and just world. We develop in them strength, knowledge and enthusiasm to be able to make conscious choices and actively carry them out.

We resolutely believe in young people and their power to help build a democratic society. We contribute to the realization of a sustainable, solidary and just world by starting from the ideas and actions of young people.

The most important objective of the KRAS project is to make the voice of all young people heard. We do this by providing young people with tools to sharpen their vision of a sustainable, solidarity-based and just world by offering a wide variety of opinions.

In doing so, the KRAS project supports young people to make their voices heard in society.

The ways we achieve the goals are diverse; young people decide the annual theme of Kras, chair a committee in a parliament, write the KRAS folder....

Good practice description

KRAS is a cross-school discussion and role-playing game in leisure time for all 16+ people all over Flanders and Brussels. KRAS offers young people the chance to form their unadulterated opinions and unleash KRAS statements on the world. Every year a theme is put forward, in which the global and system-critical dimension is central. This year that theme is identity (with subthemes including gender identity, culture and the impact of class). Next year's KRAS theme is open and will be determined by young people this year. This will also be the theme on which the participation tracks – described

below – will focus next year.

Throughout the KRAS project, young people delve into this theme through role-playing. They learn to think from a specific point of view and to represent the interests of this role. With the knowledge they gain, they can later express their own opinions more clearly. KRAS continues in 20-25 municipalities (7 sessions per municipality). At the end all young people from all over Flanders and Brussels go to local and national policy makers with their formed personal opinions. In the local closing sessions they formulate their wishes and needs at the local level, starting from the year's theme. This is followed by the finale of the entire process, the icing on the cake: the Plenum (b)XL. On this day, all KRAS youth from Flanders and Brussels come together in the Chamber, the Senate and the Flemish Parliament. Together with politicians and experts, they debate the year's theme and formulate solutions and recommendations for national and international politics. These are voted on in plenary and distributed as widely as possible.

For the full overview of the policy recommendations of the Plenum 2022, please refer to the appendix, available at www.globelink.be/kras-plenum.

Throughout the KRAS year, young people go through different phases, each of which in a different way contribute to their personal trajectory.

– September – October

At the start of the trajectory, the focus is on motivating young people. On the one hand, this translates into the commitment and conviction of our volunteer supervisors who recruit young people for this project. On the other hand, we try to reach as many young people as possible at our introductory session. During this session, young people get to know each other and are immersed in the annual theme, the KRAS methodology and the roles.

– October – March

In this phase, we focus on knowledge, skills and systems thinking. Through various role plays, young people immerse themselves in the global theme. From different roles (NGOs, multinationals, governments, civil movements, political parties,...) young people propose recommendations and solutions. They empathize, learn to debate, take into account the opinion of other roles, can distinguish between their own opinion and factual knowledge and try to compromise. Through the diversity of roles, all topics discussed are placed in a broad perspective and we ensure that young people come out at the end with a nuanced and substantiated opinion. Additional forms of work can be applied in this phase to gather more or different input, such as a company visit.

– March – April

In this phase, young people leave their roles behind. Based on their acquired knowledge and the confrontation with a broad perspective of opinions, they now make their own choices. They choose themes that are close to their hearts, place them in their municipal or urban context and formulate a personal opinion about them. They enter into conversation with people in the field who can again give input from their expertise. In this phase, the young people are introduced to systems thinking in which the global and the local are linked, as well as the various themes and their influence on each other. Together with the experts, we prepare the local and national final session.

– April – May

In the final phase, the young people take their formed personal opinions to local and national decision makers. In the local closing sessions they formulate their wishes and needs at the local level, starting from the year's theme. Afterwards comes the finale of the entire process, the icing on the cake: the Plenum (b)XL! On this day, all KRAS youth from Flanders and Brussels come together in the federal and Flemish Parliament. Together with politicians and experts, they debate the annual theme and formulate solutions and recommendations for national and international politics. These are voted on in plenary and distributed as widely as possible.

The KRAS project is made for and by young people. So young people also operate behind the scenes! They help shape the annual theme, ensure that the voice of the many KRAS young people is given a stage, and put this voice in the spotlight by spreading opinions broad dissemination. The young people who pull the strings behind the scenes at KRAS operate under the name KRAS Deluxe.

Good practice result & concrete effects

Globelink as well as the KRAS project applies the pedagogical framework Education for Sustainable Development (EDO). Through the following five competencies, we work toward competencies in the young people.

1. New knowledge

Before you develop a vision or take an action, you need some input. The head needs to be filled with information. In ESD, it is essential not to have just one story, but a diversity of points of view. It is enriching to also hear those opinions that are underexposed. Incorporating and understanding new knowledge is essential in a journey. Without new knowledge, it would be impossible to bring the complex issues being addressed into the debate. This new knowledge about sustainability and global problems should not be limited to cause-and-effect relationships. New knowledge expresses itself by citing basic reasons, possible change strategies, alternative solutions, ...

2. Systemthinking

Soon you find that one solution, one answer is usually insufficient. Social issues are complex and connected to different systems (including ecological, social and economic). Being able to recognize those systems helps formulate sustainable solutions. In order to really look for alternatives, these things cannot be separated from each other. Making connections, paying attention to processes, looking at dynamic relationships (instead of linear thinking) are crucial to tackling today's problems.

3. Value development

In addition, you must realize that solutions are determined by the lens through which you look. Depending on where you are in the world, which seat you sit on, which side of the debate you are on or which group you belong to, you have a different set of values and norms that influence how you look at problems. Looking at a problem from different points of view can provide new and creative insights. Sustainable development is about making choices. Choices that create a world that is also livable for those who come after us. These choices are made based on knowledge, but also on values and beliefs. Within KRAS, there must be room to question values and allow new ones to emerge. This happens best in situations where our own values are confronted with values and beliefs of others.

4. Action-oriented

The best steersmen stand ashore and tell others what to do. Naming your own responsibility and acting accordingly is necessary while answering social issues. Developing a vision, formulating an opinion or taking a stand: don't stop at fine words and DOE. Mastering competencies that will enable you as a citizen to actively participate in society should be a clear outcome of any project. Getting actively involved with competencies and doing something is what action orientation is all about.

5. Emotion

To formulate sustainable solutions and act on them, you need to be involved in the topic. Involvement represents commitment, passion and emotion. It motivates, encourages and reinforces the choices being made. Involvement, commitment and emotion are the driving forces to convert knowledge, insights and skills into action. It connects people and sets people in motion. Emotions also affect our ultimate choices. Knowing and expressing emotions, being able to use emotions productively, being able to control emotions, are all things we need to be mindful of within any project.

Good practice chapter of the European Charter on Local Youth Work

Core principles of youth work