



## Case study on use of the YouthMetre at local level

### *Adaptability of the urban space to the needs of bikers in Leuven*

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## About the YouthMetre

The YouthMetre empowers young people to be able to communicate with public authorities, politicians or general public and advocate for their ideas in a more effective way. It allows them to **be informed** (they get insights into EU youth statistics through visualisations), **inspired** (they can check best practices that can help solving their local issues as well), **connected** (with other young people and public authorities/politicians) and **empowered** (they can better share their ideas and gain new advocacy skills).

The principal parts of the YouthMetre project are the e-tool providing visualised statistics related to youth and youth policy, a training course on advocacy and usage of digital tools, and the crowdmap "My idea for my community", through which young people will be able to share their ideas and get in touch with their peers, public authorities/politicians and other stakeholders and promote/advocate for their ideas.

The YouthMetre e-tool aims at providing support to young people regarding advocacy. They can check statistics and support their ideas with data, compare it with best practices and draw further inspiration, put ideas on the map and network with others (who can also like and comment on idea/project) and can then create their case and present it to public authorities or politicians. During the training (face to face or online) young people will get knowledge and skills needed for effective public communication and advocacy campaigning. They can also become multipliers in their communities by conducting local training or raising awareness about the YouthMetre.

The YouthMetre online tool can be also used by public authorities/politicians as a complementary tool when they want to get in touch with young people. On the map, they can for example announce public consultations, ask people for their opinions, get inspired by best practices from other countries, or directly contact authors of interesting ideas or projects.

The YouthMetre online tool is now available at [www.youthmetre.eu](http://www.youthmetre.eu)

## Case study

### **The characters** – who wants to change the local situation

Emilie (26) and Karel (27) are recent graduates. Emilie studied urbanism and spatial planning in Gent, Belgium and Karel architecture in Leuven, Belgium. They met during an Erasmus+ youth exchange in Spain. Now they are living in Leuven and are establishing an NGO that aims at solving local issues related to urban development.

*The following document represents a guide for them on how they might maximise their use of the YouthMetre when proceeding with their advocacy activities.*

#### **1) Identify the topic** – what is the issue to be changed

As a topic, Emilie and Karel chose traffic problems, with a focus on the adaptability of the urban space to the needs of bikers. There are a lot of students using bicycles in Leuven but the city is very bike-unfriendly. It also seems that many streets are under construction at the same time, which also complicates the traffic situation.

*We chose a topic that concerns whole city. Without any need to change the following steps in this case study, the YouthMetre could also be applied to solving the issues at national level, but also those concerning only one street or another single place. We also chose a rather technical topic, but the same steps can be applied to many others – such as environmental, employment, social inclusion, health care, etc.*

#### **2) Set objective(s) and goal(s)** – what are the plans to change the issue

- a) As a first step, Emilie and Karel want to collect relevant data and compare local reality with the situation in other cities in Belgium, but also abroad.
- b) Then they want to identify the most problematic parts of the city and approach local authorities. As professionals in the field they can also prepare a project for improving specific streets.
- c) The **long-term objective** would be to change the local policy in urban planning and road reconstructions.

### 3) Use the YouthMetre – how this tool can help, stage 1

YouthMetre empowers young people to advocate for their ideas in a more effective way and thus changes the local situation and helps to solve the issue or issues identified in the first step. In stage one of using the YouthMetre we will focus on the ways you can be **informed, inspired and connected**.

#### a) Be informed

Using the YouthMetre online tool at <http://youthmetre.eu/youthmetre/> you can quickly check visualised statistics linked to your topic. In our concrete case, you can use the following statistics as a starting point for your further research. For now we chose the following statistics to demonstrate the variety of visualised data the YouthMetre provides:

