



Digital transformation of inclusive Youth Work

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the European Union



Udruga Studio B



YOUTH POWER
Germany



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Austria



YOUTH
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STRATEGY FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF YOUTH WORK AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

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1. INTRODUCTION

Association Studio B, in cooperation with international partners from Austria, Germany and Sweden, is implementing the project "Digital transformation of inclusive Youth Work, 2022-2-HR01-KA220-YOU-000096214" since the beginning of 2023. The project is co-financed by the European Union through the Erasmus+ program, Key Activity 2 Collaborative Partnerships, and was approved at the invitation of the Agency for Mobility and EU Programs.

This document presents the strategy of digital transformation of youth work at the local level, and it was created as part of the implementation of the project. In a world where digital technology plays an increasingly important role in all aspects of life, it is crucial that civil society organizations engaged in youth work recognize and take advantage of digital tools to improve their activities, accessibility and effectiveness.

The goal of this strategy is to provide guidance to civil society organizations that want to adapt their work and use the potential of digital tools in youth work. Through the application of digital technologies, organizations will be able to improve non-formal education, communication with young people, availability of resources and improve the way they work.

This document provides an overview of the current state of use of digital tools in youth work at the local level, identifies challenges and obstacles, and offers guidelines for improving digital literacy among young people and civil society organizations. Also, the strategy includes a plan for the implementation of digital tools, support and training for the effective use of digital tools, and ways to monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the application of digital transformation.

Through digital transformation, civil society organizations will be able to provide young people with innovative and adapted forms of support, open up new opportunities for learning and engagement, and contribute to their development and success. Digital tools will enable better communication, collaboration and access to information, creating a dynamic environment for young people. The implementation of this strategy will be a key step in strengthening civil society organizations and providing quality and relevant services to young people in the digital age.

This Strategy is the result of the cooperation, expertise and commitment of the partner consortium in achieving a common goal - providing support and incentives to all relevant stakeholders at the local level for the successful implementation of the digital transformation process.

2. CURRENT STATE ANALYSES – RESEARCH RESULTS AND FOCUS GROUPE

In order to analyze the current situation, two surveys and one structured dialogue using the focus group method were implemented.

The first survey included young people from Brod-Posavina County in order to determine which digital tools they are familiar with and what their level of knowledge of digital tools is; while with the second survey we covered civil society organizations active in youth work from the area of Slavonia. The structured dialogue included 20 young people from the wider area of Nova Gradiška, aged 15 to 30, who live in rural areas and face economic and geographical obstacles.

The rest of this chapter contains the results and analyzes of the research.



2.1. YOUTH AND USE OF DIGITAL TOOLS

The purpose and goal of the research

The questionnaire tried to include young people from Brod-Posavina County in order to determine which digital tools they are familiar with and what their level of knowledge of digital tools is.

Measuring instruments

As a measuring instrument, we used a questionnaire that we compiled for the purposes of this research. When answering the questionnaire, the respondents were told that the questionnaire was voluntary and anonymous.

Respondents

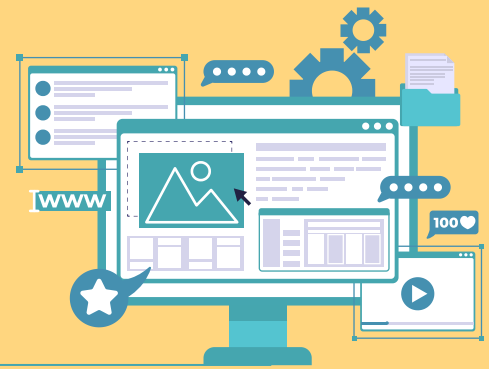
The questionnaire was filled out by 56 young people from Brod-Posavina County, and the respondents were relatively covered by age. The sample was convenient, and the questionnaire was distributed via social networks.

Procedure

Data collection was carried out online, and the questionnaire was answered anonymously. The purpose of the research was briefly explained to the respondents and that participation was free and that they could withdraw at any time if they wanted to. The questionnaire consisted of 18 questions, of which 11 were mandatory. Furthermore, 12 questions contained answers, and the answers to other questions were descriptive. The questionnaire was open during March and April 2023.



RESULTS



There were three answers to the first question "Age".

An equal number of people between the ages of 15 and 19 and those between the ages of 26 and 30 participated in the research (33.9% or 19 people per age range). Slightly less, 18 persons or 32.1% of respondents were between the ages of 20 and 25.

1

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The second question was about the gender of the respondents, and the answers were offered. 35 females (62.5%) and 21 males (37.5%) participated in the research. Persons who did not want to declare their gender did not participate in the research.

3

With the third question, we wanted to investigate whether the respondents live in urban or rural areas, in order to gather the most relevant needs of young people from rural areas. 35 people (62.5%) from a rural area (village) and 21 people from an urban area (city) participated in the research.



4

With the next question, we wanted to investigate how often young people use computers or smartphones. The answers were offered and were stated as "never"; "rarely", "sometimes", "often" and "every day". 91.1% of participants (51 people) use computers or smartphones every day, and 8.9% (5 people) use them often.



A more detailed analysis shows that people between the ages of 15 and 19 and between the ages of 26 and 30, as well as men and women, often use computers or smartphones, and they are mostly people from rural areas (4 out of 5).



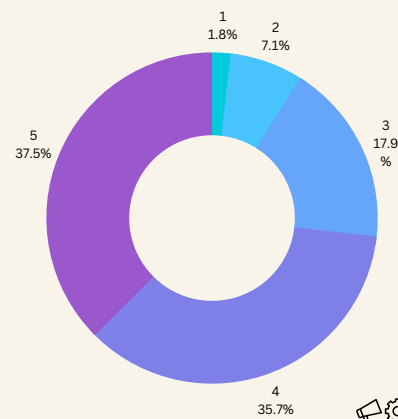
The fifth question was about navigating the use of digital tools. "How well are you using digital tools (e.g. online collaboration tools, content creation tools, event management tools)?" (Please mark your answer on a scale where 1 means = I don't cope at all and 5 means = I cope very well)."

5



Most of the participants (21 or 37.5%) rate their coping skills as a 5; slightly less (20 participants or 35.7%) rate their skill as 4; 10 participants (17.9%) rate the skill as 3; 4 people or 7.1 rate it as 2, and only one person (1.8%) does not know how to use digital tools at all.

The average score is 4, and the results are shown graphically in chart 1. A more detailed analysis shows that young people are equally good at using digital tools regardless of age group. The comparison of the results also showed that young people evaluate their coping skills equally regardless of their place of residence (rural / urban).



6

With the next question, we wanted to investigate which digital tools young people had heard of or which they used. The question was mandatory and they could mark multiple answers and/or add their own answer. The answers offered were "Kahoot!"; "Moodle"; "Padlet"; "Zoom"; "Mentimeter"; "Quizlet"; "MindMeister", "Scratch"; "Flipgrid" and none of the above.



Most of the participants heard/used Zoom (50 people or 89.3%) and Kahoot! (42 people or 75%). This is followed by Quizlet (24 people or 42.9%), Moodle (20 people or 35.7%), Padlet (14 people or 25%); Mentimeter (12 people or 21.4%). 4 people have not heard of any of the above, and less than 5 people have heard of/used MindMeister; Scratch and Flipgrid. 5 people mentioned other tools, such as Canva, Wordpress, Office 365, Yammer, GoogleMeet; Wordwall, Poplet; Merlin and Classroom. Most participants (15) chose 3 tools.



A more detailed analysis found that the majority of respondents from rural areas (25 out of a total of 35) had heard of or used mainly three or fewer digital tools, and only 9 participants from urban areas had heard of or used three or fewer digital tools, which leads to the conclusion that young people in rural areas have certain limitations in terms of information and availability of digital tools compared to their peers from urban areas.



7

The next question was about participation in non-formal education activities in the digital environment. No answers were offered, and a total of 38 participants answered, of which 25 answered in the affirmative. There is a noticeable difference in relation to the place of residence. Affirmative answers were given by 14 young people from rural areas (i.e. 40%) and 11 young people from urban areas (i.e. 52.38%).

They most often mention Zoom, Canva, Kahoot and Google Meet as the tools used.



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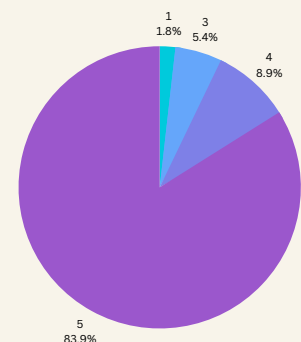
The eighth question was "How did you find out, that is, how did you learn to use these digital tools?" The participants entered the answers independently. We received 37 answers to this question. The participants most often state that they learned/learned to use digital tools independently, during education or at work. Some have learned from other people or through the Internet, workshops or courses.



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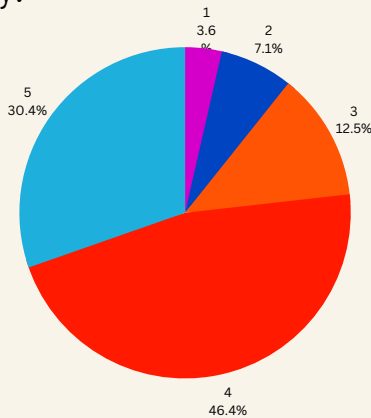
The next question was about Internet availability. The participants had to mark their answer on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means = never, and 5 means = every day. 83.9% of participants chose 5; 5 participants (8.9%) 4; 3 persons (5.4%) 3; and only one person indicated that the Internet was never available to them.

The average grade is 4.73. The results are graphically presented in Chart 2.



10

With the tenth question, we wanted to investigate the quality of the speed and stability of the Internet connection available to young people. Answers were offered on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means very slow and unstable, and 5 means excellent speed and stability.



Most of the participants, 26 of them (46.4%) rated the quality of the speed and stability of the Internet connection as 4; 17 participants (30.4%) state that the speed and stability are excellent, 7 participants (12.5%) give a rating of 3; 4 participants give a score of 2, and two participants rate the internet connection as slow and unstable. The average grade is 3.93. The results are graphically presented in Chart 3. Of the 13 people who rated the quality of the Internet connection below average (up to 3); 9 participants live in rural areas, and 4 in urban areas.



11

The next question was "How often do you use communication applications (e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Viber)?" The question was mandatory, and the answers were "never", "rarely", "sometimes", "often", "every day". The majority of participants (92.9%) use applications every day, 3 participants often, and only 1 sometimes. People who use apps often or sometimes live in rural areas.



