

# Action plan '(re)attracting and maximising the use talent to and in Roeselare'

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URBACT



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**ROESELARE**  
is 'r voor jou

# Agenda

Action plan CitiesForTalent

1. Introduction
2. Context
3. Challenges
4. Actions
5. Implementation



# 1. Introduction

# Introduction

**Labour market shortages** -> on average, organisations in RSL find it more difficult to find the right workers than the rest of Flanders

Forecast of **ageing** and **retirement** over the next 15 years

→ Objective of the action plan: **to (re-)attract and make maximum use of talent** in and to Roeselare

This action plan has been drawn up as part of the European subsidy project URBACT CitiesForTalent and receives subsidies from the Province of West Flanders.



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# Scope

## Work

- Quality of jobs, the labour market
- The entrepreneurial ecosystem
- Educational institutions, research & development, innovation

## Attractiveness of Roeselare

- City brand
- Promotion of the city
- Welcoming talent





## 2. Context

# Demographics

Roeselare is one of the fastest growing cities in Flanders

The number of inhabitants has risen by 10% over the last decade, mainly due to migration from abroad

However, there is a negative migration balance within the 18-34 age group, meaning that the proportion of older age groups is growing

By 2040:

- More than 70 000 inhabitants
- 1 in 4 Roeselare residents will be over 65 (**ageing population**)
- 1 in 10 Roeselare residents will be over 80 years old (**silver economy**)





# Labour market

Highest employment rate among Flemish city centres (72%) However, due to ageing and retirement trends, the proportion of active residents is expected to decline by 2040

Low number of job seekers compared to other Flemish central cities  
But... highest unemployment rate among Flemish central cities for residents with non-European nationality: 1 in 5 of them are job seekers without a job

Lowest number of job seekers per vacancy (tension ratio): 2.1

Average for Flemish central cities: 6.1

West Flemish average: 3.7

→ **On average, it is more difficult for organisations in RSL to find the right employees**

# Social

Lower average purchase and rental prices for flats and houses

Approximately 1 out of 10 families in Roeselare have problems paying one or more bills on time and/or find it difficult to make ends meet on their monthly income

This is lower and therefore better than the Flemish average

Over the past decade, the proportion of residents of non-Belgian origin has almost doubled

However, only 17% of residents have a positive attitude towards different cultures, which is the lowest of all central cities and only half of the Flemish average





### **3. Challenges**



# On average, it is more difficult for organisations in RSL to find the right workers

- a) The number of potential employees that organisations can recruit is limited by
  - The low unemployment rate
  - A higher average number of young people leaving the city compared to other (central) cities
- b) Not all talent in Roeselare is being utilised.

# Limited number of potential workers

Only 5% of the residents in Roeselare are currently unemployed and looking for work

One of the lowest unemployment rates in Flanders

→ On the positive side: most people in RSL who are able to work are actually employed

→ On the other hand: it is more difficult for organisations in RSL to find the right workers

Yet Roeselare is one of the fastest growing cities in Flanders? Yes, but... this is not the case in the 25-34 age group: more young talent is leaving RSL than moving to RSL... → **ageing population**

Young people indicate that they mainly leave RSL for personal reasons (life stage, change in family situation)

# Not all potential talent in RSL is being utilised

Average number of non-European residents in RSL who are unemployed and looking for work: 25%

Average for Flemish cities: 15%

On average, fewer people with disabilities are in employment compared to the rest of the Flemish cities

Two challenges to achieve in order to become a more inclusive labour market:

- Integration of these target groups into the labour market
- Changing the mindset of companies and other organisations

## Main causes of the problem

Limited supply of potential workforce / jobseekers due to low unemployment grade

Talent deficit: more young people from the age category 25-34 years old is leaving Roeselare than arriving

Not all the potential talent in Roeselare is being used

## CORE problem

It is on average for organisations in Roeselare harder to find the right employees compared to other cities in Flanders.

## Main objective

Increasing the number of available employees

## Specific objectives

Foster a pathway for high school graduates from Roeselare to build successful careers in the city by either securing local employment or pursuing higher education elsewhere, with strong incentives to return and contribute to Roeselare's economic and social development.

Make steps towards a more inclusive labour market by integrating non-European residents and residents with a disability on the one hand and obtaining a mental shift by employers

## Intervention areas

Re-attracting and retaining talent graduated from high school in Roeselare

Maximising the use of Roeselare's talent

## Actions

Defining the Roeselare brand

Collecting data of final-year students

Developing a connection between the last year students and Roeselare

Developing a residential marketing strategy

Representing Roeselare at graduate events in university cities

The opening of an innovative learning hub: a career campus

Further roll-out of the International House

Job and language coaching on the workplace

Supporting the social economy

Organising job fairs in Roeselare



## **4. Actions**

# Objective 1: Increase the number of available workers in RSL by attracting (back) talent

We would like to attract young people who have graduated from secondary education in Roeselare and subsequently continued their studies elsewhere to return to Roeselare

## Actions:

- Define the Roeselare brand *(included in strategic plan 2026-2031)*
- Collect data on final-year secondary school students in Roeselare
- Develop a connection between final-year students and the city of Roeselare
- Develop a residential marketing strategy *(included in strategic plan 2026-2031)*
- Participating in graduation fairs in university cities in Flanders

# Data collection

Setting up a database with anonymised data on students who graduated in Roeselare, including their current job, place of work and place of residence.

- 1) During the sixth year of secondary education, we collect email addresses and study plans.
- 2) Every year, a request for an update is sent out with questions about current job, place of work and place of residence

Possibilities for using the data:

- Inviting graduates to events
- Contacting graduates about job vacancies (link with companies)





## Developing a connection with RSL

Final-year students learn more about the possibilities of working in Roeselare through a company visit and/or a visit from a local entrepreneur to the classroom

→ After completing their studies, students think back positively on RSL and the professional opportunities it offers.

# Objective 2: maximise the use of the talent available in Roeselare

We are taking steps towards an inclusive labour market

Actions:

- Opening an innovative career campus (VDAB)
- Further roll-out of the International House (VOKA with support from the City) after the testing action
- Further roll out the 'job and language coaching in the workplace' initiative (VDAB)
- Supporting the social economy
  - Through subsidies
  - Through public procurement
- Organising and/or supporting job fairs

# Thank you!

**C4Talent Working Group**



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