



BEING YOUNG IN FLANDERS The principal findings of the JOP-Monitor 1

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This is the translation of the final chapter 15 of the book 'Jongeren in cijfers en letters. Bevindingen uit de JOP-monitor 1' ('Young people in Flanders: Facts and Figures. Findings of JOP-Monitor 1') (p. 249-262)¹. The JOP-Monitor 1 was administered at the end of 2005 and the beginning of 2006 among a representative sample of youngsters between 14 and 25 in Flanders (N=2503).

The content of the monitor can be summarised in three Cs, namely 'Conditions', 'Convictions' and 'Conduct'. The first aspect, conditions (social background and education), is an objective component. It covers the conditions in which the two other aspects evolve; they are the objective life-conditions as reported by the respondents. The second part covers young people's 'convictions', their social world, their subjective perception and experience of their life-conditions and environment. The third aspect covers young people's conduct and assesses reported behaviour.

The JOP (Jeugdonderzoeksplatform – Youth Research Platform) is an interdisciplinary and interuniversity partnership between the Juvenile Criminology Research Group (K.U.Leuven), the Department of Social Welfare Studies (UGent), and the Tempus Omnia Revelat Research Group (Vrije Universiteit Brussel). Given the need for a stronger focus on youth research, the JOP was set up in 2003 on the initiative of the Flemish minister for the Interior, Culture, Youth and Civil Service.² Since 2007, the JOP has been integrated into the Policy Research Centre for the 'Culture, Youth and Sport' theme.

¹ The full reference of the book is Vettenburg, N., Elchardus, M. & Walgrave, L. (2007). *Jongeren in cijfers en letters. Bevindingen uit de JOP-monitor 1* ('Young people in Flanders: Facts and Figures. Findings of JOP-Monitor 1'). Leuven: LannooCampus.

² The supervisors of the JOP are J. Deklerck & L. Walgrave (K.U.Leuven), M. Elchardus (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) and N. Vettenburg (UGent). Coordination is ensured by the Department of Social Welfare Studies, UGent. The researchers are D. Burssens, C. Rombauts, B. Vanhoutte and V. Vyverman. The core mission of the JOP consists of two activities: a systematic analysis of existing research in Flanders, and the elaboration of recurrent measurements for charting the social world of children and young people and the evolutions taking place within this world. In order to analyse Flemish research, youth research is inventoried and synthesised within the JOP. For each finished study, a detailed research form containing all the relevant information is drawn up. These forms are made available online on the JOP website – <http://www.jeugdonderzoeksplatform.be/eng/index.htm> – and constitute the basis for the syntheses. At the beginning of 2006, a first synthesis was published as a book entitled 'Jongeren van nu en straks' ('Young people now and later' (Vettenburg, Elchardus & Walgrave, 2006).

1. Introduction

The previous chapters provided detailed information about the convictions, the conditions and the conduct of 14- to 25-year-olds in Flanders. This chapter summarises the main findings for these three dimensions. When analysing the data from the JOP-Monitor 1, we systematically examined whether the findings differ according to gender, age and level of education. The relevant differences will be included here as well.

2. Conditions

What are the conditions of 14- to 25-year-olds in Flanders with regard to family, school, work, friends, etc.? This section covers the more objective information we obtained via the monitor.

2.1. Family situation

The heterogeneity of family types appears to be rather limited for 14- to 25-year-olds who are still living in the parental home: 78% were living with both parents, whilst only 19% of the young people still living in the parental home had experienced their parents' divorce. For this group, co-parenting does not appear to be an established phenomenon (8%). However, most young people maintain contact with the other parent on a regular basis after the divorce (more than 60%). At the same time, almost one in five never have any contact with the other parent after the divorce.

Young people between 14 and 25 constitute a fairly heterogeneous group in terms of their life-conditions and family situation. Most of them are still living with their parent(s), whilst others have already taken the step towards autonomy and are living either alone, together with their partner, or together with friends.

When examining the entire group of respondents, we found that a large majority (85%) are still living in the parental home. Two thirds of the 14- to 25-year-olds are living with both parents, about 14% with the mother, just below 3% with the father, and only 1.3% reside as often with the mother as with the father (co-parenting).

The analysis of the figures for the 18- to 25-year age bracket shows that here again a majority of almost 80% are still living with their father and/or mother in the parental home. Leaving home before the age of 22 is a limited phenomenon (nearly 5%). At the age of 25, slightly more than half of respondents are no longer living in the parental home.

