



OCMW GENT

05/12/2017

Chinese study visit

OCMW in Belgium



Openbaar Centrum voor Maatschappelijk Welzijn

=

Public Centre for Social Welfare

Gives everyone a chance to fully
participate in this society.



Short history

Since the French Revolution in 1789 no more charity but social and financial help from the government.

Burgerlijke godshuizen

(° na Fr. Rev.)

Burelen van weldadigheid

(° na Fr. Rev.)

Commissie van Openbare Onderstand (COO)
(° 1925)

OCMW (°1976)



8th july 1976: a new law which garantees help for every citizen => the OCMW is born

Short history

1976

The OCMW-law 1976:

- Right to receive public services
- Evolution from 'help' to 'public service'
- to professionalise the service providing: the profession 'social worker' is now officially integrated in the organisation.

2002

The federal law of 2002 concerning the Right to Social Integration takes over:

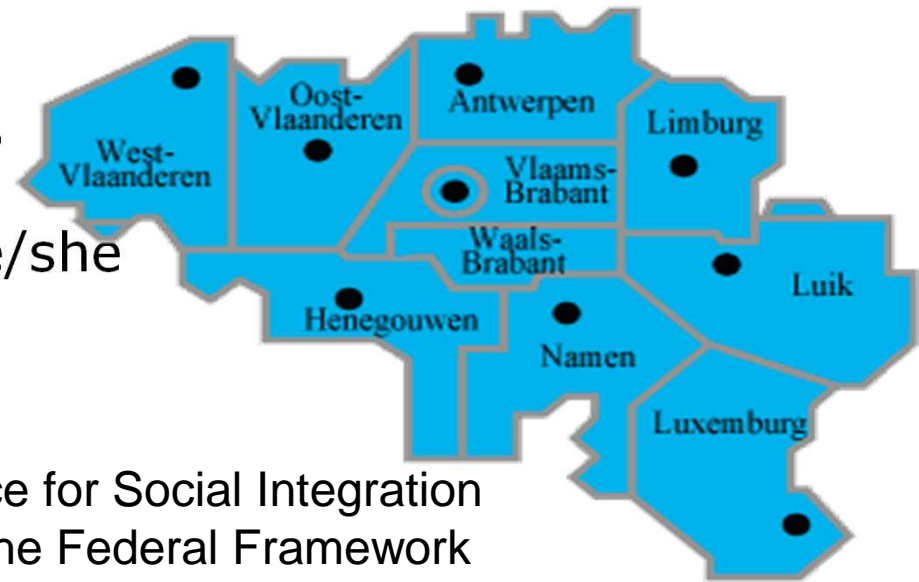
- To guarantee 'security of life' by a minimum income (~ 1976) (right)
- + to integrate everybody in the community (obligation)

This right can consist of **employment** and/or a welfare benefit, that can be combined with an 'individual project for social integration (GPMI)'

= ° **stronger accent on activation!**

Organisation at Local level

Every village or city has an OCMW.
Every citizen has the right to be helped by the OCMW in the city he/she lives in.



