



HOMAAR

GROEIPLEK VOOR JONGEREN

HOMAAR
GROEIPLEK VOOR JONGEREN - WETTEREN

VONK
GROEIPLEK VOOR JONGEREN - BOECHOUT

HOMAAR
GROEIPLEK VOOR JONGEREN - BRUSSEL

HOMAAR
GROEIPLEK VOOR JONGEREN - TIENEN



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Homaar vzw was established in 2016 to provide a solid response to the social need for low-threshold, accessible group support aimed at young individuals (15 to 23) facing emotional challenges.

This is offered in a non-stigmatising and inviting atmosphere, with engaging activities that resonate with young people's lives, grounded in a youth work approach. The 'Groeiplek voor jongeren' (Growth Place for Young People) was established. In 2022, Homaar initiated a partnership with VONK vzw, leading to the creation of the second Groeiplek. Together, they united their efforts to enhance the visibility of the Groeiplekken and to broaden their reach.

We now have **4 unique Growth Spaces**, each characterized by its own professionalism, warmth, and home-like atmosphere.

Our **mission** is to assist young individuals who feel emotionally stuck to reclaim a strong, positive place for themselves in society.

How do we achieve our mission?

- Through two-week programs, young individuals can reconnect with peers in a small group setting, allowing them to rediscover their qualities and potential for personal growth.
- By providing a weekly schedule that includes experience-based, creative, and nature workshops.
- By allowing room for one-to-one conversations at the young person's request.
- Our emphasis on aftercare allows us to collaboratively assess with the young individual and their environment what is necessary for further growth after the programme, as well as how the young person can potentially reorient themselves across different areas of life.
- Through an open and varied range of creative workshops during holiday periods.
- By focusing on sustaining connections and organising reunion moments.
- Through our local embedding of each growth space within the community network.

We build bridges between youth work and welfare, as well as with education, sports, culture, and employment. We contribute to a broader social change in which mental wellbeing and prevention are central.

The Homaar-VONK team is made up of 14 motivated employees.



"To me, Homaar represents much more than just a place; it's a safe haven. From the instant you enter, it feels like coming home. It is a space where you can truly be yourself, free from judgement.

What makes Homaar truly unique is that it allows you to escape, for a while, from the negative thoughts that can sometimes be so overwhelming. It offers a space to breathe, to relax, and to reconnect with the sense that you have a rightful place here.

"Homaar has not only given me hope, but also saved my life. I am thankful for all that I have experienced here—the warmth, the support, and the assurance that I am never alone." (18 years old, ♂)

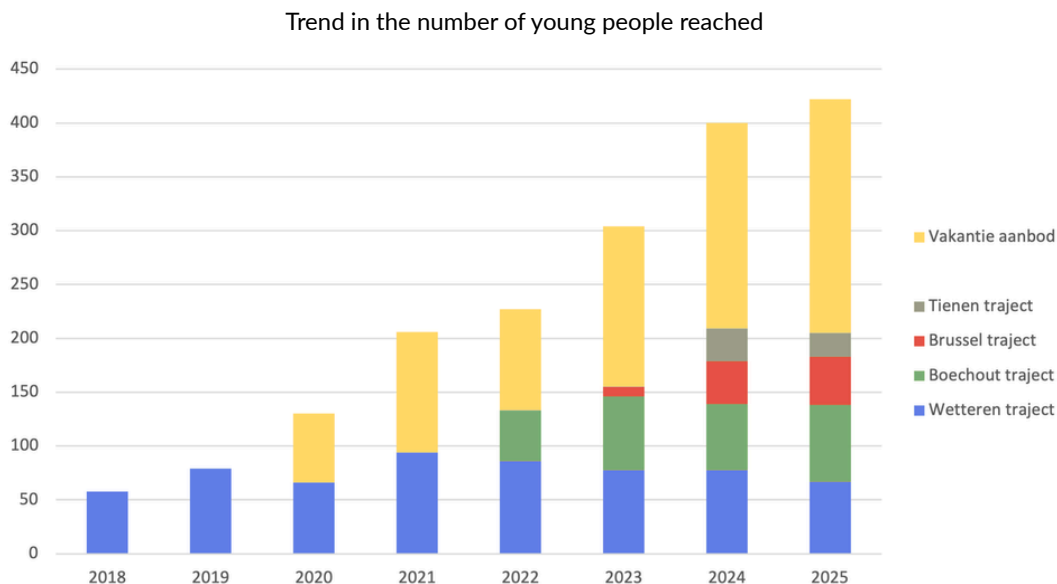
WHAT HOMAAR OFFERS

In recent years, through collaboration with VONK, Homaar has seen substantial growth in the number of young individuals reached who are emotionally stuck.

We presently have four 'Growth Spaces': in Wetteren (2017), Boechout (2022), Brussels (2023), and Tienen (2024).

