



Digital Competences and Capacities in Youth Work



Digital Competences and Capacities in Youth Work

Report

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Illustrations

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Executive summary

“Digital Competences and capacities in Youth Work” Report builds on previous efforts in advancing and understanding digital youth work at European level, particularly the European Union’s Council Conclusions from 2017 & 2019 and the work of the expert group set up under the European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2016-2018. The Report is an outcome of the “Digital Competences and Capacities in Youth Work” is the outcome of the Digital Youth Work Strategic National Agencies Cooperation (DYW SNAC), Work Package 2 led by the Estonian National Agency for Erasmus+ & European Solidarity Corps, in partnership with 13 other National Agencies Belgium (Flanders), Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Turkey. The main aim of the Work Package 2 (WP2) is that of contributing to a holistic view of the current digital state and supporting the capabilities of youth work organisations, youth workers and trainers in order to advance their objectives for a successful digital transformation in the field of youth work. In this context, activities in the framework of WP2 include

- A European mapping
- The development of virtual self-assessment tools for digital competences of youth workers and trainers in the youth work field
- The development of self-assessment tools for the digital capacities of youth work organisations.

The Report is the result of a mapping process that took place between September 2021 and January 2022, and which looked at digital youth work practices, particularly after 2018. It had both a European and a national dimension, with research activities being carried to map larger European practices as well as national ones in 10 different countries BE (FL), CY, EE, FI, DE, IS, IE, LT, RO, TR. The mapping process was identified as a necessary step in order to have digital youth work tools based on evidence, looking to further advance or scale up existing practices. More specifically, during the mapping research, the following objectives were set:

- Identifying digital competence frameworks and self-assessment tools for youth workers, trainers, educators, teachers
- Identifying digital capacity frameworks and self-assessment tools for youth work & educational organisations, other sectors
- Identifying training materials on digital youth work

The **main findings** stemming from the mapping process

A wealth of information on a variety of competence models and training practices has been identified. Overall, there have been noticed different levels of digital youth work development, recognition and stakeholders' involvement; whilst language was considered an important barrier, since tools/resources on digital youth work are often available in English only.

Based on the detailed national reports,
three type of clusters have been identified:

Frontrunners

countries with the highest number of practices and most established processes

Estonia, Finland, Ireland

Advanced

countries with strong practices, where media and digital literacy have been evolving steadily

*Belgium (Flanders),
Germany*

Emerging

countries that have started experimenting more and more, particularly due to COVID19 have seen an explosion of initiatives

*Cyprus, Iceland, Lithuania,
Romania, Turkey*



Related to the digital competence frameworks & assessment tools for youth workers & trainers

- When looking at the competence frameworks: few are specific on digital youth work; with the majority being dedicated to general digital competences, specific to schools or formal education settings.
- Very few competence models are complemented by self-assessment tools.
- Assessment of competences in digital youth work is not a widespread practice but at the same time the motivation (or lack thereof) of using them is not clear.
- Training opportunities for digital youth work are not necessarily informed by or built on designated competence frameworks.
- There is a certain inconsistency in terminology – some practices refer to digital youth work, whereas refer more to media and information literacy
- There are still some topics not, yet, properly covered such as digital wellbeing, data protection or the impact of artificial intelligence on youth work and society at large.
- Increasing number of practices that keep emerging, particularly with the financial support of Erasmus+ programme or other EU funded programmes.
- There are several competence frameworks that are more wide-spread and known in the European youth work sector, even if not fully used. Most prominent examples include: the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp), the Skill IT digital pathways for youth work (Ireland) or VERKE’s professional digital competence toolbox for youth work (Finland).
- A European dedicated competence model dedicated to digital youth work was mentioned as a necessary next step in the majority of the national reports.

Related to digital capacity frameworks & assessment tools for youth work organisations

- Unlike digital competence framework for youth workers or educators at large, where there were several practices identified, the mapping showed there is no framework dedicated to the digital transformation of youth work organisations.
- At the same time, it has been highlighted there was also no strategic approach on how to deal with it in the youth work sector.

- 
- In most cases, digital transformation seems to be dealt with by external experts or by assigning one “tech person” that deals with various, yet limited, technical issues in the organisation.
 - The few practices identified come from organisations in the formal education (schools) and private sector.

Related to training materials on digital youth work

- Whilst the purpose of the mapping was to identify specific training materials and resources on digital youth work, it was revealed there are rather few examples for such a purpose.
- Nevertheless, there were many practices that have been identified.
- Youth work organisations are often the drivers when it comes to initiating trainings for digital youth work, especially in the “emerging digital youth work countries”.
- In terms of topics, the training practices cover diverse issues related to digital transformation in youth work.
- Very few are based on digital youth work standards. In many countries occupational youth work standards do not exist or are not updated with the digital competences.
- Overall, there are few established, sustainable practices, the majority have low continuity (in many cases being identified just a one-time practice).
 - Ireland offers some of the most advanced training opportunities, including in higher education.
 - Resources created by VERKE (Finland) have been identified as strong inspiration for various organisations around Europe

Working towards a harmonised European approach for digital competences and capacities in youth work

Following the mapping process, a European expert group was set to analyse the results and propose recommendations for future action. Based on their work, carried between February-March 2022, a series of recommendations have been proposed:

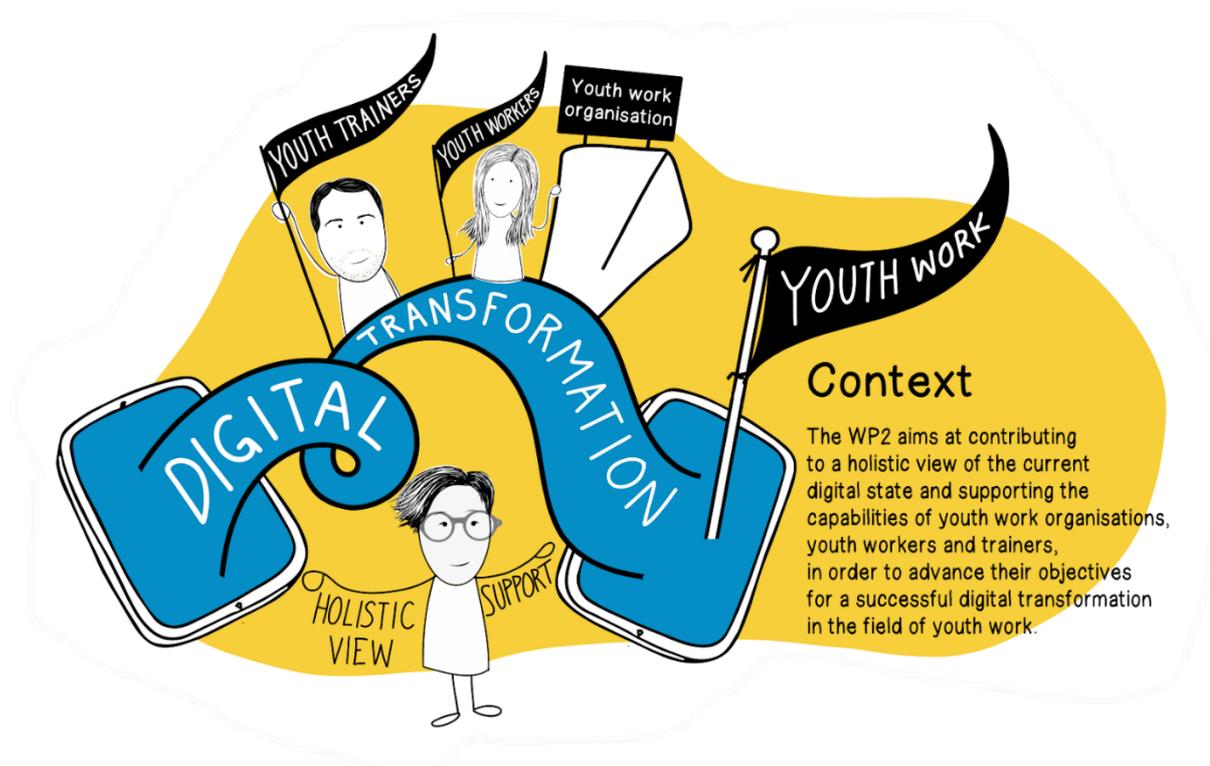
- DigComp Youth Work (initiated by Youth Policy Lab, Germany) has the best potential to become the reference digital competence framework for youth work in Europe. As a



derivative of the most well-known competence framework in Europe – DigComp - it was recommended to be further developed and used for a self-assessment tool for digital competences of youth workers.

- The proposal includes the development of both a self-assessment tool (SAT) and a self-verification tool (SVT) for youth workers. The later one would consist of a test that would be used complementarily to the SAT.
- SAT could contribute to more conscious choices for taking education or training pathway(s). At the same time, by using such tools, it is considered that youth work will benefit from increased awareness of the existing competence in the sector, thus leading to increased quality.
- The SVT was proposed as a solution to bridge the gap of how project teams and project participants assess themselves in relation to aspects related to digitalisation. As RAY research underlines that they frequently overestimate how adequate their methods and themes are in relation to digitalisation in youth work topics.
- A prototype for the SAT has been included - built on the draft DigComp YouthWork framework, competence area 2. “Communication and collaboration”, sub-competence 2.6 “Managing digital identity”. The prototype serves as inspiration for next steps - testing and full design for the entire competence model.
- When it comes to assessment tools for digital capacities in youth work organisations, it was concluded that there is no single framework that could be further developed. In this context a new competence framework specifically tailored for youth work organisations has been proposed. A draft proposal has been created and included in the present report.
- The self-assessment tool for digital capacities in youth work organisations is necessary, once the competence model will be defined. Furthermore, a strong connection between the assessment tools for youth workers and youth work organisations has been recommended.
- The final sections of the report include a series of recommendations on quality criteria that should be kept in mind when developing the different assessment tools.
- Moreover, an initial set of recommendations and measures to complement the assessment tools has been included. Recognition and validation of digital competences is equally important in order to ensure a sustainable use of assessment tools.

I. Context of the Report



The European Report “Digital Competences and Capacities in Youth Work” builds on previous efforts done at the European level and across the different European countries in terms of advancing youth work and the digital transformation process of youth work organisations. It particularly builds on the recommendations of the EU Council [Conclusions on Smart Youth Work \(2017\)](#) and EU Council [Conclusions on Digital Youth Work \(2019\)](#) which invite the Member States to “promote the use of existing materials and develop new digital youth work materials and training for youth workers by making use, inter alia, of the training needs list proposed by the expert group set up under the [European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2016-2018](#) (...), organise training on the strategic development of digital youth work”. It also builds on the developments taking place in the European youth sector between 2018-2022, the [Bonn process](#) - European Youth Work Agenda - as well as on the new societal changes brought by the COVID19 pandemic, where digital transformation became an essential element of everyday lives.

The Report is developed in the framework of the Digital Youth Work Strategic National Agency Cooperation project (DYW SNAC), Work Package 2 - led by the Estonian National Agency for



Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps. The WP2 aims at contributing to a holistic view of the current digital state and supporting the capabilities of youth work organisations, youth workers and trainers, in order to advance their objectives for a successful digital transformation in the field of youth work. In order to achieve its goal two types of instruments are foreseen to be created within this WP: 1) a virtual self-assessment tool(s) for youth workers & trainers and 2) a virtual self-assessment tool(s) for youth work organisations.

The present analysis is based on the results of a mapping process carried out at the European level and in 10 national contexts, with the support of the National Agencies from Belgium (FL), Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Romania and Turkey - specifically looking to identify practices and resources developed between 2018 and 2021. The mapping results have been carefully analysed by a European Expert group set to support WP2 and which had as a mission to identify best practices and propose recommendations for future action in areas related to

1. Competence frameworks and self-assessment tools for digital youth workers and trainers in the field
2. Capacity frameworks and self-assessment tools for digital transformation in youth work organisations
3. Training materials on digital youth work

For the purpose of this Report, the following definition will be used:

“Digital youth work means proactively using or addressing digital media and technology in youth work. Digital media and technology can be either a tool, an activity or a content in youth work. Digital youth work is not a youth work method. Digital youth work can be included in any youth work setting and it has the same goals as youth work in general. Digital youth work can happen in face-to-face situations as well as in online environments, or in a mixture of the two. Digital youth work is underpinned by the same ethics, values and principles as youth work”¹.

¹ Source [“Developing Digital Youth Work”](#) (2018)



II. Main findings

The mapping process was carried out separately by each partner in the DYW SNAC partner, based on a common guideline, following the same goal and overarching objectives. Nevertheless, the mapping methodology was decided by each researcher, based on resources available and included approaches such as desk research, interviews and focus groups with practitioners and experts in the field, questionnaires etc. The mapping was carried out between September 2021-January 2022.

The current mapping is not exhaustive and does not claim to cover all practices and resources in Europe. However, it offers an updated overview on digital youth work, in many countries being the first time such an exercise took place. In several countries national researchers pointed out the difficulty in identifying digital youth work practices, as in many cases they are not part of more institutionalised processes or traditional youth work practices, but rather project-based initiatives, many developed during the COVID19 pandemic.

This section is based on the input from the European mapping process and the specific 10 national mapping reports: Belgium (FL), Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Romania and Turkey. The key findings listed in the current section aim to offer an overall perspective on the different realities, looking at common challenges and opportunities, while a more detailed perspective resulting from the national reports can be found in [Annex I](#).

Based on the input provided by the national reports, the readiness for digital youth work in the analysed countries could be summarised as:

Frontrunners

countries with the highest number of practices and most established processes *Estonia, Finland, Ireland*

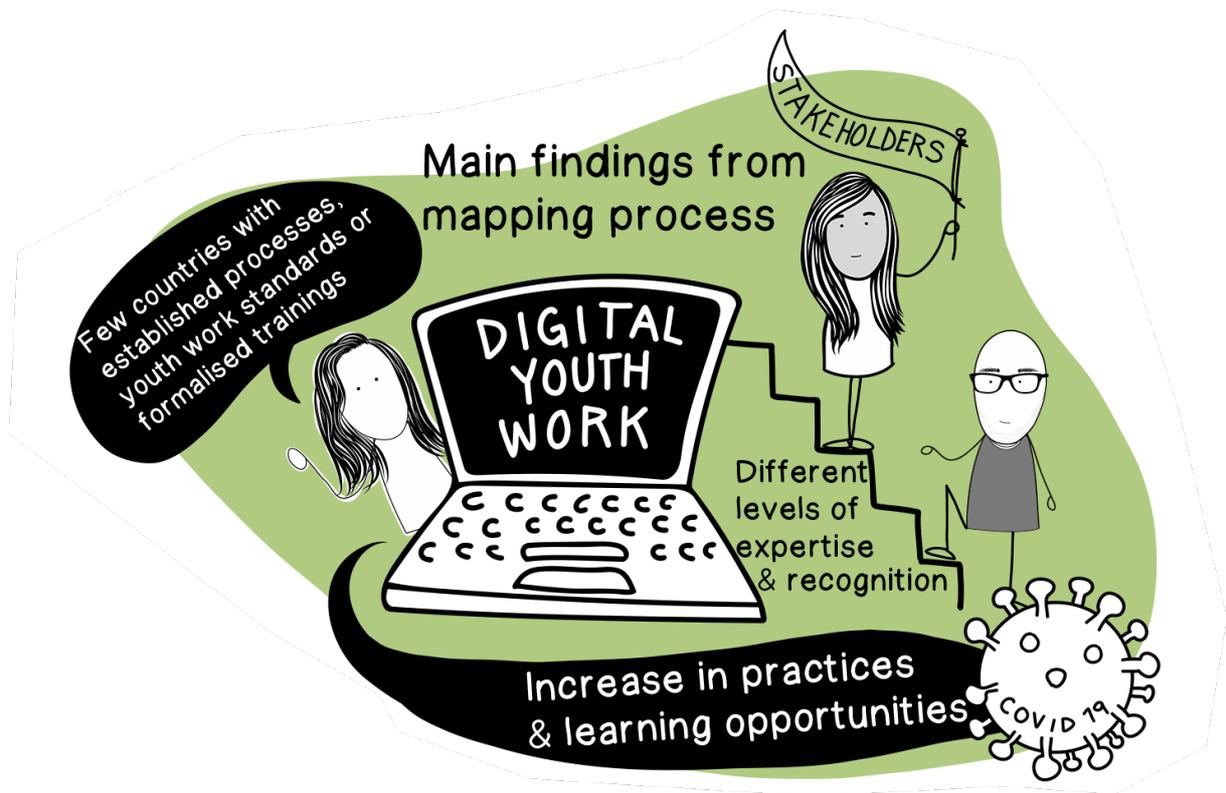
Advanced

countries with strong practices, where media and digital literacy have been evolving steadily *Belgium (Flanders), Germany*

Emerging

countries that have started experimenting more and more, particularly due to COVID19 have seen an explosion of initiatives *Cyprus, Iceland, Lithuania, Romania, Turkey*

a. Main ideas stemming from the mapping process



Digital youth work, similarly to general youth work in Europe is heterogeneous, with different levels of expertise and recognition among stakeholders.

Recognition and standardisation of youth work in various countries continue to be a significant challenge. Various national reports identify the lack of youth work occupational standards or of more formal training schemes. In their absence, digital youth work is seen as an additional layer that cannot be fully developed in the absence of more coherent approaches in the general youth work sector.

Responsibility/Leadership in supporting digital youth work ranges from municipalities, academic institutions to communities of practice. The majority of countries participating in the mapping indicate that the strongest role is held by communities of practice - individuals and/or organisations that are strongly motivated and are interested either to innovate or to ensure that youth work practices are consistent with the realities in which young people live.

Digital Youth Work definitions and practices differ from country to country - the focus can be either on digital as an activity, content or tool - very few countries have a holistic approach,



including all three dimensions. The awareness of the European definition of digital youth work is still limited.

While there is a growing interest in developing digital youth work, there are few countries with established processes that address it, including youth work standards or formalised trainings (as part of academia, adult training or life-long learning).

The COVID19 pandemic has triggered an increase in practices and learning opportunities related to digital youth work, some of them can seem experimental or in the early stages.

Language seems an important barrier, as resources on digital youth work are often available in English only.

b. Main findings related to the Digital Competence frameworks & Self-assessment tools for youth workers & trainers in the field:

**Main findings
Digital Competence frameworks
& Self-assessment tools for
youth workers & trainers**



There are several competence frameworks on digital competences that have been identified, some more general, some specific to schools & educational settings, and few specific to digital youth work.

Just some of the existing competence frameworks are complemented by self-assessment tools.

Assessment of competences in digital youth work is not a widespread practice. Current mapping does not allow for a detailed analysis of the reasons and (lack of) motivations behind such a situation.