Dashboard – Health and well-being – Injuries after road accidents

Belgium



Hungary



Poland



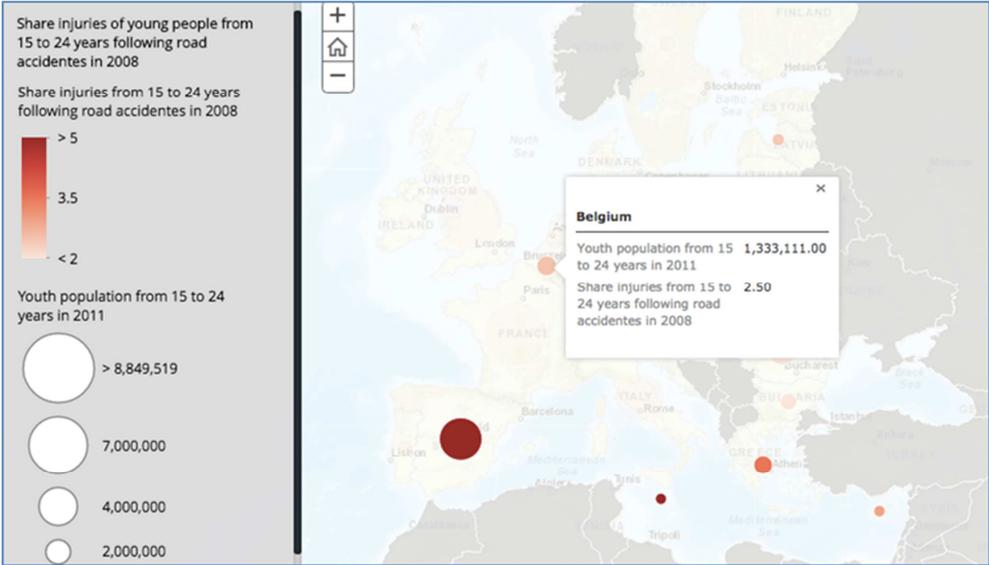
Dashboard – Youth participation – Interaction with public authorities



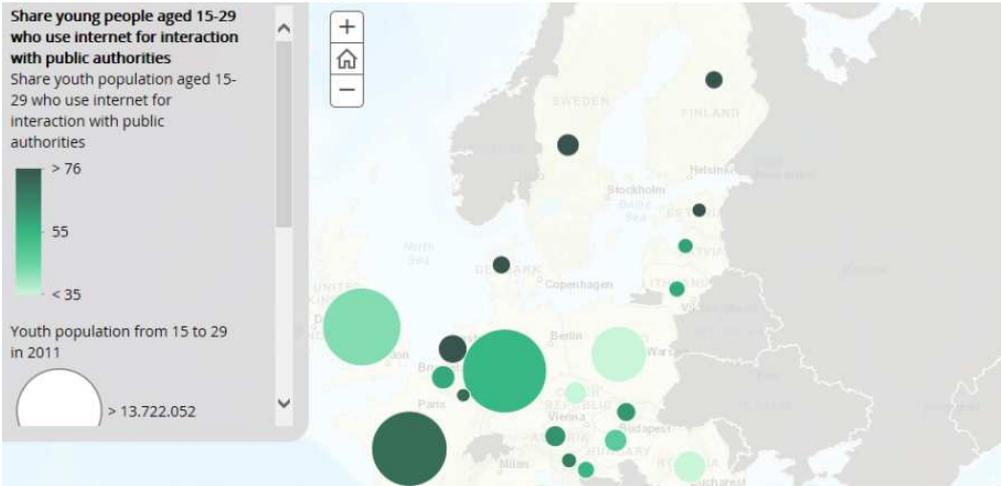
Dashboard – Youth participation – Posting opinions on issues via websites

Year	Belgium	EU28
2013	6%	18
2015	8%	16

Indicators by country – Health and well-being – Injuries: road traffic



Indicators by country – Youth participation – Use Internet for interactions with authorities



## b) Be inspired

If you check the “Good practices” tab at <http://youthmetre.eu/youthmetre/> you can see the good practices projects (as selected by the European Commission) realised in your area and all over the EU. Maybe the same or a similar issue has been addressed in another EU country and you can draw inspiration from the project that has been dealing with it, or even contact the managers of that project. Here we chose map showing projects in the field of youth participation, as those are projects led by young people dealing with various issues.



The data for the YouthMetre is often updated and a system whereby people could also propose good practices from EU countries is being considered.