At the request of the Flemish Government, an additional expansion of the Growth Spaces to all Flemish provinces was examined. A start-up coordinator was appointed to establish a Growth Space in West Flanders. After conducting an environmental analysis and holding meetings with all relevant regional partners, central West Flanders was selected due to the very limited resources available for this target group. Following discussions with the local government, it was decided to create a new 'Groeiplek' in Roeselare.

Exploratory discussions were also held in the province of Limburg, where both Lommel and Leopoldsburg expressed their willingness to support the development of a 'Groeiplek'. However, due to insufficient additional funds and uncertain future financing from the Flemish government, it was decided to postpone the launch of the new Groeiplekken in Limburg and West Flanders, prioritizing the consolidation and sustainability of the existing four Groeiplekken.



Youth Programs

In 2025, a total of **42 two-week programs** were conducted: 12 in Wetteren, 12 in Boechout, 11 in Brussels, and 7 in Tienen. Collectively, this facilitated the guidance of **205 young individuals**.

In Homaar Tienen and Homaar Brussels the expected growth did not come to fruition. In both regions, it became essential to concentrate further on increasing awareness within the local network. Considering the strong awareness and the considerable needs of this target group, we do anticipate this growth occurring in 2026.

Holiday Activities

During the school holidays, a series of open workshops aimed at strengthening resilience and reunion days was organized. This includes 2-hour workshops as well as multi-day hiking excursions.

In 2025, this holiday program experienced further expansion. A total of **110 activities** were conducted across the four growth locations, with **561 young individuals** taking part, of whom **217 were unique participants**, marking a notable increase compared to prior years.

Greater emphasis was placed on reunion days at the request of the youth.

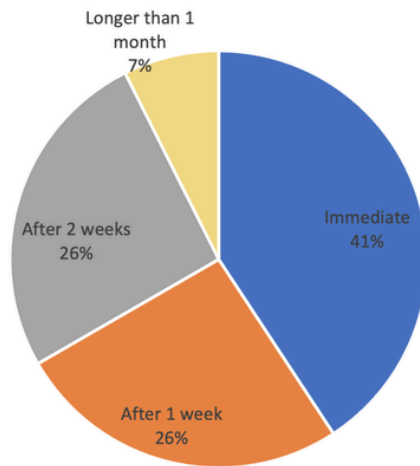
OUR IMPACT

Three to six months following their program, we distribute a questionnaire to the young individuals to gather feedback on our work. We use this feedback to assess whether we are achieving the impact we aim for. To date, we have received feedback from a total of 248 young individuals. In 2025, 56 young individuals completed the feedback questionnaire. The graphs below are derived from the responses collected in 2025.

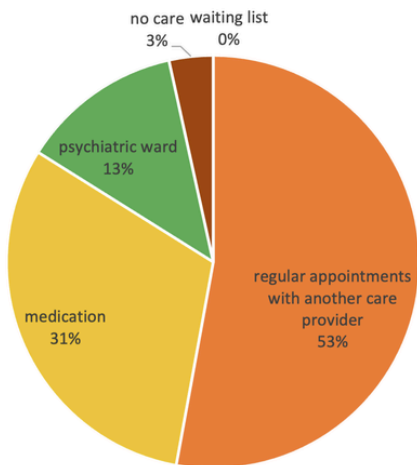
• **Goal: to improve the availability of accessible therapeutic services.**
We actively respond to the needs of young individuals to ensure they receive appropriate support promptly, thereby preventing the necessity for long-term intensive care.

93%
of the youngsters could follow a program within a month, while 41% did so within a week.

Hoe quickly could you start in Homaar/Vonk?



What other support do you receive (or have you received) since your program?



Before their programme, **57%** of the youth considered admission to a clinic. 6 months following their journey, only **13%** were admitted to a psychiatric ward.

- We aim assist young people who are struggling emotionally to believe in their potential for growth once again, and we aim to create a turning point in their lives.

81%

of the young individuals indicate that the programme has resulted in a **turning point or has brought about a change.**

Reactions from the youngsters regarding this change:

- *It has significantly assisted me in gaining clarity and "direction" in my life.*
- *Thanks to Homaar, I was able to return to school, which holds great significance for me.*
- *It has expanded my perspective and enhanced my creativity.*
- *I left Homaar feeling happier; everyone around me immediately noticed a change in me. Now, I'm getting back on track by going back to school.*
- *It has really helped me to meet others like me. It makes you realise that there are people who have been through the same thing and understand you.*
- *At first, I was much less confident about socialising with people and talking to them, but thanks to Homaar, I feel that I can do it well and I have more self-confidence.*

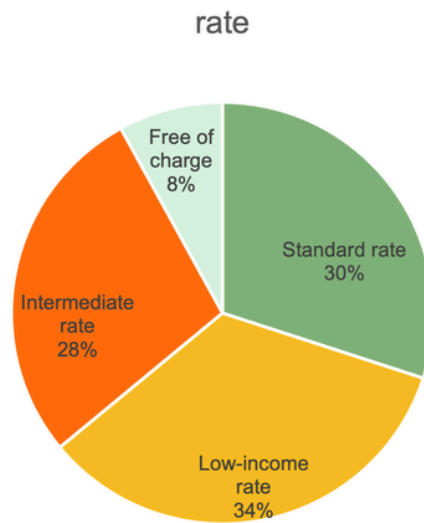
The programme has a

90%

success rate in boosting resilience and self-esteem among young people:

- they are better able to ask for help,
- know what they are good at,
- and have the determination to keep going.