There is a certain inconsistency/diversity in terminology, as some existing practices include references to digital youth work while others refer to media and information literacy.



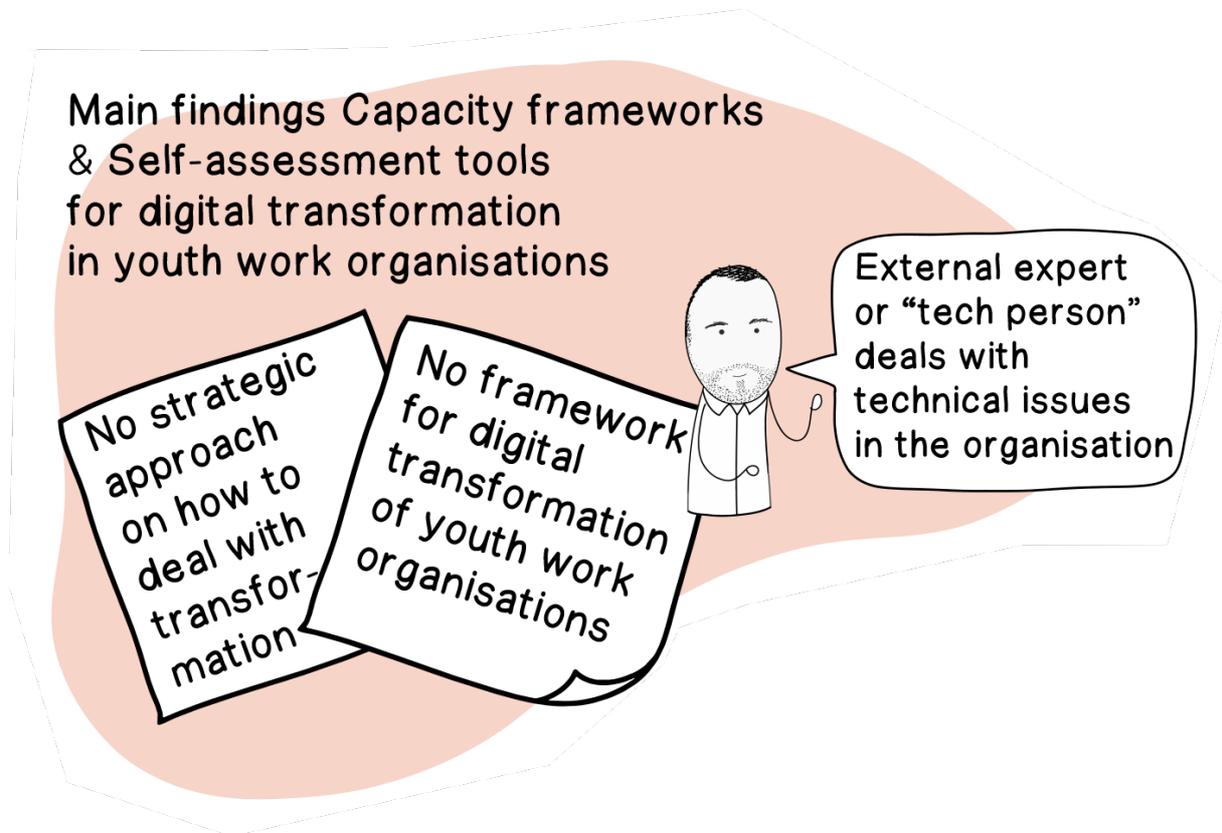
Training opportunities for digital youth work are not necessarily informed by/built on designated competence frameworks. Nevertheless, there is an increasing number of practices that keep emerging, particularly with the financial support of Erasmus+ programme or other EU funded programmes.

In the youth work community of practice, there seems to be some awareness of certain competence frameworks such as the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp), the Skill IT digital pathways for youth work or VERKE's professional digital competence toolbox for youth work.

Based on knowledge of existing competence frameworks, the mapping highlights that there are topics which are not, yet, properly covered such as digital wellbeing, data protection or the impact of artificial intelligence etc.

Practitioners and experts in youth work support the idea of having one European digital competence framework that would guide practices at the national level. The availability of such a framework and connected tools in the national language is an important prerequisite.

c. **Main findings related to the Capacity frameworks & Self-assessment tools for digital transformation in youth work organisations:**



Digital transformation is understood as an important element for youth work organisations, especially due to COVID19 new realities.

The large majority of national reports indicate there is neither a framework dedicated to the digital transformation of youth work organisations nor a strategic approach on how to deal with it. Current mapping does not shed light to which extent other organisational frameworks exist, what are the reasons for which such tools do not exist or are not used in the youth work sector.

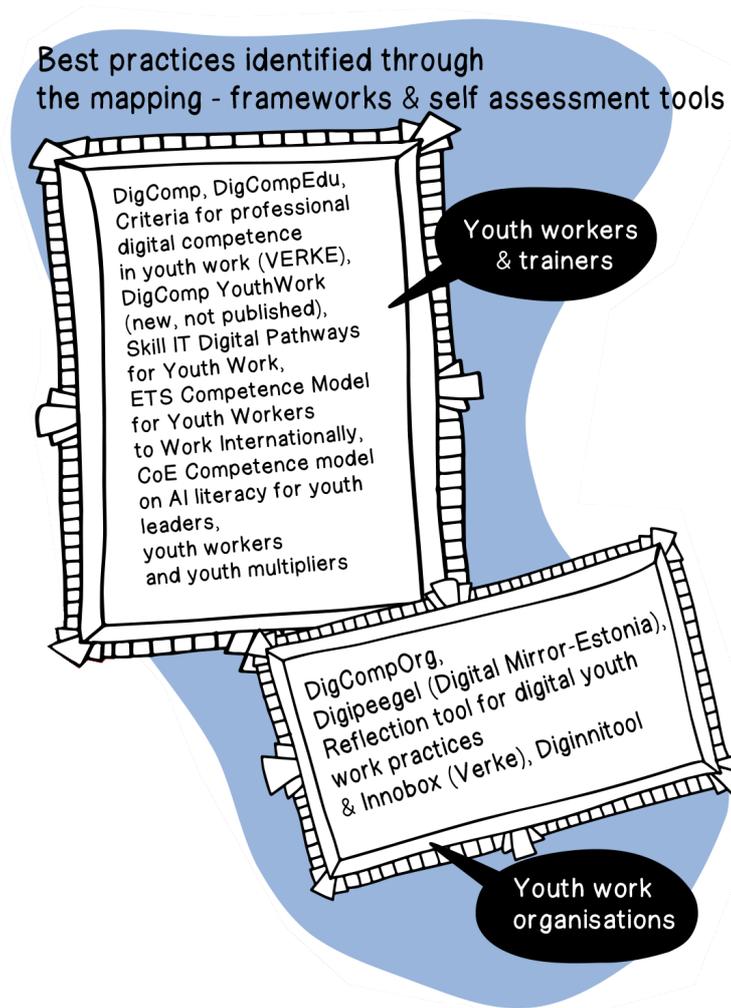
Several national reports indicate that digital transformation is dealt with by external experts or by assigning one "tech person" that deals with various, yet limited, technical issues in the organisation.

Some of the few available practices have been preponderantly developed in the Nordic and Baltic countries.



Some of the recommendations from national researchers mention that a capacity model for youth organisations should not only focus on infrastructure and competences of staff. It should also pay attention to the capacities of youth work organisations to shape the discourse on youth-related issues inside bigger debates and policies focused on the Internet and digital governance.

d. Main findings related to the training materials & practices in digital youth work



There is a diversity of materials on digital youth work in Europe, on various topics and in different formats, some in English some in national languages.

There is a strong interest from national practitioners and experts to have one repository with all mapped materials that could be easily visualised and regularly updated.

Even if existing materials are seen as diverse in terms of topics they cover, they are sometimes assessed as un-updated and specific recommendations are offered for ensuring their continuity and relevance in line with the newest approaches and topics that emerge in digital youth work.



III. Overview on best practices identified through the mapping

The competence frameworks presented in this section were selected based on their potential to be scaled up and/or used as inspiration for a European self-assessment tool for digital youth workers and trainers. Additional examples identified through the mapping process can be found in the collection of best practices.

a. Competence frameworks & self-assessment tools for digital youth workers & trainers

In addition to the 6 main competence frameworks and self-assessment tools detailed below, two other important frameworks have been identified through the European mapping, both of them bringing new and important developments for the European youth work sector.

The first is the [ETS Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally](#) - a competence model developed in the framework of the European Training Strategy (ETS) in the field of youth. It is designed for youth workers who are involved in international learning mobility projects; educational staff and trainers who organise international mobility projects; and organisations and institutions that develop training strategies for youth workers. Additionally, a self-assessment tool based on the ETS competence model for youth workers to work internationally has been created - [Yocomo](#). It facilitates self-assessment in 8 competence areas, on the level of behaviours, knowledge, skills and attitudes. It offers visualisation of results, as well as a possibility to upload evidence and enter reflection. The ETS competence model for youth workers is not a framework dedicated exclusively to digital youth work, however, an ongoing process aims to update the model with elements of digital skills - behaviours - attitudes that have been added to the existing 8 competence areas without building a new specific model.

The second is the **Competence model on AI literacy for youth leaders, youth workers and youth multipliers**, currently developed by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. This competence model is more specifically focused on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and its impact on society, democracy and citizenship as it explores different areas of competence organised around the following questions: 1) Technological perspective: What is AI? How does AI work?



2) User-oriented perspective: How should AI be used? 3) Socio-cultural perspective: How do people perceive AI? 4) Youth sector perspective: How can the youth sector support young people in dealing with AI? What can youth do in the discussions about AI?

As the processes behind these two frameworks are still ongoing and a final version of them has not been published yet, the present report does not include a detailed analysis of them. Nevertheless, it is important that future development of self-assessment tools take them into account and look to find synergies with the 2 processes mentioned above.

1. **Digital Competence Framework for Citizens 2.1. (DigComp)**

[DigComp framework](#) is built on the premise that a digital society needs digitally-competent citizens “Being digitally competent means using digital technologies in a confident and safe way for various purposes such as working, getting a job, learning, shopping online, obtaining health information, being included and participating in society, entertainment, etc.”. It has been created with the aim of helping with self-evaluation, setting learning goals, identifying training opportunities and facilitating job search. For policy makers it can be used to monitor citizens' digital skills and to support curricula development.

The DigComp framework is governed using a multi-stakeholder model where the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and the Joint Research Centre (JRC) lead the management and quality assurance. This framework can also be used as a base to develop a digital competence framework for a specific context - this is considered as being a derivative work of DigComp.

DigComp 2.1 is a further development of the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens. Based on the reference conceptual model published in DigComp 2.0, it includes eight proficiency levels and examples of use applied to the learning and employment field. It includes 5 main areas and 21 competences: Information and data literacy, Communication and collaboration, Digital content creation, Safety, Problem solving.

DigComp 2.2. is expected to be published in 2022 and it will bring new elements related to citizens interacting with Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems, wellbeing, environmental sustainability.



There are several **self-assessment tools** based on the DigComp that have been created since its appearance: in 2014, the Basque Country in Spain created a [free online Self Diagnosis Tool](#) for testing one's level of digital competence based on the DigComp framework; in 2021 the European organisation All Digital launched [MyDigiSkills](#), and in December 2021 a [self-assessment tool was made available](#) by Europass & Digital Skills and Jobs Platform.

2. Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators (DigCompEdu)

[DigCompEdu](#) is one of the DigComp derivative frameworks, being mostly used in formal education contexts. It details 22 competences organised in six areas. The focus is not on technical skills but rather aims to detail how digital technologies can be used to enhance and innovate education and training. Area 1 focuses on the professional environment; Area 2 on sourcing, creating and sharing digital resources; Area 3 on managing and orchestrating the use of digital tools in teaching and learning; Area 4 on digital tools and strategies to enhance assessment; Area 5 on the use of digital tools to empower learners; Area 6 on facilitating learners' digital competence. Areas 2 to 5 form the pedagogic core of the framework. They detail the competences educators need to possess to foster effective, inclusive and innovative learning strategies, using digital tools. Competences can be assessed through Proficiency statements (6 levels, A1 - Newcomers, C2-Pioneer).

3. Criteria for professional digital competence in youth work

The [professional digital competence criteria for youth work](#) highlight the type of digital competence that every youth work professional should possess in order to carry out high-quality youth work that corresponds to the needs of young people. The criteria consist of six competence areas, each with a list of practical competence requirements, both in terms of the digital skills needed in the work and the digital competence in youth work in general. The 6 areas are: Using and maintaining devices and applications, Organising my own work, Digital safety, Media and Information literacy, Digital creativity, Digital communication and interaction.

The framework has been developed by the Finnish Centre of Expertise for Digital Youth Work coordinated by Verke and is based on the European DigComp Framework.



The framework is complemented by 2 **self-assessment tools**: 1) [self-assessment of professional digital competence in youth work](#) that could be used to identify personal strengths and weaknesses, evaluate and improve the work community's professional digital competence, determine staff members' training needs, hire and induct new employees; 2) [competence test](#) designed to help youth workers measure their professional digital competence in youth work - the test comprises 30 questions.

4. Digital Youth Work – from a space of fear to a space of freedom in youth work

The framework aims to be one of the derivative frameworks from the European DigComp framework, tailored to youth work contexts - DigComp YouthWork. It brings two new specific competence areas in addition to Digcomp 2.1 - based on the recommendations of the Expert Group set up under the European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2016-2018: 1) Society and digitality- including competences such as cultures of digitality; identity formation and digitality; power and digitality; visions of digitality; 2) Digitality and youth work - including competences such as to know definitions and fields of action of digital youth work, to know digital worlds as social worlds of young people, values, principles and methods of digital youth work, strategic planning of digital youth work.

The framework has not yet been fully developed and has not been extensively tested in the youth work sector and is currently available just in the German language. It has been [developed within an Erasmus+ KA2 project](#), coordinated by Youth Policy Labs Germany.

5. Competence Framework for Digital Youth Work Practitioners - Skill IT Digital Pathways for Youth Work

[SkillIT framework](#) aims at helping youth workers to learn what are the competences that they need in order to make their work with young people more effective and valuable to the new digital generation, to then consider a means to assess themselves in regard to these competences, and make plans for their own improvement, using professional development tools from the field. It includes 3 competence areas and 9 competences in total: 1. Learning innovation and skills: creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration/teamwork; 2. Information and media skills/literacy:



information literacy, media literacy; 3. Life and career skills: flexibility and adaptability, social and cross-cultural, productivity and accountability.

The framework has been developed under an Erasmus + KA2 project involving Youth Work Ireland & Camara Ireland & International Partners.

The framework is complemented by a [self-assessment tool](#) - being considered one of the most innovative in the field. At the same time, it does not include a standardised self-assessment, further partnership development work is required in order for a recognition of this skill to be validated amongst youth work organisations and service providers.

6. Digital Competence Wheel

[Digital Competence Wheel](#) is a general **self-assessment tool** that aims to provide an overview of which digital competences exist and should be improved, as well as concrete inspiration for how to improve the most relevant digital competences. The tool assesses 16 competences grouped in 4 main competence areas: Communication, Information, Production and Safety. It has been developed by the Centre for Digital Dannelsø, Denmark.

b. Capacity frameworks and self-assessment tools for digital transformation in youth work organisations

1. European Framework for Digitally Competent Educational Organisations (DigCompOrg)

[DigCompOrg framework](#) can be used by educational organisations to guide a process of self-reflection on their progress towards comprehensive integration and effective deployment of digital learning technologies. The framework has 7 key elements and 15 sub-elements that are common to all education sectors. There is also scope for the addition of sector-specific elements and sub-elements. For each of the elements and sub-elements of DigCompOrg, a number of descriptors were developed (74 in total). DigCompOrg complements rather than supersedes other frameworks and tools already in use for specific purposes: e.g. the DigComp framework that can be used to develop relevant aspects of students' digital competence. Its primary purposes are: to encourage self-reflection and self-assessment within educational



organisations as they progressively deepen their engagement with digital learning and pedagogies; to enable policy makers (at local, regional, national and international level) to design, implement and appraise programmes, projects and policy interventions for the integration of digital learning technologies in E&T systems. DigCompOrg is designed to focus mainly on the teaching, learning, assessment and related learning support activities undertaken by a given educational organisation. As such, it is not intended to address the full range of administrative and management information systems that may be in use within the organisation.

DigCompOrg is one of the most known frameworks in formal educational settings, but less used in youth work.

2. Digipeegel (Digital Mirror)

[Digital Mirror](#) is an Estonian **tool for assessing digital maturity** (digital readiness) in schools. In formal education, the tool provides an opportunity to map the schools' digital performance and digital innovation through goal setting. The process proposed by the creators of the tool includes: (1) a self-assessment report is completed by the school management, as it evaluates the school's digital progress and capacity using a total of 15 metrics covering 3 fields: pedagogical innovation, system change (the management and sustainability of change at organisational level), and the development of digital infrastructure (including digital security and user support)²; (2) launching a digital working group within the school to gather evidence to support the preliminary assessment; enlisting the help of external partners and experts to formulate a more accurate stance and validate the assessment; (3) setting goals for the school's digital agenda (complete with earmarked financial measures and names of those responsible). The Digital Mirror is thus an internal self-assessment and management tool, the value of which is highest if it triggers an honest and self-critical investigation.

² The theoretical premise of the assessment model is the 3-fold index of digital innovation in the works of Michael Fullan, professor of school innovation in Canada. <https://digipeegel.ee/#slug-front> See, for example: "Evaluating and Assessing Tools in the Digital Swamp" by Michael Fullan and Katelyn Donnelly, Bloomington: Solution Tree Press (2015)



The 15 metrics that make up the maturity index are equipped with a scale of five levels: A – replacement – episodic use – digital resources and tools are used in isolated instances within the context of traditional learning; B – enrichment – coordination within the school – digital tools are used to pilot new approaches and methods of teaching; experiences are discussed and passed on between teachers; C – perfecting – changes introduced into the study process – systemic changes to study arrangements are introduced, following a science-based framework and involving students in the design process; D – integration – digital culture permeates the study environment – digital technologies are seamlessly integrated and support all aspects of the learning environment and work experience; the student directs and develops their own personalised learning environment; E – amplification – managing innovation and reconceptualizing – the digital learning solutions expand beyond the school, agile learning methods are established; students assume responsibility for designing their own learning experience (and partly also for teaching others)³. The five levels describe a hierarchical scale – placing oneself at level C, for instance, presupposes the prior attainment of levels A and B.