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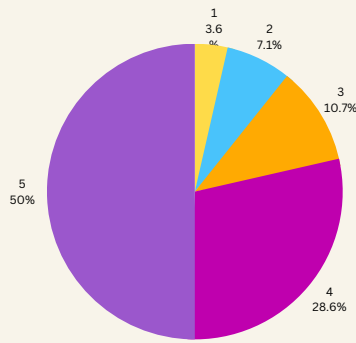
The 13th question was "Do you think that digital tools are accessible to young people in your local community?", and the answers offered were "Not at all", "To some extent not", "Sometimes", "To some extent they are" and "They are completely". More than half of participants (53.6%) state that digital tools are fully accessible to young people, a quarter of participants (28.6%) believe that tools are somewhat accessible, 7 participants (12.5%) believe that digital tools are sometimes accessible to young people; 2 participants (3.6%) believe that to some extent they are not, and one participant (1.8%) believes that digital tools are not completely accessible to young people in the local community. The results are graphically presented in Chart 4.



12

With the next question, we wanted to find out which digital tools are available to young people in their local community. This question was optional and we received 30 answers. Participants mostly mention Zoom, Kahoot and Canva.



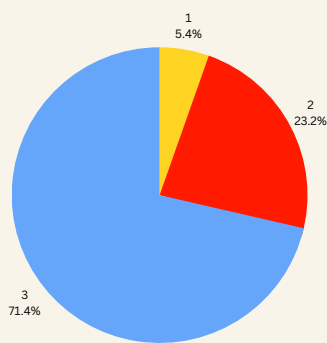


Of the 26 people who think that digital tools are accessible to some extent, sometimes that is, that they are not accessible to some extent or at all, 19 of them live in a rural area, and 7 in an urban area.



14

With the next question, we wanted to investigate how young people would like civil society organizations to use digital tools in their youth work. The participants had to write an answer, and the question was optional, and we got 27 answers. Participants state that CSOs should show young people how to use digital tools, through quizzes and fun games, and use them for the purpose of strengthening digital skills, organizing meetings, workshops, education and presentations, developing creativity, providing counseling, etc.



The 15th question was: Do you think that digital tools could improve the quality and/or frequency of your participation in youth work activities, and there were three answers: "yes", "no" and "I don't know". Almost three quarters of participants (71.4% or 40 participants) believe that digital tools would improve the quality and/or frequency of participation in youth work activities. A little less than a quarter of participants (23.2%) do not know whether digital tools would improve the quality of participation, and 3 participants (5.4%) believe that digital tools would not improve the quality and/or frequency of their participation in youth work activities. The results are graphically presented in Chart 5.

15

16

With the next question, we wanted to investigate how young people have access to a computer or a smartphone. Participants marked their answer on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means never and 5 means daily.

91.1% of participants indicated that access to a computer or smartphone is available to them every day, 3 participants (5.4%) gave a rating of 4, and two participants a rating of 2. All participants who consider that access to a computer or smartphone is available to them less than daily live in a rural area.





17

The penultimate question was "Which digital tools would you like to learn to use to participate in nonformal learning activities?" The question was optional and we received 26 answers. Participants mentioned Slack, Trello, Wordpress, Popplet, Kahoot, Zoom, Mentimeter, Padlet, Quizlet and Photoshop, as well as digital tools for creating videos and organizing online meetings.



18

With the last question, we wanted to find out which digital tools young people would like to see more often in youth work activities. The question was optional and we received 25 answers. Participants mentioned Kahoot, Mentimeter, Canva, Quizlet and Padlet.



CONCLUSION

56 youngsters from Brod-Posavina County participated in the research, equally of all age groups (15-19; 20-25 and 26-30 years old), slightly more women (62.5%), and slightly more people from rural areas (62.5%).

The participants mostly use computers or smartphones every day, and the average rating of how to use digital tools is 4 out of 5. A more detailed analysis shows that young people are equally good at using digital tools regardless of age group and place of residence.

Most of the participants heard of/used Zoom (50 people or 89.3%) and Kahoot! (42 people or 75%). This is followed by Quizlet (24 people or 42.9%), Moodle (20 people or 35.7%), Padlet (14 people or 25%); Mentimeter (12 people or 21.4%). 4 people have not heard of any of the above, and less than 5 people have heard of/used MindMeister; Scratch and Flipgrid. 5 people mentioned other tools, such as Canva, Wordpress, Office 365, Yammer, GoogleMeet; Wordwall, Popplet; Merlin and Classroom. Most participants (15) chose 3 tools.

Young people who participated in non-formal education activities in the digital environment mainly used Zoom, Canva, Kahoot and Google Meet. A total of 25 affirmative answers were collected, however, the percentage of young people who participated in non-formal education activities in the digital environment is slightly higher among young people from urban areas (52% vs. 40%).

Regarding the acquisition of knowledge about the use of digital tools, the respondents most often state that they discovered/learned to use digital tools independently, during education or at work. Some have learned from other people or through the Internet, workshops or courses.

The Internet is available to the participants every day, and the quality of the speed and stability of the Internet connection was evaluated with an average score of 3.93. The below-average score was marked mainly by people living in rural areas, which leads to the conclusion that more efforts need to be made in advocating equal availability and quality of the Internet in all areas.

The vast majority of participants use communication applications (e.g. WhatsApp, Facebook, Messenger, Viber) on a daily basis. Various tools are available to young people in local communities, such as Zoom, Kahoot and Canva. Most of the participants believe that digital tools are fully accessible to young people. Of the 26 people who think that digital tools are accessible to some extent, sometimes that is, to some extent or not at all accessible, the majority live in rural areas (19 versus 7), which leads to the conclusion that it is necessary to empower stakeholders in rural areas who can ensure the accessibility of digital tools to young people in rural areas.

Participants state that CSOs should show young people how to use digital tools, through quizzes and fun games, but also through strengthening digital skills, and 71.4% of participants believe that digital tools would improve the quality and/or frequency of participation in youth work activities, which leads to the conclusion that it is necessary to inform CSOs, empower them and encourage them to use digital tools more often in their youth work.

Most participants have access to a computer or smartphone on a daily basis. All participants who feel that access to a computer or smartphone is available to them less than every day live in a rural area.

Participants would like to learn how to use Slack, Trello, Wordpress, Popplet, Kahoot, Zoom, Mentimeter, Padlet, Quizlet and Photoshop, as well as digital tools for creating videos and organizing online meetings. Also, the participants state that they would like to see Kahoot, Mentimeter, Canva, Quizlet and Padlet more often in youth work activities.

2.2. DIGITAL TOOLS USE IN YOUTH WORK

The purpose and goal of the research

The questionnaire tried to include civil society organizations from the area of Slavonia that are active in working with young people, especially those from rural areas, and to find out how much they use digital tools in their work. The results of the research serve as an analytical basis for the creation of the Strategy for digital transformation of inclusive youth work.



Measuring instruments

As a measuring instrument, we used a questionnaire that we compiled for the purposes of this research. When answering the questionnaire, the respondents were told that the questionnaire was voluntary and anonymous.



Respondents

The questionnaire was filled out by 15 civil society organizations from the area of Slavonia that are active in working with young people. The sample was convenient, and the questionnaire was delivered via e-mail to organizations registered in rural areas, and to organizations that include young people from rural areas in their work.



Procedure

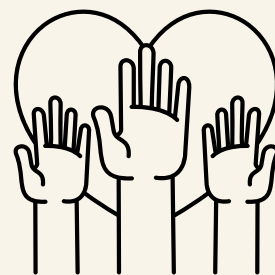
Data collection was carried out online, and the questionnaire was answered anonymously. The purpose of the research was briefly explained to the respondents, and that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time if they wanted to. The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions, of which 8 were mandatory. Furthermore, 8 questions contained offered answers, while the answers to other questions were descriptive. The questionnaire was open during March and April 2023.



The results

1

To the question "Which youth work activities do you most often carry out?", it was possible to choose several answers (Different forms of nonformal education at the local level, International projects (e.g. Erasmus+ youth exchange), Volunteer activities / programs, Discussions / panels / focus groups, Psychosocial and / or mentoring support activities, Courses and workshops for the development of life skills, Counseling and information, Organized spending of free time, ...), and the results are as follows:





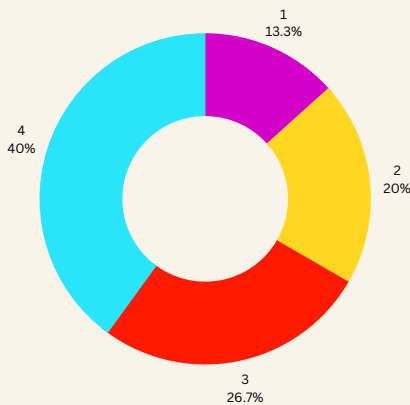
Most organizations implement various forms of nonformal education at the local level and volunteer activities/programs (13 answers, or 22% of all answers). This is followed by the counseling and information activity (9 responses, or 15% of all responses). In the third place is organized leisure time (7 responses or 12%). In the fourth place are the trainings and workshops for the development of life skills and international projects (5 responses or 8%). Discussion and focus group activities are in penultimate place (4 responses or 6%), and psychosocial and/or mentoring support activities are in the last place (2 responses or 3%).

A more detailed analysis shows that only one organization carries out all the listed activities; two organizations carry out six listed activities; one organization implements five activities, one organization implements two offered activities, and two organizations implement only one offered activity.



2

When asked how often your organization uses digital tools in their youth work, 6 organizations (40%) answered that they use digital tools every day; 2 organizations (13.3%) use them on a weekly basis; 4 organizations (26.7%) on a monthly basis, and 3 organizations rarely.



A more detailed analysis shows that there is a connection between the type of activities that organizations carry out and the frequency of using digital tools. All organizations that rarely use digital tools mainly implement volunteer activities/programs, while organizations that use digital tools on a daily basis most often implement various forms of nonformal education at the local level, as well as counseling and information.

In the next question, the organizations had to mark all the digital tools used in the work of CSOs that they had heard of or used, and the following answers were offered to them: Kahoot, Moodle, Padlet, Zoom, Mentimeter, Quizlet, MindMeister, Scratch, Flipgrid, Trello, Canva, Google Suite, Dropbox, Hootsuite, Adobe Spark, None of the above.

Respondents could mark several answers, and the results are as follows:

most organizations, 13 of them have heard of or used ZOOM, and 11 of them Canva. In the middle are Kahoot! (9) and Dropbox (8). Organizations are least familiar with the following tools: Moodle (2), MindMeister (2), Flipgrid (1), Trello (1) and Microsoft Office (1).

