

A photograph of three children working on a brick wall. A boy in a blue jacket is using a trowel to apply mortar, while a girl in a grey jacket uses a wooden float. An adult is visible in the background. A large red circle is overlaid on the image, containing the title text.

Annual Overview 2025

TAJO

Talentatelier
voor jongeren

TAJO is needed more than ever

In dit jaarverslag '25 brengen we verslag uit over ons zevende operationele werkingsjaar dat verliep in een onzekere tot chaotische wereld. De nieuwsbulletins brengen dagelijks verslag uit over de oorlogen in Oekraïne, Gaza, Iran, Soedan, Oost-Congo e.a. en over de wijze waarop de wereldorde grondig wordt verbouwd door autocratische leiders. Ze brengen in vele gremia grote onzekerheid. Vooral de meest kwetsbaren van onze samenleving hunkeren naar enig houvast. TAJO werkt hard om voor onze kwetsbare jongeren een humane, duurzame en warme toekomst te verzekeren. Wij willen vooral de weerbaarheid van onze kwetsbare jongeren versterken, hen perspectief geven en voorkomen dat ze vroegtijdig de school verlaten zonder diploma waardoor ze het risico lopen op jeugdwerkloosheid, delinquentie en radicalisering.

Zoals eerder geschreven worden in Gent en in Antwerpen bijna een kwart van de kinderen in kansarmoede geboren; in Kortrijk is dat 15%. In ruim 30% van die gezinnen is Nederlands niet de thuistaal en behalen 30% van die jongeren geen diploma secundair onderwijs. Van die groep eindigt 60% in werkloosheid met een zware persoonlijke en maatschappelijke kost. U leest het verder in dit jaarverslag. We herhalen onze ambitie om het vroegtijdig schoolverlaten met ruim de helft te reduceren en de cijfers tonen aan dat we dit objectief ruimschoots halen.

TAJO startte in 2019 met 41 jongeren in de Gentse wijk Sint-Amandsberg. Onze organisatie is sterk gegroeid; inmiddels nemen 930 kwetsbare jongeren deel aan ons programma, dat wordt uitgevoerd in drie wijken van Gent en in Kortrijk, waar we momenteel het vierde werkjaar zijn ingegaan. In Antwerpen, waar we gestart zijn in 2024 met 60 jongeren, nemen intussen 120 jongeren deel aan ons programma. We zijn zeer erkentelijk t.a.v. het Sint-Janscollege, de Odisee Hogeschool, het IVV Sint-Vincentius in de Gentse wijken Sint-Amandsberg, de Brugse Poort en Rabot; de Athena scholengroep in Kortrijk, de stedelijke scholen Panorama en Marco Polo in de Antwerpse wijk Borgerhout en de Ho Gent (zetel van TAJO) voor hun grote gastvrijheid waarmee ze onze jongeren onthalen.

TAJO heeft 21 klassen, elk met een enthousiaste coördinator. Een belangrijk deel van hun opdracht is het voorbereiden van de ateliers met de gastdocenten die hun professionele ervaring en passie delen met onze jongeren. Ze zijn nu met ongeveer 2100 uit allerlei beroepsgroepen. We zijn hen allen bijzonder dankbaar voor het prachtige werk dat ze verrichten. Tijdens de diploma-uitreiking van elke jaargang en in het bijzonder de stoep-diploma-uitreiking voor de eerste jaars blijkt het hartverwarmend enthousiasme, de fierheid en de dankbaarheid van de jongeren en hun ouders.

TAJO groeit en bloeit en dat wordt ook duidelijk door onze TienerUP-werking waarin we via een leeftijdsgebonden programma inmiddels 300 jongeren begeleiden tot hun diploma en werksituatie. TAJO is voor deze doelgroep een uniek programma dat kwetsbare jongeren gedurende ruim 8 jaar begeleidt naar een volwaardige deelname aan onze samenleving.

Voor dit alles dank ik in naam van de raad van bestuur in de eerste plaats ons operationeel team o.l.v. gedelegeerd bestuurder Claudia van Egmond dat met onverdroten inzet opnieuw een prestatie neerzette. Ik dank de vele gastdocenten, de stagiairs en vrijwilligers voor hun onverdroten inzet voor onze jongeren. Ik dank H. Van Keer en M. Valcke van UGent en E. Vanassche en H. van der Kloot van KULAK voor hun bijdrage aan de impactstudie waarover we verder rapporteren.

Last but not least dank ik alle donateurs heel hartelijk die ons zelfs in deze economisch moeilijke tijden blijven steunen en het financieel mogelijk maken om zoveel jongeren perspectief te geven op een betere toekomst. Thanks to the Flemish Government for the two-year start-up subsidy that made our programme in Antwerp possible.

Tot slot dank ik VLAIO voor de belangrijke financiële tussenkomst in het kader van het doctoraat aan de UGent dat de impact van ons programma zal onderzoeken en de belangrijkste drijvers van het succes ervan zal aantonen.

Luc De Bruyckere
voorzitter TAJO vzw





Talentatelier
voor jongeren

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Why TAJO is more relevant than ever

Researchers emphasise the importance of a qualification, not only for finding a good job, but also for society in general and economic growth in particular (Hanushek, E.A. (2009). The Economic value of education and cognitive skills. In: Sykes, G., Schneider, B. & Plank, D.N. (eds), Handbook of education policy research. New York: Routledge, 39-56). Early school leaving (ESL) has major financial consequences and brings high social and economic costs for both individuals and society. Studies have shown that the costs of ESL per school leaver over a lifetime lie between one and two million euros (see website Flanders is Education and Training; Action Plan Together Against School Dropout, 58p).

Achieving a significant reduction in ESL is therefore important to guarantee economic growth and maintain and further strengthen social cohesion. The most recent figures indicate that this is a priority. (Education Statistics Dataloop Flanders 2022-23).

	'14-'15	'15-'16	'16-'17	'17-'18	'18-'19	'19-'20	'20-'21	'21-'22	'22-'23	'23-'24
Antwerpen	20,4%	20,7%	21,7%	21,6%	22,1%	17,4%	21,2%	24,3%	23,8%	21,5%
Gent	14,9%	17,2%	17,6%	19,8%	19,0%	14,3%	18,9%	20,0%	17,7%	18,3%
Kortrijk	10,4%	10,4%	14,2%	15,1%	14,0%	8,6%	13,3%	14,2%	15,1%	14,7%
Totaal	17,7%	18,7%	19,9%	20,5%	20,4%	15,7%	19,9%	22,3%	21,3%	20,0%
In case home language is not Flemish	'14-'15	'15-'16	'16-'17	'17-'18	'18-'19	'19-'20	'20-'21	'21-'22	'22-'23	'23-'24
	25,9%	27,0%	29,9%	29,9%	29,2%	22,9%	27,7%	30,2%	30,4%	27,6%

Early school leaving is often the result of an individually complex story. The causes can be very diverse. Problems often pile up before the student finally leaves secondary school.