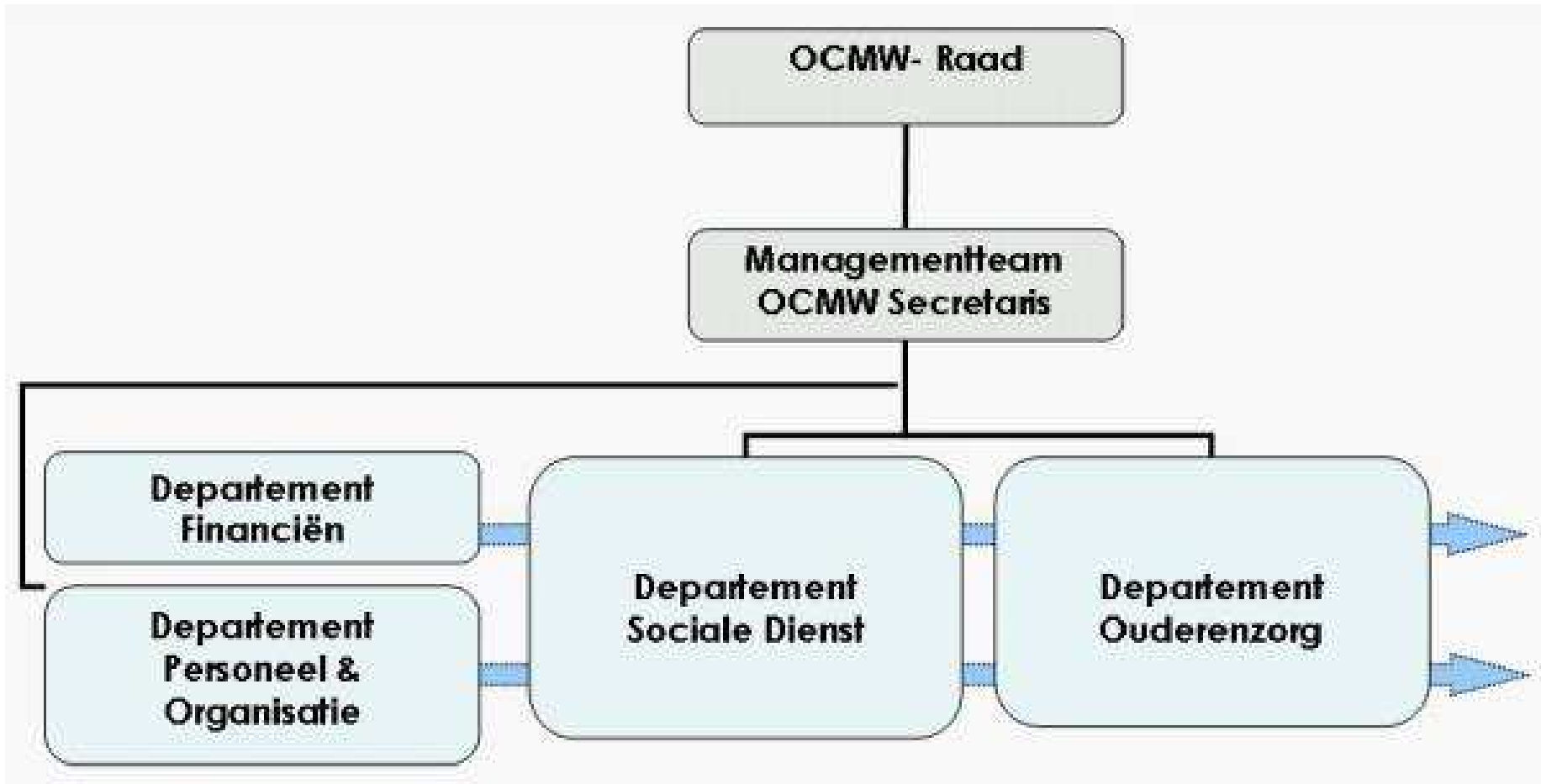
POD MI: The federal Public Planning Service for Social Integration
→ Creation, supervision and evaluation of the Federal Framework



Dutch is the working language for all OCMW's in Flanders.

We ask the help of translators to ensure communication with our clients.

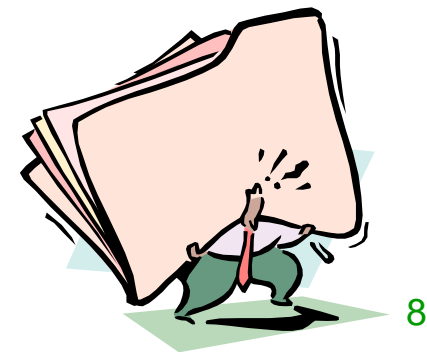
Governance



And how does it work?

- An inhabitant can apply for help at the local OCMW if he needs it
- A social worker explores the situation & writes a report with positive or negative advice
- An OCMW-council or committee then decides whether the person gets help

The 'OCMW-council' has representatives of different political parties.



