



Study on the impact of the Internet and Social Media on Youth participation and Youth work

Annex 2: Case studies



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Editor: Francisco Lupiáñez-Villanueva

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1. #NichtEgal – Germany

Overview

How it works	#Nichtegal advertises a respectful exchange of opinions on different online platforms and in everyday life. In order to achieve these goals the initiative conducts workshops in schools, creates campaigning material such as gifs and a video challenge.
Mission	To motivate young people to share their views, to reflect their own role in the digital space and to promote a discussion about values in a respectful way.
Duration	2016-2017, and ongoing
Target group(s)	Young people
Learning Context	Non-formal and schools
Organisation	Digital Helden
Key Theme	Digital and media literacy, Active citizenship
Methods and Tools:	Peer-to-peer mentoring, blended learning, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Gifs
Transferability	The initiative is easily transferable to other countries due to the simple concept and channels, but the involvement of YouTube and local YouTube creators is a major key to success.
Impact	Young people learn how to evaluate information and opinions on the Internet, and reflect on their own behaviour. It supports creative, peer-led learning processes and engagement against hatred and intolerance in the internet.
Funding Sources	YouTube
Website	https://nichtegal.withyoutube.com/
Twitter	@NichtEgal_yt

Description

#NichtEgal was launched on 19 September 2016 together with YouTube, the Federal Agency for Civic Education (BPB), Digital Heroes (Digitale Helden) and the Voluntary Self-control for Multimedia Service Providers (FSM).

Social networks and internet services are an important source of information for young people and an exchange platform for the formation of opinions. The diverse possibilities of participation also allow content-related publications and debates, which are not always qualified or even anti-democratic. An increasing extremism in society is also reflected in the Internet and in social networks, in particular, the phenomenon of “hate speech” has increased whereby anti-democratic groups implement sensationalist tactics in order to influence public opinion and social interaction. While there is no definitive solution to dealing with hate speech, different measures and responses are required depending on the context. However, the amount of contributions can constitute a challenge for platform operators, community managers and online editorial teams.

The main aim of #NichtEgal is to advertise a respectful exchange of opinions on different online platforms and in everyday life. In order to achieve this ambitious goal,

media educators bring together thousands of students from all over Germany together to promote tolerance and democracy on the Internet. The Minister of Family Affairs is the patron of #NichtEgal along with many other sponsors, such as the Grimme Institute or the No-Hate-Speech Movement supporting the aims of the initiative. #NichtEgal is an independent scheme, however, and the Ministry has no hand in the content of the workshops nor does it provide the funding. In cooperation with the FSM, the BPB offers teaching materials for all teachers who are interested in getting involved in Germany. An example of such a material was the "hate on the net" program. The Digital Heroes conceive, coordinate and conduct all workshops at schools that are interest in hosting them. The FSM also runs the #NichtEgal channels on YouTube and other social networks and supports the Digital Heroes in the curation of the workshops at schools.

#NichtEgal has already triggered a huge media reaction. In addition to many positive voices there were also critical opinions and demands raised. The most frequent questions are answered on its website www.yt.be/nichtegal. Among other things, it is explained that the initiative is funded by YouTube. However, while YouTube finances the initiative and even engaged in a worldwide campaign to promote it, it does not engage in the pedagogical implementation and workshops conducted at schools. Eight well-established, well-known and regional media pedagogical expert teams conceive the nationwide school activities and carried them out between January and April of 2017. These teams include Cybermobbing prevention (Berlin), Blickwechsel, (Hannover/ Hamburg), Digital Heroes (Frankfurt), Juuport e. V., (Hannover), Medial Paths (Berlin), medienblau (Kassel / Leipzig), medienundbildung.com (Ludwigshafen), service Bureau Youth Information (Bremen) and Sin Studio im Netz (Munich).

As the provider of a large and hugely influential platform, YouTube has been committed to a respectful and tolerant approach for many years. Since as early as 2009, they have launched a number of appropriate initiatives with "361 Grad Toleranz " as well as "361 Grad Respekt ". They continue this commitment with #NichtEgal. YouTube, Digitale Helden and their partners hope to start a movement that is supported by a large majority in the country and bring about a change that encourages everyone to oppose hatred – online and offline.



Source: © Digitale Helden, H.Menzel

The target group are young people and school students. They are motivated to speak and reflect on topics such as freedom of speech and respectful communication both on and offline. Furthermore, the initiative wants to promote discussions about values: the initiative raises awareness on the meaning of hate speech on the Internet, the target of hate speech and how they can best confront it.

The workshops that form part of the #NichtEgal initiative are organised by established, independent pedagogical institutions. Although experienced YouTubers are involved as discussion partners, they are not involved in the pedagogical implementation of the initiative or the workshops. Additionally, during these workshops, up to 25 students are educated to become mentors at their own schools.

One result of the workshops are the videos captured on mobile devices- the project's goal is not a perfect media product, but rather the creative, peer-led learning process and the discussion of the topic of hate speech. The initiative provides a space for people who used to actively engage in the distribution of hate speech themselves – YouTubers with their own track records in this area are invited to share their views and reflections from their experiences in the past. #NichtEgal also involves disadvantaged groups of young people. As an initiative developed inside the schools, it reaches out to young people facing difficulties with their grades, those at an economic and social disadvantage as well as those struggling to integrate.

Pedagogical Approach / Methods

The initiative provides a #NichtEgal Reader that is directed at teachers and youth workers, providing information and material on the topic that can be used inside the classroom or in extra-curricular activities. The reader includes work materials such as checklists, worksheets, videos and presentations that can be used in school or youth work. In addition to that, the initiatives include workshops conducted in schools across the country. The digital heroes, as partners of #NichtEgal, organize around 40 days at schools across Germany in collaboration with established independent media education institutions.

In the #NichtEgal student workshops, action-oriented media education is linked with the approaches of peer education giving students the opportunity to study their own role in democratic processes and to reflect on the social coexistence in the digital space. The action days are carried out by qualified trainers and media pedagogues from the Digital Heroes group, accompanied by some YouTubers.

Additionally, specially designed learning videos provided by YouTubers inspire young people to become active themselves and formulate their own opinions on the topic. While many of them have already used tolerance and respect in the past, they reach many young people through their established channels with the call to engage themselves against hatred and intolerance on the net.



Source: © Digitale Helden, H.Menzel

Videos on YouTube are used in two ways. Firstly, the videos explain the initiative and create an understanding of the objective. Secondly, the initiative itself involves a video competition, the “360° challenge”¹, with videos promoting empathy and tolerance being awarded. YouTube is further used as a social network to disseminate and raise awareness for the campaign. In order to promote the idea of the initiative, there are three versions of gifs available on the website that can be shared on social media as a statement.

Competences / Skills Taught

If young people see themselves as a budding member of digital society, they need to be offered space and strategies that enable them to develop their own Ideas and to contribute to the debates. For a democratic exchange with one another it is important to re-negotiate, rethink attitudes, and revise opinions. Given the media world children and young adults are now exposed to, the mastery of the mechanisms of digital communication is no longer enough: young people need the ability and courage to critically evaluate and question the network contributions of friends and to confidently counteract the expressions of adults– and at the very least require the competence to communicate de-escalating and moderate alternatives.