- We aim to provide an accessible and easily approachable service.

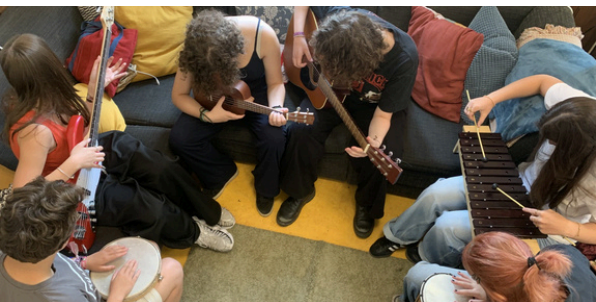


We aim to guarantee that financial considerations do not hinder participation. By concentrating on fundraising efforts, we successfully provided a reduced rate, a social rate, and free admission for our programs. A total of 145 young individuals (70%) benefited from this initiative.

In 2025, the free admission programs were exclusively available in Homaar Tienen and Brussels. This will be extended to all Growth spaces in 2026.

In Homaar Brussels, 84% utilize the social tariff or lack financial resources. In Homaar Tienen, this figure stands at 40%, in Wetteren it is 29%, and in Boechout, it is merely 25%.

Only 9% are able to afford the standard rate in Homaar Brussels.



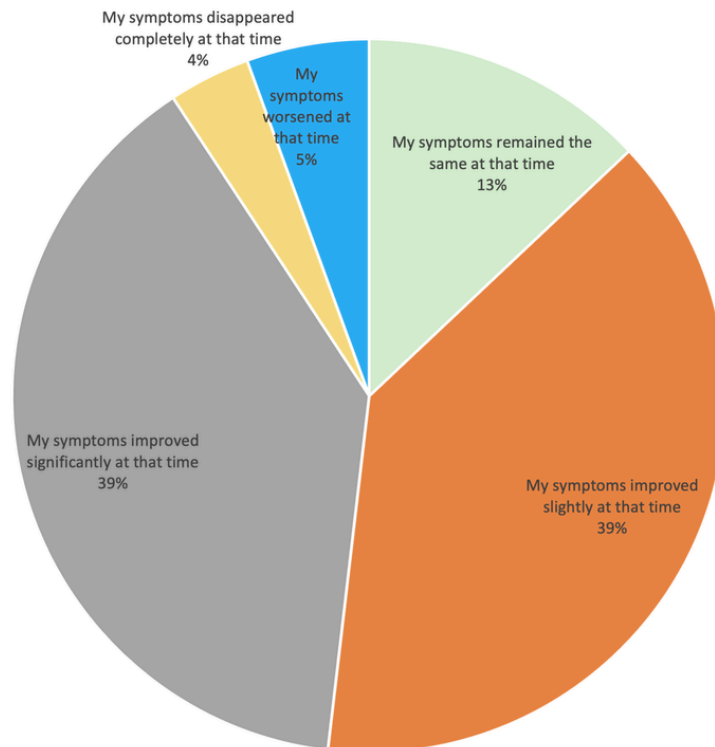
“Homaar operates in a way that is specifically designed to meet the needs of young individuals; participation is voluntary, and a wide range of options is available. Homaar adapts its services based on your requirements. Additionally, it is a space you can return to as needed, providing the comfort of familiar faces and surroundings. Even after completing your program at Homaar, you are welcome to reach out to the counselors for inquiries or simply for a conversation!” (Young person, 18 years old)

- Our mission is to assist young individuals to reclaim their place in society with renewed strength and a more positive outlook.

82%

of the youngsters report that their **symptoms** have **diminished or disappeared** during the programme.

To what extent did your symptoms improve during the course of treatment?

