



GHENT, Belgium

The House of Skills Pilot Project

Key facts

The City of Ghent is conducting two pilot projects to test if the House of Skills project that aims to increase sustainable employability can be translated into the local context of the city. This case is an example of how to build a local ecosystem around lifelong learning.

Timeframe and funding

The pilot projects runs from September 2020 to end of August 2022. The pilot projects are financed by the European Social Fund, the City Council of Ghent and the Flemish regional government.

City population

260,341

Governing body

City Council of Ghent

Link

[The House of Skills Project in Ghent](#)

Main objectives

The key objectives of the project are:

- Increase sustainable employability of the entire working population of the city, and especially those with middle and lower education levels, in the context of rapidly changing labour markets, jobs and careers.
- To test if the House of Skills project that is already implemented in the Amsterdam region can be translated into the local context of the City of Ghent.

Content and mode of delivery



The two pilot projects in Ghent focus specifically on developing skills and supporting career transitions for employees in shrinking professions and on employees who need further training because of a rapidly changing work environment. The project focuses on how to develop more future-oriented skills, ensure continuous training and retraining of employees and change the behaviour of every worker so that they more actively take control of their own career paths and realise that lifelong learning is essential for all.

Stakeholders



The project is delivered in cooperation by a wide variety of stakeholders including:

- Private companies such as Volvo Cars and Europabank, the public employment service VDAB and the career guidance organisation KOPA.
- In addition, a stakeholder group has been created including sectoral training funds, the employers' federation Febelfin, representatives from the Flemish government, and career guidance experts from RiseSmart, labour market experts from Agoria and education representation via the municipal department of education.

Key challenges, success factors & transferability



According to the city, the main challenge with regard to the implementation of the programme has been creating awareness about the necessity of life-long learning, guidance and self-management throughout the learning career, to translate macro-economic evolutions such as digitalisation, automation and disappearing professions to individual career moves and to convince career counsellors of the impact of macro-economic evolutions and to include its importance in their career discussions.

A key success factor of the programme, which could also be transferred to other places and locations, is building a local ecosystem around lifelong learning including a broad range of stakeholders (see above).

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