The decision to leave school is not always a conscious choice. Factors that cause the student to no longer feel connected to the school or to experience a difficult school career can lead to rejection. These can be characteristics inherent to the education system or external factors such as school fatigue, poor choice of study, learning difficulties, language difficulties, problematic home and family situations, psychological problems, or dealing with rules and obligations within youth culture.

How can we reduce the trend?



Recognising the impact of the socio-economic status (SES) of the family

The greatest predictor of an increased risk of early school leaving is the socio-economic status (SES) of the family. The lower the SES, the greater the chance of early school leaving. This is the reason for TAJO's existence. Broader than early school leaving, it is widely known that social inequality is strongly determined by background: those who grow up in a disadvantaged environment find it very difficult to escape it. In Ghent 25% of children live in poverty, in Kortrijk 15% and in Antwerp 26%. Breaking out of poverty is often linked to obtaining a diploma, enabling entry into the qualification-oriented labour market (Poverty Report City of Ghent, 2018). Children growing up in poverty often lead lives in precarious circumstances with little time and space for personal development — unless intervention occurs from an early age. That is why TAJO invests from a young age in motivating, experiential learning and society-oriented growth.

Recognising the impact of the growing trend of mental health issues

On top of the current poverty figures, there is also the growing trend in serious mental health issues among young people. The SIGMA study by KU Leuven concludes: almost one in five Flemish young people experience moderate to severe mental health complaints. Social relationships play a crucial role. Socially skilled teenagers report fewer complaints. On top of the mainstreaming of social media (causing suicide attempts and depressions among young people to rise alarmingly, cf. Peter Adriaenssens) we also have the effect of the corona crisis. Many young people have become even more vulnerable: we notice decreased resilience. For a vulnerable group like TAJO young people and their families, support aimed at strengthening self-organising capacity is very important, especially in economically uncertain times.



Impact of an "appropriate" study choice

The importance of a "suitable" choice of study must also not be underestimated at the VSV. The study choices young people make in secondary education today are often based on recommendations from class councils and academic results. Furthermore, parental preferences and perceptions, or peripheral influences from friends or classmates, play a significant role. Students' background characteristics (such as SES and gender) sometimes play too large a role in their choice of study. As a result, many students end up in a field of study that does not suit them, causing more than 20,000 students to change fields of study annually during the school year.

Often, the movement from transfer-oriented education to other forms is made (cascade system). This has major societal and individual costs (demotivation, unqualified outflow, shortages in certain sectors, career reorientations after career guidance, ...). The trajectory is also highly dependent on contextual variables (teachers, school approach, parents, friends, ...).

An initiative like TAJO responds to this by offering a sustainable trajectory in which young people gain clear insight into their interests, competencies, motivations and attitudes that can inform their study choice.

Impact of language deficiency

Language delay is also a determining factor in ESL. Students who speak no Dutch at home are 3.6 times more likely to leave secondary education early than students who mainly speak Dutch at home (26.8% versus 7.4% in 2017-2018).

An initiative like TAJO provides an answer to this by focusing on this target group (free, neighborhood-oriented, and at multiple locations) and organizing all activities in Dutch.



At the G100 of Community Ghent in 2017, a call was made for an impactful and sustainable initiative to structurally combat poverty and early school leaving for young people in Ghent.

The then-mayor put us in contact with TADA in Brussels, which drew inspiration from the more than 25 years of experience of the IMC Weekend School in the Netherlands.

We are grateful to both organisations for the clarifying conversations and inspiration.





Positively and realistically taking on the challenge together

Young people in socially vulnerable situations often encounter three major barriers: a lack of future perspective, limited self-knowledge and self-confidence, and a limited network. These deficiencies make it harder to seize opportunities, even when they present themselves.

Early school leaving therefore remains a persistent challenge, with far-reaching consequences for both the young person and society. Tackling this problem is crucial, especially to give young people the opportunity to develop their talents and build a stable future. After all, seizing opportunities starts with being given opportunities.

Many companies not only provide financial support to TAJO, but they also believe in the social added value of TAJO and thus invest in the future of young people. Hundreds of professionals act as guest lecturers and share their expertise and passion, bringing young people into contact with a wide variety of professions and talents.

Schools and parents form an essential link in this process. In many debates, the topic of parental accountability comes up. TAJO also wants to strengthen this, from a position of trust in and from parents. Because we not only support young people, we also reach their families. We see time and again how parents, who are sometimes themselves in a vulnerable situation, give their children opportunities and ultimately give us their trust. That is perhaps where the greatest impact lies: when a parent, despite everything, gets hope and dares to walk a new path together with their child.

The many collaborations require a great deal of energy from the TAJO team, but the result — young people who broaden their horizons, build self-confidence and learn to chart their own course — makes every effort more than worthwhile.

We are an innovative and autonomous non-profit organization committed to giving young people future prospects and connecting worlds.

TAJO

Talentatelier
voor jongeren

TAJO's objectives

To combat early school leaving and help young people step into society prepared, TAJ0 vzw focuses on three pillars.

- Providing perspective – broad outlook & talent development
- Development of a positive self-image from dream to ambition
- Building partnerships – schools, bridge figures, neighbourhood and city organisations, guest lecturers, companies, young people, parents...

We bring together worlds that rarely or never meet in everyday life. Our concrete, interactive and inspiring network creates space for the development of self-knowledge and self-insight.

Eight-year programme

Workshop activities (age 10 to 14)

Every Saturday, young people between 10 and 14 years old attend four interactive workshops on the most diverse professions and themes. Volunteer professionals (guest lecturers) guide these experience-based workshops from their expertise. For each theme, we also always make an excursion to maximise learning opportunities.

Through the weekly activities, after three years the young people have gained 300 different experiences across as many professions. From this they learn which fields appeal to them and are encouraged to study in a direction that takes them further in life. After this intensive three-year trajectory, the young people join the TienerUP programme.

TienerUP (up to age 18)

From the second year of secondary education, a new context for the target group leads to a shift in TAJ0's approach. Weekly workshops give way to monthly activities that cater to the interests,

life experiences, and needs of the TienerUP youth. From now on, they hold more control, and we are making a division into TienerUP juniors and TienerUP seniors.

Alumni

When the young people start working or continue their studies, they move to the alumni group. Here, they increasingly dedicate themselves as ambassadors for TAJ0.

Talent discovery and development

The word TALENT is not just prominently present in the name TAJO. Stimulating talent development in young people is of inestimable value for their personal growth and development. By giving young people the opportunity to discover and develop their talents, they can strengthen their self-confidence and develop a sense of self-worth.

In addition, talent development can contribute to developing important skills such as perseverance, creativity, problem-solving ability and collaboration. By supporting and motivating young people to develop their talents, they can experience satisfaction and pride when they achieve their goals. By investing in talent development in young people, we lay a solid foundation for their future growth.