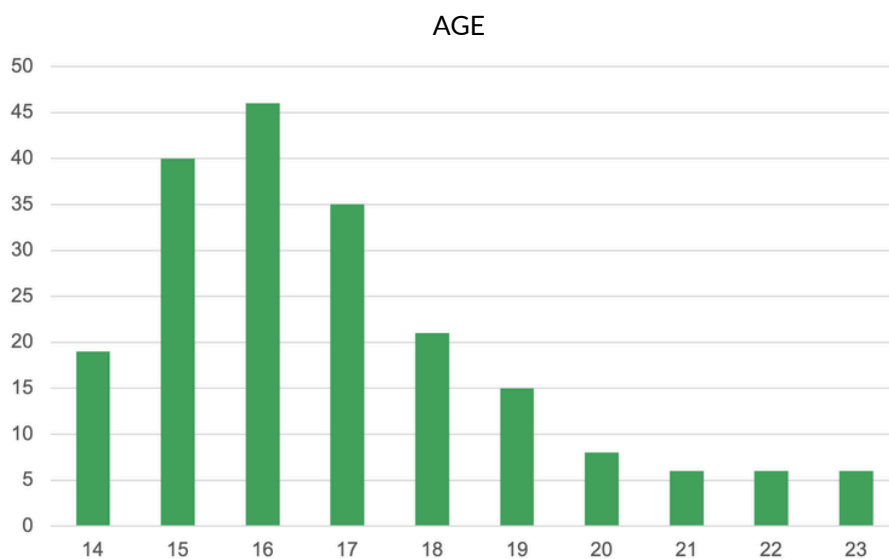


Before the program, **merely 23% of the youth were engaged in full-time schooling**. In Homaar Wetteren, this figure stands at 37%, whereas in Brussels, it is a mere 5%.

Following the program, 65% of young individuals have: pursued further education (26%), embarked on a new educational journey (15%), switched schools (15%), or selected an alternative learning route (9%).

In just 24% of cases was there no prospect, or did more intensive support become necessary.

WHO DO WE REACH?



- In 2025, the largest group consisted of 15- and 16-year-olds. **69% are under 18**, while 31% are 18 or older. This aligns with the previous year.
- In Boechout and Tienen, the proportion of individuals aged 18 and older is greater, at 39% and 42% respectively. In contrast, Brussels has a percentage of just 18%.
- **71% of the youth are female**, 26% are male, and 3% identify as gender-neutral.
- **77%** of young individuals in Homaar **had previously been diagnosed**, including 32% with depression and 31% with autism. Anxiety disorder 21%, eating disorder 15%, ADHD 13%.
- 96.5% of the youth had received social assistance prior to their program.

23% of the youngsters return later to participate in another program. In Vonk, this figure rises to 35%.

- The types of education are quite varied.
- **81.6% of young individuals are enrolled at a school or educational program**. Merely 5% are either employed, seeking employment, or receiving guidance related to employment.
- There has been a rise in the percentage of young individuals who are not participating in an educational or employment pathway: 14% in Vonk and 19% in Homaar Brussels.



How do we reach our target audience?

- The youth primarily access the Growth spaces through referrals (71%), even though the services are directly available. The sources of referrals are quite varied:

Psychologists, the CLB (school), and youth care organizations (including residential groups, juvenile court consultants, RTJ, and OCJ) represent the three primary referral sources, although variations exist depending on the Growth Space.

In Homaar Wetteren, the primary sources of referrals are psychologists (25%) and general practitioners/psychiatrists (16%). Additionally, 23% sought help on their own initiative.

In Vonk Boechout, psychologists represent the largest group of referrers at 32%. Additionally, 40% of individuals seek assistance on their own initiative or through family.

In Brussels, the primary referrers are CLB /Schools (31%) and youth care organizations (27%).

In Homaar Tienen, there remains inadequate data to identify a trend; the referrers are quite varied.

The reason for following a program

The reason '**difficulties at school/school pressure**' is the **primary factor** for joining Homaar at every growth location remains consistent with last year. Other common issues are depressive thoughts, a difficult home situation, Anxiety, lack of energy, autism, feelings of loneliness.



“Homaar has helped me grow; it was like a pit stop in the race to be the best. My passion has been reignited thanks to the young individuals and mentors present there. Thank you! :)”

BRIDGE AND SIGNAL FUNCTION - NETWORKING

At Homaar, we aim to establish a strong connection among young individuals, their caregivers, and the wider community.

For every young person completing a programme, a **closing meeting** is organised with someone from their support network (parent/caregiver/support worker/...) to **evaluate** what is necessary for continued development and how the young person may potentially redirect themselves across different life areas.

Furthermore, each growth location is **firmly embedded in the local youth and welfare landscape** and engages in local partnerships.

Participating in networking and meetings while regularly showcasing our operations is an ongoing process. Each Growth space has fully dedicated itself to this initiative in 2025 as well. This is detailed in the individual fact sheets for each growth space (pp. 14-17).

The '*Dekselse Kunst*' art project was established as a comprehensive initiative. Have you ever considered that art could be contained within the lid of a jam jar?

This established the framework for a **creative collaboration project**, where we invited our youth, colleagues, and interested artists from outside to produce a piece of art within a lid.

The artworks made from lids were showcased in a traveling exhibition at KADOC-KULeuven, GC Elzenhof in Brussels, and the Verbeke Foundation in Stekene. Over 300 participants from Flanders and Brussels contributed to this project, creating art from metal lids, with each piece telling a unique story.