Young people need to feel that their requests and ideas are respected and valued in order to motivate them into actively participating in the democratic process. They must experience that democracy is vibrant state of government that they can actively shape them as responsible citizens. This is why young people do not only need to possess the ability to identify relationships and how they can engage with them, but also the courage to formulate their ideas and utopias in order to believe and stand up for them. This is where #NichtEgal steps in. Becoming active, engaging in debates against hate speech and the intentions behind it helps young people to sensitise as well as defend and support solidarity. These are constructive ways to counteract hate speech on the net at a very personal level. However, anyone who counteracts may themselves become a target. It is therefore necessary to seek allies to argue and enlighten together.

¹ <https://nichtegal.withyoutube.com/##three-sixty-challenge>

Young people participating in the initiative improve their media literacy competence in a significant way and learn how to evaluate information and opinions on the internet as well as reflecting on their own behaviour. They learn to state their opinions in an objective way and with supporting arguments. In addition, the workshops help young people to become mentors to their fellow students through a creative, peer-led learning process and engage against hatred and intolerance on the internet through publishing and watching videos on YouTube.

This initiative also involves youth workers and media educators in terms of digital competencies and soft skills. They have to be able to use social media, YouTube in particular, and be media literate. At the same time, anyone involved should have the capacity to tolerate the opinions of the students and teach them how to formulate them in an objective way. They have also conduct the workshops in the schools, which entails acting responsibly during the creation of the pedagogical concept behind them.

Impact and outcomes

The main impact of the initiative relates to improved media literacy competences and young people's capacity to evaluate information and opinions on the Internet, while being encouraged to reflect on their own behaviour. Through the creative learning processes applied in the initiative, young people themselves become mentors for their fellow students. In order to participate in the public and political sphere it is important to have an opinion and be able to present it in a suitable manner. At the same time, it is important to be able to accept the opinions of others. Both issues are addresses and promoted by this initiative.



Source: © #NichtEgal

Transferability

This initiative has a nation-wide scope due to the social media campaign and the action days/workshops that are organised in schools across Germany. In total, 40 schools in all 16 federal states were selected in cooperation with the partners of the initiative from more than 500 applications. Media mentors accompanied the mentors of their school in workshops with pupils in the seventh and eighth grades nationwide. All schools were able to apply for the campaign days via the internet, while both

schools and parents of the participating students had to sign an agreement in order to participate.

It was very helpful for the commitment of the students and teachers that YouTube was on board – the same holds for local YouTube creators. An initiative against hate speech and positive communication culture using social media can still also be initiated, staged and funded by any other organizations. Organisations should consider the involvement of famous testimonials to motivate young people. The material is public and open and has a creative commons licence (cc by sa). Youth workers and teachers are invited to transfer, adopt and remix the material.

Implications for policy makers

The Minister of Family Affairs is the patron of #NichtEgal. Together with many other supporters, such as the Grimme Institute or the No-Hate-Speech Movement, it supports the aims of the initiative.

Testimony

"Youth work should prepare young people for their future and not for our past. Therefore it should integrate social media skills and methods like peer education, blended learning and mobile phone video production into their everyday business."

Florian Borns - Co-founder Digitale Helden

Sources

Literature

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Interviewee

Florian Borns, Co-founder, Digitale Helden. Interview conducted on 10 July 2017.

2. A Scuola di OPENCOESIONE - Italy

Overview

How it works	A Scuola di OpenCoesione: From open data to civic engagement, it is an educational online pathway designed for students in Italian secondary schools.
Mission	Its mission is to engage participating schools towards actively promoting the use and reuse of open data for the development of civic awareness and the engagement with local communities in monitoring the effectiveness of public investment.
Duration	2013 – Ongoing
Target group(s)	Students from high schools all over the country
Learning Context	Non-formal, formal
Organisation	Department for Cohesion Policy, in partnership with Ministry for Education and European Commission Representation in Italy
Key Theme	Active Citizenship
Methods and Tools:	OpenCoesione portal (www.opencoesione.gov.it), MOOC (Massive Online Open Course), Webinars, Monithon (www.monithon.it), social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
Transferability	The initiative is easily transferable, although it could be hindered by the specific national legislation of the country in which the practice is transferred. In fact, it mainly requires the active involvement of high schools, the use of the internet, and the availability of open data with respect to the use of public funding.
Impact	The initiative contributes to the development of young people's digital skills, competences, and citizenship awareness.
Funding Sources	Public (national government)
Website	http://www.ascuoladiopencoesione.it/
Twitter	@ascuoladioc

Description

"A Scuola di OpenCoesione" (OpenCoesione goes to School), also known as ASOC, is an educational opportunity and MOOC (Massive Online Open Course) designed for students in Italian secondary schools. ASOC was launched in 2013 within the open government strategy on cohesion policy carried out by the Italian national government, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Representation Office of the European Commission in Italy. It is also supported by the European Commission's network of Europe Direct Information Centres.

The objective of ASOC is to engage the students of high schools towards actively promoting the use and reuse of open data to increase civic awareness and young people's engagement with local communities by means of involving them in monitoring the effectiveness of public investment and in liaising with local authorities. The participating students and teachers design their research using data from a pool

of around 900,000 projects hosted on the national OpenCoesione portal², which provides transparent information regarding the investment of projects funded by cohesion policies in Italy. It further provides data with detailed information regarding the amount of funding, policy objectives, locations, involved subjects and completion times. Schools can select the data they want to use in their research, which can be related to their region or city along their lines of interest.

The initiative conveys several messages:

- Active citizenship and participation in the community problems are fundamental to support the development of the territory and of a strong group identity;
- Gaining soft-skills, such as teamwork, is an asset that is valuable in the future working lives of participants;
- The active involvement of young people increases their knowledge about their region and country, and supports the development of digital skills;
- Overall, the use of new technologies brings exciting opportunities that impact on how education is delivered.

The first pilot initiative of ASOC was carried out in 7 schools across Italy in 2013/2014. It was then extended to 86 schools in 2014/2015, 120 schools in 2015/2016 and almost 200 schools in 2016/2017 and 2017/2018. The initiative was implemented in cooperation with several public institutions, such as the Department for Cohesion Policy (coordinating body), the Ministry of Education, University and Research, the Agency for Territorial Cohesion, and the European Commission.

The most important prerequisite for a school to participate in this initiative is the availability of good ICT equipment and motivated participants, including teachers and students.



Source: ©A Scuola di Open Coesione (2016-2017)

In 2014, the OpenCoesione initiative, in partnership with Monithon was awarded the Silver Award during the first edition of the Open Government Awards relating to Civic Engagement. Moreover, ASOC was referred to in the National Plan for Digital Education of the Ministry of Education, University and Research as a good example in the use of civic monitoring and data journalism, and was also cited as good practice at international level in the volume "Open Data as Open Educational Resources".

² <http://www.opencoesione.gov.it/>

One of the main facilitators of this initiative is the involvement of different territorial actors. The European Commission's network of Europe Direct Information Centres plays a central role in supporting the activities of the schools within the didactic pathway. In addition, there are the "Friends of ASOC" – 60 associations and organisations that work specifically in typical cohesion policies themes, such as environment, social inclusion, mobility, transport, legality or in other transversal themes as open data and transparency. Some Regions have also become ASOC partners in order to increase the impact of the initiative at the local level.

The students are also encouraged to conduct interviews with local stakeholders to facilitate information exchange and in-depth analyses of specific cases. Before the final event where the final results are presented publicly, there is also an intermediate event - in association with the International Open Data Day – which provides an occasion for students to become direct promoters of all the key themes of the cohesion policies and to sensitize their active citizenship and an open administration. The best projects receive a prize - the first prize being a trip to Brussels to visit the European institutions that have financed the projects.