A welcome set of aspects regarding the learning experience and growth are covered, such as student empowerment, own study design, role as peer influencer/teacher to others. It is important to note that sustained interest in and active uptake of the tool has been lower than perhaps expected. Some weaknesses are highlighted in a survey from 2019, with users citing the additional workload and adopting an ‘extra’ tool as demotivating factors⁴. From respondent feedback, additionally: (1) plans only remained on paper as no extra funding was made available with the coming of the tool; (2) it would be useful to allow the integration of existing documents into the tool, such as the school’s work plan and development strategy; (3) taking on extra work to fill out and follow an additional tool was not practical, or even possible, given the fast-paced nature of day to day work; (4) only the IT-team was interested in using this tool; (5) users often did not think of using the comparative features of the tool to explore how/what other schools are doing⁵.

³ The five-level scale is modelled on *EduVista*, a digital maturity framework for organisations, designed as part of the 2014 project iTEC (Innovative Models for Engaging Classrooms) by European Schoolnet.

⁴ https://media.voog.com/0000/0034/3577/files/Tagaside_Digipeegel.pdf

⁵ K. Nõlvak, *Digiküpsuse hindamisemudeli Digipeegel sobivuse analüüs kasutamiseks noortekeskustele*. MA Thesis, Tallinn University, Digital Technologies Institute: 2020.



The Digital Mirror is a promising tool from the youth work perspective. Kati Nõlvak, a digital youth work specialist at the Estonian Education and Youth Board researched the suitability of the tool for youth centres and explored the modifications required to transfer the model into the youth field. The author concludes: “The main proposals of the research are to develop a digital maturity assessment model for youth work that would be suitable for the local government level. There are two possibilities for this: a separate model and the assessment of digital maturity as part of the quality assessment of youth work. In the model being developed, it is important that: descriptions of areas, indicators and levels are appropriate to the context of the youth work; instead of different descriptions of levels, the description of the metric would be clearer and longer than at present, and the levels would have the same descriptions all through the model; when referring to documents at indicators or levels, it would be clear to the assessor which part of the document is meant”. Respondents from 4 youth centres in the country indicated which parts of the questionnaire should be kept intact, and which should be modified or recombined. The respondents validated the assumption that a digital self-assessment model/tool is needed, and indeed useful for digital competence development.

As the Digital Mirror tool has been adapted for use in kindergartens and vocational schools, the addition of a youth work tool would set the ground for a comprehensive overview of educational competences, state of affairs and quality assessment at the local, municipal, and state levels.

3. Reflection tool for digital youth work practices

[The reflection tool](#) was created by the Finnish Centre of Expertise for Digital Youth Work coordinated by Verke and its structure is based on data from the Screenagers research report (2016) and the final report “Developing digital youth work” of the EU expert group on digitalisation and youth. It has been further revised and rebuilt during the Digital youth work project in 2019.

It is meant to be a tool to reflect on new practices, approaches or the latest information on digital youth work topics. It is intended as a tool to reflect on the subject from the viewpoint of your work, so freely write down any thoughts as narrowly or in-depth as you see necessary.



This form can be used in events, training courses or any other suitable setting where new practices are presented.

4. An online digital maturity recommender tool for SMEs - DiginnoTool

[The assessment tool](#) covers the following aspects of digitalisation: remote work, access to information (such as budgetary data, client information, collaboration history), how empowered is the client to manage the service chain autonomously, target group data analysis (past behaviour, prognosis for future needs), load management algorithms when processing orders, visibility, SEO, systems for monitoring interactions with clients, interoperability of digital solutions, digital collaboration tools for employees, safety and security, data insurance, automation in production, innovation plans – for services, processes, marketing and organisational structure. The assessment test is available online, accessible to any role in the company. Results appear in the form of detailed recommendations for the next steps in each of the 10 categories covered.

In terms of strengths, the tool is seen as easy, fast and visually appealing (created around the concept of fitness with imagery of training equipment employed in design and language.) Results appear in the form of recommendations for the next steps to be taken in each of the 10 categories (and further subcategories) covered. The tool helps to launch a conversation about the various aspects of enterprise digitalisation and progress as compared to competitors. Recommendations give direction to SMEs regarding the best steps for advancing their business goals. In terms of weaknesses, it's mentioned that those starting with digitalisation get more use out of it than those more advanced in their process.

It has been developed by the Latvian Information and Communications Technology Association (LIKTA), with the support of the project #RO50 DIGINNO of Interreg Baltic Sea Region and is available in several languages English, Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Danish, Swedish, Polish.

5. Innobox

[Innobox](#) is a toolkit that helps youth workers innovate new practices in a longer process. The purpose of Innobox is to provide support and assistance when it becomes necessary to develop youth work practice and create something new. Youth workers may find the material

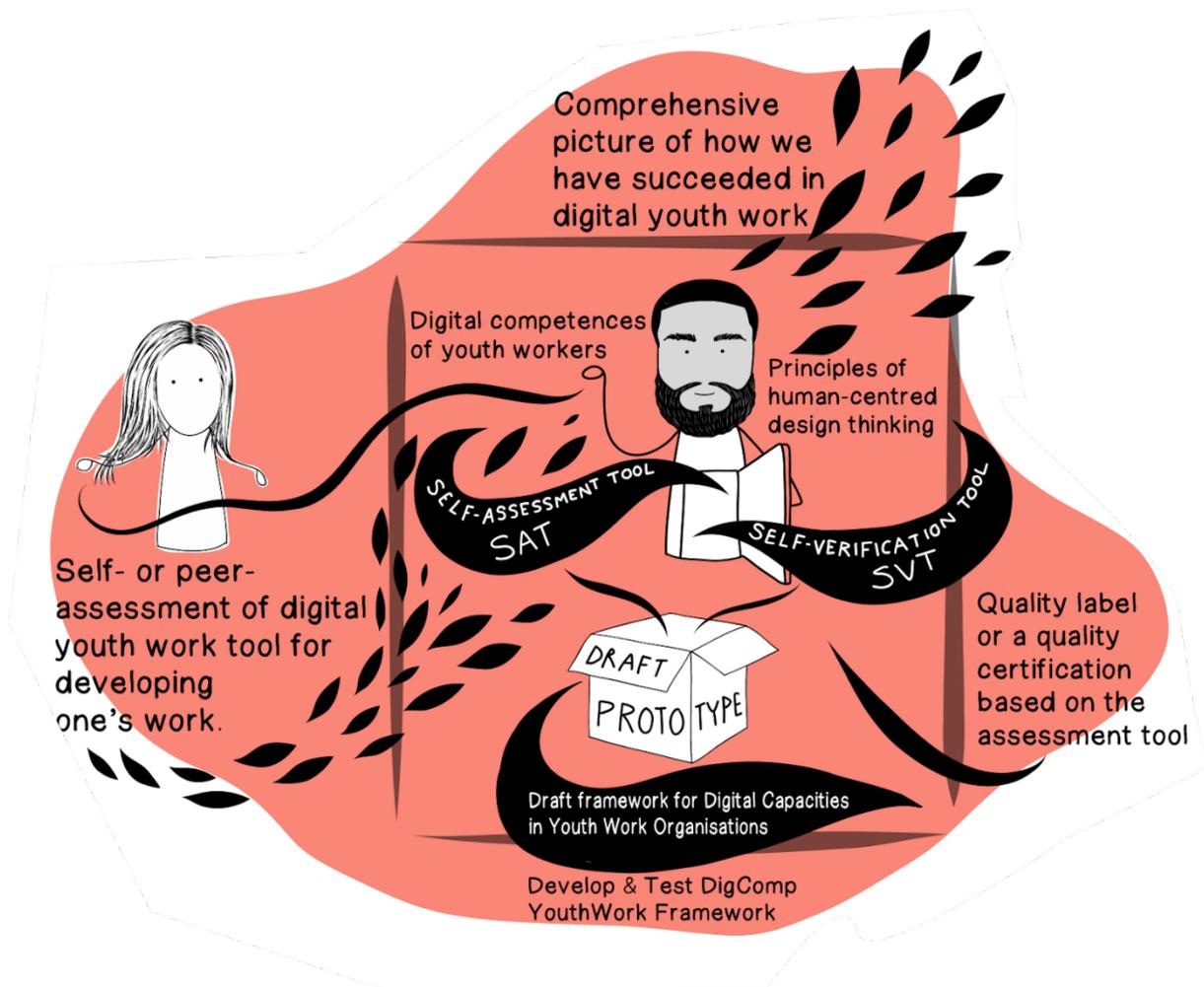


useful when they want to: revamp clubs, camps or small group activities; create new operating models for using digital games; modernise the internal communications in the working community; modernise customer communications; develop operations intended for young people; make preparations for future digital developments; do something good for the world; obtain new ideas to form the basis of strategy work.

The purpose of this Innobox is to help youth workers to analyse and identify the challenge they want to address. The challenge will be examined from several perspectives, and, as the process moves forward, it may even change.

The Innobox, developed by the Finnish Centre of Expertise for Digital Youth Work coordinated by Verke, is neither a competence framework nor a self-assessment for the digital capacity of youth work organisations. Nevertheless, it can be used as inspiration when planning other tools and approaches in the digital transformation process of youth work organisations.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations for self-assessment tools



The conclusions and recommendations section has been developed with the support of the Expert group active within the framework of WP2 of the DYW SNAC. The ideas included below are based on an in-depth analysis of the findings resulting from the mapping process as well as the expertise of the involved members. The following conclusions and recommendations are meant to guide the next steps in developing the self-assessment tools for youth workers and organisations.

General considerations for developing frameworks and self-assessment tools in the youth work sector

- The main reason for carrying out self- or peer-assessment of digital youth work is that it is a tool for developing one's work. It provides an opportunity to have a



comprehensive picture of how we have succeeded in digital youth work, particularly as digital transformation is still a new change that the entire society tries to adapt to. Youth workers can analyse the challenges and reflect on the reasons for their successes (peer-reflection, peer-learning). At the same time, it is useful for the management, leaders, the stakeholders and the funders to evaluate how well the objectives set by them have been reached. The funders can reflect if the project has provided a good return on investments.

- When an assessment is repeated, one can see if there has been development, which elements of digital youth work have been best, which need further attention. If the assessment documents – or their possibly anonymised results - are stored on an open database, there is a good possibility for benchmarking.
- There is a possibility to elaborate a quality label or a quality certification based on the assessment tool – in which case a peer-assessment tool would be preferable.
- The ability of the organisation and youth workers to develop their capacity to analyse their own work.
- Compared to the ‘sterile’ statistical evaluation surveys, self- and peer-assessment stand out as a refreshing complimentary form of accountability.
- It is important to build frameworks and self-assessment tools that would be relevant, usable and useful for youth workers and their organisations. The relevance can be backed up by the existing evidence and research, where it exists. If not, then wider research is needed of what kind of support youth work organisations need to go hand in hand with the digitalisation processes in society.
- The development of the framework and the tool may apply the principles of human-centred design thinking. The process encompasses 5 stages: Empathise -> Define -> Ideate -> Prototype -> Test. This process can be circular and may be repeated several times until a tool prototype would prove to be functioning well and accepted by organisations. The first phase ‘Empathise’ is often called ‘Problem definition and redefinition’ aiming to understand what are the issues that organisations are solving and how such a framework and a tool can help in solving their problems.

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- In case the present initiative will choose to further develop an existing framework (eg. such as DigiComp YouthWork), the question still remains what organisations need and how can it help them in achieving their goals.
 - The step ‘Define’ helps to ‘unpack and synthesise empathy findings into compelling needs and insights’⁶ which in turn help come up with an actionable problem statement leading to the next steps of an ideating possible solution, building a prototype and testing it with the end target group - youth work organisations.

Conclusions and recommendations for a framework and self-assessment tool on digital competences for youth workers & trainers

After analysing the results stemming from the European and national mapping, the Expert group particularly chose to look deeper into a few practices, as described below.

Key reflections

- DigComp can be considered as one of the most widely known and used frameworks though not necessarily in the youth sector as also highlighted in the national mappings. As one of its strengths, it already serves as the basis framework for a wide range of self-assessment tools developed by different actors for diverse purposes in different countries, including Criteria for professional digital competence in youth work by Verke, Digital Competence Wheel (DK), MENTEP and many others. In addition to those included in the present mapping report, other national-level models as the Teachers E-Portfolio (ES), PIX (FR) are based on DigComp (see some references [here](#)).
- When comparing the DigComp and DigCompEdu, the competence areas as presented in the DigCompEdu seem to have slightly more relevance to the essence of youth work as educational practice, with the approach of 6 competence areas with specific focusing on Empowering learners, Facilitating Learners Digital Competence, Professional Engagement etc (similar approach can be observed in the logic of competence areas in MENTEP). However, while the DigCompEdu is claimed to be directed towards all levels and contexts of education, including non-formal learning

⁶ Source: ‘[bootcamp bootleg](#)’, by Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford University



contexts, the Expert group concluded that the framework would need significant further developments in order for its content to be appropriate to the non-formal learning context in youth work.

- The ETS competence model for youth workers is the most advanced one and should be seen as the guiding framework for the training of youth workers active in international youth work in Europe. The ongoing process to update it by bringing in the digital dimension as a transversal approach is considered timely and highly important.
- The VERKE Criteria for professional digital competence in youth work and the tools complementing it (self-assessment tool & competence test) are some of the most user-friendly and practical instruments created. It brings a distinction between competences required for work (for youth workers themselves) versus competences required in youth work practices (targeted at youth).
- The “Digital Youth Work – from a space of fear to a space of freedom in youth work” competence model is one of the most recently developed examples. It builds on DigComp and uses the official extension framework for sector adaptation by introducing the two additional youth work specific competence areas - Digitality and society and Digitality and youth work - as well as youth-work specific introductory texts and illustrations, hence providing the most recent and most tailored, competence framework on digitality of youth work. Its adaptation of DigComp is based on the work of the expert group of the European Commission (digital youth work as activity, content, tool) as well as on the work of VERKE and the developments of digitalisation at large. As its main aim is to become a derivative from the main DigComp framework for youth work, the name that will be further used in this report is DigComp YouthWork.

In this context, the Expert group proposes the following approach:

- The ETS competence model is an important milestone in European youth work, however, it serves different purposes than the focus on digital youth work and related competences. Its nature of being a comprehensive general all-purpose model does



not make it possible to specify in detail the aspects connected to digital competences even if a digital dimension of competences is being added. Having said that, any new tools created should in any case ensure synergies with ETS competence model process.

- There is a need to have separate/additional tools that allow to raise awareness, assess and advance specifically the digital competences of youth workers.
- The DigComp YouthWork framework has the potential to become the reference tool in advancing digital competences for youth workers in different European countries as well as at European level. Its clear connection with DigComp - the most well-known framework among Member States dedicated to digital competences - is of advantage. The new additions brought in the framework are an essential improvement. The idea of an introduction to all competence areas linked with practical examples would work in youth work. The new competence areas are welcome, still, they could be enlarged from the viewpoint that technology is not given but man-made and further emphasise the impact of new technologies on the youth work sector and society at large (eg. the business logic of the tech industry, the way it affects democracy, civic space and human rights, the social conditions of youth). As a new framework, it needs more testing before launching.
- Any European framework and tool should be closely linked with the quite recent European digital strategies (2020) and the policy action (eg. General Data Protection Regulation-GDPR, Digital Services Act - DSA, Digital Market Act - DMA) - and to be explained within the context of youth work.
- The choice of the competence framework is a fundamental step, however, the impact on the digital transformation of the youth sector will most likely be even more dependent on specific tools of self-assessment and on additional support measures nudging that these tools would become actively used in the youth sector community, both among youth workers and organisations. Hence the mentoring and training programmes, quality assurance and other measures that different stakeholders will be able to initiate and inspire for are of great importance.

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- A competence framework and a self-assessment tool are both very strategic and political instruments: both define what is quality youth work, and what is important in youth work. It follows that they are not technical instruments, but strategic and policy instruments and as such they also need to be discussed, modified and adopted by youth policy makers. A process should be established for this purpose at all levels.
 - One of the specific issues that needs highlighting and further approached is the sustainability of competence frameworks and the tools related to it, as also emphasised by the national mappings. There might be different scenarios and approaches to guarantee further updates and upgrades of practices and tools, either backed up institutionally and/or opened for further developments by the community of practitioners themselves under the Creative Commons licence or other open-source tools; or a combination of these.

Recommendations and proposals

This section aims at providing guidance on how a competence framework for digital youth work should be further developed and how new assessment tools, based on it, should be designed and used. Inspired by Verke's tools, the Expert group proposes the development of two different tools - one for self-assessment (SAT) and another for self-verification (SVT).

Why a Self-Assessment Tool (SAT)

- There is a need to create instruments that offer a better understanding of digital competences in the context of youth work, including the complexity of related competence areas and respective knowledge, skills and attitudes as well as the proficiency levels etc.
- Youth workers and other specialists in the youth sector would benefit from better awareness of one's own strengths and areas for development.
- A self-assessment tool could contribute to more conscious choices for taking education or training pathway(s).
- By using such tools, it is considered that youth work will benefit from increased awareness of the existing competence in the sector, thus leading to increased quality.

Why a Self-Verification Tool (SVT)

- RAY research⁷ has shown a consistent gap between the assessment of project teams and project participants in relation to aspects related to digitalisation. Project teams frequently overestimate how adequate their methods and themes are in relation to digitalisation in youth work topics. This overestimation shows that a considerable proportion of project teams in the European youth programmes is not yet able to adequately assess their own competence in relation to digitalisation. A self-verification tool could help to navigate that challenge. Ideally, such a tool would – over time – become superfluous and show a level of consistency between self-assessment and self-verification as is common in other areas of youth work, such as principles and methods of non-formal education.
- Linked to self-assessment tool. It can help to contrast the self-assessment results
- Alternatively, it can be used instead of or before self-assessment
- It should openly refer to the possible uses and ways to connect the result to the self-assessment tool.
- It can serve as a teaser and motivation trigger to actually perform a self-assessment. Could even be used for promotional reasons

Beneficiaries of the tools

The SAT and SVT could be used by a number of beneficiaries, including:

- Students/ trainees on their path to becoming a youth worker
- Youth workers interested in updating their skills and ensuring a quality youth work process
- Teams of youth workers

⁷ Böhler, J., Fennes, H., Karsten, A. & Mayerl, M. (2021). Effects and outcomes of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme: Transnational Data Report 2014-2020. Berlin/Vienna, RAY Network. [Available online](#)

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- Trainers in their planning of digital youth work courses
 - Youth work units, youth centre staff, local YNGO club staff
 - Youth work services and networks
 - Youth work organisations - complimentary with other tools dedicated to the digital capacity of their organisations

The above-mentioned target groups could particularly benefit from the use the tools:

- Before / after training or education
- Periodically as part of a quality assurance process
- Before annual performance review (in youth work organisations)
- For personal learning purpose, on a voluntary basis, for better awareness and inspiration for future professional development
- When creating teams
- As part of the application process for quality assessment and/or occupational standard on local or national levels.