Besides the age effect, we also found several other features which determine whether a young person is still living at home or not. Far more girls than boys leave the parental home before their 25th birthday, 27% and 14% respectively. Among young people who have stopped studying, about one in three live autonomously; among those who are still studying this is not even 2%.

When young people leave home, three quarters of them go and live together with their partner; generally, they are not married. The second largest group of youngsters who

have left the parental home live alone (slightly more than 20%), and only 3.5% share a home with friends.

2.2. The social profile of pupils and students in Flanders

Two in ten pupils and students between 14 and 25 are entitled to a grant for financing their studies. In secondary education, 17% of the pupils have a grant, although many pupils do not know whether they are entitled to a grant or not. In higher education, 23% of the students have a grant.

With a majority of the pupils and students, it is the parents who pay for their children's studies. Few pupils and students pay for their own studies fully or for the main part (4%). When young people help to finance their studies, it is generally via their income from a job during the holiday period(s), in the weekends or in the course of the school year.

Most pupils and students are still living in the parental home (84%). In higher education, about one in four students live in rooms, the others commute. Students living in rooms are more frequent at universities than at colleges for higher education.

With regard to social inequality in education, reference is often made to the influence of the social-economic background on young people's school performance and school careers. For higher education as well, this concern appears to be well-founded. Prospects for entering higher education appear to remain strongly affected by the social and cultural characteristics of the family of origin. If the parents have a higher level of education or if they are working, their children have a greater chance of entering a college or university. Conversely, children of parents with a lower level of education will have fewer opportunities for entering higher education; if they do, most of them will opt for a college, not for the university. This need not exclusively be determined by the parents' financial capacities. The finding that parents still bear most of the costs of studying makes this element more plausible for explaining existing inequality. In addition, going to university often also requires an indirect financial effort, since it often goes together with living in rooms.

2.3. Young people and holiday jobs

Some questions in the JOP-Monitor 1 investigate the various types of student jobs. We examined the extent to which students from secondary and higher education take an extra job or a holiday job. We did not examine whether they are holiday jobs and students' jobs in the official circuit, or more informal ways of earning money (babysitting, odd jobs about the house, etc.). This was left to the discretion of the respondents themselves.

More than half of pupils and students perform an extra or holiday job, and from the age of 18 this figure exceeds 80%. About as many boys as girls take an extra job or holiday job. In secondary education, more than one third of the pupils in ASO (general secondary education) and KSO (secondary arts education) perform an extra job or a holiday job;

among pupils in the other disciplines, this percentage rises to almost 50%. In higher education, there are differences according to the educational level as well. Among college students, 87.3% are doing extra jobs, whilst for university students this is 76.6%. More students living in rooms have an extra job or a holiday job (89.5%) than commuters (79.5%).

Among youngsters doing extra jobs, holiday jobs during the summer holidays are the most frequent (86.7%); however, weekend jobs are quite popular as well (24.9%). Proportionally, there are more students from secondary education than from higher education who take a weekend job. Only a minority of students work during the school holidays outside the summer holidays or do occasional jobs or work during the week in the course of the school year. Working during the week is slightly more frequent among higher-education students (9.4%) than among secondary-education students (5.5%).

Most students have a fairly limited labour participation: for those who take an extra job or a holiday job, in more than half of the cases this is limited to a job during the summer holidays. About one student in ten combines this with a weekend job.

2.4. The employment situation of young people

After secondary education, a number of young people keep studying, whilst others directly enter the labour market. Of the young people who stop studying, almost four fifths have a job. Most of them are in employment (74.2%), whilst only a very small percentage are self-employed (3.5%). However, the transition to the labour market is not equally smooth for everyone. At the time of the research, about 15.5% of respondents were unemployed and entitled to benefits, or were in the qualifying period. More than 17% of youngsters are or had been unemployed for more than 6 months. It is especially the lowest-educated who are most vulnerable on the labour market, as well as young people whose parents are unemployed themselves. Unemployment is more frequent among women than among men.

A majority of youngsters having a job appear to have a full-time job. Part-time work occurs especially among women: 21.8% of women are working part-time, against only 5.6% of men. The educational level plays a role as well: part-time work occurs more frequently among lower-educated workers than among higher-educated workers. There are some differences with regard to employment certainty as well. The majority of young workers have a contract for an indefinite term (61.9%); especially youngsters having a higher secondary-education degree appear to be employed on a permanent basis. Contracts for a definite term or temporary contracts are more frequent among women than among men, as well as among young people who have been unemployed for a slightly longer period of time.