The **exhibition** united art and well-being, encouraging visitors to explore creativity, self-expression, and the transformative power of art. The artworks embody the emotions, memories, and aspirations of their creators, while also promoting awareness of creative therapy as a pathway to mental resilience.

The displayed playful artworks were available for purchase, with proceeds supporting our initiatives.



Alongside the emphasis on networking and increasing awareness, we attended **training courses** on topics including eating disorders, suicidality, culturally sensitive practices, school exclusion, school refusal, among others. We took part in inspiration days centered on Youth Participation, a conference dedicated to youth welfare work, and various networking events.

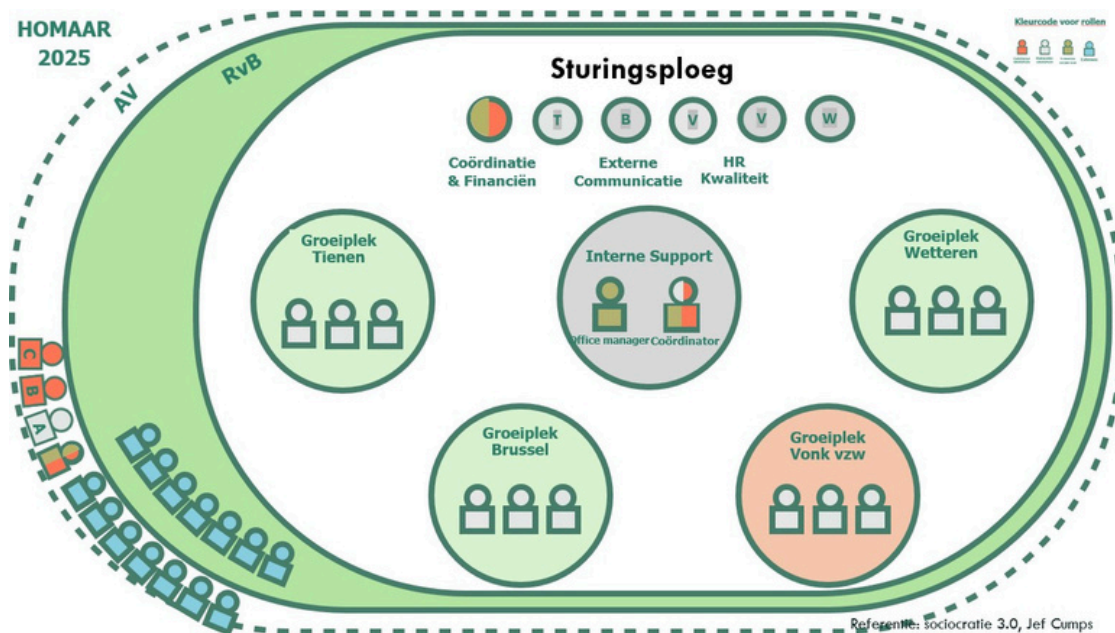
Furthermore, each growth center conducts **peer supervision sessions and team meetings** regularly. Every three months, a content-focused team day is held across all growth centers, concentrating on Sociocracy 3.0, the policy plan and strategic directions, HR policy, case study exchanges and workshops, as well as training on fire safety and ergonomics.

This enables us to maintain our emphasis on high-quality and broadly supported operations.

HOMAAR'S POLICY

Sociocracy 3.0

In early 2025, we commenced the development of our **new organizational structure**. A steering group was formed, including at least one representative from each Growth center. Currently, the steering group is made up of 6 employees. Responsibilities for the overarching domains were allocated within the steering group according to existing competencies and motivation: coordination, finance, communication, HR, and quality. The steering group convenes every three weeks. Furthermore, each Growth Space receives assistance from the 'internal support' domain, which manages internal communication and provides administrative support for both the Growth Spots and the steering group.



Communication

A communication strategy featuring a distinct corporate identity has been created and is currently implemented at each growth location. New flyers and posters have been designed, along with templates for social media, to ensure consistent external communication.

HR

In the realm of HR, we aim for a comprehensive policy that receives support from all stakeholders. The overtime policy has been established, and the procedures for selection, training and development, as well as employee care, have been completed. This will undergo further refinement in 2026.