Weekly talent shower

Every week, our young people stand under the figurative shower of talent. We relay the compliments from guest lecturers back to them. We acknowledge their talents in front of the whole group. This moment is priceless. The young people beam and are immensely proud. We also love sharing this moment of pride with parents and teachers/ liaison officers. **Those who receive attention, grow!**

TAJO goes all the way to the door.

In addition to the weekly on-site activities, we also visit the young people to highlight their talents with their parents and family.

We do this using:

Cohort 1: compliment card based on entry-level talents (in collaboration with Beroepenhuis)

Cohort 2: talent tree based on in-depth talents (in collaboration with Luk Dewulf)

Cohort 3: talent passport with talents, compliments and dream job

At the request of primary schools, we also annually provide structured school visits. Together we discuss how we can strengthen the young people!



"They always asked how I was doing and there was always a talent shower about what the guest lecturers saw in you last time. That was really lovely. I still have my first compliment card at home."

~ TAJO alumni



Concrete workshop activities

Every Saturday TAJ0 – 300 experiences

Every Saturday (except during holidays), we organize four ateliers (experiential workshops) around various themes. The ateliers are led by volunteer professionals. These are people with a passion and expertise in that theme. We work on a theme for two to three weeks at a time, and on the last Saturday, we go on an outing. The young people follow this program for three years, resulting in 300 experiences.

For school year 2025-26: we achieve 100% activity in both Ghent, Kortrijk and Antwerp.

Central themes

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Kick-off Arts & Culture Technology & Innovation Group dynamics Care & Welfare Journalism The Liveable City Construction Food & Hospitality	Architecture Law Group dynamics Sales & marketing Arts & Culture 2 Studiekeuze Safety Religion & Philosophy Talents Medical world	Entrepreneurship (Incl. finance) Group dynamics TienerUP Fashion Logistics & Transport Sciences World Heritage Hotel

TienerUP programme in action

The activities for the TienerUP programme are set annually by a dedicated TAJ0 coordinator so that the 5 follow-up years are equally high quality. The young people can, at their own pace, participate in activities about 9 times per year. These activities connect more with the living world of the TienerUP young people.

More information about this further in this annual overview.

3 cities and 4 TAJO weekend schools

TAJO deliberately chooses a local offering — we organise our activities "close" to the young people. A local offering makes it possible to provide low-threshold and personalised support that connects with the specific needs and challenges of the young people. TAJO does this through the integration of educational support and social-emotional guidance in the offering of safe and stimulating activities that contribute to the personal growth and development of the young people.

In addition, a local offering can play an important role in preventing social isolation, providing a safe environment and creating opportunities for inclusion and participation.

Upon joining TAJO, young people get the opportunity to participate in our unique programme while they are still in primary school. We work structurally with 40 primary schools in the neighbourhoods where TAJO is active. Each year these schools enable us to introduce TAJO to students in the fourth year. Together with the primary schools we inspire new young people and their families and then share our passion weekly through participation in TAJO.

Our weekly activities take place in:

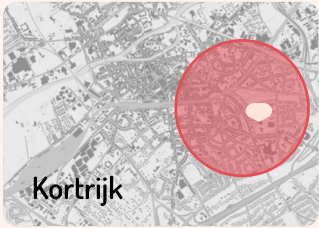
Ghent

Neighbourhood St-Amandsberg:
Sint-Janscollege, Visitatiestraat 5, for all 3 cohorts
Neighbourhood Brugse Poort and Rabot:
Odisee Technology Campus, Guldenvliesstraat, for cohort 1
IVV Sint-Vincentius, for cohorts 2-3



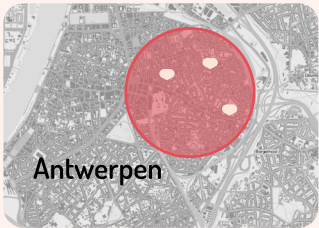
Kortrijk

Neighbourhood Centrum-Oost:
Athena Drie Hofsteden, for all 3 cohorts



Antwerp

Neighbourhood Borgerhout & 2060:
Onyx, for cohort 1
Panorama, for cohort 2
Marco Polo, for cohort 3



Around 900 TAJO young people

TAJO is ambitious: each year we organise an intensive intake process to allow new TAJO young people to join and we do everything possible to motivate every TAJO young person to participate continuously. For cohort 2025-2026 we run 21 classes. More than 630 young people come to TAJO weekly. 133 young people are active in the TienerUP programme in Ghent.

TAJO completed the 2025 intake in the period April-May-June 2025 for both St-Amandsberg and Brugse Poort and Rabot, for Kortrijk and also for Borgerhout in Antwerp.

How does such an intake process work?

We always start with the tailor-made TAJO children's story for all students in the 4th year of all primary schools in the neighbourhoods where we are active.

In individual conversations, TAJO maps the motivation of the young person, the existence of an alternative learning environment alongside the school environment and the general socio-economic home and family situation.

Young people who could most benefit from a helping hand are given priority, with quotas per school. Finally, we finalise the registrations (incl. GDPR) via the parent(s)/guardian during doorstep or home visits.

44% boys - 56% girls

83% home language is different from Dutch

We give the workshops themselves in Dutch. Other languages we often hear on Saturday are:

Moroccan
Bulgarian
French
English
Albanian
Serbian
Italian
Turkish
Arabic

Urdu
Hausa
Slovak
Romanian,
Pashto
Kurdish
Macedonian
Somali
Twi



2,100 guest lecturers and many interns

TAJO functions thanks to the weekly commitment of many guest lecturers: adults who want to share their (professional) experience and passion with the TAJO young people. They do this entirely voluntarily but not without commitment. We expect that animating the workshops will become an annual tradition for them, as 95% want to participate again. They all experience TAJO's activities as successful support in broadening a promising career.

	J1	J2	J3	Total
Classes	8	8	5	21
Guest lecturers every sat.	32	32	20	84
Saturdays a year	25	25	25	25
Total amount of guest lecturers				2100

In addition, TAJO can also count on many interns: every year around 10 students from programmes in early childhood education, social work, educational sciences, applied psychology... who lend a hand with educational & logistical support and so many other things. They are top ambassadors for TAJO and they ensure that our young people blossom completely.

The gentleness with which you approach life is a talent that stands on your cap.
- Guest lecturer



I have learned a lot, and was confronted a few times. Even today, it still lingers in my pores. - Guest lecturer

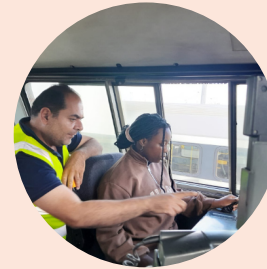
Dozens of volunteers

Our volunteers are the driving force behind the organisation of our TAJ0 Saturdays. They all share one common goal: creating a welcoming and supportive environment for our young people. They warmly welcome the young people, facilitate activities during the midday lunch and ensure that every excursion goes safely and pleasantly. Some volunteers are themselves parents of a TAJ0 young person, others are affiliated with REFU-interim. Even on unique occasions such as the study choice day with parents and the graduation ceremony in cohort 3 we can always count on helping hands.