Considering the variety of possible motivations in using the tools, diverse ways of undertaking the self-assessment should be promoted, including as a fully individual process or further supported reflection through peer-to-peer exchange or mentor feedback etc. Further support measures could be highly recommended when the self-assessment of individuals is related to an organisational process, e.g. as part of the annual performance review, digital competence assessment of an organisation etc.

As policy makers would not be direct users of the proposed tools, their awareness of such tools is critical when planning policies and programmes for youth work or when allocating funding for the youth work sector.

Quality criteria to be considered when developing the SAT and SVT tools

- Quality criteria should be derived from the aims and objectives set for digital youth work. These criteria can also be organisation specific, local, national or international. The logic is that the results (such as scores) of self-assessment in a youth work unit shows how well the objectives for digital youth work have been reached. Quantitative scores are highly recommended as they provide comparison and follow-up in time and across services and areas.
- Self-assessment makes more sense and is more motivating if it is clear WHY it is done and how it is embedded in possible consequences (eg. action plan/ development plan/ access to training/ better quality of work/ higher salary).
- However such relations and possible impacts of self-assessment should be carefully considered and communicated, for among other reasons (such as recognition) to avoid bias (eg. giving oneself more credit to get a higher salary).
- Recognition of self-assessment efforts is embedded in the tool (being able to prove/show to others that a person makes efforts towards professional development).
- As a field of quick changes, in order to ensure the sustainability of the tool, a system of constant updating, managing and training would be needed. It should be considered together with an implementation plan to this effect.
- Guidelines for self-assessment: make reference to Dunning-Kruger effect (overconfidence by beginners, underrating by experts) and other biases. The self-verification tool that will complement the self-assessment tool can respond to the Dunning-Kruger effect.
- Self-assessment tools need to include recommendations on how to improve specific competences, depending on the assessment results. For this purpose, the training materials mapped through the current exercise could be used, in addition to other resources specifically identified for each competence area.

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- A connection with the ETS self-assessment tool Yocomo is highly recommended, thus, the new digital competence self-assessment tool could have links to the ETS tool and vice-versa.
 - Considering the emerging awareness of digital competences and the variety of existing self-assessment tools, youth workers could also benefit from support to choose the most appropriate self-assessment tool for their specific needs. For example, as an inspiring practice from the field of formal education, an [automated model](#) has been developed in Tallinn University (Estonia) that describes the different scenarios for the assessment of digital competences respecting the specifics of different teaching fields (eg. maths, arts as related to the field of teaching also digital tools may vary etc) and guides the user in choosing the appropriate assessment tool. Such additional tools aimed at providing more personalised assistance in self-assessment could as well be a valuable direction for developments in youth work in the coming years.

Design and usability - what elements could be considered when developing the self-assessment tools

- The self-assessment tools need to be user-friendly and easy to use, avoiding complex approaches.
- Overall, the tool should be designed in such a way that it would not require training on how to use them.
- A good balance between questions is necessary. Between more "technical" issues (e.g. how to use a certain platform/service/technology) and those that require not only knowledge but also a reflection on issues such as ethical/value-based choice of a youth worker in how to act in certain situations.
- Description of concrete situations where a competence is shown - competences need to be placed in context (providing examples of competence in action - behaviour can make the competences more tangible).

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- Tools need to be modular, youth workers can assess each competence area separately without needing to assess all competence areas in one effort in order to get the results of the assessment.
 - Offer options to go deeper into assessing competence areas but with a possibility to not make it mandatory for more specific sub-competences (e.g. assessing on the competence level, but assessment on indicators level are optional).
 - It's recommended to build it around 4 proficiency levels from beginner to expert (grouping the 8 DigComp levels).
 - Self-assessment greatly gains from being complemented by external feedback, thus, its design should consider the possibility to add comments by an external assessor to each element assessed.
 - A 360-degree tool could be considered, leading to a more comprehensive approach for the entire organisational development.
 - It should be built in the way that it can be updated with new competences later on, after the initial process - add "customizable" competence fields for self-assessment in case the offered competence model does not cover everything (in the feeling of the self-assessor).
 - It should be built in a way that it can be updated with new/ relevant cases (e.g. names of tools, technologies, etc. which are actual for that period of time)
 - The person using it should know the estimated time needed to complete the self-assessment.
 - It should ensure that the process and amount of required time to go through the tool are not overwhelming and off-putting, it should rather be easy and intuitive.
 - The self-verification tool should not take more than 20 minutes as the attention lowers and answers might not be that accurate.
 - Make it possible to do the process step-by-step, at all times progress is visible, and you can freeze the status and extract visualisations and summaries - especially for the SAT.

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- Saving the process and getting back to complete/change the responses could be offered to registered users.
 - Comparison between different assessments to show the progress over time would be beneficial.
 - Offer benchmarking options/data, to contrast/compare the own result and the result from peers (aggregated anonymised averages generated by the self-assessment tool users similar to the one doing the self-assessment).
 - On completion of the self-assessment test, individuals should be further inspired and supported with automated suggestions referencing relevant materials, trainings and other ways to work further on the development of their digital competences. Such automated suggestions can be developed based on the defined content of the competence areas and respective proficiency levels.
 - The tools need to avoid being text-based only, offer visuals, use contrasting colour codes, offer accessibility for different types of learners/ thinkers (e.g. mindmap, metaphors, storytelling). Wheel shape is often a common (and good) visualisation.
 - An important principle would be “anonymous by default”, thus, results of the self-assessment can be made public only if the user specifically chooses to.
 - Ensure that used colours match patterns suitable for colour-blindness and other visual impairment.
 - Clarity of language is especially important, taking into consideration non-native speakers (e.g. in the case of the tools developed in the English language for international users).
 - Reliability - the new tools should be tried and tested to show consistent results.

Draft proposal for a prototype: Self-Assessment tool for digital competences of youth workers and trainers

This section proposes a prototype build on the proposals included in the DigComp YouthWork framework, specifically designed for one main competence area 2. “Communication and collaboration” and more specifically sub-competence 2.6 “Managing digital identity”.

The prototype serves as inspiration for next steps - testing and full design for the entire competence model. The SAT that will result could cover indicators for all competence areas and all its sub-competences or just for some of those, depending on the results of initial testing.

The proposed prototype is based on 4 proficiency levels (basic/rudimentary, fair, good, excellent), 2 domains (complexity of task and youth engagement) and 2 indicators per competence area: “The ability to utilise digital environments for peer comparison on identity issues” and “The competence to manage harmful digital platforms in identity construction”.

The two evaluation domains are adapted to digital youth work as follows: “*Complexity of task*” refers not only to the technical difficulty of solving problems with different complexity, but also, and essentially, to the multidimensional nature of digitalisation, such as entanglement and awareness of human rights, democracy, politics and economic interests, in dealing with the digital life of young people. The broader the competence is, the higher is the proficiency level. “*Youth engagement*” refers to the competence of the youth worker to engage the young people in dealing with the issue at hand. Higher proficiency also means working beyond the individual, working with young people’s groups.

The operationalization of the descriptors, called *indicators*, must reflect the non-formal learning approach of youth work. The two indicators below try to capture the essence of “managing digital identity” as outlined in the DigComp YouthWork introductory text in competence area 2.6.

1. The ability to utilise digital environments for peer comparison on identity issues
2. The competence to manage harmful digital platforms in identity construction

Prototype of self-assessment for youth workers on “2.6 Managing digital identity”

Indicator 1: “The ability to utilise digital environments for peer comparison on identity issues”

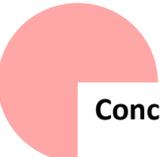
Levels/domains	Complexity of task ⁸	Youth engagement ⁹
Basic/ Rudimentary	Knows the most popular platforms where young people present themselves and discuss their experiences.	Leaves it up to the young people to manage these interactions.
Fair	Understands the importance of digital peer interaction/comparison to their identity growth. Can nudge young people to digital peer interaction to reflect their identity.	Systematically organises peer discussions between young people on their experiences of these interactions.
Good	Is able to identify what kind of identity issues young people can develop and can suggest respective digital and offline contexts for interaction.	Is able to motivate and support the young people to explore themselves the opportunities to express their identities on- and offline, such as (giving examples).
Excellent	Ability to support young people to master their digital/analogue identity growth such as building a digital portfolio and linking it to their career plans and social, cultural and political orientations.	Can encourage young people as individuals and groups to take an active, even activist, role in the digital space – thus profiling their identity.

⁸ “Complexity of task” refers not only to the technical difficulty of solving problems with different complexity, but also, and essentially, to the multidimensional nature of digitalization, such as entanglement and awareness of human rights, democracy, politics and economic interests, in dealing with the digital life of young people. The broader the competence is, the higher is the proficiency level.

⁹ “Youth engagement” refers to the competence of the youth worker to engage the young people in dealing with the issue at hand. Higher proficiency also means working beyond the individual, working with young people’s groups.

Indicator 2: *“The competence to manage data on digital platforms in identity construction”*

Levels/domains	Complexity of task	Youth engagement
Basic/ Rudimentary	Discuss – on a general level - with young people about the risks of publishing personal data and pictures on the Internet, such as the difficulty to remove it, manipulation of it and identity theft.	Leave it to individual young people to handle identity risks and harms on the internet.
Fair	Ability to advise young people to protect their digital identity through basic measures of privacy and anonymity.	Take the responsibility of seeing to it that young people use privacy securing measures and are able and willing to safeguard their anonymity.
Good	Ability to identify and analyse potential detrimental effects of the digital platforms on identity, such as the possible impact of the photo and video sharing platforms on self-image and confidence.	Supporting young people, preferably groups of young people with similar issues, to manage their negative experiences. Knowing where to find peer-support, help desks or professional advice if needed.
Excellent	Awareness of digital cultures which inhibit the free expression of one’s identity and the logic behind it, such as echo chambers, civic activism in authoritarian regimes or even e-sports which make it problematic to express feminine identity. Ability to engage young people in these issues.	Ability to raise the awareness of young people of digital cultures which restrict the free expression of identity. The competence to empower young people to the respective collective action of their own choice.



Conclusions and recommendations for a framework and self-assessment tool on digital capacities for youth work organisations

After reviewing the mapping reports, the expert group took particular notice of the following examples: the European Framework for Digitally Competent Educational Organisations (DigCompOrg), the Reflection tool for digital youth work practices (Verke, Finland) and Digipeegel (Digital Mirror, Estonia) - the digital maturity measuring tool for schools.

Key reflections

- ***Related to the European DigCompOrg framework***

DigCompOrg is one of the most comprehensive frameworks dedicated to the digital transformation of educational organisations. Arguably, it is built up from the perspective of formal education, with recognition of informal and non-formal learning presented as one of the assessment practices. This central focus on formal education might be one of the reasons why this framework seems to be so little known/considered relevant among youth work organisations.

The key segments as covered by the DigCompOrg - leadership and governance practices, teaching and learning practices, professional development, assessment practices, content and curricula, collaboration and networking, infrastructure - seem to have relevance for youth work organisations, especially as the framework welcomes the sector-specific additions.

However, the reasoned decision on how this framework model could be adjusted and further developed in order to respond to the reality and needs of organisations in the youth sector would require a more profound analysis. Specific attention needs to be given to the philosophy and the specific principles of non-formal learning as well as the most diverse types and practices of youth work organisations would need to be fully considered and respected. Also, the complexity of the framework needs to be taken into account and further analysed to better understand how it can be adjusted to the youth sector.



In order to support coherent strategic developments in the youth sector, it is also important to create synergies between different tools and instruments aimed at nudging the digital transformation. Following the proposal to use the DigComp YouthWork framework for the self-assessment of digital competences of youth workers - due to its strong connection with the general DigComp framework, the expert group recommends that the overall logic of the DigCompOrg should be considered, further analysed and possibly revised for the organisations of the youth sector.

DigCompOrg includes elements, sub-elements and descriptors that may be regarded as linked to “organisational responsibilities” (e.g. Infrastructure) or to 'individual responsibilities' (e.g., Teaching and Learning practices), reflecting that a digitally-competent organisation would need to build upon a balanced combination of strong leadership and governance (for vision and top-down strategies) as well as the staff and stakeholders capable of taking personal responsibility (for self-initiated actions and bottom-up efforts and initiatives). The DigComp Youth Work with its comprehensive insight into the competences of youth workers provides important input and or even a foundation for further development of an organisational model also from this perspective.

- ***Related to Digital Mirror***

Digital Mirror, the Estonian tool for assessing digital maturity (digital readiness) in schools can be seen as one of the most advanced assessment tools available that could be adapted for the youth sector. Similarly to what has been described above for the DigCompOrg as possible adjustments, a more profound analysis would be needed in order to deeply assess the content of the proposed 15 metrics - covering three fields like pedagogical innovation, system change (the management and sustainability of change at the organisational level), and the development of digital infrastructure (including digital security and user support) - and their relevance to the youth work organisations.



At the same time, the expert group has found that there are two additional aspects of the Digital Mirror that deserve attention and further consideration in order to be relevant for youth work organisations:

1) The proposed process for the implementation that covers (1) the self-assessment report completed by the management of the organisation; (2) a digital working group involving both the staff of the organisation as well as the views of the partners and external stakeholders; (3) development of a plan or agenda for further digital innovation of the organisation highlighting also the respective financial measures and responsible persons. The expert group suggests that even if implemented flexibly in modified versions, such a strategic approach could be helpful for comprehensive understanding and planning.

2) The 5 proficiency levels described as A – replacement – episodic use/B – enrichment – coordination within the school/ C – perfecting – changes introduced into the study process/ D – integration – digital culture permeates the study environment/ E – amplification – managing innovation and reconceptualizing. The expert group finds this approach interesting, also from the viewpoint of management of internal impact factors in organisations and suggests this for further reflection and considerations.

Whereas there are some practices that have been identified and could be further built upon, the mapping highlights the lack of deeper knowledge and usage of such frameworks at the national level. Additionally, there is a limited understanding and evidence on what is the motivation (or lack thereof) for youth work organisations to use such frameworks and tools in using them that the expert group considers to be one of the key aspects of the underlying rationale to be able to identify the best possible approaches. In this context, the expert group proposes the following approach:

- Future frameworks & assessment tools need to be based on further understandings of how youth work organisations would best use them. Current mapping needs to be complemented by quality insights from the youth sector, such as interviews with managers & leaders of youth work organisations, also some key stakeholders/partners of youth work organisations etc.

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- Proposals for digital capacity framework & assessment tools are timely and can build on the momentum created by the COVID19 pandemic, thus, further supporting the youth sector to advance its digital transformation in a strategic and systematic way. Nevertheless, such tools need to be considered in a wider approach, where they are used by youth work organisations and how their value is recognised by other stakeholders as well (eg. such as National Agencies for Erasmus+ & ESC, municipalities, donors or funding programmes managers).
 - Considering that the use of frameworks and tools dedicated to digital competences of youth workers and organisations is still in the early ages, the expert group suggests two options for further developments. *Option 1*: the frameworks and self-assessment tools for both youth workers and organisations would be developed in parallel, keeping the coherency and synergy between these tools. *Option 2*: the priority focus would be on the development of the framework and tools for youth workers, while the use of a framework advancing the overall digital transformation of organisations would be a step that could be taken at a later stage. The latter option would allow them to approach these development processes gradually, building and scaling up the organisational framework based on already tested and improved versions of the tools directed at youth workers. The expert group suggests that in any case, further perspectives would largely depend on how these, both strategically very important further developments, would be managed and backed up with institutional support and involvement and financial resources.

General considerations

In order to develop a framework and tools relevant for the European youth work sector a series of questions have been proposed for future consideration. They could be used by the DYW SNAC but also by other stakeholders to ensure that the tools created are strongly rooted in the realities of European youth work organisations and their use is supported by larger strategic measures:

- How will it influence resources for capacity building of organisations?
- Will it lead to some recognition scheme or label?

- Will it support organisations in making better quality digital youth work?
- Will it help in securing more finances to activities (by showing that the organisation invests in assessment and development of their digital capacity)?

Furthermore, the next steps should help identify the following aspects:

- Who should be involved in completing the assessment on an organisational level?
- How other existing or newly created tools (like Self-assessment and Self-test tools for youth workers) can be integrated in a meaningful way?
- What recognition organisations would like to get for making these efforts?
- Where the information of assessment should be available and how can it be used to source needed competences, equipment and finances?

Draft proposal for a framework on digital capacities for youth work organisations

Youth work organisations are of very different sizes and types. There are large municipal youth service organisations and big international organisations with national, regional and local setups. The type of these organisations ranges from highly organised, institutionally embedded youth organisations to spontaneous, non-hierarchical and less institutional movements. Due to this variety, it is challenging to design a one-format-fits-all model. Rather there could be *two kinds of assessment tools*. *One generic model could be elaborated to the more customised needs of different kinds of organisations. Another model could be a concrete example of the tool, elaborating its framework, defining the key areas of competences and examples of their indicators, evaluation levels and evaluation criteria.* There is a need for a process that starts from making a prototype for one area, testing, revising, and then applying to all areas.

It is important for the model to be simple enough for an ordinary youth work organisation to carry out with evaluation criteria adapted to the youth work environment and practices.

To assess the capacity of a youth work organisation, the following list of competence areas and their sub-areas is drafted. The list is based on various models from the private sector and from key youth work digital competence models. It is tentative and requires further development.



As the focus is on the capacity of *organisations*, the model consists of the following 5 main elements: 1. leadership and management, 2. the working culture, 3. training needs of staff, 4. the digital infrastructure and 5. assessment. The list includes 5 main areas and 47 sub-categories. This may be sufficient to function as a generic model but to better understand what a final assessment tool should look like; examples of selected areas and sub-categories could be further operationalised to measurable indicators. To develop a fully customised tool, all areas and their sub-categories should be operationalized into indicators.

1. Leadership and management - Managing digital transformation

In digital transformation the role of management is crucial for many reasons. The staff has often very different assumptions on digital youth work; there are the advocates, the adversaries and those indifferent, and many others. Management is needed to organise dialogue and align the staff towards common ground. A particular management challenge is to combat the resistance. Furthermore, management is required to create a proactive, agile and innovative working culture – necessary for a digital organisation. Another task is finding a balance between addressing the opportunities of digitalisation and the negative effects and risks of the online world. Finally, it is the main task of managers and leaders to ensure the implementation of the digital transformation strategy, however complex and unprecedented it may appear.