Only one organization stated that they had not heard or used any of the above. Two organizations indicated as many as 9 digital tools, and a comparison of the answers shows that they use digital tools daily (1) and on a monthly basis (1). Only two organizations chose one digital tool (ZOOM) each. Two digital tools (Scratch and Hootsuite) were not selected by any organization.

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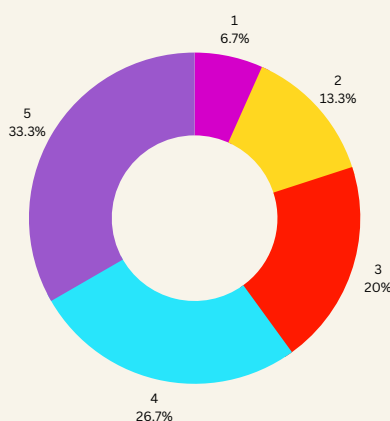


To the question "Which digital tools are most often used in your organization while providing youth work activities?", organizations entered their answers independently.

It is evident from the answers that organizations most often use ZOOM and Canva (6 answers), and less often Dropbox, Clipchamp, Google Suite, Microsoft Office and social networks.

The answers to this question are compatible with those of the previous question.

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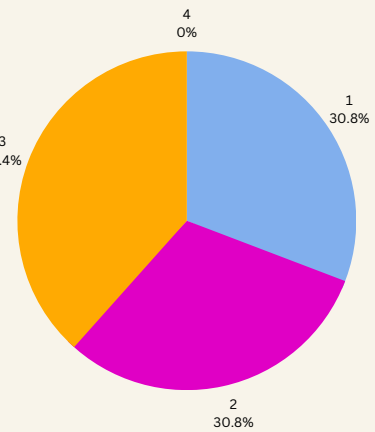


The next thing we wanted to find out with this questionnaire is how much organizations, according to their own self-assessment, are trained to use digital tools in working with young people.

It is evident from the answers that the most organizations marked the qualification with a rating of 3 (5 organizations or 33.3% of all responses), followed by a rating of 4 (4 organizations or 26.7%) and a rating of 5 (3 organizations or 20%). Two organizations gave a rating of 2 (13.3%), and only one organization gave a rating of 1 (6.7%). The average grade is 3.27. It is shown graphically in Chart 2.

6

In the next question, the organizations had to answer how much they invest in the equipment and software needed to use digital tools in working with young people. The largest number of organizations responded solidly (5 organizations - 33.3%), 4 organizations a little or a lot (4 organizations - 26.7%), one organization a lot, while one does not invest anything in equipment and software. By comparing the answers, it is evident that the organization that answered "nothing" to this question considers that it is not trained to use digital tools, is not familiar with any digital tools and uses them rarely, and mostly implements volunteer programs and activities.



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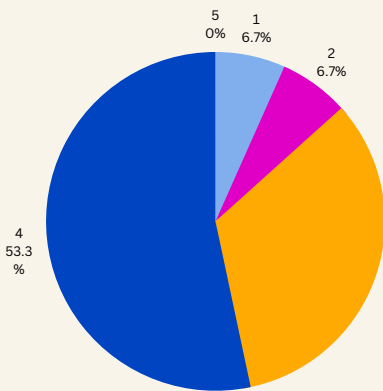
11 answers were collected to the question "What are the biggest obstacles that your organization faces in using digital tools in youth work?", and the respondents answered descriptively. Organizations stated that monthly subscriptions are expensive, and that there are fewer and fewer free options, as well as insufficient interactivity of the available applications (tools). They then pointed out that digital tools are not always desirable when working with young people because they (young people, note) are already dependent on the Internet, and that the use of digital tools causes a lack of activity among young people. Several answers highlight the disinterest of young people in using these tools, as well as insufficient information. They also cited lack of capacity, lack of modern technical equipment and poor infrastructure.



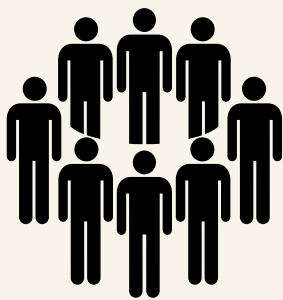
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"Lack of capacity - a small number of employees, who do a large number of different jobs and do not have enough time for learning and development. Lack of modern technical equipment (enough number of laptops, tablets...)" From the answers received, it can be concluded that the biggest obstacles are insufficient organizational capacity, either financial (cost of tools and lack of equipment) or human, and the disinterest of young people.





After that, we wanted to examine the extent to which organizations, according to their own self-assessment, are familiar with the needs of young people in using digital tools in everyday life. All respondents answered this question. Most organizations, 8 of them, or 53.3%, estimate that they are moderately familiar with the needs of young people (rating 3). This is followed by a rating of 4 (5 organizations, or 33.3%), while one organization marked a rating of 5 (6.7%), and one also marked a rating of 1. From the graph shown in Chart 4, it is evident that most organizations believe that they are well or very well acquainted with the needs of young people in the use of digital tools.



We also asked the organizations what are the biggest advantages of using digital tools in youth work, and especially with young people from rural areas, and we collected 13 descriptive answers that mainly related to easier and faster connection with young people, greater opportunities to reach young people, especially young people from rural and remote areas who, despite being displaced, have the opportunity to participate and access information, greater availability of content and better information for young people. Some answers highlight the attractiveness of digital tools, the greater possibility of group work, enabling easier identification of young people (with CSOs and/or youth workers). Also, one organization pointed out as an advantage the greater openness of young people, that is, the tendency to express their opinions through digital tools without fear of judgment.



Next, we wanted to find out what are the biggest disadvantages of using digital tools in working with young people, especially young people from rural areas. The organizations answered this question descriptively, and the answers related to insufficient capacities in terms of equipment and necessary knowledge and skills, both with civil society organizations and with the youth themselves, technical difficulties and poor infrastructure, and a lack of direct interaction.

Also, the organizations responded that digital tools are used unnecessarily, and that some activities are better performed live. The growing incidence of young people's addiction to the Internet and smartphones has been recognized as one of the shortcomings.



To the question of how organizations carry out training on the use of digital tools in the implementation of youth work activities, the respondents answered descriptively, and 5 organizations stated that they do not carry out such training for various reasons. Other organizations are educated through internal trainings, participate in trainings provided by other CSOs and companies, or use a learning-by-doing approach, by using new tools.



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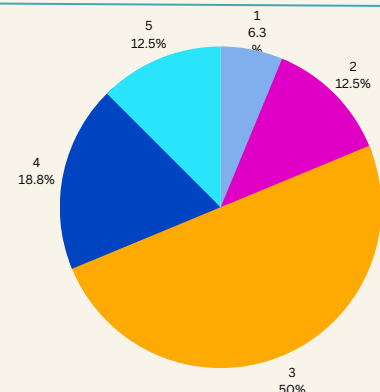
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When asked which digital tools they would like to include in their youth work in the future, the organizations stated that they would like to use Photoshop, Jamboard, Mural, Microsoft Teams and Canva. Some organizations would like to try all available tools, smartboard capabilities, and video production tools.



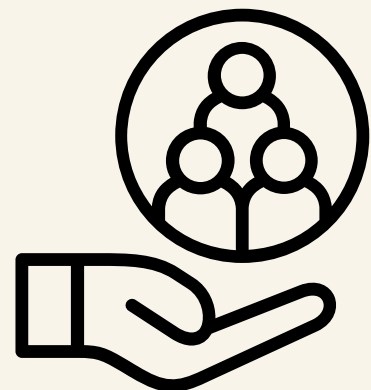
14

Next, we wanted to find out how organizations assess the level of digital literacy among their youth worker (employees and volunteers). Respondents answered this question on a linear scale from 1 to 5. The largest number of organizations answered 3 (8 organizations or 53.3%), followed by a rating of 4 (3 organizations or 20%), and in third place are ratings 5 and 2 (2 organizations). The average rating of the level of digital literacy is 3.33.



15

We also wanted to find out what kind of support organizations need in order to better use digital tools in their youth work. The organizations pointed out that they need more workshops and training on digital tools, concrete examples of application, and some of them believe that they need technical support, a greater possibility of using premium versions, and support in promotion.



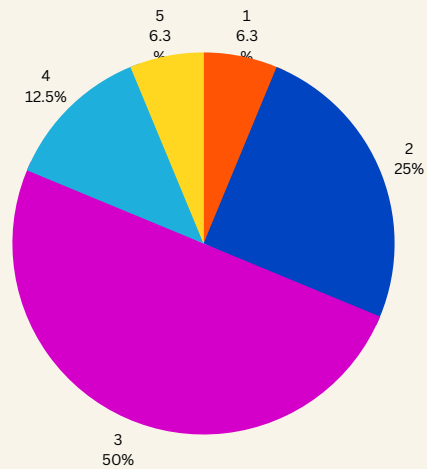
"Presentation of the most popular tools with a direct comparison - advantages, disadvantages and recommendations for use in specific activities."



16

Finally, we wanted to examine how organizations evaluate the current level of involvement of young people in the use of digital tools in their youth work.

Organizations answered this question linearly from 1 to 5. Most organizations (8 or 53.3%) gave a score of 3, followed by a score of 2 (4 organizations or 26.7%), a score of 4 (2 organizations or 13.3%) and a score of 5 (1 organization – 6.7%). The average rating of the current level of involvement is 3.

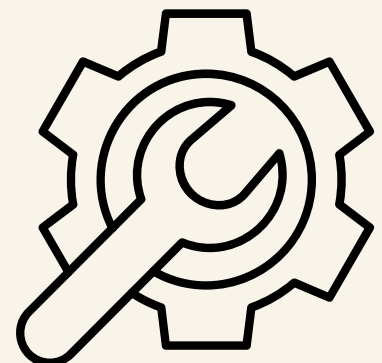


Conclusion



15 civil society organizations active in youth work from Slavonia participated in the research. Most organizations implement various forms of nonformal education at the local level and volunteer activities/programs, and most of them use digital tools, mostly ZOOM and Canva, on a daily or monthly basis. The average score of organizations' ability to use digital tools is 3.27 (out of 5), which leads to the conclusion that it is necessary to provide CSOs with information about available digital tools and appropriate training for their use. The largest number of organizations invest solidly or a lot in equipment and software.