We are always looking for extra volunteers.

Interested in this experience? Join our inspiring team of volunteers and make a difference in the lives of the TAJ0 young people. Whether you want to help organise activities, guide excursions or simply be a listening ear; your contribution is enormously appreciated.

Visit our website and sign up. Many thanks!



TienerUP program up to age 18

The TienerUP programme is a continuation for TAJO young people after the regular three-year programme. With the same mission: to strengthen the TAJO young people so that they can autonomously take a step into society. Starting with obtaining a secondary school diploma.

In this network, the direction increasingly lies with the young people themselves. They independently register for activities and co-organise them. The TienerUP young people can always turn to TAJO for support with life decisions, training questions or internship placements. The programme consists of 2 age groups with their own interesting activities and events.



Within the TienerUP programme, three pillars are central:

- Focus on motivation by investing in autonomy and connection — me and the other
- Focus on experiential learning — me and my (school) career
- Focus on being in life in a society-oriented way — me and society

The activities and events are tailored to what young people truly need in their career paths. For example, TAJO created a custom-made curriculum for young people by age. Juniors: 2nd-3rd year of secondary school; Seniors: 4th-5th-6th year of secondary school; Alumni: after secondary education graduation.

As a junior, the young people can participate monthly in diverse activities and register at their own pace for numerous events, training courses... As a senior they can participate in an annual programme.



The total offering includes:

- A local TienerUP network for the TienerUP juniors (Ghent, Kortrijk, Antwerp)
- Eventually a Flemish network for the TienerUP seniors and alumni
- Activities and trajectories from which TienerUP young people can choose themselves
- More intensive follow-up programmes for which young people must put themselves forward
- Small and social events where TienerUP young people meet each other

We aim for:

- Strengthened self-confidence
- Strengthened social-emotional learning
- Strengthened non-cognitive skills (e.g. social-societal)
- Expanded general knowledge
- Strengthened positive school experience
- Strengthened motivation to keep developing
- Broader future perspectives
- A stronger sense of connection with society



Our own call centre

To measure our impact in the long term, it is important to register certain things in the short term such as attendance per activity/event and from whom we receive an annual update. It is crucial to remain in contact with all TienerUP young people, regardless of whether they participate in the activities and events. This way we can align our offering as well as possible with the input of the young people and we get a better picture of the quality of the workshops.

Using a "call centre", always at the end of the school year, we survey all our TienerUP young people. The call agents we engage for this are none other than our own alumni! This way they can immediately get a taste of a first holiday job.

By collecting and monitoring all data, we can better report in the long term on, for example, the impact that TAJ0 has on the cascade effect and early school leaving in secondary education.

The juniors visited many inspiring places such as Junior ORSI Academy, Film Festival Ghent, museum Abby, the Ghent animal shelter, Larian Studios and much more. The seniors attended, among other things, job application training at Groep Intro and will later this year visit the STUVO of HOGENT to learn all about the services available in higher education.

The mentoring programme, whereby TienerUP young people can become a TAJ0 mentor for a new group of TAJ0 young people, ran in all years in Ghent and started for the first time in Kortrijk in 2025. The follow-up programme, Mentor+, also got underway in Ghent with the first two plus mentors. They focus on the guest lecturers and talent programme and receive a volunteer allowance for this. Yet another extra step in continuing to strengthen and grow the TAJ0 young people.

School year 2025-2026

The summer holiday was festively concluded for the TienerUP juniors from Ghent and — for the first time also — from Kortrijk with a visit to Bellewaerde. The Ghent juniors and seniors together kicked off a new TienerUP year at the kick-off, and in Kortrijk they also started the year with a connecting meal. The maths tutoring in collaboration with HelloProf was resumed this year in Ghent and started up in Kortrijk to give some young people who need support a helping hand.

During the autumn holiday, a group of young people expanded their global citizenship for the second year in a row during a 5-day trip to Bordeaux as part of a participation trajectory with Globelink. In another part of that trajectory, during various gatherings with the TienerUP young people, it was investigated experientially how they view participation within TAJ0. It emerged that they are currently not requesting a fixed structure or youth board, but do like to come together on a case-by-case basis to provide input. This way they can choose a case that connects with them and we can respond to their autonomy and motivation.





TAJO team

Growth requires entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is strongly present at TAJ0. In 2025 the TAJ0 team counts 21 educational coordinators. They continuously work on developing the topics and the concrete learning objectives of the workshops, finding and guiding the guest lecturers for the workshops, maintaining and further building the network of donors, building a network with the many neighbourhood players, the school teams, coordinating the Saturday workshops with the young people... The team also consists of 3 site managers, 1 administrative employee, 1 lead external affairs and 1 lead TienerUP.

TAJO board

The board of directors is composed as follows: Mr Luc De Bruyckere (honorary chairman of Ter Beke and VOKA) as chairman, Ms Prof. Anne De Paepe (pro-rector UGent), Mr Johnny Thijs (chairman of Electrabel, Hospital Logistics and Golazo), Mr Joseph-Michel Boes (business auditor and partner JMB in Kortrijk), Ms Maigret Hooijmaaijer (expert in conceptual development and realisation of learning environments within post-academic training), Mr Alexander Saverys (CEO of CMB.TECH, family shipping company), Mr Marc Michils (chairman of 'Kom op tegen Kanker') and Ms Claudia van Egmond as managing director.

Of course, TAJ0 is also supported by an impressive General Assembly including Daniel Termont, Guido Vanherpe, Ignace Van Doorselaere, Jean-Charles Wibbo, Leo Van Tuyckom, Luk Dewulf, Michel Moortgat, Nicolas Macharis, Piet Labeeuw, Tom De Bruyckere, Isabelle Dewulf, Matthieu Boone, Prof. Em. E. De Lembre and Prof. Em. Joost Lowyck.



L De Bruyckere



C v Egmond



J-M Boes



J Thijs



A De Paepe



A Saverys



M Michils

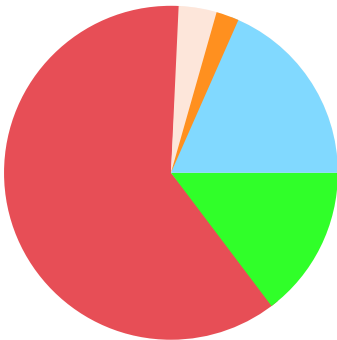


M Hooijmaaijer

TAJO donors

The number of companies, organisations and individuals that financially support TAJO continues to grow. They all choose to actively contribute to social mobility in our society. They contribute with cash, services and/or time donated to TAJO. Several project applications were also successfully completed. The financial report shows that revenue and donations generated the resources to enable the wonderful continuity and growth in 2024-25!