- **A visible, dedicated leadership** with clear objectives linked with EU digital strategies, measures to combat resistance and persistent implementation of the strategy. The leaders of the organisations must give their face to digital transformation.
- **Nurturing a networking culture that supports digitalisation** through collaboration, networking, digital skills and focuses on continuous development.
- **Streamlining.** Making it clear that digital transformation and training for it concerns everybody in the organisation. HR-function is a key driver through training, rewarding, recruitment, internal communication and a conflict resolution system.
- **Communicating and discussing** the objectives with all in the organisation. The organisation prepares its Digital Transformation Strategy together with youth workers, the young people and the networking partners. It is a common pursuit.
- **Gathering knowledge** on (1) young people's use of digital media, their communication habits, language and cultures as well as digital risks, (2) youth workers' digital competences and their assumptions, strengths and imaginaries of digitalisation and (3) the digital infrastructure of the organisation.

- **Managing dialogue** between the people with different understandings of digitalisation such as advocates, adversaries and those indifferent.
- **Establishment of a strategic plan** is based on the values, aims and priorities of the youth field and the youth work organisation. Engage the staff and young people in agreeing on the values and principles and setting objectives and priorities. It is also based on the EU digital strategies. The plan is integrated into the mission, values, strategy, QA tools, performance metrics and bonus systems of the organisation.
- **Managing the diversity of digitalisation:** The organisation promotes the active and creative use of digital media and addresses inequalities and risks related to it.
- **Providing infrastructure, support, time and funds:** The organisation provides encouragement, space (working hours) and resources for on-the-job development of digital youth work, encourages experimenting and allows failure within given parameters.
- **Mapping cooperation partners.** Collaborative relationships, networks and platforms within the City and other service providers, research, training, companies, and other organisations are established for planning and implementation.
- **Consider digital youth work competences in recruitment and appraisal interviews.** The organisation uses digital youth work competences as recruitment criteria in the job advertisement, in interviews and in making recruitment decisions. Furthermore, the regular appraisal interviews should cover digital training needs.
- **Linking digital youth work activities to budget heads.** Excellent and detailed plans and the Good Will is not enough. All costs of the activities must be integrated in the budget heads of the organisation.

2. Innovative working culture

Strategic planning and strategic management are fashionable private sector concepts that have made their way to the public and civic sector as well. Even recognizing their importance, it is increasingly admitted that people, good working culture and flexibility are even more important: “Culture eats strategy for breakfast” as Harvard Business Review has noticed (Dec 2017). The list below consists of the organisation’s characteristics that enhance a positive working culture fit to a digitalised organisation.

- **Nurturing an agile mindset and critical thinking.**
 - “Agile mindset” emphasises the importance of the employees, the organisations and the managers to become flexible and quick to respond to changes – and respond through digital means.

- A “critical attitude” refers to privacy questions, safety, manipulation, surveillance, distorting democratic processes, disinformation, power of the tech industry, adverse effects on health and social relations, bullying and harassment – and elaborating on the responsibility of youth work and what it could do.
- **Emphasis on people:** training and study missions available to improve digital competences. Introduce Continuous Professional Development (CPD)
- **Youth engagement:** young people are taken on board of all planning and implementation of processes of digital means – on equal footing with adults.
- **The organisation has the capacity to network and collaborate.** This can be a challenge to a small sector which sometimes feels threatened by bigger sectors such as the school or the social services, and rather tends to keep to oneself. A digitalizing youth work organisation determinately and actively opens up and seeks new collaboration partners.
- **Less focus on long-term planning, more on continuous development.** Long-term planning is necessary, but in the digital field things tend to change very quickly and a dogmatic fixation to a long-term strategy would be useless. An organisation is able to *also* focus on continuous development.

3. Learning – training needs of youth workers and the organisation

Promoting young people’s digital citizenship through acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding required to enjoy their leisure, express and develop their identity but also to defend human rights, democracy and social equality.

- **Critical digital literacy**
 - The organisation strengthens youth workers’ critical digital literacy and supports them to work accordingly with young people.
 - The organisation understands that digital technology is mainly used for leisure, such as social media, gaming, music, sports, fashion, movies, bloggers, vloggers and youth cultural sites.
 - The organisation is aware that almost the entire architecture of the digital technology referred to above is owned and managed by typically the biggest tech companies and it understands that governments and the EU are trying to regulate them. Youth work is sensitive to both the positive and negative effects there are on young people.
 - The organisation has the capacity and dedication to support young people’s digital agency, whether that means participation through the institutional democratic structures or via dissent.
- **Digitalisation is glocal:** The organisation, even if it functions locally, works with young people living in the area, promoting a broad European and global perspective. It develops a comprehensive view of the role and power of data, the tech industry and



the main elements of national and European digital policies. The organisation has a shared understanding of the positive and negative effects of the tech industry and its relationship to democracy, digital authoritarianism, human rights and its violations, well-being and inequality, to the civic space action and its shrinking and to mitigation and increase of climate change. The organisation supports participation in international activities.

- **Finding a balanced role to promote the benefits of digital means and to take responsibility for their negative effects.**
- **Participation in European projects is expected.**
- **The competence of the entire staff to provide basic digital skills for young people**
 - Using basic programs and apps, producing digital content; browsing, evaluating, organising and storing data, ethical rules and regulations, and how to engage safely in various forms of peer-communication to develop their identity. The organisation has developed a solid competence-base on young people's diverse digital engagements.
 - The organisation supports young people's digital communication and collaboration skills and to create, modify and integrate information into an existing body of knowledge.
- **Capability of youth workers to organise digital youth work.** This refers to being fluent with digital apps in working effectively, use of free licence sources, finding data on youth and from youth, managing professional online identity, communicating with my colleagues, and familiarity with digital solutions to basic youth work challenges such as participation through public organisations and through movements and action outside them. Competence to refer young people to digital services which they might need.
- **Digital safety and well-being.** The organisation understands the most common threats to its privacy and has taken measures to secure the safety of its data and communication.
 - It knows its digital rights and is capable of taking action in case of violations.
 - The organisation is aware of digital risks, such as social media and game dependency sharing your personal information and problems related to fake news and hate speech, and manipulation. The organisation is prepared to support young people facing these risks and knows how to advise them in finding help-desks, professional consultation or even cure.
- **Problem solving.** The organisation is able to support young people to use digital means to solve their variety of problems and support or suggest to them respective competence training.
- **Creative organisational learning: Using digital youth work to rethink the roles, approaches and working methods.**

- Train staff to collaborate and network – through official and informal interactions. Innovation is likely to develop through these inter-agency relationships. Historically youth work has been resistant, even hostile to collaboration with other actors and sectors. New digital communication opportunities must be used to break these barriers.
- Promoting creativity and social and emotional skills (Innovation is a derivative of social interactions and relations, and positive emotions are conducive to creativity because they broaden the mind)
- The organisation empowers and expects youth workers, the young people together with other partners to rethink existing practices and innovate new ones such as pedagogic games, OER, e-arts, e-portfolios, safe communication practices.
- Learning what kind of youth work can be done digitally what offline
- The organisation empowers young people to imagine alternative uses of digitalisation and shape new visions of digitality.

4. Infrastructure

Youth work method is non-formal learning where learning and action is intertwined. Young people learn about the context which affects their social and personal growth to become active citizens and they might want to act accordingly. Both learning and action can take place offline and online. They also can merge. A sufficient competence and technical infrastructure is in place.

- Learning objectives for the use of digital technologies must be in place.
- The organisation has in place the necessary expertise and technologies such as digitally competent youth workers and access to the internet, network connections, smartphones, laptops, tablets and digital cameras.
- Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) approaches are supported. A BYOD policy is adopted to define the parameters for own device usage.
- The organisation is prepared and able to support youth not confident with digital technology.
- The organisation has appropriate procedures and safeguards in place to ensure the protection of individual privacy, confidentiality and the safe use of digital learning technologies and data such as Data Protection and Licences and formal guidelines for staff and students on privacy, confidentiality and safety in online environments.
- Young people should be encouraged to take action offline if a concern raised online creates the motivation to act, or vice versa.

5. Assessment

Assessment is needed for basically two purposes: first, for youth workers and young people to reflect and develop youth work activities and projects and second, for the management and the stakeholders as feedback from young people's experiences and to evaluate how well the objectives of the organisation have been reached.

- **Self and peer-assessments are promoted in the organisation as a routine and on a regular basis.**
- **The organisation has the habit of integrating the young people in the assessment process** and communicating the different kinds of assessment and evaluation reports to the young people and discussing with them.
- **Linking non-formal learning with formal education.** Non-formal learning is typically experiential and practice-oriented, while formal education is focused on the acquisition of knowledge. Digital communication opens new and easier access to facts, interpretations and even theories (formal education). Youth work organisations encourage youth workers and young people to link their digital non-formal learning experiences with digital opportunities to find knowledge, facts and interpretations.
- **Assessment and evaluation data on digital youth work is used by the management and the stakeholders in developing digital youth work.** Processes are established to inform the direction on the assessment and evaluation of digital youth work and the direction has the practice to review them as part of annual reporting and budget preparations as well as when assessing digital projects and applying new ones.

Discussion related to the proposed framework

The assessment tool is comprehensive but adaptable to different types of youth work. This can refer to areas of youth work like outreach (mobile) youth work, youth work at the schools, cultural youth work, adventure education, youth work with disadvantaged youth, information and counselling, even digital youth work as a tool. To meet the special demands of these types of youth work, the assessment tool is flexible to be customised through additional tailored elements.

Relationship to the organisation's other possible management systems, evaluation measures and quality assessment tools. As such, it is not intended to replace all of the above, but rather to add the digital dimension. However, the digital youth work assessment tool of the organisation should be integrated into the organisation's other methods of quality assessment so that it would not be a separate but a complementary tool.



The need for constant revision and update of the tool. There are at least three reasons why one should be prepared for a periodical redesign of the tool. First, experience is likely to show that a number of elements of the tool do not function as planned and revisions are needed. Second, technology changes very quickly, and the assessment tool must be adapted accordingly. Third, as the tool is an articulation of the aims, objectives and priorities of the organisation, it must be changed when the organisation changes its direction. The assessment tool is not a neutral instrument, but an essentially political one: it implements the political will of the organisation at a given moment. When that will change, the assessment tool must be modified according to the new objectives and priorities.

Additional formats of participatory evaluation might be needed. The assessment tool of the digital capacity of the organisation together with the assessment of youth worker's competences is advised to be complemented by documenting and analysing the processes of digital youth work and by researching the ways that young people have experienced these activities. These include analysis of the processes of digital youth work and for example *transformative evaluation*; narrative analysis of young people's stories of their experiences of (digital) youth work (see Ord, J with M. Carletti, S Cooper, C. Dansac, D Morciano, L. Siurala and M. Taru (eds) "The Impact of Youth Work in Europe: A Study of Five European Countries" (pp. 156-174), Helsinki 2018).



V. Supporting measures to complement the self-assessment tools

With the development of new self-assessment tools, additional support measures should be foreseen, thus future initiatives could include both practical and long-term strategic approaches:

- Video and/or text tutorials that can guide users on how to use the tools - on the same digital platform where the tools will be hosted.
- Special sections supporting users to build a professional development plan with the system of reminders and with the possibility to invite peer youth workers to support on the development pathway.

In this context, an important discussion is also related to the **use, recognition and validation** of such tools. For this purpose, the following recommendations have been advanced:

- European policy-makers could facilitate a process to connect the proposed frameworks and tools with the EQF framework / Bologna process and other relevant European processes.
- Educational and occupational accreditation/validation bodies could start a process of updating youth work occupational standards by specifically including digital competences - based on the proposed competence frameworks & self-assessment tools.
- Academic and vocational training institutions with curricula on youth work and other training providers in the youth sector could integrate the knowledge on the competence framework and self-assessments of digital competences as part of the curricula/ course work/ trainings.
- National Agencies for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (NAs) could refer to self-assessment tools as a way to get recognition of youth work where it is not present.
- National and local policy makers, as well as NAs could encourage youth work organisations in using such tools by taking their outcomes into account in the



accreditation process for various programmes, evaluation of projects, including Erasmus+ Accreditation in the field of Youth & ESC quality label, etc.

- With regards to youth work in the context of Erasmus+ and ESC, the NAs and other players need to invest in the training of youth workers to develop their skills for working online with groups, such as creating and holding space, supporting meaningful engagement, and ensuring online safety. Such trainings could be based on the competence frameworks and self-assessment tools proposed in the present report.
- Develop long-term training programmes for youth workers, trainers, mentors, coaches, facilitators, where experiences can be shared - based on the proposed competence frameworks. Consider the possibility of organising them on a periodical basis - as the youth sector needs to stay up to speed with rapidly changing technology.
- The competence frameworks, if adequately adopted and spread on a national level, could on the one hand provide information and data to educational and policy stakeholders about elements to be addressed in designing long term trainings, creating resource centres but also other mechanisms to support the development of competences of both youth workers and youth work organisations.

Moreover, stakeholders such as NAs, municipalities, youth centers or other relevant bodies, could provide recognition to participants joining programmes based on such tools (eg. open badges allowing to enter national training pools, or quality elements for organisations with trained staff, to be easier accredited or given quality labels etc).

- In countries where youth work still needs proper and official recognition, NAs and other stakeholders could use the elements provided by the competence frameworks and self-assessment tools as added criteria to build a national platform for recognizing youth work.
- Consider creating/ appointing a structure or resource centre to bolster the digital transformation of youth work and give training support, share ideas, establish online and offline learning communities, curate lists of expert organisations etc.

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- Integrate digital thinking across other major youth work themes, for instance, provide specific training opportunities for youth workers, using existing resources from the Programme (eg. SALTO PI's Advisory Board on Digital Transformation) as well as ones from external sources (eg. Coderdojo clubs network).



VI. Quality in digital youth work and connections with other initiatives in the field

Considering the new developments in the youth sector, the work done under the WP2 of DYW SNAC takes stock of the new processes and new documents addressing the digital transformation in the youth sector. Thus, this section builds on the outcomes of previous efforts and reinforces the importance of quality youth work elements particularly identified through the work of Work Package 5 of DYW SNAC (led by SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resource Centre and JINT- National Agency for the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and the European Solidarity Corps programmes for the Flemish Community in Belgium) and the Bonn process.

In this context, the Expert contributing to the present report highlights the importance of aligning the proposed self-assessment tools to:

The 4 principles set in the document “Learning Experiences of Hybrid, Blended and Online Mobility Activities”¹⁰:

- *SAFE to use tools and platforms that ensure the safety of the participants,*
- *CONNECTED in terms of technology and equipment, but also connected to the development of digital youth work practices,*
- *CONFIDENT in using digital learning tools and*
- *INSPIRED by the practices that are shared by the community and by the experiences which are shared by their peers -both individuals and organisations.*

The critical elements that have been identified through the Bonn process (started with the third European Youth Work Convention, 2020) and which establish the principles of a basic youth work offer for young people all over Europe¹¹:

- *a framework to set the standard, including indicators*

¹⁰ “Safe, Connected, Confident And Inspired: Learning Experiences Of Hybrid, Blended And Online Mobility Activities. Conclusions Of The Expert Group Process” (2021). [Available online.](#)

¹¹ Signposts for the Future - final Declaration of the 3rd EYWC (2020). [Available online.](#)

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- *a proactive strategy that includes reflection on the existing structures to achieve more effective outreach*
 - *research on existing common agreed professional standards for youth workers education and training (e.g. competence models and frameworks, code of ethics, curriculum);*
 - *improving smart youth work while putting greater focus on developing digital competences of young people and youth workers*

VII. Elements for further reflection

The next section brings into attention a number of topics addressed by the Expert group and that need further reflection in the process of developing the self-assessment tools. While they have been part of the Expert group discussions, they don't represent concrete proposals, but rather broader topics that need to be explored together with other stakeholders and youth work communities of practice.

1. Clarifying terminology

CONSIDER EXPANDING THE APPROACH FROM “SELF-ASSESSMENT” TO “PEER- AND SELF-ASSESSMENT” OR TO “QUALITY ASSESSMENT”

A well-developed self-assessment tool works also as a peer-assessment tool. Experience (see the experience from Finland¹²) has shown that no changes are needed when a peer-assessment tool is used as a self-assessment and vice versa. In youth work, peer-assessment can be carried out, for example, between youth work units (such as Youth Centres) or youth organisation units (such as Scout group) in nearby cities or municipalities: youth workers from two units reciprocally assess each other's activities.

Such peer-assessment has many benefits compared to a self-assessment: first, as an external evaluation, it gives a more objective account, second, as the assessors are doing roughly the same work of a neighbouring unit of the same or similar organisation, they are experts of the activity to be assessed, third, as the assessors, however, differ from those assessed because they probably work in a somewhat different setting, with different staff, with different young people and with different methods, they both provide a refreshing comparative view and also learn themselves from the assessed organisation and fourth.

This format of external evaluation does not cost much and is easy and quick to implement. Furthermore, this model can easily be modified to a combined approach, such as carrying out

¹² A peer- and self-assessment tool has been used in Finnish youth work already for 15 years (Siurala, L & Nöjd, Taija (2015) Youth Work Quality Assessment – The self and peer assessment model, Kanuuna Network & The City of Lappeenranta Youth Services, Kanuuna Publications 1/2015). It has been already twice modified and updated. It also has been customised to assess adventure and outdoors activities, youth work at school, outreaching youth work and digital youth work. The social field has adapted this model to be used at its *Open Family Centres* (Siurala 2019: Quality Assessment Tool for Open Meeting Places, ERASMUS SEMINAR: Co-creating Integrated Family Services and NGO Activities for Families and Children, Helsinki 9 Oct 2019).



every second year a peer-assessment and every second a self-assessment. This combined approach also provides an opportunity to compare the results of the two variants, and possibly leads to useful self-reflection of self-assessments.

One possibility to circumvent this terminological issue is simply to use only one term “quality assessment” to refer to both or either of the assessment variants. Another advantage of using the term “quality assessment” is that “quality youth work” is one of the most popular objectives in European youth work and youth policy texts today.

“FRAMEWORK” AS A GUIDING CONCEPT TO DESIGN COMPETENCE AND CAPACITY

MODELS

As a new field of activity, it is understandable that the language and terminology can be differently used. To avoid confusion, specifications might be needed. The Expert group involved in drafting the recommendations of the present report uses the expression “competence framework” to refer to a list of competence areas, which then can be further broken down to sub-competences or sub-areas of these competences. And then follow the measurable indicators, one or several for each competence area or sub-competence.

On the other hand, dictionaries define “framework” as a set of ideas, rules or beliefs which helps deal with a complex problem and decide how its elements interlock, a structure which holds individual parts together. Thus, it is rather recommended to talk about a “framework for competences”. In youth work, such a framework would be the values, ethics, principles and main objectives of digital youth work. This new terminological approach would contribute to understanding which areas of organisational capacities and youth worker competences are needed and how they link to each other. In short, it would include the pedagogical and technical capacities and competences that help organisations and youth workers who run activities with young people to meet the objectives, values and principles defined in the framework. Not the other way around. Youth work and its objectives should not be subordinated or dictated by technology.