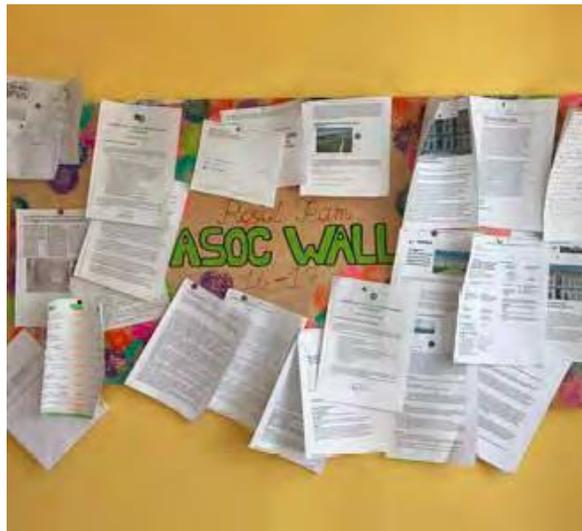
Target group(s)

The target group of the initiative mainly includes high-school students aged between 14-18 years, who are eager to learn more about the use of public funding using open data, interested in developing soft-skills such as problem solving and team work competencies, and finally, gaining and improving their digital literacy. A key to success of the initiative is also a good and motivated teacher that wants to follow and support the students along the way.

Pedagogical Approach / Methods

The activities of the initiative are based on the use of the OpenCoesione website, which plays a fundamental role, as it features the pool of open data, which participants access to gather and analyse data within the framework of the project. The use of Facebook, Twitter and project hashtags are also required, as each class/school creates a Facebook page relating to their research, or post new contents featuring the #ASOC official hashtag.

The programme of the initiative is designed in six main sessions. The first four sessions aim at developing innovative and interdisciplinary skills such as digital literacy and data analysis techniques that help students to critically examine the use of public money. Students are encouraged to apply policy analysis techniques - such as analysing policy rationales for interventions, their results, and performance through a highly interactive process. This process employs civic monitoring tools on real cases using data journalism and storytelling techniques. During the fifth session, and based on the information acquired, the students carry out onsite visits to the public works or services in their territory which are financed by EU and national funds. In this stage, they may also interview the key stakeholders involved in the projects' implementation, the beneficiaries and other sponsors relevant to the project realisation and implementation. The sixth session is a final event where students meet with representatives of the local communities and policy-makers to discuss their findings, with the ultimate goal of keeping the administrators accountable and responsible for their decisions.



Source: ©A Scuola di Open Coesione (2016-2017)

The teaching method combines asynchronous and synchronous learning. The asynchronous model is designed following a typical of MOOC (Massive Online Open Courses) style, where teachers are trained by the central ASOC team through a series of webinars and participating students learn through a series of activities. The synchronous in-class sessions share a common structure. Each team starts with one or more videos from the MOOC, followed by a group exercise, where the participants get involved in teacher-led classroom activities. These activities are organised around the development of the research projects and reproduce a reverse classroom setting. In between lessons, students work independently to prepare data analysis reports and original final projects. In order to have an impact on local communities and institutions, the students are actively supported by local associations that contribute with specific expertise in the field of open data or on specific topics, such as environmental issues, assets confiscated to the organised crime, local transportation, or other areas of interest and relevance to the project. Furthermore, the European Commission's network of information centres - "Europe Direct" (EDIC) - is involved in supporting the activities and dissemination of the results. A blog dedicated to sharing and disseminating the students' activities on social networks is provided on ASOC's website.

The pedagogical methodology focuses on specific goals, well-defined roles and decision-making. This allows students to independently manage every aspect of their project activities, from the choice of research methods to how to disseminate the results. On the other hand, the teachers are also involved in an intensive community experience that allows them to learn, not only from their own students, but also from the local community and from their fellow teaching peers involved in the project. Since the 2017-2018 edition, also the teachers have their new competences certified in their curricula.

Ultimately, this takes the form of a collective civic adventure that improves the capacity to form effective social bonds and horizontal ties among the different stakeholders and actors of the local communities. In fact, detailed open data on specific public projects has enable new forms of analysis and storytelling focused on real cases developed in the students' neighbourhoods. This, in turn, has the key goal of involving the policymakers in a shared, participatory learning process, to improve both policy accountability and the capacity to respond to local needs.



Source: ©A Scuola di Open Coesione (2016-2017)

Competences / Skills Taught

Besides the digital skills to be gained within the framework of the initiative, students acquire two additional of competencies: specific knowledge of analysis and soft-skills. With respect to specific knowledge, students become aware of what cohesion policies are and what civic monitoring is, and should therefore play a fundamental role in conveying this information to other students and within the steering of activities. Students are also asked to involve territorial stakeholders in meetings and events to mainstream information on the project activities and actively participate in these events. Thus, young people need to rely on some basic communication skills, which will be developed further within the framework of the project. Participation in the initiative offers many positive outcomes and benefits for students. The main objectives of the initiative and related beneficial impacts include:

- Supporting active citizenship among students through civic monitoring;
- Learning and applying data journalism methods and techniques;
- Developing statistical, digital (especially referred to open data) and soft-skills;
- Learning and improving social research methods;
- Developing problem-solving skills and teamwork capacities;
- Learning how to relate with public bodies and other organisations.

In the first stage, participants are asked to go through the OpenCoesione portal and identify one publicly financed projects of interest on which to base their research proposals. The OpenCoesione platform includes projects that are still on-going, projects financed but not started, and projects already finished. After selecting the projects and learning how to focus, analyse, explore and tell stories, students carry out civic monitoring through the Monithon³ platform, a civil society initiative for citizen monitoring of EU-funded projects. In the next step students are asked to gather additional information through interviews and surveys to stakeholders, and then produce materials (e.g. videos, images, etc.) and a monitoring report.

While the initiative is not too demanding, digital competencies and skills are required from students as a prerequisite to participate. Students should therefore be equipped with basic technical skills such as being able to use the internet and be accustomed

³ <http://www.monithon.it/>

with using datasets featured in the OpenCoesione website. Social media plays an important role in the initiative. While the level of skills and use can vary significantly among students (i.e. some students share all the steps of their research activities in social media platforms, while others share only final results) students are taught a responsible use of social media and are equipped with skills that, in general, they do not learn during normal school activities. Moreover, students make use the Monithon⁴ platform and become aware of basic concepts such as socio-economic indicators.

The ASOC team - made up of a community manager, a web editor and representatives of the Ministry of Education, University and Research, operating in close collaboration with the OpenCoesione team - and the schools play an important role in involving other territorial actors. These are included through meetings and public events, where they can get in direct contact with the students. During these meetings, schools can share their experience and exchange good practices.

Impact and outcomes

The overall impact on young people in terms of active citizenship and participation is very positive. In fact, participants gain due awareness of the importance of playing an active role as citizen to support the development of the community. Students participating in the initiative learn that being an active citizen, and not a passive spectator, can be beneficial to the entire community.

The initiative also has a positive impact on the development of young people's digital skills and competencies. Participants learn to locate and retrieve digital data, information and content, as well as how to interact and communicate using digital technologies with other students and with the wider public. They also learn to create and edit digital contents such as videos, images, and many more. Additionally, the impact on the media literacy of young people is positive. On the one hand, the project helps students to gain critical and analytical skills with respect to the content available online and to reinforce their participation as citizens. On the other, the initiative fosters participants' capacities to make videos, create multimedia products and publish responsibly on social media. Official evaluation exercises usually focus on the schools who win the competition, as it is rather difficult to track all schools and the impacts achieved there. The feedback received from the participating schools so far has been generally very positive. Although the evaluation is most of the time conducted on an informal basis, the ASOC team is in contact with the teachers on a regular basis to receive information about the status and implementation of the projects. The teachers from the winning schools in particular are asked to provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the project. While some schools took already part in all editions of the initiative, others decided to do not take part in subsequent editions because of time constraints and differentiation of the formative offer provided in schools.