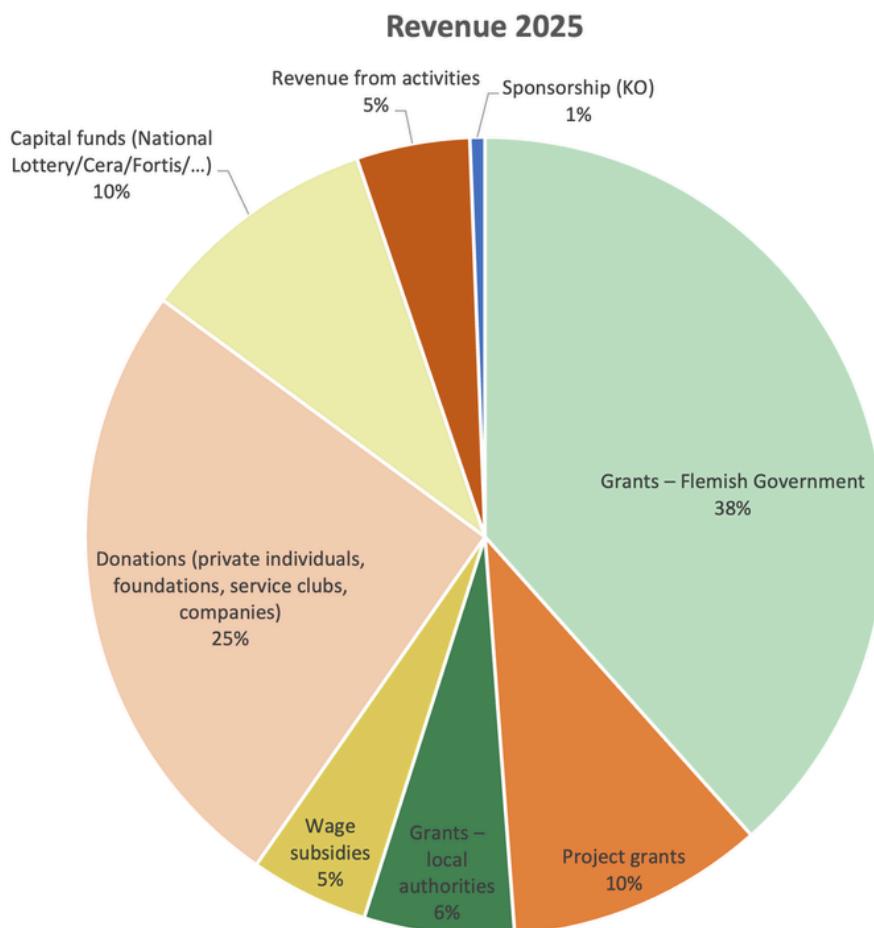
Quality

The Quality domain oversees the monitoring of the mission and vision, as well as the offerings at the group level.

The Quality team is tasked with coordinating the comprehensive content days throughout the growth areas (4 times a year), providing opportunities for training, exchange, and peer supervision. The Quality domain oversees the monitoring and development of the integrity policy, suicide prevention policy, and drug policy.

FINANCIAL

At Homaar, we strive each year to achieve a balanced funding mix, ensuring that we do not rely entirely on one source of income.



In 2025, **59%** of our revenue was derived from **government subsidies**, including the Flemish Government, local funding from Brussels, an incentive subsidy for Brussels, project funds from the ESF, wage subsidies, and contributions from local authorities.

36% is derived from donations, sponsorships, and capital subsidies. At Vonk Boechout, this figure rises to 59%. Considering our goal to provide services in the most accessible and low-threshold manner, **only 5% of our funding is derived from revenue-generating activities**, with the remainder supported by fundraising events. The local anchoring of each Growth Place is also evident in the local funding that each Growth Place prioritizes.

85% of **expenses** are allocated to personnel costs (11.1 FTE). 14% is designated for operating costs. As a result of our comprehensive organizational structure, **only 13.5% of total expenses are directed towards overhead costs**, which include administration (0.5 FTE), coordination (0.75 FTE), management costs, insurance, and accounting.

All contributions are allocated directly to the youth programs of the respective Groeiplek.

HOMAAR WETTEREN

Over the last **8 years**, Homaar Wetteren has evolved into a robust, seasoned, and high-quality enterprise.

Twelve two-week programs were conducted, accommodating **67 young individuals** out of the 72 available slots. Due to last-minute cancellations, the open positions could occasionally not be filled, despite the significant demand. There is a greater demand for the programs than we can provide, resulting in rapid enrollment.

During the **school holidays**, **49 activities** were arranged for the holiday program, attracting **288 participating young people**, of whom **79 were unique participants**. The holiday program also fills up rapidly once it becomes available online, highlighting the significant demand for such an accessible offering. With the support of the local government, local service clubs, and donations, it was made available **free of charge**.

In the context of a **learning ecosystem** focused on informal education, supported by Europa WSE, a local network named 'Wetters Weefsel' was created in partnership with ARKTOS, Fiola, Pluk 9230, and the Municipality of Wetteren, with Homaar Wetteren serving as the lead partner. This network aims to assist children and young people in Wetteren in their quest for **connection with themselves, others, nature, and society**.

As part of this initiative, a range of activities and experiments were organized, which included a visit to the Community Garden with the young people from Homaar during each phase. During the summer holidays, a three-day 'back-to-basic' camping trip took place.