The biggest obstacles in the use of digital tools in youth work are insufficient capacities in terms of equipment and necessary knowledge and skills, both with civil society organizations and with young people themselves, technical difficulties and poor infrastructure, and a lack of direct interaction. Also, the organizations responded that sometimes it is unnecessary to use digital tools, and that some activities are better performed live. The growing incidence of young people's addiction to the Internet and smartphones has been recognized as one of the shortcomings.



The average rating of familiarity with the needs of young people in the use of digital tools in everyday life is 3.33, which leads to the conclusion that it is desirable to examine the needs of young people in the use of digital tools and make the findings of that research available to as many CSOs as possible.



CSOs are well aware of the advantages of using digital tools in working with young people, especially those from rural and remote areas, such as easier and faster connection with young people, greater opportunities to reach young people, especially young people from rural and remote areas who, despite being dislocated, have the opportunity to participate and access information, greater availability of content and better information for young people. Some answers highlight the attractiveness of digital tools, the greater possibility of group work, enabling easier identification of young people (with CSOs and/or youth workers). Also, one organization pointed out as an advantage the greater openness of young people, that is, the tendency to express their opinions through digital tools without fear of judgment.



Part of the respondents are educated about new tools independently through internal trainings, participation in trainings of other providers, and direct use of new tools, while part of the respondents don't carry out such trainings. In their further work, organizations would like to use Photoshop, Jamboard, Mural, Microsoft Teams, Canva, and video creation tools.

The average rating of the level of digital literacy among participants and volunteers of civil society organizations is 3.33, so that the respondents themselves emphasize the need for more workshops and training on digital tools, concrete examples of application, and some of them believe that they need technical support, greater possibility of using premium versions, and support in promotion. In the end, CSOs estimated that the average level of involvement of young people in the use of digital tools is medium (3), which leads to the conclusion that it is necessary to inform, educate and encourage young people to participate through digital tools.



2.3. FOCUS GROUP „Youth and the use of digital tools“

The process of analyzing the current situation included the implementation of a structured dialogue with young people using the focus group method, which was held in Bodovaljci on 24/02/2023. A total of 20 young people between the ages of 15 and 30 participated in the focus group, of which 16 were female and 4 were male. It was conducted by two moderators, Magdalena Poljac and Nikolina Jureković, lasting 1.5 hours. All young people who participated in this process live in rural areas (municipalities of Vrbe, Rešetari, Davor, Staro Petrovo Selo); and they face different geographical and economic obstacles. As for the age structure of the participants, it is as follows: there were 9 participants from 15 to 18 years old, 7 from 19 to 25 years old, and 4 from 26 to 30 years old.

Below is an analysis of the collected information.

1. Are you familiar with the concept of digital tools? Can you name some?

Perspectives, thoughts and arguments presented in the discussion on question 1:

As part of this focus group with young people, we asked if they were familiar with the concept of digital tools and invited them to list some of them. All participants were familiar with the topic and were able to list the various tools they used in their daily lives, including tools used in education and work environments.

Some of the tools they listed are Microsoft Teams, Office, Yammer, Zoom, Google Forms, Canva, Kahoot, Prezi, and IZZI (which comes with schoolbooks). Some of the young people also mentioned Moodle, Bubble.us for creating digital maps, Google Classroom, Duolingo, Quizlet, MindMaster and Scratch. Participants expressed the great benefit they get from digital tools in their daily activities, especially in education. They noticed that these tools help them organize and manage their tasks and responsibilities and make it easier for them to communicate and collaborate with others.



Were there opposing opinions - which ones?

Conclusions of the 1st question:

We can say that young people are familiar with digital tools and actively use them in their daily lives. They expressed satisfaction with the efficiency and practicality of these tools in their work and education.



2. Have you heard of the term youth work? Can you describe some of the activities?

Perspectives, thoughts and arguments presented in the discussion on question 2:

We asked the participants whether they had heard of the term youth work and invited them to describe some activities related to this term.

All participants were familiar with the concept of youth work and mentioned different activities that they experienced as part of that work. Some examples of activities include youth workshops, youth clubs, sports activities, creative workshops and participation in programs such as Erasmus+.

All participants agreed that the activities carried out in the framework of youth work are aimed at developing skills and knowledge, and that they include workshops on various topics, such as acting, dancing, art and other nonformal forms of learning. Most activities usually take place in a physical space, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, participants noticed that more and more activities are moving to the virtual world to ensure the safety and security of all participants.



Were there opposing opinions - which ones?

Conclusions of the 2nd question:

We can say that the participants of this focus group are well acquainted with the concept of youth work and the various activities related to this concept. Likewise, we have noticed that more and more activities are being transferred to the virtual world due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but despite this, youth work remains important and relevant for the development of young people.

3. How would you rate the current level of digital literacy among young people in our community?

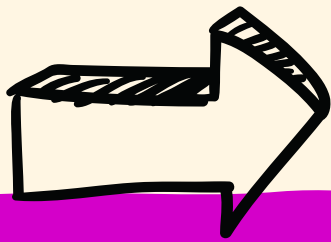


Perspectives, thoughts and arguments presented in the discussion on question 3:

We asked participants how they would rate the current level of digital literacy among young people in their community. Younger youth, aged 13 to 18, expressed a high level of confidence in their digital skills. On a scale of 1 to 10, most chose 10 as their rating. They believe that they are easily adaptable to new digital tools and that they need a short time to master them. On the other hand, older youth (19-30 years old) were a little less confident and gave their digital literacy rating a 7.

When we asked young people whether they would prefer to participate in youth work activities, especially non-formal education, in a physical or virtual environment, the majority expressed a preference for a physical environment. Young people believe that online workshops are harder to follow and that they have less concentration, and that they can be more distracted by other activities while the event is taking place online. Therefore, most young people would rather participate in a physical environment.

Also, young people expressed that there are big differences in digital literacy among young people in their community. Although some are very adept at using digital tools, there are also those who are not so digitally literate.



Were there opposing opinions - which ones?

Conclusions of the 3rd question:

Digital literacy among young people in this community is quite diverse. While some young people expressed a high level of confidence in their digital skills, others are less confident in their abilities. Most young people prefer to participate in activities carried out in a physical environment, but this does not mean that online activities should not be organized. It is important to take into account the differences in digital literacy and develop accessible programs that will help raise the level of digital literacy among all young people in the community.

4. What digital tools are currently available to you to use in your daily life?



Perspectives, thoughts and arguments presented in the discussion on question 4:

When asked what digital tools are currently available to young people to use in their daily lives, most of them mentioned tools like Yammer and Microsoft Teams, which are available to them whenever they have access to the Internet. However, the quality of the internet network varies depending on the area, so young people in some villages have a weaker network, while it is much better in the city. The mobile network can also be slower and make it difficult to use digital tools.

When it comes to using Zoom, young people are often forced to turn off their cameras because the network is not strong enough to support video calls. In some cases, the connection is broken and this makes it difficult to use the tool as it should.

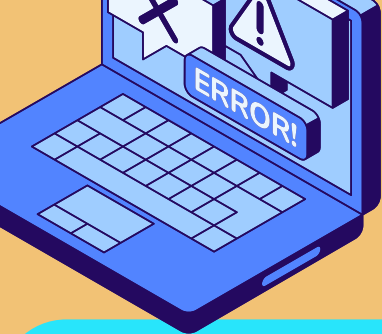
In addition, due to the low quality of the network, some digital tools are not available to them or their use is significantly more difficult. In most rural areas, optical Internet is still not available, which can further limit the possibilities of using digital tools.

Conclusions of the 4th question:

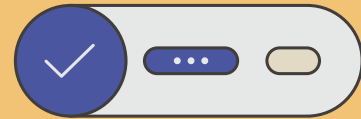
Almost all digital tools used in youth work activities are available to young people, but due to external limitations (speed and strength of the network itself) their use is difficult.

Were there opposing opinions - which ones?





5. What are the advantages of using digital tools in working with young people? What are the disadvantages?



Perspectives, thoughts and arguments presented in the discussion on question 5:

According to young people, using digital tools in working with them has a number of advantages. It is easier to arrange meetings and participate in activities, without having to travel somewhere, which is especially important in situations where public transport is difficult to reach, unavailable or too expensive. Also, digital tools are more easily accessible and if some educations were constantly available, they could review it at any time. Young people are aware of the importance of digital literacy in life and believe that they should use digital tools as early as possible. They like to use Kahoot the most because the quiz is self-correcting, and through Google Form they get the answers they are looking for right away. The learning process is more interesting for them when they use digital tools such as presentations. The advantage of using digital tools is the possibility to participate from home, which gives them greater flexibility.

On the other hand, the disadvantages of using digital tools are related to the quality of the Internet network, which is often poor in rural areas. A weak network limits the possibility of using some digital tools and can affect the quality of online workshops. Also, some tools are paid, which can be a barrier to use. The lack of motivation, and the overloading of the home network if several family members connect at the same time, which causes interference and broken connections, is also a disadvantage of using digital tools. In online activities, it often happens that everyone speaks in a voice, which hinders communication.

Conclusions of the 5th question:

In short, according to young people, digital tools have numerous advantages, such as facilitating meetings and participation in activities and the possibility of participation from home. Young people are aware of the importance of digital literacy in life and believe that they should use digital tools as early as possible. However, the quality of the internet network in rural areas is often poor and can limit the use of digital tools. Also, some tools are paid, which can be a barrier to use. Motivation to participate in online activities is often low, which can lead to distraction and communication problems.

Were there opposing opinions - which ones?





6. What digital tools would you find most useful for participating in youth activities?



Perspectives, thoughts and arguments presented in the discussion on question 6:

According to the answer to the sixth question, the most useful digital tools for participating in youth activities are Zoom and Microsoft Teams, Kahoot or Quizlet, Canva, Google Docs, Microsoft Sway and Prezi. These tools enable joint work in teams and groups and facilitate easier participation and agreement. However, young people point out that carrying out online activities is often boring and they miss the interaction they have in person. To make online activities more interesting, they suggest using PowerPoint presentations, watching movies together, and using online energizers. Also, it would help young people if classic online lectures were interrupted by some more fun activities from the spectrum of informal learning (energizers and icebreakers) to make it more interesting for them. Despite the advantages of digital tools, the disadvantage is the poor quality of the Internet network and lack of motivation.

Were there opposing opinions - which ones?

Conclusions of the 6th question:

Young people mentioned several digital tools that they find useful for increasing participation in youth activities, mainly Zoom and Microsoft Teams, Kahoot or Quizlet, Canva, Google Docs, Microsoft Sway and Prezi.