Transferability

The key facilitator for transferability of this initiative is the availability of open data on public investment projects. The geographical scope of the practice is national (Italy), as local interventions are supposed to be implemented in many cities and regions of the country. The sustainability and replicability of the intervention to other countries or settings is high, although it could be hindered by the specific national legislation of the country in which the practice is transferred. In fact, the intervention is highly transferrable as it mainly requires the active involvement of schools/students and the use of the internet, but it is subject to the availability of open data with respect to the use of public funding. Nevertheless, the requirement for EU Member States to

⁴ <http://www.monithon.it/>

establish national portals on cohesion policy projects can represent an enabling factor. Other barriers to transferability are mainly of technical nature, as the use of internet to access datasets is the main activity on which to base the involvement of participants. To a lesser extent, organisational barriers could be an obstacle, because classes need to organise their research activity in order to ensure team work and an adequate implementation process. Finally, regulatory barriers could inhibit the transferability of the practice, as not all regional/national public administrations produce open data, in case no compelling regulation or legislation is in force.

Implications for policy makers

This initiative is financially supported by the National Agency for Territorial Cohesion, in the framework of the broader OpenCoesion initiative and it is directly supported by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR), to which ASOC constitutes an example of how civic monitoring, data journalism and storytelling can enhance the accountability of policy makers in the local communities and how civic awareness is fundamental to support the development of the territory and of a strong group identity.

The MIUR considers that educating young people on global citizenship, entrepreneurship and valorisation of the cultural heritage has a strong link with digital competences that are improved through this initiative.

Testimony

"The Internet and Social Media have a central role in the implementation of this initiative. The responsible use of them is one of the main competences that require improvement for the young students. They become aware of the potential of these instruments – especially Twitter – which is used for the dissemination of the results of the students' researches and live tweeting during the International Open Data Day and other relevant events.

In a formal learning context subjects may be distant from real life contexts. Thanks to ASOC, students are part of a team where each member is engaged in real-life problems, and has a specific role: social media manager, storyteller, coder, or data analyst. The new activities and tools used for ASOC have not only enabled the development of new competences, but also the emergence of proactive participation by those students that show some difficulties in a structured learning context."

Carlo Amati - NUVAP Department for Cohesion Policy,
Presidency of the Council of Ministers

Sources

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Interviewee

Carlo Amati, OpenCoesione Steering Committee, NUVAP Department for Cohesion Policy, Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Interview conducted on 14 July 2017.

3. Bytes – North Ireland

Overview

How it works	Bytes is a voluntary youth work charity that targets the most socially-excluded young people in society. It acts at the local community level and it makes use of creative ICT.
Mission	To engage and inspire young people so that they can progress and be successful in the areas of education, training and employment.
Duration	1993 – Ongoing
Target group(s)	Disadvantaged young people (16-24 years old)
Learning Context	Non- formal
Organisation	NGO
Key Theme	Empowerment
Methods and Tools:	Focus on trust building. Use of ICT to engage young people (games, App, websites, social media). Youth-orientated and non-judgemental approach, use of co-design and experiential learning methodologies.
Transferability	The project can be transferred, provided that lack of funding, lack of resources, and the difficulty of access to young people in rural areas is addressed.
Impact	Bytes has reached thousands of young people since its implementation in 1993 to change their lives for the better.
Funding Sources	Department of Education, Department for Employment and Learning, The Big Lottery Fund
Website	www.bytes.org
Twitter	@bytesproject

Description

Bytes is a voluntary youth work charity, created in 1993, that targets the most socially-excluded young people in society. It has the mission to engage and inspire them so that they can progress and be successful in the areas of education, training and employment. It aims at removing the barriers to training and employment that they face and help them overcome extreme social and educational disadvantage. The charity acts at the local community level and pursues its goal by using creative ICT. Bytes offers free, unlimited access to information technology to young people.

The project was inspired by the initiative 'Bytes for Bullets' that targeted young people at risk in Costa Rica, also providing them access to ICT in order to foster their personal and economic development. Representatives of the Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI) visited different open-access computer projects in the United States in order to gain knowledge on this kind of initiative. Afterwards, the department established the project Bytes for Belfast, together with other institutions such as the Training and Employment Agency (T&EA), the University of Ulster and Queen's University. The project was initially set up with equipment donated by Apple, such as Apple Mac PCs, printers and scanners. They were used in the project's drop-in centres to engage youth people through the use of creative ICT.

Bytes wants to give youth opportunities to realise their potential regarding employment and life in general. The project includes a range of programmes that have the objectives to:

- Improve participants' mental health and wellbeing;
- Support participants' employability;
- Support participants' personal development;
- Give participants social interaction skills.

The initiative also wants to promote youth engagement in their communities and to promote making a positive contribution to them. Moreover, it intends to foster the relationships among young people, especially between those coming from different backgrounds and cultures. Another objective of the project is to identify learning needs among young people as well as suitable learning methods for them.

The organisation has 15 permanent staff. It also employs temporary workers for specific projects. Funding used to come mainly from the government. For example, in 2006 £263,000 was received from the Department of Education and the Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland. Bytes also received additional funding for specific programmes from other public organisations such as the Community Relations Council, and The Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI). Public funding has decreased, however, in recent years. As a consequence, Bytes had to downsize in 2011. Currently, the organisation does not perceive public funding to be guaranteed and, therefore, does not know how it will evolve. Consequently, they had to look for alternative funding streams. One of the most important streams is the Big Lottery Fund. This is very useful and supportive and ensures that some of the programmes are run.

Bytes' scope is not limited to the young participating directly in the project, but it establishes relationships with other groups and organisations in order to share their experiences of digital youth work practice and to increase the possibilities of reaching all those in need. For instance, the project collaborates with local youth and community centres, schools, government agencies across, accommodation for homeless young people and Young Offenders Centres (YOCs).



Source: ©Bytes briefing (October 2016)

Target Group(s)

The main target group of this initiative are disadvantaged young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), or those at risk of becoming so. A special emphasis is given to those considered to be further away from the labour market and those that have complex personal issues. Thus, the initiative works with young people from a wide range of backgrounds and with diverse personal circumstances. This includes, among others: those that fulfil the NEET definition, homeless people, youngsters that are in care or have family conflicts, ethnic minorities, youth with disabilities or mental and physical health problems, individuals involved in drug and alcohol misuse, those known to the law, those with low educational background, youngsters living in socially disadvantage areas or in poverty, and youth suffering from lack of self-esteem and confidence. It must be noted that some of these people do not engage in social groups, and are excluded from social interaction. They may have had these problems since early in life. Consequently, when they reach the age of 16-24 they lack many personal skills such as confidence, self-esteem, and general communication. Bytes works mainly with individuals aged 16-24, however, there are some creative programmes that would be eligible for people from 4 years old.