2.5. Youngsters and lifelong and lifewide learning

In our present-day knowledge-based society, 'learning' is becoming increasingly important. We examined the extent to which 14- to 25-year-olds take trainings and

courses outside regular education, from two different angles. For the 18- to 25-year-olds we examined whether they had taken a (complementary) training in the context of their job, and if so, whether they had obtained a certificate. Secondly, we examined the extent to which young people take courses or lessons in their leisure time.

Many young people are taking a training or have done so in the context of their job (37.1%), and of this group a large majority (70.1%) have obtained a diploma, a certificate or written record that they have taken this training. It is noteworthy that more men than women take further training (41.4% men against 32.2% women). The educational level also plays a prominent role in this respect: many more high-educated than low-educated workers take a training in the context of their job. Among the young people having a higher-education degree, this is 46.5%, among those having a higher-secondary-education degree it is 39%, and among youngsters having at most a lower-secondary-education degree, only 20.1% took a training in the context of their job.

With regard to courses or lessons taken in their leisure time, we examined the entire group of respondents (14 to 25 years). We found that about one young person in four attends a course or a class at least once a month. The ratio between boys and girls is the opposite of the ratio for work-related trainings: in their leisure time, more girls than boys take a course (31.4% versus 14.6%). Taking courses in one's leisure time is largely determined by the parents' educational level. Many more young people having high-educated parents take courses in their leisure time (26.3%) than young people having low-educated parents (19.8%).

About one fourth of students in secondary or higher education also take courses in their leisure time. When young people stop studying, the ratio of those taking courses or classes in their leisure time to those who do not drops to one in five.

2.6. Young people and friends

The respondents have an average of 3.85 best friends. Generally, boys would appear to have more best friends than girls. At the same time, we find that the oldest age bracket (22- to 25-year-olds) have somewhat fewer friends than the younger groups. More than three quarters of young people say they only have (best) friends of Belgian origin.

Almost half of the 14- to 25-year-olds have a boyfriend/girlfriend or a partner, and yet another one in three had no relationship at the time of the questionnaire but had had a boyfriend/girlfriend before. The older they become, the more young people appear to have a relationship. In addition, more girls than boys have a boyfriend/girlfriend or a partner.

3. Convictions

How do young people feel at home, school, work, etc.? The JOP-Monitor 1 investigated their experiences in these different areas.

3.1. Young people about their family relationships

Almost all young people view their biological mother as their 'real' mother (97.9%). For the father, this percentage is slightly lower (92.2%). One quarter of young people having divorced parents do not view their biological father as their 'real' father.

Although today's family composition is more diversified than in the past, parents are generally indicated as the persons primarily responsible for education. Van Nuffel, Rutgeerts et al. (2006) give an overview of research into the way in which a positive parent-child relationship contributes to emotionally appropriate behaviour, better social functioning, higher self-esteem and improved psychological health. Their survey also shows that a problematic parent-child relationship can cause anxiety disorders, aggressive behaviour, drop-out, depression and suicide. The JOP-Monitor 1 also examined the parent-child relationship among 14- to 25-year-olds. How do juveniles and young adults living in the parental home experience the interaction with their father and mother?

Young people between 14 and 25 living with one or both parents have a predominantly positive relationship with the persons they view as their father and mother. Young people on average think that the mother is somewhat more responsive than the father, but both parents help their children when they are having problems. Moreover, young people living at home are monitored by their father and mother. Parents are interested firstly in their adolescent children's going out, secondly in their circle of friends, and thirdly in their spending pattern.

3.2. Young people about their school perception

We focused on the question how pupils and students perceive school and the contacts with teachers. To this end, we analysed the answers provided by 1,514 young people from secondary and higher education between 14 and 25 years of age. In order to obtain a workable picture of the perception of school and contacts, two reliable scales were created.

Students' well-being at school is relatively high. About 83% say they are satisfied with the training and no less than 65% say they enjoy their studies. Fifty-nine percent of pupils and students say that the content of the subjects is good; 12% are not convinced of this, and there are many students who have doubts about the content. Sixteen percent of young people also claim that classes are dull. Half of the respondents disagree with this. However, here again the percentage in doubt is substantial. The vast majority do not feel inclined to switch schools. They say that on the whole they are happy at their present school. Young people also show great sympathy for their teachers. They have the feeling that they are taken seriously by their teachers, that they can talk to them when something goes wrong. Slightly more than half claim that they can formulate their own (divergent) opinions. Still, 14% say this is not possible and one in three (31%) doubt whether they can voice their opinion openly if it differs from the teacher's.