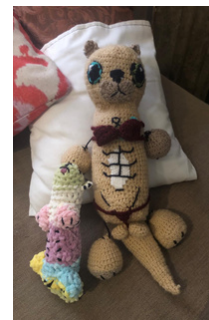
In conclusion of this project, a **networking and inspiration day** took place on October 9, which included discussion tables, workshops, and a lecture by Dr. Belo Mussche. A total of 44 individuals participated, representing around 15 local organizations, among others. The project will not secure additional funding after 2025; however, it has significantly enhanced numerous informal collaborations.

Additionally, OverKop-huis Wetteren-Laarne-Wichelen continues to be a partner with whom we engage in intensive collaboration: one staff member and an intern attend the Overkop reception on Wednesday afternoons, in addition to participating in the core group and the steering group.

Local embedding was accomplished through engagement in networking sessions and thematic roundtables facilitated by the local government (17/01, 13/05); the independent CLB Anker (20/11); as well as intersectoral networking events and a market stand (24/11, 5/12).

We took part as speakers in the panel discussion at the 'Volle rugzakken' inspiration day (Ghent 30/04); Conversation Circles occurred at Sint-Gertrudiscollege in Wetteren (28/03), and we served as the host organization for the Exchange Learning program (15/05).

Additionally, we hosted an open day on March 8, the yearly reception occurred on March 9, and we concluded the year on December 20 with a successful sale at a winter market in Wetteren.



VONK BOECHOUT

Over the last 4 years, Vonk has consistently broadened its operations, experiencing significant growth in its engagement with young people.

The **12 available programs** were completely filled, with **69 young individuals** taking part. Three young individuals withdrew at the last moment. The **holiday program** was further enhanced with a variety of activities aimed at building resilience. A total of **165 young individuals engaged** in the holiday program, of which **76 were unique participants**, in contrast to 54 unique participants in 2024. The activities featured a sailing day and a three-day hiking excursion.

VONK is **firmly rooted in the local network** through its consistent involvement in the Antwerp Youth Welfare Consultation, the Boechout Welfare and Health Council, the CMP Antwerp (Central Reporting Point for At-Risk Youth), and the ELZORA network event focused on trauma-sensitive practices, ensuring accurate and efficient referrals for young individuals.

Furthermore, participation encompassed the 'wel-in-je-vel' Welzijnsbeurs Mortsel (3/10), an initiative related to the 10-day CGG event at KAM College Mortsel (9/10), and the Boechout annual market (7/10).

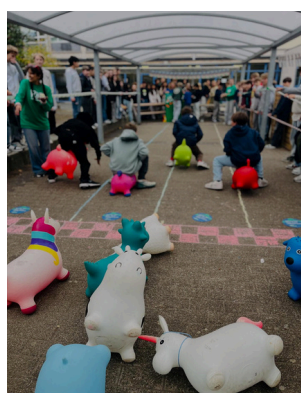
A **partnership** exists with the Overkop House in Lier; there is collaboration with the CAW for an annual Rock and Water training, and discussions have taken place with the CGG concerning the formulation of a suicide prevention policy.

Vonk prioritizes **volunteering** to provide a wide and varied array of activities. 15 volunteers are currently participating in the operation. Through peer supervision, personal discussions, and a gratitude celebration, individuals stay engaged and connected to the community.

Additionally, Vonk has a **well-established fundraising operation**. 59% of their revenue is derived from contributions made by foundations, corporations, service clubs, and individual donations.

Vonk is well-recognized in the region and attains extensive regional distribution in the province of Antwerp with its products.

“A secure surface where you can land by bumping, banging, gently, slowly, or skidding” (16 years old).



HOMAAR BRUSSELS

In 2025, 11 trajectories persisted, during which **45 young individuals received guidance**.

The **holiday workshops** and return days were further extended, with **54 young individuals taking part**, 41 of whom were distinct participants. This initiative involved collaboration with several organizations, including Neerhof, Orkest Etesiane, and Atelier TKT.

A **varied group of young individuals was engaged** regarding cultural background, gender, and educational type. Two-thirds of the young individuals originate from the Brussels-Capital Region. The remaining young individuals primarily hail from the province of Flemish Brabant.

Homaar is located through KANS CLB, Yuneco, CGG, psychologists, and youth welfare organizations including Sonja Erteejee, Tonuso, Minor Ndako, and the juvenile court.

To enhance **local embedding**, significant attention was directed towards networking in 2025 as well.

Participation remained steady in the Bru-stars working group "Young People in Transition Age," the BIKA Consultation (Brussels Intervention Children and Adolescents), the partner consultation with KANS, the Network Crisis Steering Group, and the network events of Arktos, Minor Ndako, and ParticipACTIE.

The **collaboration** with KANS was maintained, with Homaar Brussels serving as a permanent partner in their program, and the trajectory being financed by KANS for young individuals who enroll through them.

The **partnership** with OverKop Brussel - D'Broej has been further enhanced, with a boxing workshop included in every program and a focus on warm mutual referrals. Additionally, in collaboration with JES vzw, young people can now be introduced to climate workshops as part of the programs.