The distribution of resources



Private donations Companies Foundations (Project) subsidies Service clubs

TAJO is enormously happy with and grateful for all its donors and friends. Thanks to this continued support, TAJO can motivate more and more young people with a socially vulnerable background to stand confidently in life, with a positive self-image and well-informed about themselves, society and the labour market.

With great thanks to



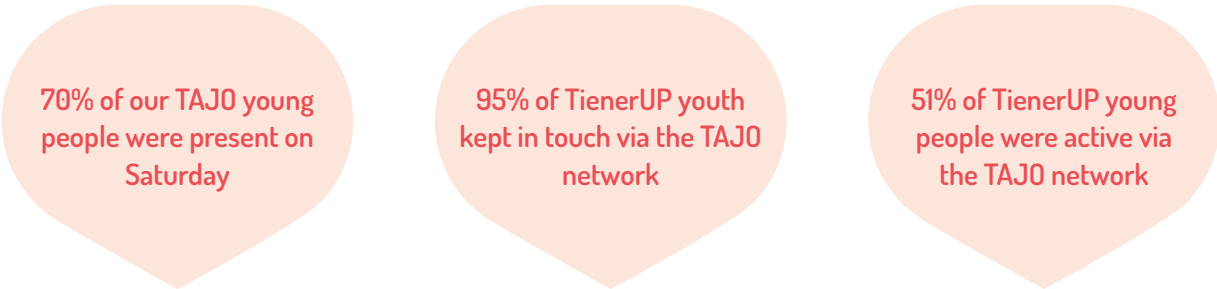
And many others...

TAJO's impact

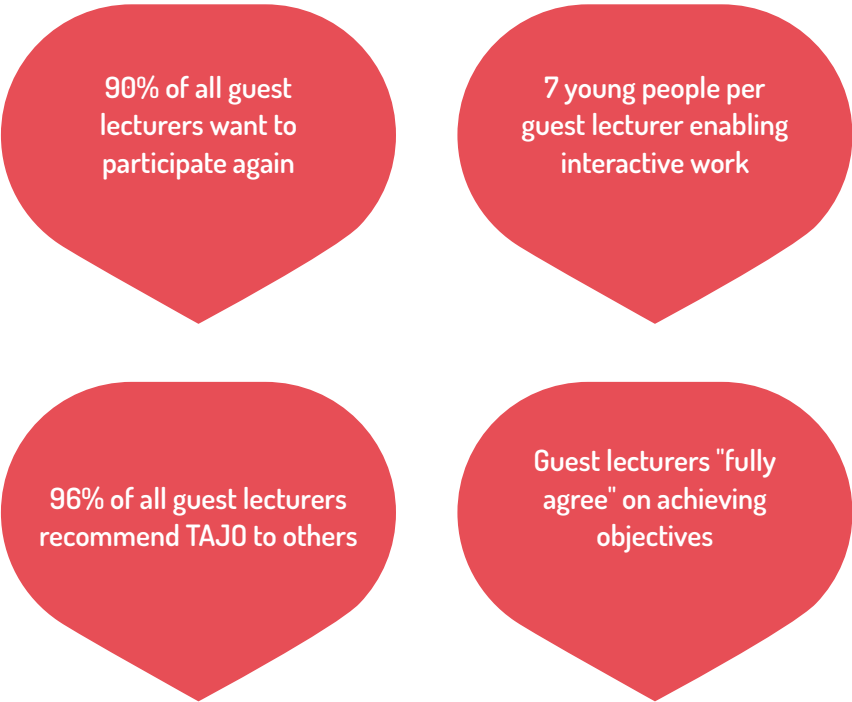
1. Quantitative and qualitative indicators

In order to monitor the quality of TAJO and register the impact of TAJO on the target group and on others in a uniform manner, TAJO monitors a number of indicators.

On the one hand, these are quantitative performance indicators such as the number of TAJO young people who participate weekly (KPI=min 70%), the average number of young people per guest lecturer per Saturday (KPI=max 7) and the overall cost per young person.



In addition, TAJO also uses qualitative criteria using NPS methodology (scores from 0 to 10=fully agree). Using questionnaires, we ask our guest lecturers whether they believe that TAJO achieves the objectives (KPI=8), whether they want to continue giving TAJO workshops in the future (KPI=85%>6), and whether they want to remain strong ambassadors for TAJO (KPI=90%>6).



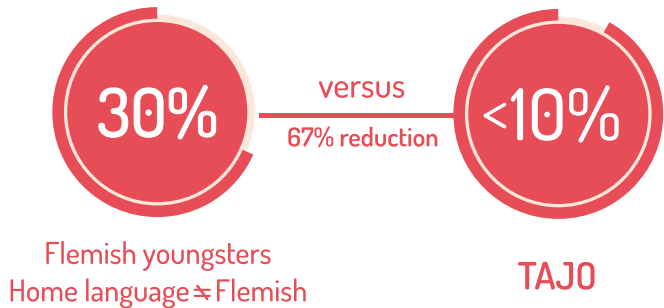
TAJO's own research results

Thanks to monitoring the impact indicators over the past 8 years, we can now draw the first conclusions about the impact of TAJO on matters such as early school leaving, the cascade effect and the upward movement percentage among our young people.

Early school leaving

67% is by how much we have reduced early school leaving among TAJO young people compared to Flemish young people whose home language is different from Dutch. In addition, we observe an upward movement of 9% and a cascade effect of 14% among our young people.

Early school leaving



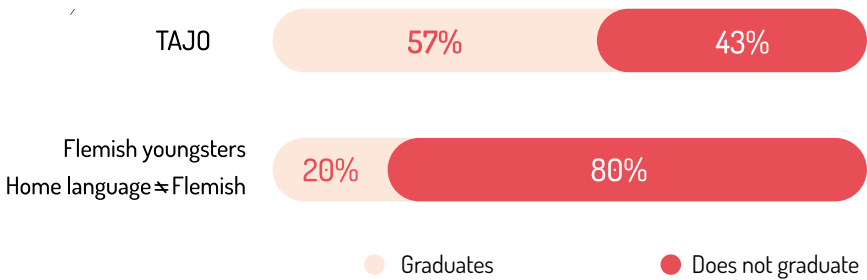
Economic impact

15x is the return on investment in TAJO. According to the study by Bain & Company in 2022, every prevented early school leaver corresponds to a societal saving of 1 to 2 million euros. Based on the ESL percentage among TAJO young people, per outflow of 160 young people (after an inflow of 240 young people) an average of 32 additional young people remain in education who would otherwise have dropped out early. This results in a saving of 32 million euros per outflow. Set against an investment of 2,440,000 euros in the TAJO programme, this amounts to a return of approximately 15 times the investment.

Other effects? Absolutely!

We also notice significant differences in the number of primary education certificates for TAJO and non-TAJO students.