The Bytes project uses three different strategies to contact the target group. Firstly, the charity has seven drop-in centres in local communities that can be approached by young people. Secondly, the project has strong links and partnerships with key stakeholders such as homeless centres, justice organisations, and community centres. For instance, the Youth Justice Agency⁵, the public executive agency that works with teenagers who have committed offences or are at risk of doing so, refers people to The Bytes project if they consider that it could help them. Moreover, direct referrals also come from social services. Lastly, the project deploys a specific outreach service targeted to the areas in need. Bytes has on street autonomous workers that try to reach out to those living on the streets. They explain them what Bytes is, what the project does and what it can offer. In most cases those approached agree to get involved with the programme. This is achieved thanks to the fact that youth workers are friendly, open, and transparent, facilitating the engagement with disadvantaged young people. The idea is to explain what Bytes' mission and projects are, but without forcing them to get involved. It is important to show them that there are opportunities available if they want to take them, and to encourage them to go to a Bytes' centre and have a chat with the staff.

Pedagogical Approach / Methods

Trust is key for the project's success. That's why the first step is to build a good relationship and trust with the young person. This requires a young person-centred and non-judgemental approach. Youth workers need to accept and respect young participants as they are and without judging them, regardless of their background, behaviour or experiences. Once trust is established, the objective is to help them discover their interests and talent, and to set some goals. It is important to stress that the project does not take a one-size-fits-all approach, and, thus, the goal-setting process differs greatly depending on the individual, given that they themselves determine their own goals based on their issues, barriers, interests, etc. The process is based on co-design: the young person participates actively, and the youth worker adopts a facilitator and mentor role. The worker has the goal of asking young people what they want to do, what they want to achieve, what job they would like to do in the future, etc. After the goals are set, the staff help project participants to design a realistic action plan to work towards by following specific steps. Based on the goals set

⁵ <https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/articles/about-youth-justice-agency>

and the action plan, participants can access accredited training in order to develop skills. These skills are to help them increase their chances of progressing in the domains of education, training and employment.

It must be kept in mind that many of young people involved feel that they have been abandoned, sometimes from a very early age and, thus, they have difficulties in trusting people. For this we need to have an open approach and to be very transparent and honest. This means to do the things that we have committed to and avoid making empty promises. That's why before promising something make sure to check if it is feasible. Otherwise, youngsters are at risk of being disappointed.

Another key point is to create an environment in which young people can learn because they want to. To achieve this, 'experiential learning' methodologies are used so that participants work on both their communication skills and on creative problem solving. Bytes has now a more mobile approach, it does not just have centres where young people can attend, but the staff themselves also go to young people to provide them with the programmes created.



Source: © Bytes briefing (October 2016)

Bytes intends to engage youth by using ICT. An App is being developed and young people are participating in its development. The idea is that each youth worker would have access to the app and that young people would use it to ask them help. This communication would be private and confidential. At the same time, young people would be able to communicate to each other through an open forum. At the moment discussions are being held with young people to decide what to add.

There is also the Bytes website, which contains open forums. The website is also being further developed in order to be able to offer online qualifications. This means that if the young person cannot attend a group, online sessions could be conducted instead. Then the person would be able to progress in the qualifications even if they are not able to meet the youth worker of the Bytes project in person. There is also another website that is run by the young people themselves. It is an open forum for discussion for our youth forum and focus groups, but it is also a place where young people can communicate among each other. It is overseen by the chair of the youth forum, who is also one of the young participants.

The project also uses social media tools frequently: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. Youth workers encourage young people to use them. They are also used in

some projects for social experiments for which the staff set up pages and closed groups where people can get involved to discuss Bytes projects.

Competences / Skills Taught

The projects offer participants life skills relevant in today's global market. These skills promote positive self-identity and empowerment, education, employment, emotional competencies, social and cultural competencies, community involvement, and health and well-being. The curriculum of the project has evolved since 1993, with the input received from young people, managers, youth workers and examination boards. It is organised in four core areas:

- IT and digital media;
- Personal and social development;
- Building relationships;
- Employability and skills support.

The project intends to make use of the latest technology available in a non-formal learning environment. One of the objectives is to introduce young people to computer science and STEM subjects through enjoyable activities. Some examples of these activities are scratch coding, Minecraft gaming, Lego Mindstorm, robots, Raspberry Pi computer building, video filming editing, and web design. Furthermore, the project organises a free summer camp the *Mega Bytes Champions Summer Camp*⁶ for 14-19 year-olds, which includes FIFA tournaments, robotics, and other activities.

The initiative also works for raising youth communication skills, which in turn raises their confidence and increases the likeability that they would decide to engage in activities, and to get involved in groups related to their hobbies or in careers they are interested in. Several Bytes' activities aim at building contact and relationships in the community, which also includes learning on cultural diversity. Creative ICT is used to pursue this goal. For instance, Bytes supports online participation and it uses social media to promote friendships and learning.

Training is usually provided in Bytes' projects, and accredited courses and qualifications are offered. For example, they plan to offer an OCN⁷ level 1 qualification in social media. This would look at the impact of young people using social media and how it can be implemented as a tool for advertising, building friendships and maintaining relationships, but also for bullying, trolling, etc. The goal would be to raise the awareness of both the positive and negative elements related to social media, and to promote that they use it safely. A recent project trained young people to be advocates for peace through online forums and social media. This included training in social media and digital media.

On the other hand, the staff require a lot of skills to work with this target group. They need to have a type of personality that enables them to get to the level of young people. They also need to be patient and persistent. Sometimes it may take weeks or even months to engage with those involved. However, once participants see that the youth worker is persistent and have a stable presence, they eventually are able to build a trusting relationship. Upon achieving this, they start to engage more. Moreover, youth workers have to avoid feeling offended. Young people can sometimes lash out and say things to try and hurt them. In these cases, the youth worker has to remain patient in order to not allow the relationship to break down. This initiative is

⁶ <http://www.bytes.org/2016/07/01/mega-bytes-champions/>

⁷ <https://www.ocnni.org.uk/centres/qualification-levels-and-equivalences/>

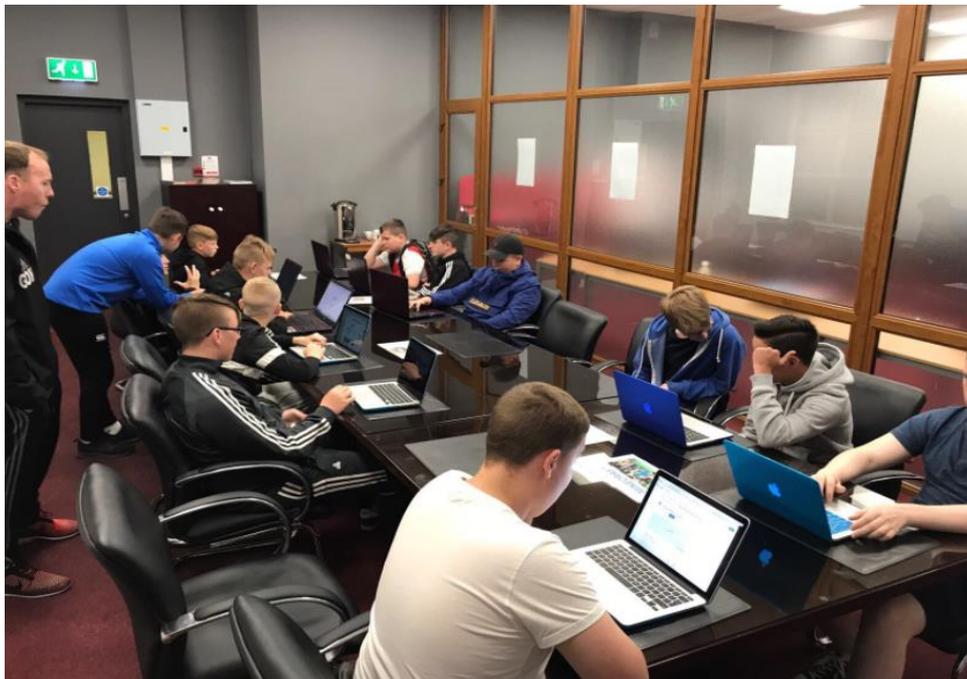
also very demanding for the staff because it requires high skills in digital, ICT and online tools.