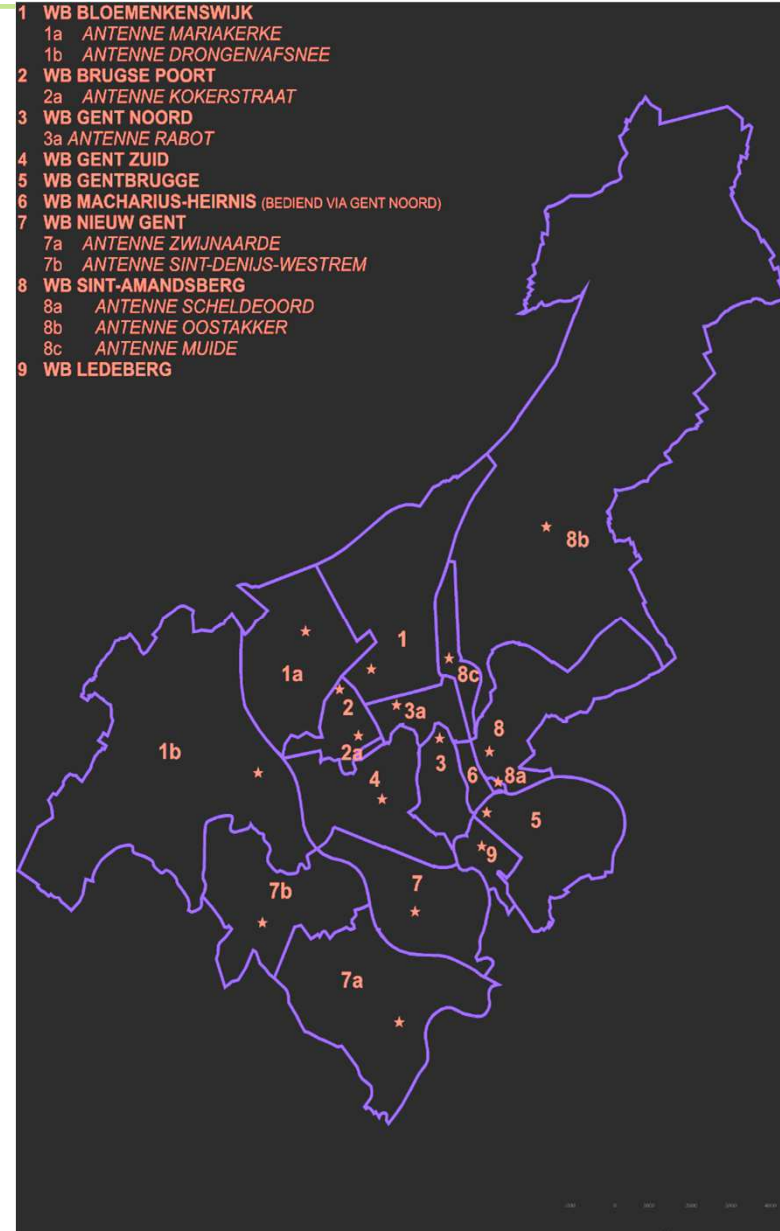
OCMW in Ghent



Geographical reach

= a public institution that provides a broad range of social services to all citizens of Ghent

7 OCMW Offices spread over the neighbourhoods to service them (+ antenna's)



Target population

258k inhabitants (=117k HH) in Ghent

We help people from all walks of life.

Nevertheless OCMW Ghent pays special attention to certain 'vulnerable' groups of people.

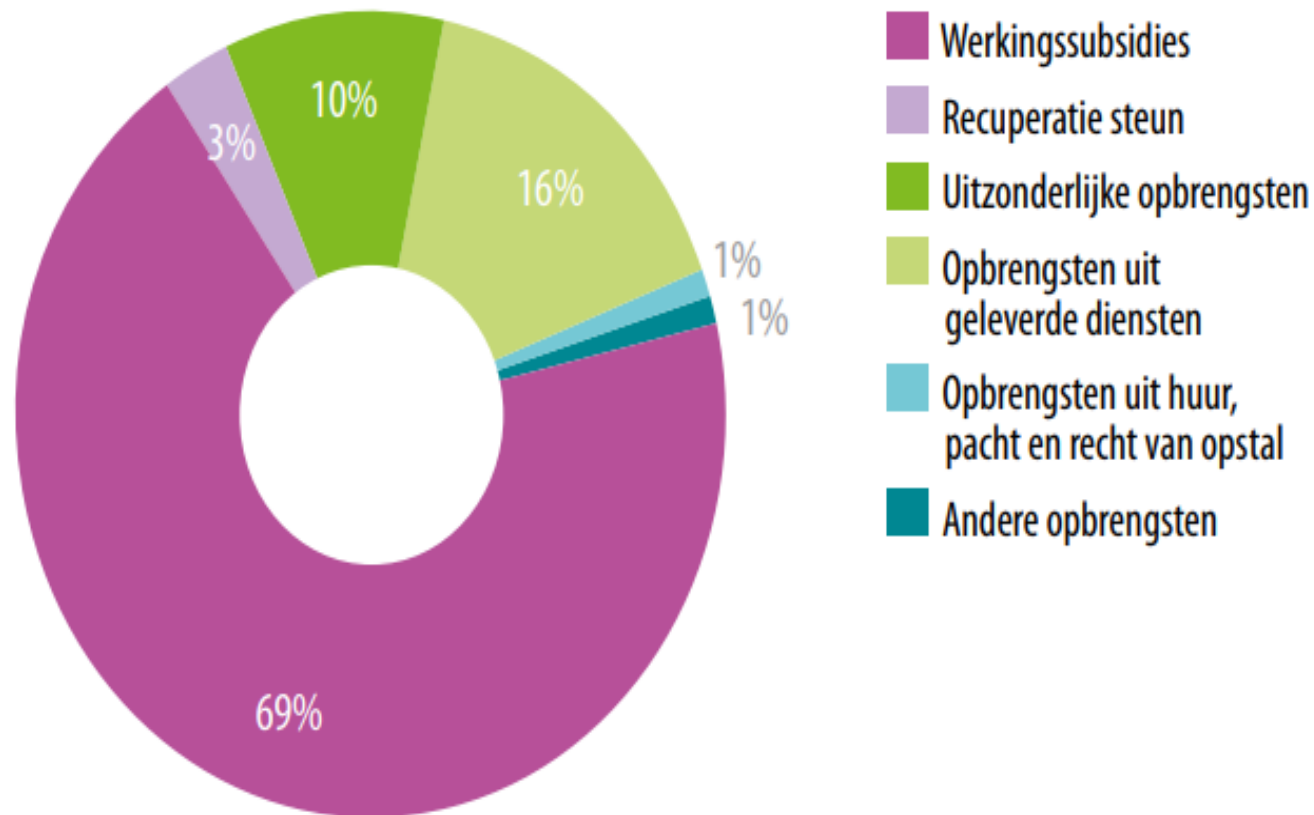
They experience difficulties in developing a qualitative life because of:

- sickness or age;
- lack of education;
- low income or unemployment...



Revenues

OPBRENGSTEN PER SOORT 2016 (205 MILJOEN EURO)



The income of the OCMW consists mainly of subsidies by federal, regional and local level

Poverty in Ghent

- Poverty = living underneath the 60% median income of the country (EU SILC definition)
- 15% of people live in poverty in Belgium, assumption also 15% in Ghent (AROP)
- 21,6% of kids in Ghent are born in poor families (K&G)
- >10% of inhabitants of Ghent get some type of support of the social services of the OCMW

Direct services

1. Financial support
2. Housing
3. Services for foreigners
4. Services for youth and families
5. Activation (incl education)
6. Other types of support
7. Care for the elderly

1. Financial support (in general)

- **“Leefloon” = (eq) LL – “welfare benefit” :**

- Belgians
- Recognised refugees
- People with permanent residency permit
- Other foreigners

2% of Ghent
(5k HH)

- **Amounts of “welfare benefit”
(from 1 sept 2017)**

- Person living alone 892,70 €/month
- People living together 595,13 €/month
- Person responsible for a minor child 1190,27 €/month

- **Conditions for welfare benefit:**

age, no other sufficient income, intention to work

1. Financial support (in general)

- **The welfare benefit (LL) is not sufficient to get people to the poverty threshold, therefore:**
- **Additional general financial support**, if under poverty threshold + a min % difference with minum netto income out of work guaranteed
- **Specific financial assistance** e.g. for heating, cultural or sports activities, medical costs, ...

2. Housing

600+
coachings/y

- **Support** wrt housing
 - Mediate with the landlord when our client has debts
 - Help in search for a new home
 - Provide first three months of rent as deposit
 - Coach clients in social housing
- **Night shelter:** Subsidise night shelter for homeless people
- **Housing**
 - Housing first for homeless people via social housing (>50/y)
 - 32 long term places for older chronic homeless people
 - 25 emergency homes (fire, ...)
 - 200+ SVK houses/appt

3. Services for foreigners

- Help and information about legal procedures
- Information about voluntary return to the home country
- Referrals to other organisations who help foreigners