Building on earlier literature on well-being at school, we also compared subpopulations within the student population. We found no significant difference between men and women. Both boys and girls experience school in an equally positive manner (checked on background). We cannot confirm the assumption that girls in the 14-25 age bracket develop a better relationship with their teachers than boys. In contrast, in the 14-18 age bracket, i.e. in secondary education, girls appear to have a more positive opinion about teachers than boys.

For secondary education, it has been shown that well-being at school decreases with age, with a major break between the first two years and the four last years (Mertens & Van Damme, 2000). For pupils and students in general, no trend can be discerned based on age, and we can say that school well-being is relatively stable. As for the contacts with the teachers, satisfaction remains stable over age as well.

The educational level does matter, however. Students in higher education do not have better contacts with their lecturers than pupils with their teachers. With regard to school well-being, students in higher education score better than pupils in secondary education. This remains the case even after a check on their gender, age and repeating record.

Repeaters feel less at home than those who never repeat in their school career. However, repeating has no lasting effects. Incidentally, contacts with teachers are not harmed by earlier repeating experiences.

3.3. Job satisfaction among young people

The JOP-Monitor 1 questioned young people about their satisfaction with certain aspects of their job, such as colleagues, contacts with others, their function, their responsibilities, the working environment and working hours, wages, etc. On each of these items, young people score relatively high – only with the career opportunities they are less satisfied. As for overall job satisfaction, we find that women are a bit more satisfied than men and that high-educated workers also are somewhat more satisfied than lower-educated workers. Having a job clearly affects the perception of satisfaction: the satisfaction among those who are currently working is much higher than with young people asked to assess their satisfaction with their last job. Finally, the type of contract plays a role as well: the higher the job security (permanent contract), the more satisfied they are with the job.

3.4. Young people about friendship and relationships

Friendships and relationships are important themes in young people's social world. The JOP-Monitor 1 investigated young people's opinions about friendship. We also assessed young people's romantic relationships: how many young people have a boyfriend/girlfriend or a partner? Do they consider this a permanent or a casual relationship?

The analysis of young people's opinions about friendship shows that they view friendship as a relationship based on mutual trust rather than as a relationship based on shared interests. However, there are some differences according to age and gender. Older respondents (22- tot 25-year-olds) and girls on average score higher on the 'trust'

dimension of the friendship scale. Young respondents and boys on average score higher on the 'friendship as shared interest' dimension.

We have already seen that more girls than boys have a boyfriend/girlfriend or a partner. They view their relationship more as a permanent relationship, just like those in the older age bracket. The young person's educational level has a minor impact on having a boyfriend/girlfriend or not – somewhat more low-educated people have a boyfriend/girlfriend than high-educated people – but this plays no role in qualifying the relationship as casual or permanent. The vast majority (more than 90%) indicate that they consider their relationship to be permanent.

3.5. Young people about aspects of their well-being

A positive self-image and good prospects are key elements in young people's well-being. The perception of the neighbourhood and the overall feeling of security contribute to well-being as well. The JOP-Monitor 1 assessed these aspects of well-being among 14- to 25-year-olds.

The overall conclusion is that young people in Flanders have a positive sense of well-being. For instance, the majority say that they possess good qualities (86%), that they are OK (78%) and that they can be proud of who they are (69%). The findings relating to young people's future prospects are positive as well. For instance, a majority are looking towards the future expectantly (67%), they are not afraid of becoming unemployed in the years to come (78%). Moreover, there are few feelings of insecurity. This is for instance demonstrated by the fact that the majority are not afraid of staying home alone at night (85%) or of walking the streets alone at night (76%). Finally, the perception of the neighbourhood also appears to be positive among 14- to 25-year-olds. They appear to be very satisfied with their neighbourhood: almost 80% like living in their neighbourhood, they feel at home, they think it is a peaceful neighbourhood and that the streets are clean.