### c) Be connected

On the YouthMetre web page “SG surveys” (Youth – SG surveys) you can access map called “[My idea for my community](#)”. On this map you can also see projects from your country or all around the EU (maybe some of them are dealing with the same issue as you do). The main purpose of this map is to share ideas and raise awareness of diverse issues.



Using this map is quite intuitive. It can be divided into several steps:

- choose the map according to your preferences or geographical scale on which you are working. In our case it would be a “Streets map”, where you can easily identify the most problematic areas;
- post the idea/project by clicking on the icon of the edit tool.  You will be asked to choose key topic at first – in our case it can be “Volunteering” or “Youth participation”. Then just click on the map to localise the problem. If you are dealing with diverse locations you could place more dots on the map – one being for the whole project, others for concrete examples of its implementation;
- then add information about the idea/project including contact data;
- people can comment on or like your idea/projects. As long as users provide their contact data it is simple to get in direct contact with them. This way you can easily find other like-minded people and network;
- you can share the map on social media, embed it on the website;
- you can also print the map with your idea and use it during advocacy campaign and talks with local authorities – you will be able to show them how many people support your idea and what they think about it;
- you can stay up to date by subscribing to the YouthMetre newsletter (at the bottom of <http://youthmetre.eu/>) and by following the project on social media.

#### 4) What other sources and platforms can be used

If some important or specific supporting statistics cannot be obtained via YouthMetre you should identify other sources of information. In our case, you can check the websites of [Statistics Belgium](#) (Algemene Directie Statistiek/Direction générale Statistique), which is main statistical authority in Belgium, or the official country portal [Belgium.be](#). You can also consult [Belgian Statistical Society](#) and [FLAMES](#) (Flanders Training Network for Methodology and Statistics). For regional statistics, you can refer to [website of Flemish region](#) and for city statistics to [Leven in Leuven](#).

In order to find people who might want to support your idea, you can use discussion platforms on social media. For example, in this case the Facebook group “**Durf te vragen Leuven**” with almost 17.000 members is probably the best place for you. There is also another group called “**Durf te klagen Leuven**” that is meant for fun, but also there you can find some potentially useful contacts. It is definitely worthwhile to join discussion groups of university students or local NGO’s dealing with the same or similar topics. It is also worth approaching the NGO’s directly.

#### 5) Using the YouthMetre – how this tool can help, stage 2

For the second stage of using the YouthMetre we will focus on some ways how you can be **empowered**.

Once you have developed your idea/project, supported it with statistics, compared it with other similar activities, presented it on the map and found supporters, you can present it to media and the general public, approach public authorities and advocate for a change with policy makers. It doesn’t matter what your goal is – whether it is the improvement of local road or a change of urban planning policy – only a well-developed campaign can be successful. For this reason we have developed the “YouthMetre training course”, accessible online at <http://youthmetre.eu/training/>.

There you will learn more about EU youth policy and policy indicators, the YouthMetre, how to visualise data, create story maps and, most importantly, how to communicate with the media/public and to create successful advocacy campaigns. In this regard, the most important is the final exercise and the documents “**Template to design an advocacy campaign**” and “**Guidelines and template timeline of C&D plan**”.

## **6) Enhance the YouthMetre and EU youth policies and statistics**

At the moment, statistics, good practices and ideas/projects on the map “My idea for my community” are divided according to the eight topics of the EU Youth Strategy and Youth Indicators. The YouthMetre could also cover other topics that will tell us more about the lives of young people in the EU. Examples of such topics could be transportation or attitudes towards the environment. We need your help to understand, which are the most important issues and the indicators that can be used to measure how well your local authority is doing in the different policy areas.

On the [YouthMetre website](#) you can contribute to this by filling in one or more of the opinion surveys and propose new indicators and topics (if you are proposing those that are not covered yet, please use the survey about Youth Participation, Voluntary Activities, or Youth & the World).

**The PowerPoint presentation with pictures and visualisations forms an integral part of this case study.**

## **7) Conclusion**

Using the six steps process of:

1. identify the topic
2. set objective(s) and goal(s)
3. use the YouthMetre to set the context of the problem
4. identify other sources to be used
5. share your issues or ideas and advocate for a change
6. give your opinions on what concerns you

you can be informed, inspired, connected and empowered to advocate on issues that concern you the most.