In this context, a recommendation for the future would be to agree on the use of terminology. The term ‘framework’ should be understood as a broad umbrella concept; ‘framework of digital youth work’ (its values, principles, objectives, and the ways youth work is being done).



The term ‘competence or capacity framework’ would be replaced by ‘competence or capacity areas’, ‘competence or capacity models’ or ‘competence or capacity needs’, which then refer to the competencies or capacities that need to carry out digital youth work in practice by a youth worker or by a youth work organisation.

2. Developing frameworks which link the different aspects of digitalisation to digital youth work competences and capacities

SUPPORTING YOUTH WORK SECTOR’S UNDERSTANDING OF THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY

The Council Conclusion of the Finnish Presidency of the EU Council 2019 mentions “Many youth policy documents lack foresight about the ways in which digitalisation will affect society, young people and youth work. Many strategies also lack a holistic approach to developing youth work in the digital era.” The lack of a broader digital approach, a policy and a strategy – or even a framework - has led to focus on existing technology.

The launching chapter “Context of the Report” underlines that “digital media and technology” is understood as “environment, method and content”, but often in the identified practises the focus is on “method and content”. What is missing is first, how the ethics, values and principles of youth work link with or guide the formulation of competences and capacities. Second, the understanding that “environment” should also refer to the broad negative effects of digitalisation on issues such as democracy, civic space, human rights and privacy rights, among others. This lack of ‘environment’, can be a result of a wide-spread assumption of technology as “given”, “inevitable” or “inherently good” with a lesser focus on the “man-made” dimension.

However, the more recent formulations of competences (Verke and draft DigComp YouthWork 2022) expand their scope to the different positive and negative effects of digitalisation. Still, a broader and deeper analysis of these effects and actors is missing, even if the research is available (such as Zuboff 2019 and Couldry and Meijas 2019).

The list of digital competences and capacities should be based on the values, principles, and objectives of, say youth work, not on the given architecture, design and interests of the tech industry. Thus, a recommendation for the next steps could include the development of a



framework (digital youth work policy and strategy) which outlines how the values and principles of youth work guide digital youth work and where digitalisation runs counter to its values and principles.

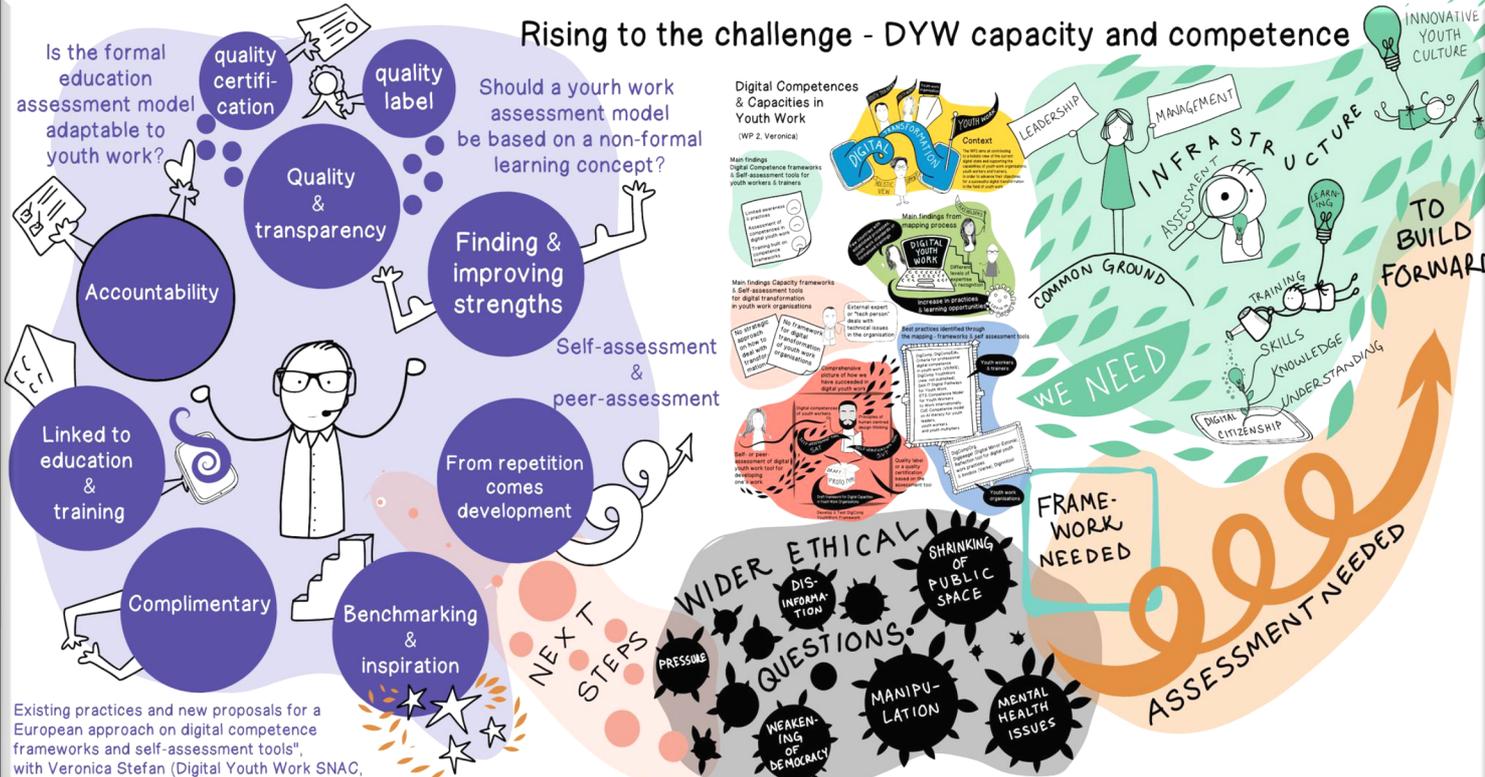
3. Reframing the extensive formal education competence models

Competence frameworks such as DigCompEdu are meant for professionally trained (in many countries MA-level) teachers who are full-time workers and whose syllabus is framed in quite a detail by the national curriculum. Youth workers are more varied and flexible in these respects. Very few are university-trained full-time professionals. Typically, they have lower-level training and a lot of learning by doing and typically NGO workers and volunteers with relatively high turnover. Youth work itself is not structured by detailed curriculums but rather framed by broad objectives, principles and practices. As a result, teachers can be expected to adapt to detailed and lengthy evaluations, while youth work is known to resist quantifiability and measurement.

For example, the UK with a strong tradition of youth work and youth worker training, has been famous for its open resistance to measurement. The relationship between the youth worker and the young person is often seen as an unpredictable process, difficult to measure (Ord 2012). A youth work process can take unexpected turns and the turns might be difficult to explain. Finnish outdoor educationalist Steve Bowles said that in adventure education learning is often “something that takes place between the youth worker, the moon and the campfire”, something which is not easy to break down into didactic phases leading to clear-cut quantifiable learning results. Furthermore, the outcome of a youth work project might not be measurable knowledge or competences (of formal education), but rather practical knowledge, non-formal learning which is challenging to capture through standardised measures.

There is a need to further reflect on the type of frameworks that will be used in the future - there are youth work specific cultural reasons for adapting an assessment model fit for teachers into the context of youth work and to be a clearly simplified version (concise and user-friendly) to be feasible for youth workers.

Rising to the challenge - DYW capacity and competence



Existing practices and new proposals for a European approach on digital competence frameworks and self-assessment tools", with Veronica Stefan (Digital Youth Work SNAC, Estonian National Agency Erasmus+ & ESC), Lasse Siurala and Michele di Paola (experts in Work Package 2 "Digital competences and digital capacity in youth work")



FINNISH NATIONAL AGENCY FOR EDUCATION



DIGITAL YOUTH WORK STRATEGIC NATIONAL AGENCY CO-OPERATION



Digital Youth Work – state of play
March 16-18, 2022

ANNEX 1 - Key findings and recommendations from the national reports

1. Belgium, Flanders

Key findings and conclusions

a. About training

- There is no specific preparatory training for 'youth worker' in Flanders (e.g. bachelor programme), so preparatory training for Digital Youth Work is very programme-dependent. A general framework for youth workers is missing.
- In Flanders, there's a lot of expertise in training youngster to become an animator in Youth Work ('kadervorming'). In the competence framework for animators in youth work, little is specifically included on digital competences (only in relation to the use of photos on social media). The question is whether more specific attention should be paid to this, or whether these competences can be covered by 'starting from the world of children and young people'.
- There are a lot of Youth Work Organisations delivering training and materials to the field, but in lots of cases, reference is made to the materials of Mediawijs (Flemish agency on digital and media literacy).
- Training materials can be found but focus mostly on Digital Youth Work as 'content' or 'activity'. It's hard to find materials focusing on 'digital as a tool' in blended Digital Youth Work, where digital is integrated as a tool among tools and to enrich activities. Starting from the digital is not an automatic reflex of youth workers.
- An interesting approach for training is 'how to reach other young people, broaden your target group with digital youth work?'
- We need to look at blended training programmes for training youngster to become an animator in Youth Work ('kadervorming'). There is a lot of expertise in Flanders, but little 'innovation' in this. - The training and support needs of professional or volunteer



youth workers can be different. A self-assessment tool or training should best be adapted to the way the youth worker wants to use the digital in his work.

b. About competence models/frameworks:

- There are competence models for Youth Work. The Ambrassade has taken a first step with the: DNA of the youth worker (<https://ambrassade.be/nl/kennis/artikel/jeugdwerkwerkt-vandaag-en-in-de-toekomst>) that was written with the whole youth work community. Next to that you have competence models for animator training (laid down in an execution decree, <https://codex.vlaanderen.be/Zoeken/Document.aspx?DID=1024584¶m=inhoud>) . At the time of Corona, 'dealing critically with visual material' was added.
 - Having digital competences is not a prerequisite to be a good youth worker. When selecting youth workers (professional or volunteers) having a healthy interest in ICT and digital media and understanding of and interest in the digital world of children and young people as utmost important as criteria anno 2021.
 - Purely technical skills are either brought in externally (e.g. specific STEM activities) or are learned on the job (peer learning). More important is that the youth worker succeeds in putting fun in activities and has needs pedagogical skills to make the activity succeed.
 - Understanding of and for the digital world of children and young people, being close to the world of children and young people and making it discussable are always mentioned.
 - Furthermore, courage, flexibility and curiosity are mentioned as prerequisites to DJW. This also means that youth workers can play to their own strengths.
 - Depending on how the organisation uses digital (digital as a tool, digital as content, digital as an activity), certain competences are more important than others.
- c.** Competence models are not unknown but hardly ever used. There are no specific Flemish models for Digital Youth Work yet.



d. About self assessment tools:

- There are no specific Flemish Self-assessment tools models for Digital Youth Work yet.
- There are doubts of the usability of self-assessment tools for volunteers.
- A self-assessment tool at organisational level can also be interesting, not everyone needs to know or be able to do everything.

d. In general:

- The concept 'digital youth work' can scare people off. Evolving towards hybrid/blended youth work is a natural process.
- Since it concerns digital YOUTHWORK, the fun factor in the activities: about (content), with (instrument) or work form (methodology), is essential.
- The diversity in Flemish youth work is enormous. Youth work as a description in an EU context is often more delineated (to youth welfare work as in youth counselling). So the question is whether we should delineate it?
- Organisations that took covid as a catalyst usually focus on: how can we (continue to) communicate digitally? Some of the actions taken during covid seem to have fallen silent. As compared to e-health practices, also for Digital Youth Work it is to say that 'Implementation' is also often absent here.
- Organisations with more experience can support other organisations. A learning network at national level might be interesting.
- Who in Flanders can take the lead to support the development of Digital Youth Work?

2. Cyprus

Key findings

a. About frameworks, models, tools

- The frameworks mostly used from youth organisations are DigComp, EntreComp, Competence Framework for Digital Youth Work Practice and a Digital Competence Model developed internally by one organisation for its staff members.
- Available digital competence frameworks that exist, and are officially enforced in Cyprus, are the Digital Strategy for Cyprus, the CyberSecurity Strategy of the Republic of Cyprus and the National Strategy on Online Safety for Students, Educators and Parents; Training course on the enhancement of digital skills in Cyprus are offered by the Cyprus Productivity Center, the Cyprus Computer Society and the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute (for educators).
- The Teacher Training Program for Digital Skills Development offered by the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute to educators, is one that can mostly relate to youth workers and can potentially serve as a starting base for the development of a Youth Worker Training Program for Digital Skills Development.
- Youth organisations in Cyprus seem to be using training content and material developed in the context of EU-funded or co-funded projects with the most prominent ones being SkillIT and CYberSafety.
- Self-assessment tools used by youth organisations in Cyprus are the MENTEP TET-SAT Tool developed by the 17 national education bodies under the coordination of European Schoolnet, the SkillIT Digital Readiness Self Assessment Tool developed in the context of the Erasmus+ funded project, the Digital Skills Accelerator Self Assessment Tool also developed in the context of an Erasmus+ funded project and the Digital Competence Wheel developed on the basis of DigComp from the Center for Digital Dannelse.



c. Shortcomings & Opportunities

- The current frameworks do not have a provision for compulsory training for e-skills which could ensure the acquisition of relevant knowledge by the target groups and the knowhow to apply it in their daily work with young people.
- The frameworks should be constantly updated and upgraded in order to sufficiently capture the ever-changing needs of youth work and youth workers and trainers in the digital environment.
- The already developed knowledge from national and European projects and initiatives could be exploited to facilitate the establishment and development of the field of youth work in Cyprus.
- As youth work is not officially recognised in Cyprus, youth organisations cannot operate solely as that, and they are forced to have youth work as only one part of the activities in order to survive.
- For advancing youth work to digital, by equipping their staff with the necessary digital skills and competences, youth organisations in Cyprus seem to be struggling, mainly financially, as the only income they have comes from EU-funded projects, which is not enough to enable for external and regular training.
- Youth organisations reported also that it is financially difficult for them to purchase advanced digital tools for upgrading their work, as free tools have limited capabilities and paid tools are very expensive.

Key Conclusions & Recommendations

- Digital youth work in Cyprus needs to come along with the recognition of youth work and the youth worker as a professional in order to lay the foundation for working and living from it.
- The upskilling of educators with the enhancement of their digital competences is not obligatory which can pose a problem to the advancement of the whole profession.

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- The existing digital frameworks in addition to the incorporation of digital skills for youth workers in the National Youth Strategy can facilitate the efforts made by the Youth Board of Cyprus.
 - On a European level, a digital competence framework for Europe to be adapted by its Member States will support the advancement of digital youth work in Europe. The Framework should moreover include capacity models for youth organisations, encouraging them to incorporate plans for regular training of their staff, either paid or voluntary. This will ensure that people working with and for youth are appropriately skilled and qualified to deliver proper training to young people.
 - The creation of a training course for advancing the digital skills of youth workers with Europe-wide certification recognition at European and national level might also help the efforts made.
 - The development of a European Repository for training on digital skills and digital youth work material to be submitted from all Member States might facilitate the effort of supporting youth workers to offer better and of higher quality activities to young people.

3. Estonia

Key findings

a. **About the frameworks/models/tools discovered**

- Estonia has well-established tools for supporting digital competence development in schools, particularly following the accelerated move to online learning environments during the current COVID crisis. Given the proximity and relevance of formal education to the field of youth work, the existing tools and habituated practices provide a fruitful basis for designing the necessary assessment tools in youth work, and research has been conducted on the needs and opportunities for possibly adapting the self-assessment tool “Digipeegel” (Digital Mirror) for use in youth work centres.

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- The two important online tools in formal education are Digipeegel (Digital Mirror) and Digipädevus.ee (Digital Competence). Digipeegel is a tool for assessing digital maturity (digital readiness) in schools – it proposes a process to map the schools’ digital performance and digital innovation by way of goal setting. According to their website, 216 school administrators and 423 schools in Estonia use this tool to manage their digital growth and innovation. As a first step, a self-assessment report is completed by school management, evaluating the school’s digital progress and capacity, using a total of 15 metrics covering 3 fields: pedagogical innovation, system change (the management and sustainability of change at organisational level), and the development of digital infrastructure (including digital security and user support). In the next steps, school staff and external experts join the working group for a more comprehensive assessment, which is followed by goal setting for digital development and innovation. This self-assessment tool has already been adapted for use in kindergartens and vocational schools. Kati Nõlvak’s research on the tool’s usefulness and adaptability for youth work (2020) suggested interest and need for such a tool and its decidedly feasible adaptations within the community of practice. The research paper arrived at the conclusion that, in the Estonian context, it would be most useful to develop a youth work digital maturity assessment model that is suitable for the local governance (municipality) level. Going forward, this would enable the local government to obtain a full view of its youth-related digital competences and capacity, encompassing schools of general education, vocational schools, kindergartens and youth work facilities.
 - Digipädevus.ee is a web resource that is based on the DigiCompEDU (for educators) and the DigiComp framework (for learners). It is a ready-to-use tool (competence model and self-assessment questionnaire) for individuals – school teachers, professors, academic supervisors, and learners. Ever since COVID placed the urgency of digital capacity building in high relief, the website has offered access to a Digital Accelerator (DigiKiirendi) tool/compilation, which guides users through a school-wide strengthening of digital competences. The compilation includes best practices and case studies from schools that have completed the Digital Accelerator Development Programme. The Digital Accelerator online tool (which includes the mapping of current



possibilities, needs, a SWOT analysis, a digital infrastructure analysis, etc.) can inform the design of the processes for capacity building in youth work institutions.