Impact and Outcomes

The Bytes Project has reached thousands of youth since its implementation in 1993. In the 2010-2011 course around 3,000 people participated in activities and services from the project. In the following year, this went down to 2,000 (due to the budgetary constraints previously mentioned). Participants in the 2011-12 course included NEETs, lone parents, people with disabilities, individuals that in young offender centres or that were deemed at risk of offending, young homeless people, and those living in care or socially deprived communities. During that year, approximately 456 qualifications were achieved. Last year (April 2016-April 2017) the number of participants was close to 3,000. The organisation issues an annual report with all the activities performed.

The impact of the project is measured through evaluations. Stats are collected on the young people that Bytes reaches, their engagement, and their achievement. However, the achievement mainly refers to soft skills such as confidence, so it is hard to measure. Therefore, the evaluation is mostly based on the input from young people provided through case studies. Young people are interviewed when they register for one of the Bytes programmes. A contact sheet with the information is prepared and this is reviewed along the project, every 6 weeks. This allows them to monitor progress.

Measurement is also performed through the personal development plans. These plans are based on five different areas of development for a young person: confidence and self-esteem, money management, employability skills, level of education, and hobbies and interests. At the beginning of the programme, young people are asked to provide a score for each skill together with an explanation of why they provided that value. These scores are then reviewed every 6 weeks during the project to analyse the evolution. Moreover, youth workers set up action plans with young people with goals to be achieved during the following 6 weeks.



Source: ©Twitter (2017)

Transferability

As explained above, this project was based on another initiative functioning in Costa-Rica. This shows that this concept can be transferred. At the moment, the Belfast Bytes project is only applied in Northern Ireland, and the team would like to expand it within this territory, by increasing the number of projects and reaching more young people. However, it is facing three main barriers: lack of funding, lack of resources, and the difficulty of access for young people in rural areas. Funding is the biggest barrier and the tight budget means that the organisation cannot run as many projects as it would like to. Since the public funds decreased, they started looking for other streams. However, it is difficult to access funds because there are many organisations applying for them. The lack of funding also means that they have fewer human resources than what would be ideal. The organisation knows that there are more young people that would benefit from entering the project, but they cannot reach all of them. Sometimes staff do voluntary work and spend extra time to give young people what they need in order to fill the gaps where they can.

Furthermore, it is difficult to reach young people in rural areas with the few staff that Bytes has. If they had more staff and time they could work with the people that live in rural areas, instead of mainly focusing on big cities, like Belfast, where there are larger amounts of disadvantaged young people. Limited transport is an additional barrier for those in rural areas as it makes it difficult for them to join Bytes' courses. Moreover, it is less likely that they see advertisement and are made aware of the project, since it is more complicated to disseminate posters, flyers, etc. in these areas. These three barriers should be addressed if the project wants to be transferred to other regions or countries.

Implication for policy makers

As explained above, funding is the main barrier for this initiative. Moreover, public funding has decreased and there are uncertainties regarding whether it will be available in the future. Funding is key and the unavailability of it could mean that some projects would not be implemented. Therefore, providing funding is a key action that public organisations could do to support the Bytes project. It would be convenient not only to increase the funding for the following year, but to ensure that this could be sustained. If the organisation had more certainty regarding funds it would facilitate the planning of the projects to be implemented. It would also be beneficial to apply policies to reach youth in need who live in rural areas.

Testimony

"We have our Bytes App, and young people are taking part in development in a way that they see fit to use and as a means of communication between groups and with youth workers. This is one way in which we use the Internet.

(...) We are developing the website so that we do online qualifications through it, meaning that if we don't get to meet the young person, or they can't attend the group, or we don't get to see them face-to-face that we can still do online sessions and the young person can complete the qualifications."

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Interviewee

Charlene Cowan, Youth Support Manager, Bytes. Interview conducted on 18 July 2017.

4. Capital Digital – Belgium

Overview

How it works	In Capital Digital, young people aged 14 to 18 receive assistance in acquiring the technical and pedagogical skills in order to teach coding and programming to their younger 10-12-year-old peers, stemming from disadvantaged backgrounds in the neighbourhoods of Brussels.
Mission	To engage children in STEM and coding activities in a fun way and increase the number of people from disadvantaged groups, such as migrants and asylum seekers, accessing STEM career paths, and particularly, IT-careers.
Duration	2015
Target group(s)	Young people (14 to a maximum of 25 years old), children (10 – 12 years old)
Learning Context	Non-formal
Organisation	Maks vzw
Key Theme	Inclusion, Empowerment
Methods and Tools:	Peer-to-peer learning, coding, robotics, app development
Transferability	The initiative is highly transferable to other countries and settings. The project is reaching increasing numbers of young people and children, partly due to the additional financial support of private and public partners.
Impact	The initiative demonstrates that building young people’s science capital has a positive effect on their lives, not only in economic terms, but personal fulfilment and self-esteem.
Funding Sources	Public and private, (State Secretary for Equal Opportunity and Digitalization, Microsoft)
Website	https://capitaldigital.be/

Description

In the Capital Digital project, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as migrants and asylum seekers, acquire technical and pedagogical skills to teach coding and programming to their younger 10-12-year-old peers. As e-facilitators, they learn to engage children in STEM and coding activities in a playful manner. This first opportunity of work experience enhances the young person’s confidence in choosing a fitting career and finding employment. It allows them to connect with each other in a constructive way and to enjoy the role of educating their younger peers. Moreover, the project encourages young children to enjoy and enhance their IT skills, which are becoming ever more important in the labour market.

The project is implemented by three different organisations: Foyer Vzw (Integration Services) and Fedactio Vzw (Non-formal Education) recruit young people and children and assist in the practical organization of workshops; while Maks Vzw, a non for profit civil society organisation dedicated to e-inclusion, coordinates, provides curriculum and training. The work and mission of Maks in Kuregem is becoming more and more important in a society with a growing gap between communities, religions as well as

the rich and poor. Maks provides methods that encourage vulnerable audiences to express themselves freely about certain themes and allows young people to gain experience even if they come from less affluent families and have less access to the labor market.

Since 1999, Maks has inspired the residents of Kuregem and Oud-Molenbeek to develop their talents. With the help of the Brussels region, Maks began to train multimedia animators in a computer centre accessible and open to everyone. The organization provides three major services. By means of computer, video and picture, *Maks Digitaal* takes care of the deployment of the young and old and encourages in improving their digital skills. *Maks Work* provides coaching to job seekers through individual supervision, group sessions, and training and language courses. The *Maks Graphic Agency* is a social economy project for fun design, with mainly customers from the Brussels region, providing qualitative graphic design services to clients from the non-profit sector while providing those that have received less formal education with on-the-job training. Sixteen years after its establishment, the non-profit association has developed well: two other centers have been set up: one in Molenbeek and the other in Schaerbeek.