7. What prerequisites are needed to be able to use them?

Perspectives, thoughts and arguments presented in the discussion on question 7:

As a prerequisite the participants point out the access to the digital tools. Some tools are free, while others require a subscription or usage fee. Therefore, financial prerequisites can be limiting for some young people. Also, they need to have a certain level of technological literacy in order to be able to navigate the use of different digital tools. They need to know how to use the software, how to access different functions, how to create and share content, and how to communicate with other participants. In short, they need to have access to technological means, as well as the knowledge and skills to use them in order to be able to successfully participate in activities carried out through digital tools.

Furthermore, in the context of education, prerequisites could also include appropriate content, a structured learning method, quality interaction with the lecturer and other participants, as well as the possibility of receiving feedback and evaluating one's work. The quality and availability of these prerequisites can affect the quality of online education and the success of young people's participation in such activities.

Furthermore, they state the internet, a laptop or a mobile phone as prerequisites. Most young people own mobile phones, but it's easier to participate in online education via laptop. Also, it is necessary to provide a quieter space where they can participate online, and maybe even a person who will babysit children for young parents while they're participating in online education. It is important that young people have digital skills in order to be able to successfully participate in online activities, as well as to know the language in which the education takes place.



Were there opposing opinions - which ones?

Conclusions of the 7th question:

In the discussion on the 7th question, it was pointed out that access to digital tools and technological literacy are prerequisites for the successful participation of young people in activities carried out through digital tools. In addition, it was pointed out that appropriate content, a structured learning method, high-quality interaction with the lecturer and other participants, as well as the possibility of receiving feedback and evaluating one's work are necessary for online education to be successful. It is necessary to ensure the availability of the Internet, laptop or mobile phone, as well as a quiet space and knowledge of the language in which the education takes place. Financial prerequisites can be limiting for some young people, and lack of technological literacy, as well as space and a person to look after their children, can also represent barriers to youth for their participation.

8. What obstacles or challenges arise in the use of digital tools in youth work in rural areas?

Perspectives, thoughts and arguments presented in the discussion on question 8:

Rural areas often face a worse internet network than cities, which can be a big obstacle for using digital tools in youth work. Young people living in rural areas often do not have access to fast internet and a stable network, which makes it difficult to participate in online activities. Also, rural areas often have a less developed infrastructure for digital technology, which makes it difficult to access and use digital tools.

Another emerging challenge is the lack of digital literacy among young people in rural areas. Young people who are less familiar with digital technologies and tools may have difficulty understanding and using new digital tools. Also, some digital tools can be too complex for young people who do not have experience in using them, which can reduce the effectiveness of working with them.

An additional challenge that occurs in rural areas is the lack of access to educational resources and educational programs that could better familiarize them with digital tools and technologies. Smaller schools and smaller local communities may not have the funds and resources to provide access and training in the use of digital tools.

Finally, cultural and linguistic challenges may also be present in rural areas. Young people who speak minor languages or dialects may face difficulties in using digital tools that are mainly in English. Also, some digital tools may not be adapted for certain cultures and traditions, which can make them difficult to accept and use.

Conclusions of the 8th question:

Rural areas have a less developed infrastructure for digital technology, which makes it difficult for young people living in these areas to access and use digital tools. Lack of digital literacy among young people in rural areas, lack of access to educational resources and educational programs, and cultural and linguistic challenges further complicate the use of digital tools in working with young people in these areas.



9. What kind of training and support would be needed to improve your digital literacy and use of digital tools?

Perspectives, thoughts and arguments presented in the discussion on question 9:

In order to improve digital literacy and the use of digital tools, appropriate training and support is needed. Digital literacy workshops can be very helpful, where a physical workshop could be held first to familiarize them with digital tools, and then it would be possible to use those tools – carrying out a test workshop. Using free wi-fi that would be faster than home network would also be very useful. Also, if one chooses an education that takes place exclusively online, it would be useful to have a physical space available where the participants would have a better quality or speed of the network to be able to participate. In addition, young parents would benefit from someone to look after the children or to animate the child. If the education takes place in the afternoon, childcare must be provided. In case the participants do not speak the language in which the education is held, it would be good to provide translations, subtitles or a person who would be there as a support and translator. Some other forms of support for young people may include compensation for participation in education or paid education. Fortunately, most of the tools used today are free.

Were there opposing opinions – which ones?



Conclusions of question 9:

It is crucial to improve digital literacy and the use of digital tools through appropriate training and support. Physical workshops that allow for testing digital tools in advance can be useful, as can providing faster and free wi-fi. Also, quality support for young parents should be ensured. In case of lack of language skills, translations, subtitles or translators are essential to provide support. Additional support in the form of a fee or paid training can be useful, although most digital tools used today are free.



10. Digital tools in general - what are your thoughts?



Conclusions 10. Questions:

Overall, participants are aware of the benefits of digital tools, but do not see them as a substitute for human contact and interaction. They believe that it is important to find a balance between using digital tools and maintaining real interactions and relationships.

Perspectives, thoughts and arguments presented in the debate on Question 10:

In the focus group, the general opinion about digital tools were discussed. Participants pointed out that they will use digital tools if there is no other option, but they would prefer things to happen live. However, they recognize that some digital tools have made life and access to information easier, as well as the availability of ideas and inspiration. When it comes to youth work activities, the participants expressed their desire to hold it live, but they would also be ready for a hybrid model that combines online and offline participation so they could meet in person, but work in smaller groups and solve tasks online using digital tools.



Conclusion



It is clear from the responses of the participants that there is a great importance of digital literacy and the use of digital tools in working with young people. However, there are many challenges and obstacles in rural areas, such as a poor internet network, lack of infrastructure and educational resources, and language and cultural barriers.

In order to improve digital literacy and the use of digital tools, appropriate training and support is needed. Digital literacy workshops, as well as the use of free wi-fi, can be very helpful. Also, physical space for education, childcare and translation services can be useful for young participants.

In addition, it is necessary to recognize the importance of adapting digital tools to different cultures and traditions. Considering all these challenges, it is necessary to work on the development of innovative solutions that will provide young people in rural areas with better access to digital literacy and digital tools, thus contributing to their development and success in the future.

Focus group



3. PRIORITIES, SPECIFIC GOALS AND MEASURES



Based on the information and data collected in research, and the needs expressed both by young people and by civil society organizations, the expert team created 4 priorities, together with specific goals, measures and indicators, of the strategy of digital transformation of youth work at the local level.

By applying the aforementioned, civil society organizations will be able to digitally transform their work and thus reach different groups of young people who have not yet been covered by youth work practices. On the other hand, young people (especially from rural and remote areas) will be given access to information, education, and other practices of working with young people, which will lead to their personal and professional development, and equal opportunities with peers from urban areas.



<p>Priority 1</p>	<p>Advocate for the provision of adequate internet infrastructure in rural areas</p>	
<p><i>Specific goals</i></p>	<p>SC 1. Conduct an analysis of the current state of Internet infrastructure in rural areas</p>	<p>SC 2. Educate local communities about the importance of adequate internet infrastructure for youth development and their access to digital tools through campaigns and public events</p>
<p>Measures</p>	<p>1.1.1. identify the most critical points 1.1.2. propose specific measures to improve Internet coverage and quality</p>	<p>1.2.1. Organize a series of public lectures and workshops on the importance of internet infrastructure for youth development. The thematic focus will be on the benefits of access to high-speed Internet, digital literacy and the use of digital tools. 1.2.2. Implement an awareness campaign that will inform local communities about the importance of adequate internet infrastructure for young people. The campaign will include media releases and social media to educate and encourage understanding and support for infrastructure improvements.</p>



1.2.3. Establish cooperation with local schools and other educational institutions to organize lectures or workshops on the importance of the Internet and digital tools for youth education, which will include the presentation of various digital tools that support learning and active involvement of young people.

1.2.4. Establish partnerships with local CSOs, local government and other relevant stakeholders to jointly promote the importance of adequate internet infrastructure. These partnerships include organizing joint events, supporting campaigns and promoting digital literacy in the local community.

Indicators

- the number of reported technical problems related to the Internet (such as unstable connection, low speed or interruptions) in rural areas
- the percentage of rural areas that have access to high-speed Internet (a certain minimum speed that is considered adequate) compared to the total number of rural areas
- evaluation of the user experience of young people and other residents of rural areas in relation to the quality of the Internet connection (stability, speed, availability and user satisfaction)

- Number of organized lectures and workshops
 - Number of participants
 - Evaluation of participants' satisfaction
- Feedback on applied knowledge and skills
- number of media announcements
- reach on social networks (number of followers, likes, shares and comments)
- the number of stakeholders who support infrastructure improvement
- number of established collaborations with local schools and other educational institutions
- number of organized lectures and workshops in local schools and educational institutions
- number of established partnerships with local CSOs, local government and other relevant stakeholders

<p>Priority 2</p>	<p>To provide civil society organizations with education and support in the use of digital tools in order to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for working with young people</p>	
<p>Specific goals</p>	<p>SC 1. Increase the use of digital tools in youth work among civil society organizations</p>	<p>SC 2. Develop an online platform for sharing resources, examples of good practice and educational materials on the use of digital tools in youth work</p>
<p>Measures</p>	<p>2.1.1 Identify the key digital tools and skills that CSOs need in their youth work.</p> <p>2.1.2 Provide information to CSOs about educational workshops and trainings covering topics such as the basics of using digital tools, communication through digital channels, online collaboration and other relevant topics.</p> <p>2.1.3 Organize workshops and trainings at the local level, adapted to the needs of CSOs.</p> <p>2.1.4 Establish continuous support and mentoring to CSOs after education in order to ensure the application of learned knowledge and skills in their youth work.</p> <p>2.1.5. Promote manuals and guides on the use of digital tools in working with young people.</p>	<p>2.2.1. Develop the Virtual Inclusive Center platform, which includes 5 open digital education systems, and 4 auxiliary digital tools (E-board - creation of participants' notes and insight into all notes, DigiMindGame - the possibility of creating a game like EscapeRoom, Educards - reminders and motivational messages, Auxiliary tool for the visually impaired - the possibility of choosing larger letters), and the following components: Sharing is caring, Virtual study buddy, EduLab, and a map of digital nomads in youth work</p> <p>2.2.2. Development of a mobile application that contains all components of VIC</p>

Indicators

- Number of key digital tools and skills identified
- number of CSO action plans
 - number of sent newsletters / number of informative posts
- number of informed CSOs
 - number of held workshops / trainings
 - number of participants in workshops / trainings
 - feedback from participants
 - the number of mentoring sessions held
 - number of CSOs involved in mentoring
 - number of promoted manuals and guides
 - number of CSOs to which manuals and guides were sent

- Number of registered users on the virtual inclusive center
- Number of downloads of the created mobile application
- Number of registered digital nomads on the map and mobile application
- The number of languages into which innovative digital tools and content on the virtual inclusion center have been translated
 - Number of positive and negative feedback
- The number of people who rated the mobile application on the AppStore and GooglePlay
- Number of visitors on a monthly and annual basis (via Google tools)
- Number of new visitors to the virtual inclusive center
 - Average time spent at the virtual inclusive center
 - The number of users who immediately left the platform, without taking any action
- Quality assessment of newly created multilingual digital tools by YW and stakeholders working with youth
- Degree of satisfaction with acquired knowledge in digitalization of youth work
- The degree of adaptation of digital tools to the target group of the project
- Degree of stakeholder satisfaction
- engagement of participants on the Sharing is caring tool
- evaluation of the mobile application on AppStore and Google play.