- For youth work specialists specifically, competence models are found in university level programmes (BA, MA, higher education diploma studies in youth work), and the award of professional qualification (the youth work occupational standard). Out of the three institutions of higher education that offer youth work (or related) curricula in Estonia, only one has an explicit study module dedicated to digital youth work. While certain digital competences are mentioned in the other programmes as well, the language remains that of separation – digital as a specific skill, one of many, rather than an integrated possibility and need within a hybrid youth work reality. Similarly, one may observe that, in the language of the youth work occupational standard, youth work is not placed within an inherently hybrid, fluid environment, and there is a perceived separation between habitual settings and digital settings (e.g. when referring to the need to foster safe environments). Digital behaviour is not quite integrated into the language of youth work standards beyond references to specific skills, activities and tools (e.g. MS Word).
- Furthermore, surveys reveal that a majority of practicing youth workers have neither university degrees in youth work nor state-awarded occupational qualifications, highlighting the need for digital competence models and development paths outside these formal structures.
- The mapping suggested that, in search of examples for digital competence frameworks for organisations, helpful tools may be found in unrelated fields – an online digital maturity recommender tool for Small and Middle-sized Enterprises (SMEs) provides an easy, visually interesting, compact experience for institutional assessment. Results appear in the form of summarized or comprehensive recommendations for the next steps in each of the 10 categories covered.



c. About the availability of such frameworks/models/tools at national level

- If we define availability as the ability of the user to access information or resources in a specified location and in the correct format, all online sources and tools covered in this report demonstrate the highest availability – open access, intuitive navigation, no log-in or membership required, quality site maintenance and updates ensured. If we take a broader approach to availability and include expectations of findability, sectoral visibility, and easy pathways to usage, it could be observed that interlinkages between the different tools are oftentimes lacking, or it is unclear how the tools complement (or compete with) each other. Surveyed youth workers have signalled, for example, the need for a single-access gateway to training information and available resources, indicating the perception (and user experience) that the existing websites do not provide a comprehensive view of what is available, nor make use of other existing solutions and potential horizontal interlinkages.
- For the online self-assessment tools in formal education listed in this report, availability in terms of thematic, semantic and terminological accessibility is constantly improved via user input – at the end of every section users are invited to comment on the question/statement and indicate desired alterations to wording.
- Accessibility, in technical terms, to the main frameworks of youth work competence assessment is good – to obtain the occupational qualification, one must upload their portfolio online, following which an assessment will take place online as well. At the same time, the format of the training (university programmes on youth work include occupational qualification attainment) makes it less accessible as people embarking on careers in youth work often already have university degrees in other fields and are not in a position to pursue another one – this reality signals a need for alternative, less formal competence frameworks, linked to feasible strategies for individual competence building and training courses that present a lower threshold for joining (i.e. not a full 3-year university course). One possibility would be developing frameworks/tools/models in conjunction with trainings as bridges and alternative pathways to the occupational qualification, should that be deemed desirable in its own right.



c. About the relevance for youth work or other educational sectors

- The tools developed for formal education and their use cases are of high relevance to youth work, and research conducted among Estonian youth centres suggests that the community of practice appreciates the need and usefulness of developing a digital youth work competence assessment tool. The adaptation of existing assessment tools (as developed for other educational sectors) has been deemed feasible and desirable.
- The youth work specific tool could be linked to the existing tools for formal education and provide a fuller view of digital competences in the youth and education sectors at municipal level, and be employed as part of the quality assessment process for youth work.
- The linkages between the tools in said sectors could form part of a broader interconnected environment for the future, where youth work participation, along with formal educational achievements, ‘leaves a mark’, a digital trace, and can be connected to the educational path and profile of the participant (see Q10).

d. Shortcomings and opportunities brought by identified tools/frameworks

- An important opportunity for the cohesion of the youth field lies in the prospect of linking the tools/frameworks from different sectors to each other for a comprehensive view of digital competence and development at municipal governance (or state) level. Such an interlinked view could also connect to a digitally recorded and supported path for youth field participants, both service providers and service users (e.g. linked to existing Estonian services of personalized study paths in formal education). Naturally, such interoperability depends heavily on national contexts (what the existing tools are, and which levels of governance would find this information useful).
- The individual tools present opportunities for enhancing resilience and supporting digital development, notably in times of rapid change and pressure to move services into hybrid and online settings. The tools suggest easy adaptability from field to field (formal education to youth work), opportunities to link digital maturity assessment results with tailored recommendations for the next steps, and to institutional (and personal) goal setting and tracking. An important opportunity inherent in the existing



tools (notably Digipeegel) is the idea of connecting the various levels of digital maturity into one comprehensive view – individual skills, organizational development and the broader youth field (comparative potential).

- Interoperability between the tools is rather lacking at present. Another shortcoming is related to user interest. Digipeegel in formal education has demonstrated lower levels of sustained interest and use than perhaps expected, with users citing the additional workload and adopting an ‘extra’ tool as demotivating factors. Regarding formal competence frameworks, the proportion of active youth workers going through designated university programmes and applying for occupational qualifications is relatively low, signalling a need for a different set of assessment opportunities, followed by recommendations for training and strategic steps outside (or perhaps supporting the path to) formal qualifications.
- Among university programmes, only one has an exclusively digital module, similarly, the professional qualification standard is not too specific in terms of digital skillset support and direction, referencing applications that no longer dominate youth work realities and communicative imperatives, i.e. MS Word skills. This suggests that the framework does not serve to direct all the relevant steps in competence development.

Key conclusions and recommendations

- The creation (adaptation) of a youth work specific tool to support self-assessment and/or as part of the quality control process is desirable and feasible.
- Existing tools are a ready role model and reference in terms of both design and use cases.
- Models for self-assessment tools are found in formal education as well as unrelated fields such as SME digitization.
- Individually developed tools should be interlinked as much as possible for the purpose of a cohesive data view at varying levels of governance, a more seamless user experience and reduction of ‘extra’ work, and a shift towards a more comprehensive digital path (along with support services) for youth work participants, connecting



educational and youth sector learnings. (This would entail youth work participation leaving a digital ‘mark’, similarly to educational records, for example, providing a fuller picture of a young person’s training and development).

- Locally, it would be most useful to develop the tool with the municipal government level in mind, allowing for a comprehensive view of youth-related services and quality (Digipeegel is already adopted for use at kindergartens and vocational schools, to which the youth work tool could be added). Here it is important to identify the most meaningful interconnections for local needs and circumstances.
- The self-assessment tool can be created to connect the different levels in youth work. For example: individuals fill it out, it then automatically completes certain aspects of the organizational questionnaire; additional questions are answered at organizational level, and the input subsequently informs an aggregate, municipal level competence assessment.
- Competency frameworks come with the occupational standard and university programmes. Only one university programme addresses the digital aspects of youth work explicitly. The practicing youth worker often does not enter these structures and a more accessible tool that links to the youth workers’ needs and practices would be desirable.
- Going forward, youth work is likely to benefit from a further perpetuation of the view that ‘digital’ is not a separate space, but rather an indistinguishable component of lived experience, and the necessary skills rather blend into one whole under the concept of smart youth work.

4. Germany

Key findings

- In Germany, there are many initiatives active in the field of digitalisation, youth and youth work. The diversity of actors is a strength. At the same time, the field is complex: There is neither a consensus on terminologies and concepts nor on competence



models. That makes it at times difficult to get an overview and to access existing resources. Thus, potential synergies that could arise from the diversity of stakeholders are not being fully harnessed.

- Looking at the training materials, it is worth noting that there is a refreshing range and variety. However, a challenge seems to be that existing materials are no longer updated and maintained. This is especially challenging in the rapidly changing field of digitalisation.
- Germany has a strong tradition of media education, which is influential in academic and professional discourse. Yet, at times there is little reference to international debates (Kerres 2017, 86). This may explain why the digital competence framework DigComp and the concept of digital youth work have received rather limited attention.
- While the discussion around the impact of digitalisation on young people is wide-ranging, there is less attention drawn to the digital transformation of youth work organisations. Unlike in other European countries – e.g. Finland (Verke 2019) – there is no data on the state of digital youth work in Germany. Therefore, no information can be given about the digital equipment and infrastructure of youth work organisations. With regard to the available training materials, it is worth noting that the focus is often on pedagogical work. The strategic development and planning of digital youth work from an organisational perspective is less emphasised.
- Looking at the self-assessment tools, it is noticeable that an action-based approach is rare. Self-assessment and knowledge-based approaches predominate.

Key conclusions and recommendations

- In Germany, a strategy for the implementation of digital youth work with clear goals and concrete steps should be developed. In addition, a broader orientation on and popularisation of the European digital competence framework DigComp in general and particularly within the non-formal youth sector seems desirable. This could help to provide orientation within the wide-ranging field of youth, youth work and digitalisation, to bundle existing resources and to establish synergies.

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- Since a wide range of resources already exist, funding should also be given to projects that, for example, make use of existing training materials, update, revise or remix them. Thus, a one-sided focus on innovation in funding allocation should be reconsidered. When developing new materials, however, a special focus should be placed on their use beyond the specific project.
 - A blind-spot seems to be the digital transformation of youth organisations. To address the issue, first of all, data should be collected on the current state of the digital transformation of youth organisations. The development of an assessment tool for youth organisations could be an instrument for this purpose.

Recommendations for the European level

- Digital competence frameworks for youth workers & trainers should allow leeway for adaptation at national level. The curriculum developed by the project "Angstfrei" could be used as a basis. The project implemented the two additional competence areas recommended by the expert group for digital youth work (digitalisation + society and digitalisation + youth work) and developed sub-competences.
- A capacity model for youth organisations should not only focus on infrastructure and competences of staff. It should also pay attention to the capacities of youth organisations to shape the discourse on youth-related internet policy. A capacity model should include a reflection on the extent to which youth organisations address the intersectional factors of young people's digital inclusion.
- The definition of digital youth work could be used as orientation (the digital as a tool, as an activity, as content in youth work). This would ensure the development of training materials for the various areas of digital youth work. The focus should not only be on the pedagogical use of digital tools, but also on the organisational level.
- When allocating funding the focus should not only be on innovation and the creation of new materials. Instead, there should also be appreciation and resources for using, developing, remixing, updating and translating existing materials.
- Capacities for Open Educational Resources (OER) should be built. For example training for youth workers on how to create, remix and use OER.

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- When allocating funding for the development of training materials, a focus should be on the user-centred design. Concepts for the use beyond specific projects could improve the long-term use of the materials.
 - Self-assessment tools for digital youth workers/ youth work trainers - ability-based tasks are very time-consuming in development and maintenance. Nevertheless, a good mix of self-assessment questions and knowledge and skill-based tasks is desirable for the assessment of digital competences. - Should allow leeway for adaptation at national level.

5. Iceland

Key Findings

- Digital youth work is a new concept so some challenges arose around definitions. Some of the material found was originally intended for schoolwork, but is either said by creators to work in the youth work setting or is based on non-formal or informal learning methods frequently used in the youth sector so they have been assessed by the researcher to fit the definitions of this mapping exercise.
- In total 14 projects were found that were considered to fall under the criteria for this research project. 13 are *Training materials* and 1 is an *Assessment tool*. The projects are very diverse and cover different areas of informal or non-formal education. They also vary in size from handbooks or online courses for one specific program to large databases of resources for youth workers.
- 9 out of 13 projects in the training category would be further categorised as training materials for trainers. Where the target groups are youth workers or anyone working with young people. They guide on various topics, in three of them, informal or non-formal education is the main topic of learning. They include databases of games and projects that can be used in youth work to reach educational goals. Furthermore, all three include how and why those games/projects might reach those goals and in many cases explanations of why those goals are important in the education and development of children. Those three database projects, despite their similarities,



differ in some key aspects, one focuses mainly on children from ages 6-9, one is a very comprehensive handbook for youth leaders on working with groups and the benefits of that group work and one is a more general game database for all ages.

- The remaining 6 training for trainers projects are focused on more specific topics ranging from building confidence to tackle Gender-Based Violence and sex education in youth work to leading religious youth work or training materials to certify as judges in table tennis.
- 2 of the 9 projects are originally aimed at teachers and the formal classroom setting. The researcher made the decision to include them as they had very strong informal learning approaches that could just as well be used in the youth work setting. One uses lego bricks to learn about science, programming, physics, technology, math and engineering and more. The other is on digital textile work.
- Furthermore, 4 projects were not aimed at youth workers at all but at youth or families. Two are guides for young people to further their interests, one in the field of music and the other in the field of environmental activism. And two are activities for families, of those ones was specifically made for education and fun during the time of covid where families were self-isolating, in quarantine or following the rules of social distancing.
- One project found is an assessment tool, it can both be used as a self-assessment tool for young people or youth organisations and it can also help youth workers make assessments of the youth attending.
- No projects in the Digital capacity/Digital competence have been made or participated in, in Iceland so there were none in that category.

Recommendations for further activities

- Our recommendations for *European training materials for digital youth work*: The work being done here is very interesting and can be very helpful to youth workers, working to reach youth online and in person. So, delivery of it to youth workers all over Europe would have to be clear and accessible. We would suggest looking at best



practice projects where educational material have been shared. From Iceland, the following one might be named as a good example <https://menntastefna.is/>. Another area to look for best practice might be e-sports where a lot of development and a change of mindset is happening.

- We also recommend developing the categories further. Training material for youth work for example can be online training materials for specific topics, for non-formal education in general or specifically for youth work that happens online. That last one we found lacking here in Iceland. No doubt more categories will emerge from other participants throughout Europe.
- Lastly what we found here in Iceland is that use cases and strength analysis was lacking and our research budget wasn't large enough to cover it from scratch. If this is the case in other countries in Europe, we think it would be very beneficial to do that research in the coming months.
- Our recommendations for European assessment tools: in Iceland, there was only one assessment tool so our main recommendation is to increase access to those, whether it be local to each country or on a European level.

6. Ireland

Key findings

- Ireland has well-established digital youth work initiatives that have emerged through both local community-led and top-down national sectoral approaches led by youth representative bodies, education social enterprises, and in-house by youth and non-formal education organisations.
- A range of frameworks, models and tools have been developed and delivered to enable the youth work sector to deliver rich learning experiences to young people using digital youth work as a catalyst.
- Extensive work at a country level has been carried out in Ireland led by key national partners, youth organisations and communities of youth work practitioners to develop



and implement digital youth work frameworks in order to efficiently impact digital youth work training, infrastructure and research practices. However, this is not enough.

- The primary and secondary education sector in Ireland catered for approximately 930,671 students in 2020. The Department of Education developed a Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020 and is currently developing a follow-up Digital Strategy in consultation with all stakeholders. As part of the first strategy, schools received €210m in Infrastructure Grants alone from the Department of Education to equip their schools with digital technologies to support teaching, learning and assessment. In addition to the grants, schools also received free Digital Learning Planning training, ongoing CPD trainings available and other initial teacher education (ITE) initiatives as part of the Digital Strategy Actions Plans. Additionally, a STEM Education Policy Statement (2017-2026) and STEM Education Implementation Plan (2017-2019) specifically addresses the STEM area of digital learning.
- By comparison, pre-pandemic the youth work sector in Ireland had the highest level of involvement in youth services in the EU, with 26% of young people active in a youth club/organisation. In addition to this, 46.5% of young people who attend a youth club/organisation are considered to be vulnerable and/or at risk. To date the Department for Children, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Youth (DCEDIY) have not developed a digital strategy to cover the non-formal learning and social, personal and emotional development education that takes place within early childhood care and education (ECCE), and youth work settings. Considering the Department of Education are now developing the second Digital Strategy for Schools covering the period 2021 and beyond. Plus, a further €200m has been allocated to fund the Digital Strategy for Schools up to 2027 as part of the Irish Government's Strategy and National Development Plan, Project Ireland 2040.
- Within this mapping exercise, it is evident that although there appears to be a high level of toolkits, frameworks and creative supports available to local youth workers in Ireland, there is a national strategy gap to support middle management, local youth officers and local coordinators to allow for national provision of digital youth work as



identified in the Creative Ireland Report 2020. Newer government initiatives such as the Local Creative Youth Partnership supported by cross-Governmental department Creative Ireland, have the opportunity to support this gap in association with local Education and Training Boards but this will require strategic review and commitment to ensure sustainability at government level.

Key conclusions and recommendations

- **Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnership Projects**

Three significant projects, completed between 2017-2019, provide a solid foundation from which to develop and embed digital youth work in Ireland, and Europe, at policy, strategy, framework, and action plan level. These projects have provided evidence and best practice, training toolkits and more - for youth organisations to enhance their capacity with examples to contextualise and enhance youth work organisations policies and programmes.

Digital Youth Work Project: The NYCI and Kinia (formerly Camara Ireland) collaborated with partners from six different countries across Europe on the project, [Digital Youth Work.eu](https://www.digitalyouthwork.eu). The project aimed to build the capacity to deliver digital youth work at local, national and European levels through best practice videos, training materials and the development of the [European Guidelines for Digital Youth Work](https://www.digitalyouthwork.eu/european-guidelines-for-digital-youth-work). The guidelines provide organisations with guidance on how to develop a digital youth work action plan across six strategic pillars; strategy, culture, governance and management, human resources, infrastructure, and partnerships. These pillars remain relevant today, however, to be truly effective organisations require a cross governmental approach and for DCEDIY to lead the vision, strategy, funding and action plans to ensure equitable development and delivery of digital across all areas of youth work.

Skill IT for Youth Project: A collaboration between Youth Work Ireland and Kinia, and five European partners aimed to build the capacity of youth organisations, youth workers and policymakers through the development of online competency framework self-assessment tools, digital learning planning tools, training toolkits and policy briefs to enable the strategic growth of digital youth work in Ireland and Europe. In the 2019 Skill IT Study on digital skills and youth work in Ireland the data indicated little evidence of a coordinated digital learning



vision and plan at organisational level. It also highlighted an “awareness and intention amongst most senior managers to develop and incorporate this as part of their next strategy planning cycles. Unlike the formal education system, the youth sector does not have a digital strategy and action plan to reference for strategic direction. Efforts across the sector are currently driven by individuals in organisations and tend to be disjointed.”

YouthWorkandYou.org: A collaboration across five countries aimed to provide digital curriculum materials on five contemporary youth work themes; one of which is Youth Work in the Digital World. The website is a rich source of materials and resources for youth work practitioners.

- **Continue multi-partnership approaches** by organisations who are leading the way in the field of capacity building digital youth work and education. Key players to date have been the National Youth Council of Ireland, Maynooth University, Kinia, Education Training Boards (ETBs), in collaboration with leading Irish youth organisations listed at the beginning of this report.
- **National youth work organisations Foroige, Youth Work Ireland and YMCA are developing in-house training for staff** utilising a digital youth work approach to enhance existing, and develop new programmes. This has been enabled by staff developing digital expertise through funded training courses and university programmes, infrastructure grants and support from leading multi-partnership organisations.
- **Innovation-focused Government bodies and departments;** The Science Foundation of Ireland, Creative Ireland and the Department of an Gaeltacht are leading the way to inspire a long term multi-government funding approach to enhancing access to digital youth work and STEAM education for young people in out of school settings. As the multi-pronged beneficial outcomes for young people are starting to be realised, emerging evidence and impact reports are providing further justification for funding national specialised local resources and digital youth workers for young people.
- **Continued lobbying and advocacy to build on the recognition of the role digital youth work plays in enhancing and accelerating the impact of Government department**



strategies and initiatives; these include An Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge (The 20 Year Strategy for the Irish Language), Óige Ildánach (Creative Youth Plan) Creative Ireland, ETB's UBU Your Place Your Space, Better Outcomes Brighter Futures, and more.