Distribution primary school certificates



2. Scientific research

2.1 Research into school motivation (2019-2023)

A first scientific study in collaboration with UGent (prof. H. Van Keer and prof. dr. M. Valcke) consisted of a survey on school motivation among both the TAJO young people and their fellow students from 6 primary schools in Sint-Amandsberg. Additionally, individual interviews were conducted with the TAJO young people.

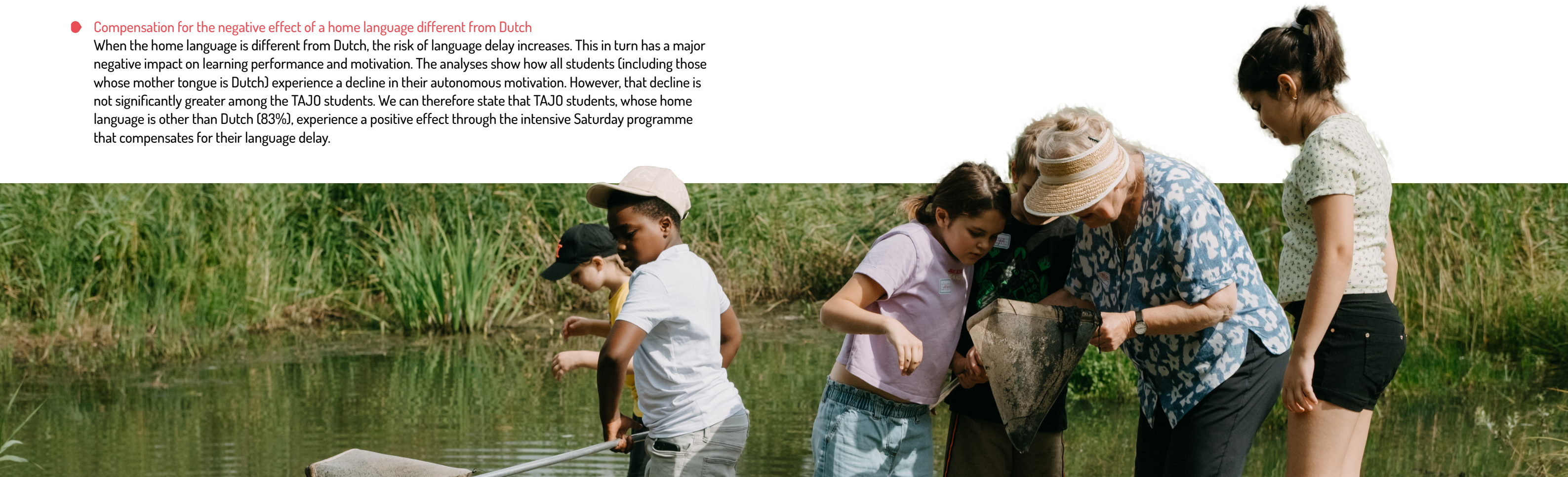
We started with a baseline measurement in September 2019. Since then we have administered the survey twice per school year to draw relevant conclusions about school motivation in relation to TAJO. Each school year a master's student or PhD student worked on this using the same methodology. In 2020 we also started with a baseline measurement in Kortrijk. The results showed the following:

- **TAJO young people belong to the most vulnerable group**
Young people who participate in the TAJO activities belong to the highest-risk group. They attend schools in Ghent or Kortrijk where 27.2% to 71.36% of young people have a home language different from Dutch.
- **TAJO addresses the decline in motivation**
Flemish education is experiencing an ever-growing decline in school motivation. TAJO strengthens the motivation for learning, education and making future plans through the talent workshops. In a complementary TAJO evaluation study we looked at whether there is an impact on the decline in school motivation. Normally we would expect a decline in motivation but the analysis results show a stagnation. The autonomous motivation of TAJO students therefore does not decline, whereas this does happen with non-TAJO students. In other words, the TAJO programme compensates for the significant decline in autonomous motivation.
- **Compensation for the negative effect of a home language different from Dutch**
When the home language is different from Dutch, the risk of language delay increases. This in turn has a major negative impact on learning performance and motivation. The analyses show how all students (including those whose mother tongue is Dutch) experience a decline in their autonomous motivation. However, that decline is not significantly greater among the TAJO students. We can therefore state that TAJO students, whose home language is other than Dutch (83%), experience a positive effect through the intensive Saturday programme that compensates for their language delay.

2.2 Follow-up research (2023-2024)

A second scientific study ran from 2023 to 2024 in collaboration with KULeuven Kortrijk campus (in collaboration with rector Piet De Smet and Eline Vanassche and Hannelore van der Kloot; Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences). A qualitative study was conducted in Ghent and Kortrijk, with the focus on an in-depth exploration of school motivation among the participating TAJO young people. This follow-up research offers valuable insights into the impact of TAJO:

- The majority of young people are identified as motivated. This implies that they make efforts at school with a view to their future perspective.
- Young people experience TAJO as a learning and enriching environment, in which they acquire knowledge and skills that they consider more concrete and practical than at school. This contributes to an increased sense of competence, particularly when they see points of recognition between the knowledge gained at TAJO and school learning content.
- The involvement of mentors and guest lecturers within TAJO contributes significantly to the sense of social support among young people. Young people experience TAJO as a safe and inclusive learning environment in which they can be themselves and where they feel valued.
- There is a direct impact on educational motivation and professional ambitions. Getting to know diverse professional profiles and fields of study helps young people to develop a more well-founded vision of the future, which contributes to their long-term perspective and career orientation.



2.3 VLAIO research (2025-2030)

On 18 July 2025 we received confirmation of a VLAIO mandate in collaboration with UGent (= 5-year PhD study). This is a large-scale impact study with 240 TAJ0 young people and a control group of no fewer than 700+ young people from at least 24 different schools (who do not know TAJ0). The schools from this control group are, for example, schools from Sint-Niklaas, Mechelen, Ostend and Roeselare.

PhD student Sofie Beunen is taking on this research. TAJ0 needs to invest 30% itself. Fortunately, for the first 2 years we can already count on the financial support of Upgrade-Estate.

Onderzoeksvragen

What impact does a weekend school intervention have on the educational career of vulnerable young people?

Langlopend, longitudinaal, quasi-experimenteel onderzoek (Durlak et al., 2010b)

How does the weekend school intervention have an impact on the study choice process?

- Do weekend school young people go through a more considered study choice process?
- Is there an indirect impact on the study choice process via self-image, futility and social capital?

The first findings after 35 dialogue sessions:

TAJ0 alumni attach great importance to school and a good study choice. They strongly see the added value of a diploma and of doing their best at school; in contrast to the feelings of futility we often see in vulnerable young people.

When changing direction, the young people make positive choices. They don't think "I can't do it" but "this suits me better". They also think far less "hierarchically" and although they are aware of the prejudices about different directions, they don't follow them.