In 2015, it launched its Capital Digital initiative, a programming school for children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The objective of the Capital Digital project is to help build a portfolio of realised work, which will enhance young people's chances in the labour market. Within the project, both fun and educational digital activities in schools are provided to encourage children and young people to become producers of ICT, rather than mere consumers. Activities include training youngsters on video-editing and programming. The project further recognizes the power of stories. Job seekers and other vulnerable target groups learn to produce their own videos based about their life story. They call this "digital storytelling", a powerful process in which people learn to process and express a part of their story or a point of view on a significant experience. Through various activities and tools used in its projects, both young and old are gain reaffirmation of their self-esteem and learning capacities, which helps them to find their way in modern society and in the labour market. The main challenge addressed by the project is a **lack** of people from disadvantaged groups accessing **STEM** career paths and particularly, IT-careers. Reasons for this are grounded in factors such as:

- Educational problems;
- Vicious cycle of exclusion (gender and socio-economic situation);
- Lack of "science capital" i.e. undetermined role and importance of science in the daily life of local communities.

The multifaceted consortium around the project addresses these issues and offers interactive, out of school activities rooted in the local communities and on peer-to-peer education concepts. By doing so, the partnering organisations strive to raise the "science capital" of young people from disadvantaged communities, and thereby increasing their chances of accessing the labour market in the long term.

Maks has constantly developed innovative methods and tools, always in Dutch and French, focusing on the growth of each individual using digital knowledge. Every year, the organization reaches about 2,500 users, for the most part from disadvantaged groups, including 500 job seekers in trajectory guidance. Every year, they support fifty people to make their first steps with the computer. The Capital Digital project is reaching increasing numbers of young people and children, partly due to the additional financial support of private and public partners. The project was nominated for various awards, including the prestigious Social Innovation Award. In 2016, Maks also kicked off its first European project: a project involving young people from Kuregem with young people from Barcelona to Zagreb to visit a refugee camp. They worked for 10

days around storytelling, social and photography. From 2017, Maks will also be a pioneer in learning to encode vulnerable audiences thanks to the launch of the new BeCode project.



Source: ©Maks Vzw

Target Group(s)

The Capital Digital project aims to reach two age groups, namely young people between 14 to 25, who become mentors to young peers aged between 10 -12 years. The young mentors are trained in the basics of coding, together with basic pedagogical skills that enable them to transfer this knowledge to other children. A short-term goal is therefore to improve essential IT skills of young people and basics of coding, while in the long term, they want to make disadvantaged target groups aware of the career paths that lead to jobs in the IT and tech sector, a sector where people from migrant backgrounds or other socio-economically disadvantaged groups are currently underrepresented.

At the same time, the association tries to attract older people to the data centre, as the non-profit association organizes many other activities. For three months, from 9am to 12 noon, unemployed people receive training, for example, helping them find a job. From digital storytelling to computer courses to sewing using social media - the opportunities offered by the Maks panel is varied. In order to attract an older audience, parents and grandparents, are invited at the end of each training to see what their children or grandchildren have achieved. They realise that their children not only play games, but that they can also learn outside the school setting in a fun way. Often, they rediscover the potential of their children, while the young people themselves become more self-confident and empowered.

Pedagogical Approach / Methods

The initiative builds on the idea of 'peer learning': the children learn together and from each other. Therefore, the initiative includes both training sessions for e-facilitators for

teenagers and coding camps for children, in which the trained young people become coaches themselves within the framework of paid workshops.

In a first step, young people aged 14 to 18 receive training to become code-animators or e-facilitators for a digital playground with younger children. In the low-threshold 'coding bootcamp', these teenagers teach their younger fellows – just like little brothers and sisters – to create and program their own games, stories, robots, apps and music during the school holidays.

The teenagers can choose among several modules, which include: basic coding, design and programming of video games, introduction to robotics and programming applications. These modules enable them to assimilate principles of mathematics and physics in a playful way, while they further learn soft skills that are important in the labour market, such as teamwork and the ability to be analytical. In addition, they will be able to register their work within the Capital Digital project as "coding facilitator" on their CV - an attribute that is always helpful for the future.

In 2016, several training sessions were held for the e-facilitators in preparation of 3 workshops (camps) with children taking place in the holiday seasons where they receive the chance to apply their knowledge:

- *Easter 2016*: 3 groups basis module 'computer language' and 3 groups of follow-up modules 'GameLab';
- *Summer 2016*: 3 groups basis module 'computer language' and 3 groups of follow-up modules 'Robomania';
- *Christmas 2016*: 3 groups basis module 'computer language'
- 1 group basis module 'computer language' (in French) and 3 groups "AppDesigner"

The workshops took place in 3 different locations in Brussels, at Maaks in Anderlecht, at Foyer in Molenbeek and at Fedactio Schaarbeek. In the Christmas holiday period of 2016, the first French speaking groups participated in the computer centre in Moolenbeek. In these camps, younger children learn to program themselves. They do not have to actually write the code, but work with a range of software apps, where they have to assemble their codes using pre-programmed puzzle pieces. A problem-solving approach then follows: the children are confronted with a problem that can be solved through gaming, which requires them to work together to find a solution. Just like real programmers, the children are encouraged to employ trial and error, by testing their own games and removing bugs. At the end of every holiday season, the parents are invited to a presentation of the final project result.

What started in 2015 as a pilot project with a basic module was expanded in 2016 with a series of follow up modules: children who followed the basic module, invented and developed with Scratch their own game (GameLab), programmed robots with LEGO Mindstorms (Robomania) and created their own apps with OJOO and AppInventor (AppDesigner).

By the end of 2016, some of the children followed all existing modules and can be regarded as "truly graduated". For 2017, a further project expansion was planned to include even younger children (7-9 years), or just an extra group for the 'alumni' (12-15 years) so that they can grow into the role of animator once they reach 15 years. In addition, more internships for French-speaking children were offered.



Source: ©Maks Vzw

Competences / Skills Taught

The young people participating in the Capital Digital Project acquire both technical and pedagogical skills to teach coding and programming to their younger 10-12-year-old peers. The young e-facilitators learn to engage children in STEM and coding activities in a playful way. The teaching experience provides them with improved self-esteem and self-perception. This first work experience opportunity enhances the young person's confidence to choose a fitting career and to find a job. It allows them to connect with one another in a constructive way and to enjoy the role of educating their younger peers. Moreover, the project encourages young children to enjoy and enhance their IT skills, which are becoming ever more important in the labour market.

After participating in the project, the young people will have successfully developed coding and soft skills such as teamwork, logical and computational thinking, but also receive the chance to exchange personal experiences with one another.

The children make active use of digital tools and apps, including Ipads, Scratch, Gamemaker, laptops, robots (dash and dots, lego mindstorm), Ojoo.com, etc.

Impact and Outcomes

The initiative has had a very positive impact on the disadvantaged communities in social hotspots around Brussels. So far, the project has reached hundreds of young people and children, encouraging them to engage in IT in a fun and creative way. Research has shown that building their science capital will have a positive effect on young people's lives – not just in terms of encouraging more young people to continue into science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) jobs, but more importantly, building science capital is a tool for social justice, to help improve people's lives and life opportunities. At the same time, we show the potential and enthusiasm of young people who recently became particularly stigmatised because of the neighbourhoods in which they live or their ethnic backgrounds. Capital Digital supports them to boost their self-esteem. The project focuses on three disadvantaged

areas in the Brussels Capital Region: Anderlecht, Molenbeek and Schaarbeek, characterised by large numbers of disadvantaged youth and children, primarily with a migrant background. The partnership between the different agents involved in the development and implementation of the project ensures that the target groups are reached in the way set out by the project. Maks, Foyer and Fedactio have a lot of experience working with disadvantaged target groups and know the communities they work with very well. In addition, the partnership with the Cabinet of the State Secretary for Equal Opportunity and Digitalization in the Brussels Capital Region provides a base subsidy to partly staff the project and pay for investments. The government also assists in awareness raising about the project.