- **Many smaller social enterprises and creative industry partners are offering workshops and local specialised workshop resources;** to impact and inspire day-to-day practice in youth work settings such as Make Create Innovate in Dublin, Fab Labs and Digi-Whizz based in County Kerry, Reel Life Science. These creative organisations remain a vital source of innovation and inspiration.
- Education and Training Boards (ETBs) are implementing **assistive technology-enhanced learning strategies at local level** and in partnership with Creative Ireland, appointing a pilot number of Local Creative Youth Partnership (LCYP) Coordinators. The LCYP programme particularly focuses on bringing together creative partnership opportunities with a focus on providing creative experiences for young people, which includes but is not limited to - digital creativity and STEAM learning experiences developed in consultation with young people.
- **Ongoing research and publications in the field of digital youth work** is required to build on the important work carried out to date. This is critical to ensure Ireland continues to be recognised as a leader in digital youth work in Europe and internationally.
- **Joined up partnership and collaboration between the formal and non-formal education sectors** to share best practices, infrastructure and provide a holistic, whole education system support to young people at school and within their communities. Currently, the Music Generation programme is providing an exciting example of a national programme that can bridge the gap between classroom access to creativity, whilst also linking specialised support to after-school.



Recommendations for the European level

- Develop a centralised competency measurement system for digital youth workers practitioners with the ability to measure the impact and outcomes of digital youth work education and training programmes.
- Develop a centralised competency measurement system for youth work organisations similar to the [SELFIE tool](#) for formal education/schools.
- Develop a centralised database of digital youth work training materials for youth workers and organisations with the ability for organisations to filter, select and easily use the materials based on the specific needs of the young people they serve.
- Create a centralised platform where youth workers and organisations can request new trainings and materials required to fulfil their day-to-day work with young people and stay ahead of digital trends.
- Develop a centralised self-assessment tool for digital youth workers to assess their current skill level with an indication of where their skill level is at in comparison to their national and European counterparts.

The caveat underpinning all of the above is that it needs to be long term sustainable and maintained so that the information remains up-to-date and relevant. Users need to feel confident the resources are funded, implemented and maintained for real impact to be monitored and measured.

7. Lithuania

Key findings

- Digital youth work in Lithuania has taken its first steps during the last few years and is not perceived as a clear priority in youth policy, however, some strategic steps are taken to support its implementation. At the end of 2020, Department of Youth Affairs (DYA) published its vision for the future of Youth Policy 2030, which consists of 6 main strands, one of which is digital youth work methods. DYA is organizing Innovation funding project where youth work organizations can apply addressing their needs in digital youth work as well (development of competences, tools, development of



resources, infrastructure and other). Experts noted that the Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for digital youth work and that youth organizations were not prepared for it. The lack of digital skills among youth workers has become apparent, therefore, training for youth workers was organised.

- Currently, the official definition of digital youth work in Lithuania is related to digital methods used in youth work, however, the definition of digital youth work as proposed by the European Commission is introduced in the information section for digital youth work in an official website of DYA. As digital youth work in Lithuania is described as a method, it is not explicitly incorporated into general youth work training, national youth work occupational standards and youth worker competence standards. However, experts suggest digital youth work competencies should be more explicitly described and incorporated into these standards.
- Concerning national resources, desk research and experts indicate there is lack of national resources or resources in Lithuanian language dedicated for digital youth work. DYA provide recommendations on how to use digital youth work methods. When talking about resources, NGO “Nectarus”, Department of Youth Affairs and youth work trainers direct youth workers and organizations to European resources, VERKE’s (Development Centre for Digital Youth Work, Finland) materials.
- Interviewed experts stressed the need for continuous and accessible to all youth workers training/courses on digital youth work. Especially, as there is an early stage of developing this part of youth work in Lithuania, experts indicate the need to support developing attitudes that support digital youth work. They observed that digital youth work sometimes is perceived as a responsibility of a particular digitally competent person in organisation and not as a necessary competence for all youth workers and an inevitable part of youth work. Trainers also observed that it is a challenge to bring new ideas to organizations when only one youth worker participates in a course: they face resistance to change, lack of understanding of the importance of digital youth work, therefore, experts recommend developing a training package for youth work organizations when shared knowledge is created. There are differences in individual competence level as well as different needs of young people in cities and smaller



towns, it would be helpful to work directly with a particular youth work organization and their needs, and support achieving the next nearest step in developing digital youth work.

- *Other ways of learning about digital youth work.* DYA established several international partnerships with youth work organizations to exchange good practices in digital youth work, where DYA representatives and youth workers participate together. Interviewed experts observe a voluntary exchange of good practices of digital youth work among Lithuanian youth work organizations too. International projects, Erasmus+ is a great resource for youth workers and youth work organizations to learn about digital youth work.
- *About the frameworks/models/tools discovered.* Currently, there are no national frameworks developed for youth workers and organizations for developing digital competences and organizational capacities. In this area youth work trainers and the Department of Youth Affairs rely on European resources and good examples from countries, where the digital youth work is well developed. However, according to experts interviewed, there is a need to develop such frameworks, that would be carefully adapted to the national context. Also, there is a need to collect other resources in Lithuanian language, that information would be accessible not only for English proficient youth workers. Experts agree that best digital youth work practices from Lithuanian youth work organizations could be collected and shared (blogs, videos, descriptions, etc.) to make this area a part of youth work and not a method used under pandemic circumstances. It is suggested to financially compensate (even with small amounts) description of good practices to encourage this kind of knowledge sharing.
- *At national level there are no existing competence frameworks/models for youth workers' competences or organizational digital capacities.*
- *Though there are two comprehensive courses for youth workers, one of them is in English, therefore, might not be accessible for all youth workers. Moreover, funding for these training courses is not ensured, therefore, the strategic continuous*



development of youth workers' competences in digital youth work currently is not provided.

Key conclusions and recommendations

- Experts agree, that digital youth work should be addressed in a systematic way in Lithuania and become one of the priorities in youth policy. There is a lack of national regulation and guidelines of digital youth work, a formal description of what digital youth work is, what the tools are, the risks and hazards identified, etc. Digital youth work should go beyond the use of digital tools in work with young people. Other related topics and competences must be included. As remote youth work is more prevalent now, there is a lack of regulation and guidance on how to deal with data protection in online digital youth work, how to count online work hours, clients, how to measure and evaluate work etc. Digital youth work needs to be approached in a more systematic way. Experts also observed, that there is a need to actively promote youth workers attitudes towards digital youth work.
- There is a lack of familiarisation for youth workers on the EU Recommendations on digital youth work. Both the staff themselves should focus on familiarising with this information and national training could be organised on this topic.
- There is a need for digital youth work training on regular bases. Though there are two courses for digital youth work developed by national experts, they are not organized on regular bases (only based on received funding by providing organizations), therefore continuity of learning is not ensured. Training could be tailored to the different competences of existing staff. For example, some need a complete grounding in the basics, how to work with different tools or applications, while others may already be able to share their experience in digital youth work and improve their performance.
- There is a need to have digital youth work implementation examples - case studies presented - not only from countries that have well developed this area, but also from countries or organizations that are in transition, still developing this area, for example, where digital youth work is described as a method and what are further steps to take

to develop this area of expertise (how to make a transition from early development of digital youth work in a country to more advanced level of practices).

- While using European resources and good examples from different countries experts observed the need to adapt it for national context or provide leading mentoring as digital youth work in Lithuania is taking first steps and international examples are more advanced. However, to start with, it is enough to translate resources, put it into practice and then decide if there is a need to develop a national version of a particular resource.

8. Romania

Key findings

a. About the frameworks/models/tools discovered

- All models are worthy of being multiplied. Some elements of the models presented could be taken into consideration and analysed in depth for further development of theoretical frameworks and design of particular programmes targeting youth workers and youth organisations.
- Initiatives are mostly born from the following combination: real need + drive of the organisation + previous initiatives of the organisation on which to build upon. Some initiatives are built upon years of previous work, while others are built based on the current needs generated by the pandemic - these ones have as a main success criterion the quality of the trainers/facilitators involved, be them pools of experienced trainers (e.g., Digital Youth Worker / DigiTin) or contracting external specialists (e.g., Concordia Academia or TOT on remote learning).

b. About the availability of such frameworks/models/tools at national level

- There is no model available at national level and no formal models and trainings in place. All models are punctual initiatives which, even if they have thousands of beneficiaries, function based on the motivation of the initiating organisation.

- During desk research, the most visible resource was the training Digital Youth Worker / DigiTin, designed and implemented by the National Agency, with the support of the Ministry of Youth and Sports.
- There are only a few initiatives developed by organisations and experts which were involved in digital competencies initiatives before the pandemic.
- Some of them constitute external knowledge to some organisations, external experts supporting youth organisations develop their own training products, digital assessments and particularisation of the activities for the online environment.

c. About the relevance for youth work or other educational sectors

- Models are diverse, have different forms and approaches, and target different specialists (youth workers, teachers, organisations, schools, funded projects, different geographical areas, different means of promotion). Some of them are specifically tailored (e.g. digital combined with media literacy), others have a greater generality level. Nevertheless, there is a greater need for more initiatives, or to multiplication of the current ones.

d. Shortcomings and opportunities brought by identified tools/frameworks

- A shortcoming could be the limitations in comparing impact of the various training programmes, due to their diversity; on the other hand, the diversity of approaches and methods used shows a great potential for further use and development.
- An opportunity is that, given proper resources, these initiatives could be further improved and scaled-up - since there is a great need of the target groups addressed for further training.

Key conclusions and recommendations

- Even if the (self)assessment tools for organisations and youth workers were adapted from other European models, we could observe an emergence of programmes specifically tailored to a target group (either youth workers, NGO representatives, teachers, or even adults which work with a specific category of youth). Both in terms



of approach and methods the models are innovative, take into account the latest trends and have a practical approach. Their initiators are motivated to produce real change and, ultimately, positively and visibly impact the lives of Romanian youth.

- Transversal elements of success identified in the Romanian practices are: best practices were proposed by organisations either (1) working with highly qualified external experts which are dedicated, gained experience in several different environments, and are inclined towards putting the needs of the beneficiaries in the center, or (2) demonstrating a strong motivation towards increasing the quality of youth work/teaching, and/or (3) developing these initiatives based on their intense previous work (either building a strong team of trainers, or building upon previous projects and making them more and more complex etc). A focus was observed on giving a high-quality learning experience to training participants, starting with “why” (the vision, the ultimate goal, the change we envisage in the youth), designing a training which mixes several approaches and theories, using the most applicable methods and tools.
- In Romania there was no model identified that tackles digital capacity of (youth work) organisations, and this could be considered a priority, not only in terms of developing a framework, but also to indicate suitable tools for the different areas a youth organisation should progress/improve processes when it comes to digitalisation.
- As a general recommendation, there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution. The success of any model proposed at European level would be reached if the experts involved have a fair amount of both theoretical and practical experience, and infuse the proposed models with scenarios of adaptation to different settings.
- Also, as a general recommendation, a scaling up of some of the success models (by providing funding, ensuring that more experts and organisations become capable of delivering those programmes, and generally multiplying to as many youth workers as possible) could make the gap between youth workers that are digitally savvy and youth workers that do not have the proper digital competencies.

9. Turkey

Key findings

- The mapping process of digital youth work practices was interesting and new for the national context because mainly everyone was doing something about digital work, unfortunately no one was recording what they did. The trainings, workshops and other studies were for a short while, instant and not sustainable. On the other hand, the national digital youth work mainly focused on the tools not the assessment of competences or practices.
- The youth work in national level is not well structured. It shows also the independency of youth work in local. However, neither Ministry of Youth and Sport nor Universities had not developed any competence model for youth works and youth organization for digital competence. Only, very few youth organizations are aware of the competence models or frameworks. On the other hand, the youth workers and youth organizations are digital tools very actively.
- Among the organizations which are aware of the competence model, the European digital competence framework (DigComp) is the most popular.
- The educators of formal learning systems, teachers, trainers and other responsible people had to have a digital transformation because of the Covid pandemic. However, the youth work national-wide was not supported during this period.
- Unfortunately, there is no digital competence models or frameworks for youth workers and trainers. It shows us that we can adapt the DigComp model easily in Turkey. It would be a great chance to disseminate and the DigComp in Turkey and translate it into Turkish as soon as possible.
- Very few NGOs and trainers are using competence models and almost none of them report using self-assessment tools, while in trainings youth workers and trainers seem to mostly focus on the use of digital tools without being interested in developing other attitudes and behaviours in the process.

Contributors' biographies

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Veronica is a professional with more than 15 years of experience in the youth sector, working intensively at the intersection of human rights, education, youth, new technologies and digital governance.

She has been engaged in research, public policy and project management initiatives while consulting for various stakeholders such as Council of Europe, UN agencies, European Union bodies and other international organisations. Her recent activity includes contributions on youth and Artificial Intelligence, youth participation in Internet Governance multistakeholder processes, developing media and digital competences for educational and youth actors, understanding the impact of digital transformation on Civil Society Organisations, civic actors and social inclusion of young people.

Starting with 2021 Veronica joined the efforts of the Estonian National Agency for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps as the Coordinator of Work Package 2-DYW SNAC “Digital competences and capacities in youth work” and of the overall New Power in Youth SNAC.

Lasse, Siurala

Member of the European Expert Group

Dr. Adjunct Professor Lasse Siurala.

A former Director of Youth Services at the City of Helsinki and the Director of Youth and Sports at the Council of Europe. He has written on youth participation, youth work, youth policy and evaluation; Ord, J, et al. (eds) “The Impact of Youth Work in Europe: A Study of Five European Countries”, Helsinki 2018. He has contributed to the Youth Partnership “Youth Knowledge” books including (as the chief editor) vol 5 of the “History of Youth Work in Europe” (2016) and a book on digitalisation (Connolly & Moxon, eds.).



Laimonas Ragauskas

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Laimonas lives in Vilnius, Lithuania and works as a facilitator, supervisor and coach mainly in the area of non-formal learning and training for various youth work organisations as well as local and European institutions. Laimonas is recently working a lot with innovative digital solutions in the fields of youth work and education. He was involved in co-design of online self-assessment tools for youth workers and trainers. Every year he's involved in running several European online courses in the field of youth work.



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Ülly Enn is an early stage researcher at Ragnar Nurkse Department of Innovation and Governance at Tallinn University of Technology and in the interdisciplinary research collective P2P Lab. She has 25+ years of experience in the education and youth sectors, in public sector innovation and the EU policies, having worked at the Estonian NA of EU youth programmes, Ministry of Education and Research, Permanent Representation of Estonia to the EU, SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion RC etc. She has contributed to many strategic initiatives, trainings and publications both in Estonia and globally.



Michele Di Paola

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Michele Di Paola is a youth worker and trainer, expert in digital youth work and digital media literacy projects, either in Italy with his organization Spazio Giovani, and in Europe, where he is active in designing training courses for youth workers about the impact of digitalization in non formal



education, (Dig-It up! , Citizenship Reloaded) and in digitalization of youth work tools, from Council of Europe's Compass manual to SALTO European Training Strategy competence models for trainers and youth workers. He blogs about these topics in Italian and English, on his website www.dipaola.me

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MarCus is a Vienna-based international trainer, facilitator, consultant and project manager. His fields of expertise are international co-operation, creative and impacting approaches in education and training, social innovation, and the capacity-building and empowerment of civil society, organisations and individuals. MarCus has been on board as coordinator or expert in various international consortia in charge of large-scale and long-term co-operation projects and resource production in education, training and management.



Andreas Karsten

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Andreas Karsten, nerdy researcher and geeky journalist, has worked for more than 25 years in the youth sector at the junction of policy, research, media & practice. He works at Youth Policy Labs, the global think tank hosting youthpolicy.org, and coordinates the transnational research activities of RAY, the self-governed network on the research-based analysis of the European youth programmes. He loves interweaving new and old media with youth work and non-formal education, and is an avid blogger, podcaster, interviewer, technician, and producer.





Adriana Popescu

National researcher, Romania

Adriana is an educational expert passionate about experiential learning, gamification, innovation and designing innovative learning experiences. Graduate of Maastricht School of Management MBA, she researched for her thesis the drivers of innovation in the nonprofit sector. Her latest research topics in the youth field include: organisational learning in youth NGOs, youth employability. For almost 10 years, she worked for the biggest grant-making foundation in Romania, Civil Society Development Foundation, building a strategic understanding of civil society projects and grant-making schemes.



Andreas Andreou

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Andreas is an active youth worker specialising in the field of internet safety awareness, digital youth work and sports.

He shows particular interest in designing interactive workshops for youth facilitating their competence acquisition and fostering critical thinking. At the moment, he is serving as a CEO at two NGOs in Cyprus while he also coaches groups of young people in ESC projects.



Aytaç Uzunlas

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Aytaç Uzunlas studied Nuclear Energy Engineering.

Currently, he is working as the Director of AvecaPro.

He has coordinated European Union and Erasmus+ projects since 2007. He has gained high-level knowledge of and skills in project management and coordination after working in 45



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Music Generation Officer for Galway City. Expertise in STEAM learning & 21st Century learning approaches using emerging technologies in youth settings. Engaged bi-lingual disadvantaged communities for over 15 years across Scotland & Ireland. Published author in peer reviewed journals, a passion for social research and development. Co-developer & lecturer on the level-8 in Digital Creativity Certificate with NUI Maynooth, co-developed national digital youth work guidelines and best practice with European partners on www.digitalyouthwork.eu and the www.digipathways.io



Marii Väljataga

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Marii Väljataga is a researcher and research coordinator for EU youth programs at the Estonian National Agency for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps. She holds a PhD in history from the European University Institute (Italy). She has previously worked in the field of library technology and information service innovation, as well as digital public history in memory institutions. She is involved in European youth work through her Belgian NGO, The Footprints Initiative, vzw, which promotes environmental education and creativity.



Nijs, Davy

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Davy Nijs holds a master social care work and is a senior researcher in the University College Leuven-Limburg. He is a promotor, supervisor and researcher of several practice-based research projects. (Inter)nationally, he is recognised as an expert in media literacy, digital inclusion and e-health. At the moment he works at Mediawijs (the Flemish Knowledge Centre for Digital and Media Literacy) for implementing a plan for the Flemish government concerning digital inclusion and media literacy for vulnerable groups. He also works as a consultant in different projects concerning digitalization.



Rasa Pauryte

National researcher, Lithuania

I position myself as a social researcher over the past 10 years working in the field of applied research industry with a dedication to mixed-method research approach. Currently, my research projects are concentrated in developing digital products, educational, organizational development and youth work fields.