<p>Priority 3</p>	<p>Develop innovative solutions that will ensure inclusiveness and better access to digital literacy and digital tools for young people</p>
<p>Specific goals</p>	<p>SC 1. Develop the methodology of 5 innovative high-quality inclusive training programs for working with young people</p>
<p>Measures</p>	<p>3.1.1 Implement 5 local innovation bootcamps 3.1.2 Carry out 1 international bootcamp 3.1.3 Implement 5 Work in progress test trainings 3.1.4 Create manuals in traditional and digital form</p>
<p>Indicators</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of key digital tools and skills identified - number of CSO action plans - number of sent newsletters / number of informative posts - number of informed CSOs - number of held workshops / trainings - number of participants in workshops / trainings - feedback from participants - the number of mentoring sessions held - number of CSOs involved in mentoring - number of promoted manuals and guides - number of CSOs to which manuals and guides were sent



Priority 4	Improve the digital transformation of civil society organizations
Specific goals	SC 1. Raise the level of digitization of civil society organizations
Measures	<p>1.4.1. Implement project management software</p> <p>1.4.2. Improve data security and privacy protection when working with digital tools</p> <p>1.4.3. Encourage the use of digital tools for communication and collaboration, as well as virtual learning</p> <p>1.4.4. Implement software for digital storage and document management</p>
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of civil society organizations that have successfully implemented project management software - Level of user satisfaction of project management software - Implemented procedures for privacy protection - Number of activities carried out in virtual format /Number of participants or users who participated in virtual activities - Number of documents stored in digital format - Number of automated processes



4. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND GUIDELINES

Priority 1: Advocate for the provision of adequate internet infrastructure in rural areas

Specific objective 1.1: Conduct an analysis of the current state of the Internet infrastructure in rural areas

Implementation guidelines:

Measure 1.1.1: By the end of 2024, identify the most critical points related to Internet infrastructure in rural areas. This analysis will be carried out with the cooperation of local authorities, telecommunications companies and the local community in order to gain a detailed insight into the current situation. Conduct the analysis by means of a questionnaire and by including as many stakeholders as possible.

Measure 1.1.2: By mid-2025, propose specific measures to improve the coverage and quality of the Internet in the identified critical points. This would involve discussions with ISPs and local authorities to ensure that realistic and feasible options are considered. Contact all available telecom operators and competent state agencies and check their internal plans for infrastructure development in the target area.

Indicators

- The number of reported technical problems related to the Internet (such as unstable connection, low speed or interruptions) in rural areas
- The percentage of rural areas that have access to high-speed Internet (a certain minimum speed that is considered adequate) compared to the total number of rural areas
- Evaluation of the user experience of young people and other residents of rural areas in relation to the quality of the Internet connection (stability, speed, availability and user satisfaction)

Specific objective 1.2: Educate local communities about the importance of adequate internet infrastructure for youth development and their access to digital tools through campaigns and public events

Implementation guidelines:

Measure 1.2.1: Organize 2 public lectures and a workshop on the importance of internet infrastructure for youth development. Each event is expected to attract at least 15 participants. When selecting participants, take into account the representation of stakeholders relevant to the implementation of the measure by the end of 2024.

Measure 1.2.2: Carry out an awareness campaign in 2024 that will inform local communities about the importance of adequate Internet infrastructure for young people. The goal of the campaign is to reach at least 300 people through press releases and social media. The campaign should be based on digital media, informal contacts with users and the reduction of the use of environmentally harmful materials.

Measure 1.2.3: Establish cooperation with at least 3 local schools and other educational institutions in order to organize lectures or workshops on the importance of the Internet and digital tools for the education of young people by the end of 2024.

Measure 1.2.4: Establish partnerships with at least 5 local CSOs, local governments and other relevant stakeholders by the end of 2025 in order to jointly promote the importance of adequate internet infrastructure.

Indicators

- Number of organized lectures and workshops
- Number of participants in lectures and workshops
- Evaluation of participants' satisfaction at lectures and workshops
- Feedback on applied knowledge and skills from participants
- Number of media announcements related to the awareness campaign
- Reach on social networks (number of followers, likes, shares and comments)
- Number of stakeholders supporting infrastructure improvement
- Number of established collaborations with local schools and other educational institutions
- Number of lectures and workshops organized in local schools and educational institutions
- Number of established partnerships with local CSOs, local government and other relevant stakeholders.

Priority 2: To provide civil society organizations with education and support in the use of digital tools in order to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for working with young people

Specific objective 2.1: Increase the use of digital tools in youth work among civil society organizations

Measure 2.1.1: Identify the key digital tools and skills that CSOs need in their youth work by the end of 2024.

Measure 2.1.2: During 2025, provide information to a minimum of 10 CSOs on educational workshops and trainings covering topics such as the basics of using digital tools, communication through digital channels, online collaboration and other relevant topics.

Implementation guidelines:

Measure 2.1.3: Organize 5 workshops and trainings at the local level, adapted to the needs of CSOs by the end of 2025.

Measure 2.1.4: During 2025, establish continuous support and mentoring to CSOs after education in order to ensure the application of learned knowledge and skills in their youth work. It is proposed to establish an Info Point in the area of the Bodovaljci Community Center.

Measure 2.1.5: Promote manuals and guides on the use of digital tools in working with young people. Target the promotion towards organizations and institutions that work directly with young users by the end of 2025.

Specific objective 2.2: Develop an online platform for sharing resources, examples of good practice and educational materials on the use of digital tools in working with young people

Indicators

- Number of key digital tools and skills identified
- Number of sent newsletters / number of informative posts
- Number of held workshops / trainings
- Number of participants in workshops / trainings
- Feedback from participants
- Number of held mentoring sessions
- Number of CSOs involved in mentoring
- Number of promoted manuals and guides
- Number of CSOs to which manuals and guides were sent

Implementation guidelines:

Measure 2.2.1: Develop the Virtual inclusive center platform, which includes 5 open digital education systems and 4 supporting digital tools by the beginning of third quarter of 2024.

Measure 2.2.2: Develop a mobile application that contains all components of VIC by the end of 2024.

Indicators

- Number of registered users on the virtual inclusive center
- Number of downloads of the created mobile application
- Number of registered digital nomads on the map and mobile application
- The number of languages into which innovative digital tools and content on the virtual inclusion center have been translated
- Number of positive and negative feedback
- The number of people who rated the mobile application on the AppStore and Google Play
- Number of visitors on a monthly and annual basis (via Google tools)
- Number of new visitors to the virtual inclusive center
- Average time spent at the virtual inclusive center
- The number of users who immediately left the platform, without taking any action
- Quality assessment of newly created multilingual digital tools by YW and stakeholders working with youth
- Degree of satisfaction with acquired knowledge in digitalization of youth work
- The degree of adaptation of digital tools to the target group of the project
- Degree of stakeholder satisfaction
- Participant engagement on the Sharing is caring tool
- Rating of the mobile application on the AppStore and Google play.

Priority 3: Develop innovative solutions that will ensure inclusiveness and better access to digital literacy and digital tools for young people
Specific objective 3.1: Develop the methodology of 5 innovative high-quality inclusive training programs for youth work



Implementation guidelines:

Measure 3.1.1: By the end of the first quarter of 2024 carry out 5 local innovative bootcamps with the aim of developing the digital skills of young people.

Measure 3.1.2: During 2024 implement 1 international bootcamp as a platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience among young people from different countries.

Measure 3.1.3: Carry out 5 "Work in progress" test trainings to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the program by the end of 2024.

Measure 3.1.4: During 2024 create manuals in traditional and digital form, which will be used by young people and relevant stakeholders engaged in youth work.

Indicators

- Number of key digital tools and skills identified
- Number of CSO action plans
- Number of sent newsletters / number of informative posts
- Number of informed CSOs
- Number of held workshops / bootcamps
- Number of participants in workshops / bootcamps
- Feedback from participants
- Number of held mentoring sessions
- Number of CSOs involved in mentoring
- Number of created and promoted manuals
- Number of CSOs to which manuals and guides were sent



Priority 4: Improve the digital transformation of civil society organizations

Specific objective 4.1: Raise the level of digitization of civil society organizations

Implementation guidelines:

Measure 4.1.1: Implement project management software in targeted civil society organizations to improve their productivity and efficiency by the end of 2025. For software implementation, use existing solutions or finance a tailor-made ERP system through a project.

Measure 4.1.2: Improve data security and privacy protection in working with digital tools through the development and implementation of appropriate policies and procedures by the end of 2025. For the same, hire an expert to check the security of the organization's ICT infrastructure.

Measure 4.1.3: Encourage the use of digital tools for communication and collaboration, and virtual learning through webinars, workshops, and online courses by the end of 2025.

Measure 4.1.4: During 2026, implement software for digital storage and document management, with the aim of optimizing and automating processes in organizations.



Indicators

- Number of civil society organizations that have successfully implemented project management software
- Level of satisfaction of project management software users (satisfaction survey)
- Existence and implementation of privacy protection procedures (in accordance with the GDPR regulation)
- Number of activities conducted in a virtual format (webinars, online courses, virtual meetings)
- Number of participants or users who participated in virtual activities
- Number of documents stored in digital format (on cloud platforms)
- Number of automated processes in the framework of digital transformation.



EduLab
activity of finalizing strategies, June 2023.



5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

MONITORING

The monitoring of the implementation of strategic planning acts includes the process of collecting, analyzing and comparing indicators (defined in the strategic framework) that systematically monitor the success of the implementation of measures of the strategic planning act. Reporting on the implementation of the strategic planning act is the process of providing timely and relevant information to key holders of strategic planning at the LGU level and to the general public on the status of the implementation of the strategic act.