Still, this must not make us forget that there remains a small group of young people who do not have such a bright view of the future and who deserve our full attention as well. This appears from the fact that 4.4% of respondents state that they seriously considered suicide during the 12 months preceding the questionnaire. In addition, 4.5% view themselves as a failure, 10.4% take a gloomy view of the future, 8.7% are afraid of walking the streets alone at night and 7.1% do not feel at home in their own neighbourhood. Further analyses show that most of the well-being scales have a weak to strong mutual correlation. This means that it is plausible that it is always the same group of young people who score low on the different scales.

3.6. Young people about politics

The data from the JOP-Monitor 1 confirm the cliché that young people are not greatly interested in politics. For instance, the majority say that they are less well aware of

politics than their contemporaries. Almost 40% say they cannot discuss political issues with others, and the same percentage qualify themselves as politically uninterested.

It is noteworthy that age plays a key role in explaining the differences in political participation. In other words, to a certain extent growing up also means becoming more politically committed. Differences in political interests are also reflected in valid voting intentions. With regard to these voting intentions, we find a break in the voting intentions of minors and adults. The chances of a valid voting intention are twice as big when you are 18 or older than when you are a minor, irrespective of any social-demographical features. Beyond this age, the intention to go voting remains more or less stable. Women and low-educated young people vote validly less frequently. This can be an argument in favour of compulsory voting, since these categories are likely to be the first not to vote in elections.

Certain unconventional types of politics are quite popular among young people. Half of the respondents sign a petition or subscribe to a good cause. More than one third buy a product because of ethical principles. When examining the groups of young people combining these types of politics with political apathy, we find that this brings low-educated people and women into contact with political themes after all. A lower level of education remains a key feature for the group having a low political commitment. Unconventional types of politics play a part in political commitment but do not replace the traditional channels for young people's political commitment. For instance, a large group are only active in politics in the conventional way.

3.7. Young people and ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism – a discourse which promotes negative attitudes towards outsiders and a positive attitude towards one's own group – appears to have conquered a place in the value pattern of low-educated, male or not very ideologically minded young people. Young people who are still seeking themselves or who are not interested in meaning-giving are more susceptible to the ethnocentric discourse. Earlier research revealed the existence of a subculture of demotion in vocational education which constitutes a breeding ground for ethnocentrism (Pelleriaux, 2001). The findings of the JOP-Monitor 1 would appear to confirm this: a lower level of education is most closely related to ethnocentrism. In addition, social background plays a role as well.

Ethnocentric attitudes are less prevalent among socially-committed young people. Past membership of different kinds of associations or current participation in social life are accompanied with a less ethnocentric attitude, regardless of the influence of social-demographic features. The data from the JOP-Monitor 1 also confirm that ethnocentrism and lack of political interest are connected attitudes (Elchardus & Smits, 2002).

4. Conduct

Finally, the JOP-Monitor 1 investigated the behaviour of young people, viz. their means of transportation, their participation in social life, and transgressive behaviour.

4.1. Transportation

Young people in the first place ride a bicycle or are car passengers and pedestrians; in the second place, they use public transport or drive a car themselves. However, between the age of 14 and 25 the means of transportation change dramatically. The number of car drivers increases very rapidly with age, whilst the use of the bicycle and being a car passenger follow the opposite movement. The use of public transport falls sharply after young people stop studying. Besides age, other factors also affect the choice of means of transportation. Cyclists, moped riders and car drivers appear to be mostly men, whereas car passengers and to a lesser extent public transport users tend to be women. More cyclists and car drivers are higher-educated. mopeds or motorcycles are more popular among lower-educated young people. Young people living in urban areas tend to use the car less frequently and find it easier to reach their destination on foot or using public transport.

4.2. Young people and social life

The majority of young people (94%) are active in social life. Among the 14- to 25-year-olds, 78% are or have been members of a sports club, 54% of a youth club, and 46% of a municipal youth initiative. Only 6% have never been active in social life. The JOP-Monitor 1 shows that sports clubs, youth clubs and municipal youth work besides other types of structured leisure activities are most popular between the ages of 10 and 12. From the age of 16 onwards, associations and clubs that involve a greater personal input such as organising parties and festivals or participating in the activities of youth centres, become more popular.

More active and demanding types of commitment, such as participation in pupils' councils or youth councils, are engaged in by only minority of young people: 67% never participate in a pupils' council and 91% never participate in a youth council. A responsible function in youth work appears to be more common: 15% of respondents are currently active in youth work.