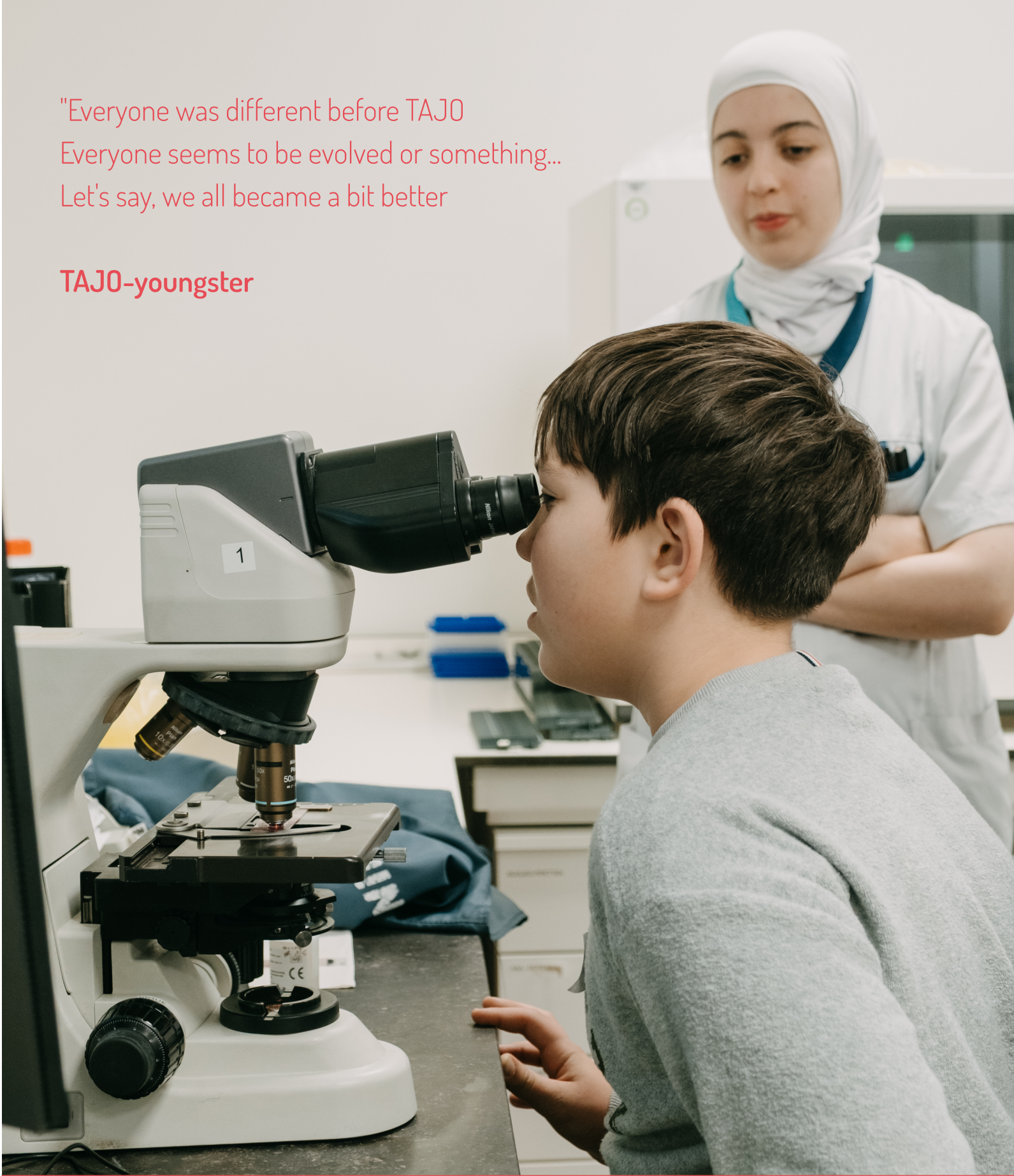
TAJ0 young people can clearly articulate what impact TAJ0 has on their personal development. (Self-confidence & self-image)

Furthermore, many quiet young people blossom through TAJ0 and can clearly better express things in words. One of the things frequently mentioned is the network they have built up at TAJ0.

Thanks to these results, TAJ0 can legitimately position itself in the market, optimise the programme, and attract more financial and human capital with a view to growth, sustainability and more impact for those who need it.

"Everyone was different before TAJ0
Everyone seems to be evolved or something...
Let's say, we all became a bit better

TAJ0-youngster



Friends of TAJ0

Since 1 January 2025, the TAJ0 fund has been transformed into the Fund Friends of TAJ0. With founders Mr Michel Moortgat and Mr Matthieu Boone; with Ms Fanny Verhauwaert as chairwoman (delegated from KBS) and a person responsible from KBS.

3. Trust relationship with the TAJO families

Graduation ceremonies

The effort and perseverance to attend many TAJO Saturdays deserves a reward. As last year, for cohort 1 we transformed the big graduation celebration at the end of June into 240 graduation celebrations on the doorstep of each young person. This way we were able to surprise every young person (and their family) with a personal visit with red carpet, a goodie bag (sponsored by among others Unilever) and a proper diploma. The time we made for each family resulted in pride, gratitude and connection. A best practice that serves as the standard.

For the second year, we had a festive closing event at the school itself (including homemade snacks and drinks).

For the third year, there will naturally be a BIG PARTY. An evening where the TAJO youth, their families, and many guests look back together on the past three years and look ahead to the TienerUP activities.

In addition to the weekly contacts (personal and by phone) and the study choice day, we have a great deal of contact with the families of the TAJO young people. By involving them, we make them proud of the evolution of their young person and we build a real bond of trust. This way, in more difficult situations, we can also tackle the complexity together.



And also TAJO during the summer holiday

TAJO is there every Saturday, with the exception of school holidays. After all, a holiday period is meant for resting, connecting with family and friends, discovering other activities, and gaining new experiences. Sometimes this is not possible. Sometimes it is not feasible. Specifically during the summer period, we also see learning gaps and summer setbacks accumulate. That is why we organized several TAJO summer days in July and August again this year. Always with the focus on strengthening the young person after a school holiday: "How Dutch is my strength after a holiday" or "How to be stronger on day 1 in secondary education". Naturally, this is all wrapped up in a package of palpable "FUN", because having fun together remains crucial for the well-being of every young person.

4. Inspiring other initiatives

From TAJO we are grateful that from the very start we have been able to draw inspiration from the IMC Weekend School and TADA. Just like TAJO, there are other cities that believe in the methodology and are also starting replications. From TAJO we in turn share our expertise with, among others, TALIM in Genk and Hasselt and the TurnUp academy in Turnhout.

In addition, we also inspire the city of Ghent where we continuously share our expertise with, among others, the Education Centre, TOPunt Ghent and several primary schools. This resulted in some practical tools for the educational landscape.