The fundamental principle of the implementation of this document is openness and participation, which means that all holders of measures are obliged to include interested individuals and organizations in their implementation. Those in charge of measures should take care to include in the activities young people from a wider area surrounding the City of Nova Gradiška, and especially young people from vulnerable groups, so that all young people benefit from the implementation.

Association Studio B, as the project leader, will collect data and feedback on an annual basis about the Strategy implementation, and will report on them to the Assembly in the framework of the annual report and publish them on the website.

It is recommended that those responsible for the implementation of the Strategy use gender-sensitive materials in the implementation of the measures and are also obliged to take care of the equal representation of all genders in the activities, where applicable.

EVALUATION

The evaluation process of the strategic planning act is an independent comparison and assessment of the expected and achieved results, outcomes and effects of the implementation of the Strategy. The evaluation will be carried out according to the methodology below.

The evaluation system will be based on the following parameters:

- The evaluation will be carried out by internal and/or external experts on the basis of annual reports and a review of relevant sources of information;
- The executive board will make a decision on the start of the evaluation process;
- The results, outcomes and effects of the implementation of the Strategy determined by the evaluation process will represent the basis for the revision of this document and further processes of strategic planning; especially the Strategic Plan of the Studio B Association in the coming period.

6. ABOUT THE “DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF INCLUSIVE YOUTH WORK” PROJECT

„ Digital transformation of inclusive Youth Work, 2022-2-HR01-KA220-YOU-000096214” is an Erasmus+ KA2 Cooperation partnership project whose coordinator is the Association for the Promotion of Active Participation "Studio B" from Croatia, while the project consortium consists of organizations Youth Power Germany, Austria and Sweden. The project is co-financed by the European Union through the Erasmus+ program, it was approved by the Agency for Mobility and Programs of the European Union, in the total grant of €250,000.00. The duration of the project is 24 months, from January 1st 2023 to December 31st 2024.

The project aims to digitally transform inclusive youth work at the international level, which means that all objectives and activities of the project are directed towards the inclusion of digital tools in our work. By adopting innovative digital teaching methods, we will increase the quality of youth work and encourage the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, and by disseminating the results, we will reach a large number of actors and strengthen transnational and intersectoral cooperation.



All organizations in the partner consortium work with young people who face various obstacles, from economic and geographical to social and cultural, which prevent them from active participation and the benefits gained through participating in youth work activities. All of these obstacles were further strengthened by the COVID-19 pandemic, which directed us towards the digitalization of our work. However, the above also had one positive effect - we discovered that with the digital transformation of youth work, we can reach those young people who are otherwise excluded from any type of youth work (out-of-reach youth).



The above will be achieved by implementing the following work packages:

- Development of 4 local strategies for the digital transformation of inclusive youth work;
- Development of 5 multilingual nonformal training programs for youth workers in traditional and digital form
- Development of the Virtual Inclusive Center (VIC) for the digital transformation of youth work.



According to the set objectives and implemented activities, we will achieve the following outcomes and outputs:

- Innovations to increase the quality of inclusive YW, applicable at the local (Strategy) and international level (nonformal inclusive programs, VIC) developed;
- Marginalized youth empowered to learn in a virtual environment;
- CSO's strengthened for the digitalization of Youth Work;
- Transnational and intersectoral cooperation achieved;
- Contribution in the creation of solutions for the green transition in accordance with the European Green Plan realized.



7. PARTNERSHIP CONSORTIUM



The Association for the Promotion of Active Participation "Studio B" is a non-governmental and non-profit organization based in the eastern part of Croatia. The association was founded with the aim of achieving balanced development of the local community as well as the development of civil society. In our work, we strive to promote and improve the rights of young people as well as to increase the quality of activities for young people by increasing their level of information. Main objectives:

1. Promotion of interests and activities of young people,
2. Promotion of awareness of the development of civil society,
3. Promotion of sustainable development,
4. Promotion of citizens active participation;
5. Promotion of the values of the European Union. Our target group is: children, young people and women from rural areas. Our mission is to realize an inclusive, solidary and equal society; and encourage the active participation of all citizens for the benefit of the entire community, and the vision is to be a highly recognizable social partner in the creation of successful projects with which we will achieve the common goals of our members, users and the entire community through the provision of services and programs that raise the quality of life of all citizens, encourage the development of responsible citizens, and promote the sustainable socio-economic development of our society.

Within the Erasmus+ program, our organization was a partner in several projects with the following topics: gender equality, internet addiction among young people, bullying and hate speech. As project beneficiaries, we implemented a youth exchange with the aim of developing critical thinking among young people and increasing media literacy, the project was carried out under the name "Let me think about it". We also implemented a youth exchange with the aim of raising awareness and promoting mental health among young people under the name "Health+ talks". As partners in the implementation of the KA2 project "Minority Youth Library" with organizations from Slovenia and Serbia, we worked with young people with fewer opportunities. We were also partners in the implementation of the "Bridge to Success" project with the organization O.A.Z.A., the project aimed to promote entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial skills among young people, where we worked with 20 young people from our local community. We also implemented the KA2 Capacity building project called "Transformers: Age of Youth work", which was carried out by the Kosovo organization LENS. Association Studio B, in partnership with the Municipality of Vrbje, has been continuously implementing local projects aimed at young people from rural communities since 2020, which usually gather over 100 participants from the Municipality. Through one of these projects, we developed the Youth Action Plan of the Municipality of Vrbje as the first public policy aimed at young people in our municipality. The association has been a full member of the Croatian Youth Network since 2021, currently employs 8 people, and implements several local, national and European projects, and we have over 40 members. The Association also runs Community center Bodovaljci that gathers other NGOs, youth, children and women from rural areas



Ung Kraft / Youth Power Sweden was officially registered as a civil society organization in 2017, but before that they operated as an informal group for 4 years. A society with positive social values, healthy lifestyles, gender equality and zero discrimination is their main goal. The programs currently implemented by the organization are aimed at nonformal education of young people (mainly young women) about entrepreneurship, cultural diversity, inclusion of refugees and migrants, healthy lifestyles and violence prevention. Some of their projects are: Entrepreneurship centers; MasterPeace Clubs – we create peace together; Promoting a healthier lifestyle among young people. Among other things, Ung Kraft developed the program of the local center for the empowerment of entrepreneurship and within it works with youth, minorities and women to increase their employability and mentoring in the process of establishing a company. In the past years, they started empowering young people and women to start their own entrepreneurship, realized 3 projects with the aim of empowerment through entrepreneurship and helped in the establishment of several entrepreneurial empowerment centers across Europe. In all these entrepreneurial empowerment centers they provide mentoring and counseling services.

Ung Kraft has 4 people who are regularly engaged as trainers and project coordinators in the organization, and at least 60 people are involved every year as participants in different local and educational projects, mostly related to their entrepreneurial empowerment center in Gothenburg. In addition to the field of youth employability and entrepreneurship, the organization's team has many years of experience in the field of: Education - organizing education for young people, training for trainers, workshops, courses; Research; Observation and evaluation; Capacity building for small local organizations; Creation of action plans; Community mobilization - advocacy.





Youth Power Germany e.V. is a Non-Governmental and Non-profit organization based in Berlin, Germany. Our main goal is to empower and support young individuals with fewer opportunities by emphasizing their strength, diversity, and togetherness. We have a specific focus on young people and immigrants who face social and cultural challenges, working towards facilitating their full integration into society.

To realize our mission with our target groups, YP DE applies the following methodologies:

- Non-formal education and youth inclusion work
- Employment and entrepreneurship education
- The use of sports methodologies and artistic expression within non-formal education
- E-learning courses and active participation on social media platforms
- Provision of social welfare services for youngsters from various social backgrounds, with a focus on immigrants
- Green ecology approach and sustainability in youth work and NGOs.

Youth Power Germany is operational in Berlin and Wiesbaden, where we support a variety of projects designed to empower disadvantaged youngsters. Our efforts in youth and adult education concentrate on the target group of young immigrants, facilitating their development of skills that lead to new opportunities. Our management education is tailored to effectively navigate existing hierarchies, while entrepreneurship competence aims to identify and exploit opportunities and to plan and manage processes of cultural, social, or financial value. These processes cover creativity skills such as imagination, critical thinking, and problem-solving, as well as communication, resource mobilization, and dealing with uncertainty, ambiguity, and risk. To effectively develop learners' competencies through our inclusion education activities, it is just as crucial to create supportive and stimulating learning environments in our youth work programs as it is to foster personal competences and motivation among educators. We therefore place a strong emphasis on promoting creativity and innovation within our entrepreneurship education youth work programs, serving both mainstream and marginalized youngsters.



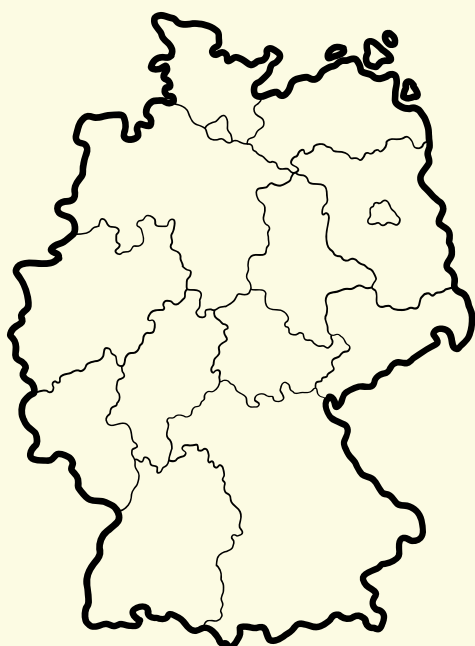


Since November 2019, we are Recognized carrier of the Berlin youth welfare service for youngsters aged 15-21, many of whom are young immigrants with varying social backgrounds. Our professional team of social workers and psychologists assists these individuals in their everyday lives and provides support during their asylum process, including handling paperwork and liaising with other institutions.

Youth Power Germany e.V. works closely with expert team of researchers, trainers, and youth workers from many different countries and fields who deliver various programs aimed at integrating less privileged young people. These professionals have a wealth of experience with digital tools in youth work, including e-learning courses and tools for digital entrepreneurship.

In addition, our professionals such as psychologists, sociologists, and social workers possess the requisite expertise to explore and adapt new methodologies within non-formal education for the inclusion and employability of marginalized groups. These professionals also carry out in-depth research and studies.