Participation in civil society appears to be something for higher-educated young people or for young people having a higher-educated social background. This shows that associations working with young people do not always succeed in attracting persons from the lower social strata.

4.3. Young people and delinquent behaviour

Transgressive behaviour among young people is inextricably linked with the transition period in which young people are seeking their own place in society. Especially among

14- to 19-year-olds, a majority are likely to commit an offence, by way of an experiment or to be provocative. Most of them confine themselves to only one offence in the course of one year, against a very small group committing more frequent and more serious offences. This so-called adolescence delinquency decreases with age.

Not everyone commits an equal amount of transgressive behaviour. Boys commit (many) more offences than girls. A problematic school career, a negative view of the future and going out often can be related more to certain types of delinquent behaviour. The JOP-Monitor 1 found few indications of a connection between social deprivation and delinquency, between young people's self-image and transgressive behaviour, and between urbanisation and delinquency.

Finally, in order to avoid delinquent behaviour it is much more important that young people can rely on responsive parents rather than having a father and mother who are constantly watching them. This means that parents should be more involved with their children when it comes to feelings, problems and aspirations.

The importance of dark-number research as was used in the monitor, is demonstrated by the figures on the (non-)discovery of offences. Apart from violent offences, most perpetrators are never found out, let alone that they should get booked. Since most people automatically outgrow juvenile delinquency, and since it was found that most young people refrain from committing offences because of an inner moral conviction rather than because of the fear of getting caught, seeking a judicial intervention would appear not to be desirable.

Finally, the JOP-Monitor 1 also showed that young people not only commit offences but are regular victims of offences as well. People committing offences stand the greatest chance of becoming the victims of offences themselves.

5. Summary

The life-conditions of young people in Flanders can be summarised as follows: the vast majority of 14- to 25-year-olds are still living in the parental home, mostly with both parents, and the relationship with the parents is positive. A substantial number of young people leave home between the ages of 22 and 25. The costs for studying are largely borne by the parents; some young people are entitled to a grant, but the opportunities to enter higher education remain substantially larger among young people having higher-educated and/or working parents. Many young people do extra jobs, especially during the summer holidays, and – to a lesser extent – during weekends. Of the non-studying group, the majority have a job, predominantly full-time jobs, and more than half have a contract for an indefinite period. This is certainly the case for men and for higher-educated people. A large group of working young people take extra training in the context of their job. However, in the entire group of 14- to 25-year-olds, we see that young people also take courses and classes in their leisure time. Young people appear to have on average 3.85 'best' friends and almost half say they have a permanent relationship.

Their social world is characterised mainly by positive experiences. The majority of young people have a positive relationship with their parents. Young people who are still

studying like going to school, a feeling that appears to be even more pronounced among college and university students. Furthermore, we found that young people view friendship mainly as a relationship based on trust; slightly less than half have a boyfriend/girlfriend. Most 14- to 25-year-olds have a positive self-image, they are looking to the future expectantly, they feel safe and they perceive their neighbourhood as positive.

Young people show little interest in politics. However, certain unconventional types of politics appear to be fairly popular among young people. Political commitment increases with age, and at the age of 18 the chance of having a valid voting intention is doubled. Ethnocentrism appears to occur mainly in the value pattern of lower-educated, male or not highly ideologically minded young people.

With regard to conduct, the monitor provided the following information. Young people mainly ride a bicycle, are car passengers or travel on foot. With age, the use of the car increases. The use of public transport falls dramatically once they stop studying. The vast majority of young people participate in social life, mainly sports club and to a lesser extent youth clubs. From the age of 16 onwards, young people prefer associations where they can make a personal contribution. The majority of young people – more boys than girls – commit transgressive behaviour at one time or another; transgressive behaviour decreases with age.

The picture derived from the monitor relates to a 'majority' of young people. This means that for a minority these aspects remain less favourable. A small group have conflicts with their parents, do not like going to school, have had negative school experiences, have been unemployed for a short or extended period, have a low sense of well-being, are considering suicide, have few or no friends, etc.

This sketch corresponds largely to the findings we collected from the literature in 'Jongeren van nu en straks' ('Young people now and later') (Vettenburg, Elchardus & Walgrave, 2006). Further analyses of the material from the JOP-Monitor 1 will, however, allow us to explore the described results in greater depth and to better chart the small group who are not doing well in Flanders. The planned recurrent measurement, the next one being scheduled in 2008, will make it possible to reveal evolutions in young people's convictions over time.

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