5. Study choice booklet

The study choice booklet focuses primarily on supporting and coaching young people and their parent(s) in their study and/or school choice for secondary education. Social background still too often determines the school and study choice, chances of success and academic results of Flemish young people (Education Flanders).

This booklet arose from the need we saw in the entire choice process. Mostly, process information about registration is provided, as well as the request to make a study choice based on talents. What was missing is precisely that link between the talents of the young person, their interests and the fields of study. Hence a concrete approach in a study choice booklet.

This booklet is intended to search together with the young people for a link between their talents, their competencies, their interests in fields of study and professions they dream of, in order to gain a view of possible fields of study in the second stage of secondary education. We seek an enrichment of possibilities, not study advice. We invest in the choice process to increase the chance of success! Several primary schools have already adapted their activities so that they too can use this booklet.



6. TAJO in the press and (social) media

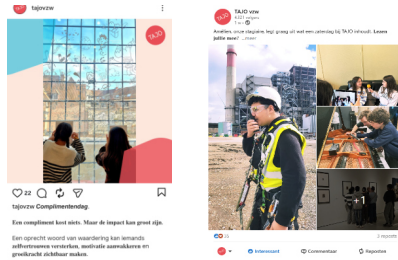
Of course we love to tell our story... Communication to the many stakeholders is important. That is why we invest in feeding, in addition to our own TAJO website and TAJO LinkedIn, a Facebook page and an Instagram page weekly. We also tell our story in many places. The indirect impact of this is difficult to measure, hence we list a few highlights.

Social media

101,000 impressions (of which 48,400 from non-followers)
9.2% interact with the posts. (1%<good<5%)

500+ mentions/tags of TAJO in 2025

Facebook: 1,600 followers
Instagram: 1,753 followers
LinkedIn: 4,300 followers



We were among others to be seen and found in:

- Kortrijk magazine
- Voka magazine
- VIB magazine
- Sustainability report Lybover
- Het Nieuwsblad

7. Recognition by the City of Ghent as youth (welfare) work!

Also in 2026 we are officially recognised as a frontline local youth work initiative by the Youth Service of the City of Ghent. As a result, we now also have our certificate as a Youth Welfare Work association and are invited to the Forum Youth Welfare Work. Once again a channel to make our voice heard!

8. Companies commit to TAJO

Many companies and organisations also open their doors to TAJO on Saturday. Not only a tour is on the programme, various professionals also animate some experience-based workshops there. These excursion venues form an essential part of the TAJO trajectory: experiencing talents outside the school context, meeting professionals from a large network and going to places that are otherwise inaccessible. Thanks to all companies and organisations that cooperate with this!



And others...!

9. TAJO shares its expertise

As an organisation we have now built up quite a lot of knowledge and expertise. We share that expertise with great pleasure with other organisations. In 2025 you could find us among other things in the panel discussion of Unie Der Zorgelozen, the speed dating event child- and youth-friendly Ghent and the action days of "Operatie Geslaagd".

Study Day Flemish Parliament 22.05.25

Inspiring study day about strengthening families and children in vulnerable situations.

Using a testimony from TAJO alumna Ravza Köksal we engaged in dialogue with Flemish politicians. We called on them to structurally recognise us as an essential partner in developing a sustainable policy for vulnerable families.



I think stereotypes are sad because a company does not only a CEO. It also won't work without employees... I think we all need each other.

TAJO-youngster



TAJO is an amazing place for me. Today, a classmate asked me about TAJO and I was vey proud to tell what I learn and experience.

TAJO-youngster



Everyone inspires me at TAJO. Because you see that everyone within the network is so passionate and talented

TAJO-youngster



I always have friends at TAJO. I used to be a quiet boy but now i have met more people like me and i have become less quiet.

TAJO-youngster



I could be myself at TAJO. They believe in my future.

TAJO-youngster



Key financial figures 2025

The accounting year starts on 1 January 2025 and closes on 31 December 2025. TAJO is a micro non-profit organisation and maintains double-entry bookkeeping, resulting in the micro model established by the Balance Sheet Centre. This annual account was subject to audit by the auditor Ernst & Young, represented by Brecht Deketele.

TAJO vzw has no commercial activities whatsoever. The financial resources collected from donors are used for developing topics covered in the workshops, for selecting the guest schools where the workshops take place, for choosing the participants in the workshops, for finding and guiding the guest lecturers for the workshops, for maintaining the network of donors, etc. The costs associated with this are covered by the donations received.

At the end of the sixth year of operation, TAJO achieved, despite all difficult challenges, the "operational milestones 2025". We also demonstrated the financial strength of the organisation and are now ready for the 2026 objectives.

Those interested in the balance sheet, income statement, result allocation and notes are referred to the Balance Sheet Centre where TAJO's annual accounts are public. See NBB application CONSULT via www.nbb.be.

Income statement

Operating income	1.837.934 €
Operating expenses	1.789.085 €
Financial result	28 €
Result for the year	48.821 €*

*Already earmarked for 2027 expenditure

For 2026, the budget of 2,253,094 euros was approved by the General Assembly.



Ambition 2027: 1,100+ TAJ0 young people in Flanders

TAJO wants to significantly contribute to the emancipation and integration of young people with a socially vulnerable background in Ghent, Kortrijk and Antwerp. We want to strengthen the TAJ0 young people so that they can autonomously take a step into society, starting with obtaining a secondary school diploma. TAJ0 also wants to have a significant impact on these young people and their environment.



For the coming years we therefore set the following goals:

Atelierwerking						
City	Target	Neighbourhood	Classes			Youngsters
			J 1	J2	J 3	
Ghent	Growth	St-Amandsberg	2	2	2	180
		Brugse Poort & Rabot	2	2	2	180
						360
Kortrijk	Continuity	Centrum-Oost	2	2	2	180
Antwerp	Growth	Borgerhout & 2060	2	2	2	180
Number of young		720	Number of		380	All TAJ0 young people: 1100

How you can help

Share your expertise

Come work at TAJ0

Tell people about TAJ0 in your network

Become a volunteer

Organise a fundraising event

Become an intern

Support us financially

Open your company to TAJ0

Share your passion

Trooper

TAJO is also active on Trooper. You can support TAJ0 via Trooper when shopping online: search for TAJ0 on trooper.be; click on the shop you need; shop and pay on the shop's webpage. By going through Trooper, the shop knows that you want to support TAJ0. You don't pay a single extra euro yourself.



Talentatelier
voor jongeren



Photos: the TAJ0 team (esp. Ilke Goddemaer)



responsible publisher: C van Egmond

GRAPHIUS WE MAKE
YOUR PRINT
WORK

Do you have a question? Would you like to support us financially?

- Via BE24 8903 1419 3438 - BIC VDSP BE91
- Via the fund Vrienden van TAJ0 - IBAN: BE10 0000 0000 0404
BIC GEBABEBB with the mentioning "+++019/2060/00097+++ (tax certificate).