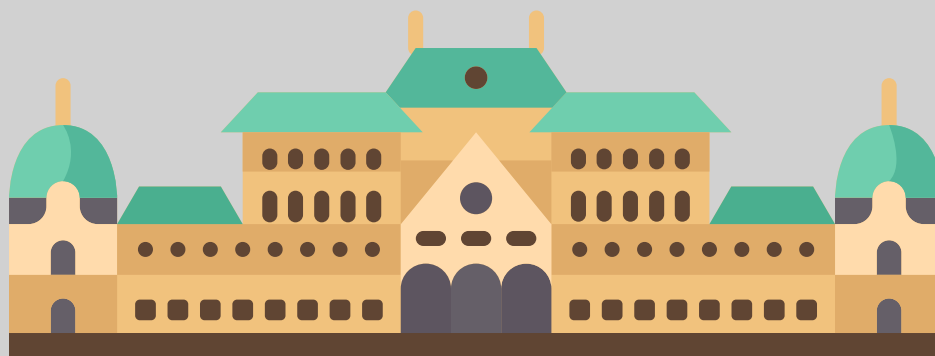
Besides those involved in providing welfare social services to youngsters, Youth Power Germany regularly engages trainers and project coordinators. Each year, we welcome a minimum of 400 people as learners participating in various local and educational projects.





Youth Power Austria is a non-governmental organization from Wels founded in 2020 by a group of young people who already had experience in the civil society sector. The organization has a strong team of seven employees and over 30 volunteers and currently implements three long-term programs. The vision of YP Austria is a society with positive values, where young people contribute to tolerance and interpersonal dialogue, promote healthy lifestyles, gender equality, non-violence and are actively involved in social life and politics.

The main activities of YP Austria are: organizing workshops, courses, youth exchange, consulting, education, organizing conferences and various events. YP Austria works on youth education at the national level in the field of youth employment; educates high school students to write resumes, search for job opportunities and prepare them for a job interview (job interview simulator). Also, they work on empowering women in matters of gender equality, prevention of violence against women, finding employment opportunities, improving them for new areas of business, promoting life without stigma and discrimination. The organization supports a network of business entrepreneurs and corporate partners to support local change makers and talented individuals, with the aim of connecting talented youth and youth organizations with entrepreneurs and experts from the corporate world, and establishing dialogue and knowledge sharing to create opportunities for employment, self-improvement and (digital) starting young people in our communities. YP Austria is especially connected with the Bosnian diaspora in Austria and other European countries where YP organizations are present and actively work on the topic of social inclusion of new young immigrants in society.



8. ERASMUS+ PROGRAM

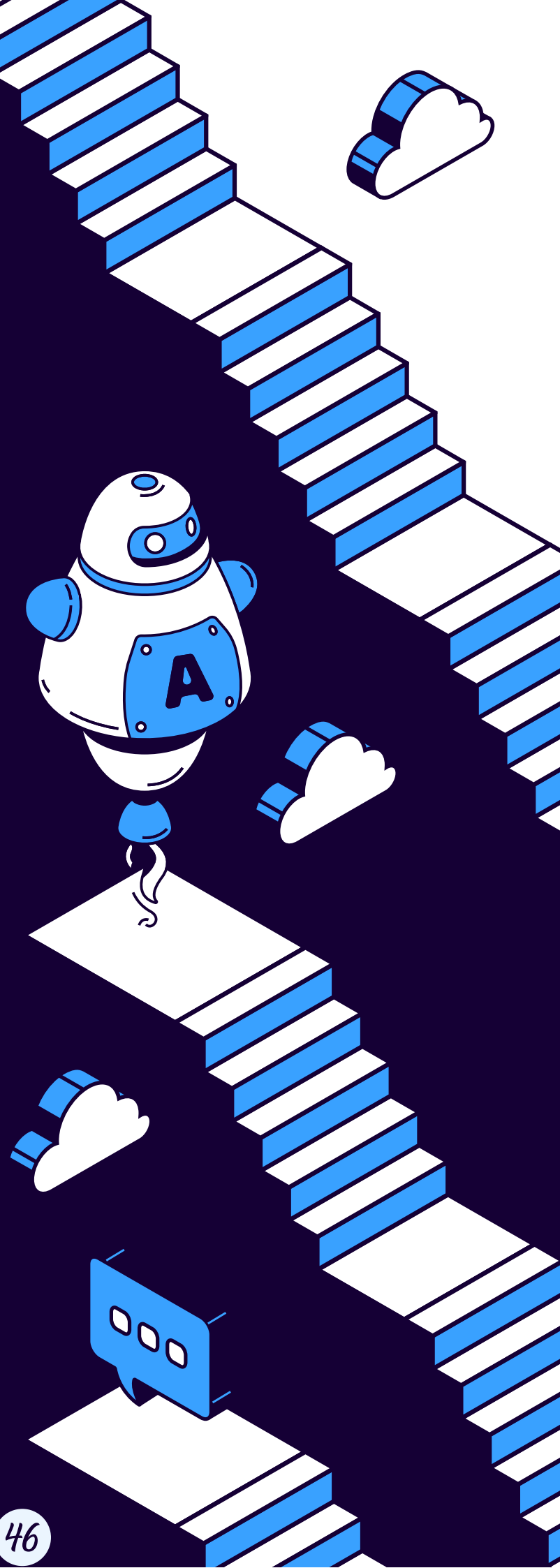
Erasmus+ is the largest EU program for education, training, youth and sports, it is aimed at strengthening the knowledge and skills and employability of European citizens, as well as improving education, training and work in the field of youth and sports. Erasmus + offers opportunities for international mobility for individuals and international cooperation for organizations, namely spending a period of study abroad, carrying out professional practice, professional development and training, volunteering, youth exchange, work on international projects focused on the modernization and internationalization of the education, training, youth sector and sports.

The goals of the program are:

- stronger connection between EU policies and financial support programs
- simplification of structure and implementation
- emphasis on the quality of the project
- stronger dissemination and better utilization of project results
- better connection with the needs of the labor market
- higher EU added value.

Erasmus+ is structured according to activities:

- KA1 – Mobility for learning purposes for individuals
- Key Action 2 - Cooperation among organisations and institutions
- KA 3- Support for policy reform
- The Jean Monnet program
- Sport.

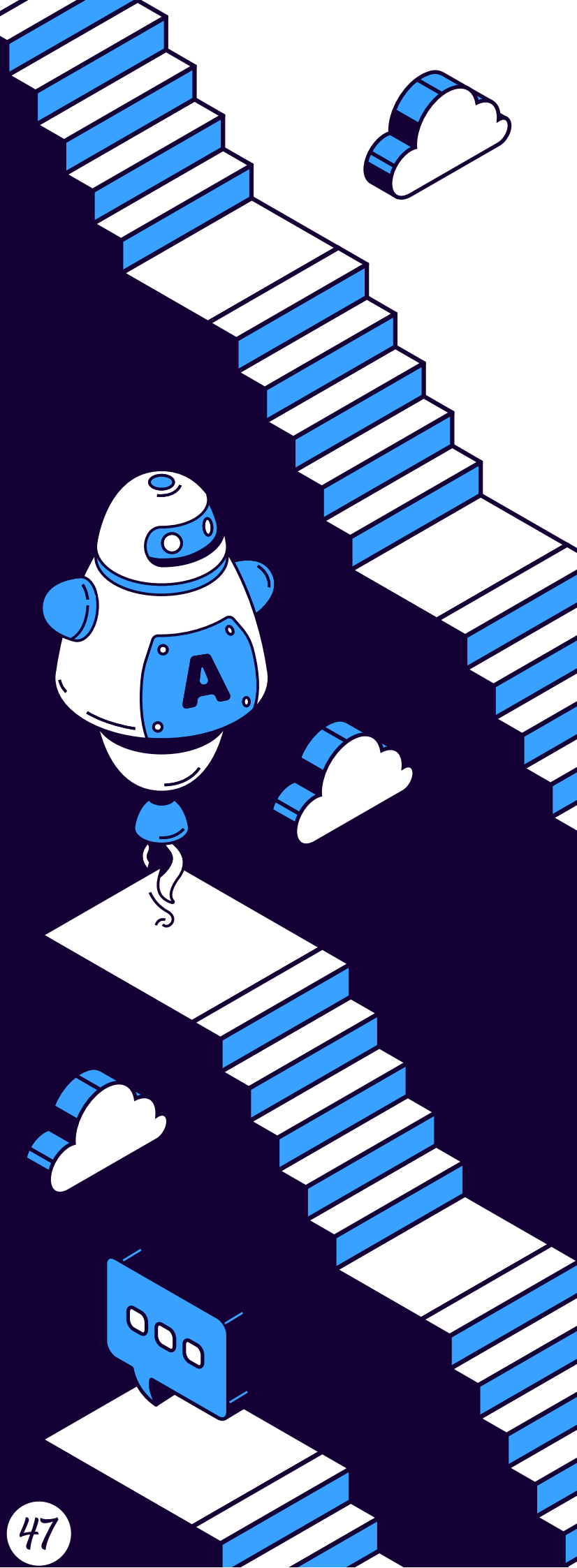


The Erasmus+ program covers 5 main areas of education and training, as well as the area of youth. Erasmus+ in the field of youth aims to strengthen the quality of youth work and informal learning for young people in Europe. It offers young people the possibility of mobility for the purpose of learning throughout Europe and outside Europe, and people who work with young people the possibility of developing interpersonal skills, increasing employability and networking within and outside Europe.

Program for the period 2021-2027. is strongly focused on social inclusion, green and digital transition, and promotion of youth participation in democratic life. It supports priorities and activities within the framework of the European Education Area, the Action Plan for Digital Education and the Skills Program for Europe. The program also supports the European Pillar of Social Rights, serves to implement the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027. and develops the European dimension in sports.

Erasmus+ has its own guide which is essential for understanding the Erasmus+ program and is an integral part of the call for project proposals under the program. Young people who want to participate in Erasmus+ activities can get information through Eurodesk, which serves as a European information service that provides young people with information about international opportunities for volunteering, travel, internships, studies, etc. The European network contains 38 Eurodesk centers across Europe, and its headquarters are in Brussels.

The Erasmus+ program enables young people to participate in various international projects and activities in order to acquire learning, new knowledge and skills on a professional and personal level. It also offers opportunities for active involvement in society, starting socially useful initiatives or getting involved in the creation of local, national or European policies for young people. The costs of participating in the activities are covered by Erasmus+, and participation for young people is free.



Impressum

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