Homaar Brussel reintroduced itself at several locations, including Hermes+, Service Citoyen, Cachet, Arktos, BruStars, Rivage Den Zaet, CAW Brussel, and Groep Intro.

On October 9, Homaar Brussels **celebrated its second anniversary with a networking event**.

An **exhibition** showcased the creative works produced by young individuals in the studios, displayed throughout the house, while visually highlighting the achievements of the second year of operation. This was succeeded by a **panel discussion** titled 'How can we collectively enhance the well-being of our youth in Brussels?', featuring a young participant, JAC, D'Broej, Groep Intro, and Tonuso in a dialogue. The day ended on a celebratory note with a reception.

The traveling exhibition 'Dekselse Kunst' was held at GC Elzenhof, where a young individual shared a poignant testimony regarding her experience with Homaar, complemented by an excellent report from BRUZZ.



HOMAAAR TIENEN

Homaar Tienen entered its second year of existence in 2025.

The **partnership** with the non-profit organization De Wissel was maintained, with the venue being shared with the Overkophuis in Tienen.

In 2025, seven two-week programs were conducted, during which we **supported a total of 22 young individuals**. The **holiday program was enhanced with 54 participating youth**, 24 of whom were first-time attendees. Additionally, a monthly open workshop was arranged to allow young people to engage between holiday sessions.

The anticipated increase in reach among young people in this second year did not come to fruition yet. Homaar Tienen faced challenges throughout the year due to staff shortages and high personnel turnover. Consequently, the team was comprised of only 2 employees instead of the usual 3 for the majority of the year, which resulted in the inability to execute all planned activities.

Nevertheless, Homaar Tienen remained resilient and, alongside the programs and holiday workshops, **concentrated on collaboration, networking, and increasing awareness**.

In partnership with vzw Sherpa, the youth had the opportunity to walk with donkeys as part of a program. Through the collaboration with Grand Slam Tienen, they were able to enjoy various sporting experiences.

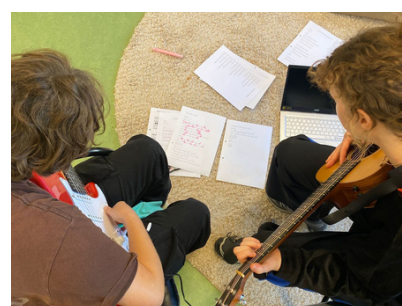
Connections were established with pertinent networks, including the Tienen Education Network (TON), the Psycho-Pedagogical Consultation, the School Dropout Prevention Lab, the Intermunicipal Youth Welfare Consultation Tienen, the Juggling Project, the Right to Education Network, the Youth Welfare Consultation Leuven, and the Steering Group for Young Adults in Flemish Brabant.

Homaar Tienen was introduced to various entities, including CAR Antenne 3000, UPC KU Leuven, the City of Leuven, graduate students in Orthopedagogics at UCLL, Monte Rosa, 1G1P, Adem vzw, JAC and CGG Leuven, as well as StuVo KU Leuven.

A training session took place at the PISO Tienen school in observance of Anti-Bullying Day.

Referrers and young individuals have not consistently discovered their way to Homaar Tienen, despite the significant need, networking efforts, and promotional activities. Consequently, it remains an ongoing inquiry to ascertain whether Tienen is the appropriate area for the Growth Hub of Flemish Brabant. We have engaged in conversations with the City of Leuven, which is eager to embrace our Growth Hub and acknowledges its value. Following this, the quest for a new location in the Leuven region was initiated. In 2026, we will persist in this search for a warm, inviting, and easily accessible venue.

Homaar Tienen was the key motivator behind the *Dekselse Kunst* project. This initiative included the organization of workshops and the distribution of information. The project culminated in a stunning exhibition at KADOC KU Leuven, showcasing nearly 1,000 lids! Approximately 200 of these lids were sold to support the organization's activities.



THANKS!



A heartfelt thank you from the entire Homaar team to everyone who made our high-quality and warm-hearted work possible in 2025!

The Homaar-VONK-team:

Nathalie Braeckman, Marieke Degryse, Tineke Gysel, Veerle Mullens, Wendi Frateur, Dorien De Vidts, Frouke Crucke, Valérie Gérard, Hasse Van Vaerenbergh, Sarah Fontaine, Vera van Leeuwen, Mira De Schepper, Sarah Ausloos, Hannah Weiler.

A big thank you to the staff members who have embarked on a new path in 2025: Eline Diliën, Cynthia Janssens, Maureen Cafmeyer, Dina Vierendeel.

Our board of directors:

Nick Van Heck, Wouter Schollaert, Goedele Van Doorselaer, Willy D'heedene, Sarah Schelstraete.

Thanks to Olivier Taveirne, Yannic Verlinden en Thomas Van Kets for their contribution and dedication as board members over the past few years.

The team of volunteers and the youngsters.

Without your support, these achievements would not have been possible.



Along with many other donations, charity events and sponsorship.

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