4. Services for youth and families

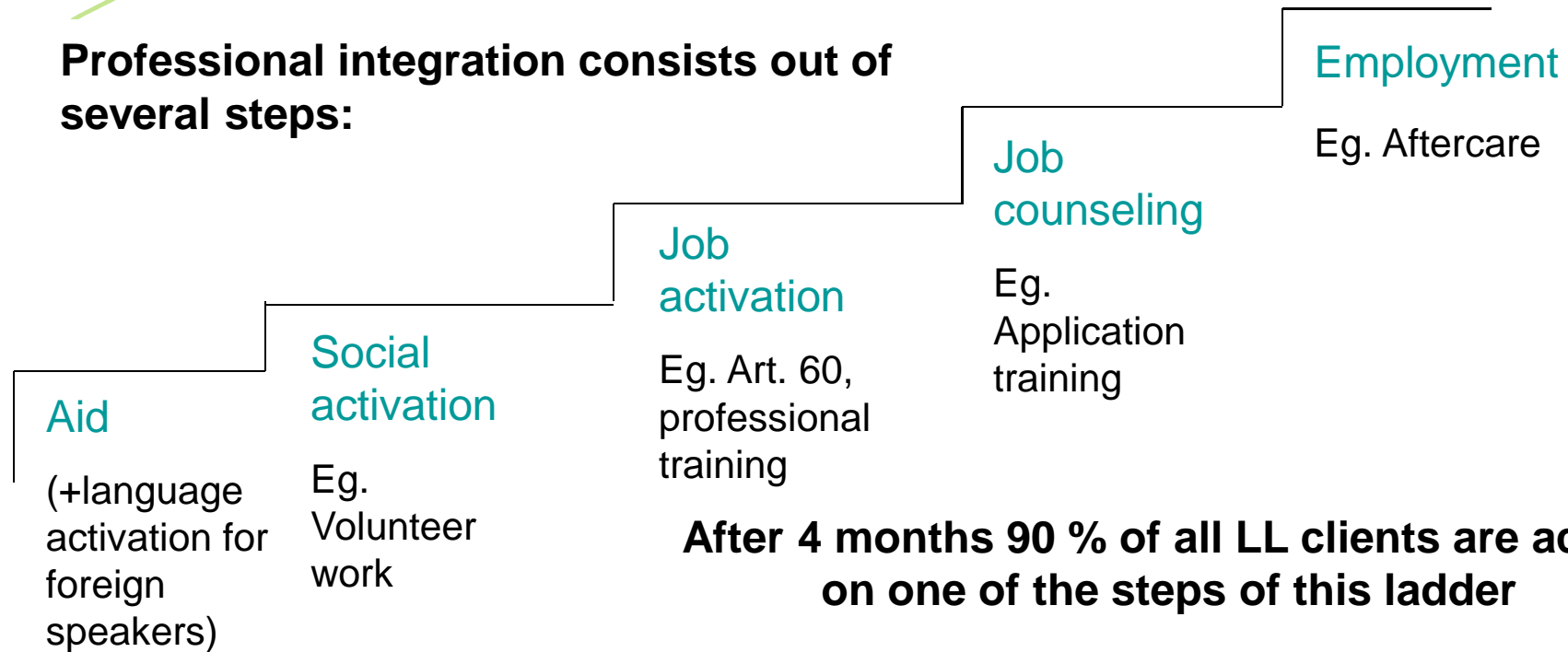
1,5k p LL
18-24y
30% HH: fam.
w kids -18y



- Intensive follow up by social workers for multi-problem families
- Pilot intensive group work with one parent families
- Specific group work with Youngsters
- Support of studies ('LL' students)
- Daycare during holidays
- Summercamps
- Subsidisation of coaching with school work
- Summer classes
- ...

5. Activation

Professional integration consists out of several steps:



After 4 months 90 % of all LL clients are active on one of the steps of this ladder

Every action of the social worker is aimed at increasing the ability of the client to do things independently and encouraging his (social-professional) position in society

Tools for Activation

- Lessons Dutch
- Social activation (group work)
- Workexperience (art. 60, volunteer work,...)
- Guidance
- Application training
- Jobtraining
- Jobfinding



Basic assumption: everybody at work, but exceptions:

- Objective reasons: eg. age + 65
- Equity reasons (assessing the situation: eg. limited ability to learn, care of children, pregnancy...)
- 'Tailored'

6. Other support

- Debts-/budgetmanagement
- Non-financial services e.g. reparations, moving service,...
- Meals at social price in 8 social restaurants spread over Ghent
- Psychological / social assistance
- Juridical assistance

Budget mgmt:
1,4k p
>33k meals @
social tarif/y

7. Care for the elderly



Local service centers for seniors

Aim: enable elderly people in their wish to live in their own homes as long as possible:

- Mealservice, bringing groceries, help at home
- Help with paperwork
- Recreational activities
- Education

Homes

- Daycare-center
- Nightcare-center
- Centers for short stay
- Senior housing
- Retirement homes



Broader role

Next to direct services to vulnerable citizens of Ghent

OCMW Ghent is also coordinator in Ghent of

- Poverty alleviation plan
- Child poverty plan
- Plan with regard to homeless people

In close collaboration with all organisations working on social welfare in Ghent



Broader role

Poverty alleviation plan for the city of Ghent:
a cooperation of public and non-public organisations



Broader role

How:

- Creating connections
 - Stakeholdersfora
 - Dialogue days
 - Welfare conventions

- Daily cooperation in the field

- Subsidies linked to agreed on actions/activities

- Common goals and action plans
 - Common Mgmt team OCMW – City
 - Taskforces
 - ...