Apart from the technical and pedagogical skills they acquire, the young people make their first steps into the labour market and learn to identify their responsibilities as employees – this is of particular importance in light of an unemployment rate among youth (around 52% in the area). For many young people the participation in the project constitutes a way to enable their own social mobility. Socio-economically disadvantaged groups still remain at risk of being excluded from the digital world. The number of new members at Maks who do not have a computer at home increased from 20% to 25%. In addition, many of the participants could never have imagined taking the role of educators to their peers but that is very much the case. Apart from the impact on the young people and children, the project has a tremendous impact on parents: when they see their own children presenting robots or apps that they have programmed themselves, they are filled with pride and astonishment with regards to their own children's capacity and skills.

The project is receiving increased (even international) recognition: At the Telecentre Europe Awards 2016, Maks was nominated 4 times: With Capital Digital in the categories 'Best Practice '(Finalist) and 'Best Multi-Stakeholder Partnership '(nomination), the director Veronique De Leener as finalist in the category 'Best Digital Changemaker' and project co-ordinator Eric Gijssen in the category 'Best e-Facilitator'. Also at the M Awards of the Flemish Knowledge Center Mediawijs.be, Capital Digital was nominated as 'mediawise initiative' and was ranked among the 10 finalists. Lastly, Capital Digital was nominated for the prestigious Social Innovation Award: from the 1,097 entries they joined the last ten finalists.



Source: ©Maks Vzw

Transferability

The initiative is transferable to other cities and countries, provided that training facilities and funding are available to be able to pay the e-facilitators.

So far, the project is partly publicly-funded, part privately-funded: the Capital Digital project was made possible with subsidies from the Brussels-Capital Region and private funding. The Cabinet of the State Secretary for Equal Opportunity and Digitalization in the Brussels Capital Region provides a base subsidy that partly covers the cost of the project. Duval Guillaume, a private advertising agency, assists with communication and brings in private funding for the project. Since 2016, the initiative receives additional support from Microsoft and the Baillet Latour Fund. Moreover, they received financial support from the 4 Wings Foundation in 2017.

Regarding the financing of the workshops, for which the young e-facilitators receive a payment as if it was a student job, an option could be that the youngsters could do this on a voluntary basis as an unpaid work experience. Another option would be to expand the project directly to schools. Maks and its partnering organisations are currently exploring different ways of securing funding and expanding the project at the same time. It will most likely remain a mix of diversified public and private funding.

Implication for policy makers

In light of recent trends in radicalisation and a vicious cycle of social exclusion and discrimination, the initiative is a bright spot for the inclusion of vulnerable target groups as active participants in society. The success of the initiative is very much influenced by regulatory and policy framework: coding is a hot topic in different programs for which funding could be made available.

Testimony

"Five-six years ago, children were essentially using computers to play games. And we said to ourselves: that's not why we opened a computer center. It was then decided to offer them tools to start programming games themselves."

Veronique de Leener - Project Coordinator

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Interviewee

Veronique de Leener, Project Coordinator, Maks vzw. Interview conducted on 7 July 2017.

5. Demokratie in Bewegung – Germany

Overview

How it works	Demokratie in Bewegung is a recently-founded political party that combines participatory democracy with the use of ICTs.
Mission	Its mission is to engage young and unrepresented groups in politics, to disrupt the party system in Germany and give young citizens a voice.
Duration	April 2017 – Ongoing
Target group(s)	Young people, women, people with experience in discrimination
Learning Context	Informal
Organisation	Political Party
Key Theme	Active Citizenship
Methods and Tools:	Marktplatz.bewegung.jetzt (Online deliberation and proposal forum), Abstimmen.bewegung.jetzt (Online Voting System), Mattermost (internal communication tool), change.org, Facebook, Twitter
Transferability	The rise of similarly organized parties (Barcelona en Comú, Pirate Party, Wikipartido, etc) stands for an emerging trend in (mostly European) consolidated democracies. Criteria for the set-up and success of this kind of party is mistrust in established political parties, a critical young mass and the proliferation of digital literacy among the population.
Impact	The organisation has a remarkable impact on the political culture and involvement of young people on a macro-level. The individuals involved in the project learn about political communication, decentralised organisation and current political issues.
Funding Sources	Private (membership fees, donations)
Website	Bewegung.jetzt
Twitter	@needsmovement

Description

Demokratie in Bewegung (DiB) is a political party that participated in the German national elections on 24th of September 2017 after only five months after its foundation. The rise of the right-wing party Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), anti-European sentiments and general effects of the crisis of representative democracy are points of departure for the foundation of DiB.

Fighting the decline of trust in existing political parties, the low number of participation rates in elections, and a general fatigue amongst young citizens in Germany (Merkel, 2017), DiB mostly aims for the establishment of a new participatory and transparent political culture following four key values: transparency, justice, tolerance and sustainability. DiB is based on two key tenets: The renewal of political decision-making towards a more participatory and inclusive paradigm, and secondly, bridging the left-right axis of the established political conundrum.

Aside from the blog “Demokratie Plus”, the core founding circle consisted of activists related to political transparency (abgeordnetenwatch.de), artists, and young entrepreneurs that aimed for transferring the concept of online petitioning into a political party. Currently, the party has 250 members nation-wide and around 800 “movers” (citizens who support the party's claims). Founded in April 2017 after collecting 100,000 signatures on Change.org (an online petition website) to enable the foundation of the party, DiB has continued to heavily rely on online technology for campaigning (Facebook, Twitter), internal communication (Mattermost, email) and collective content development (town square of ideas).

In sum, the organisation follows a three-fold goal:

- 1) To integrate strong participatory mechanisms within their own organisation
- 2) To fight structural discrimination and promote diversity in formal political positions
- 3) To fight lobbyism and political corruption

1) DiB challenges the key tenets for established political parties and proposes an innovative approach for citizen participation – the town hall of ideas -, an online facilitated mechanism to enable the participation of anyone who is interested within the framework of the party's values. This structure guarantees a low threshold for the direct input of citizens thus avoiding the implementation of ideas that are against the party's ethical code. With the support of this tool, DiB collected over 400 initiatives from which 80 were chosen to form part of the party's program.

2) The current distribution of seats in the German parliament reflects a rather homogeneous socio-graphic profile: 30.7 % of the representatives are women, 5 % are people of a migrant background and 19.6 % are under 40 years old (Pauly & Wiemann, 2017). DiB is the first party that implements both a gender quorum (50 %) and a diversity quorum (25 %). The latter is open to people who suffer from discrimination because of their colour of skin, disability, sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

3) Due to its ethical standards regarding lobby control, the party follows a strict rule in respect to its own funding. Since DiB refuses to accept financing by private corporations it depends on private donations and crowdfunding strategies. DiB has received 200,000 Euros since its foundation through these means.



Source: Founders of DiB ©Andi Weiland

Combining these three strategies, DiB obtained 0.13 % of the vote share, that equates to around 60,000 votes in the general elections. The main focus of the party after its foundation consisted of the preparation for the general elections on 24th of September. In four months the party achieved to consolidate all federal branches, collected the signatures necessary for participating in the elections (74% of ballot papers), and organized the national campaigning strategy. The organisation follows the model of “connective parties” (Bennett et al., 2017) and “movement parties” (Della Porta et al., 2017) and pushes forward decentralised decision-making in contrast to hierarchical party organisation. Relatively autonomous layers and sub-groups decide about their own structure and strategies, organised around specific topics, i.e. strategy and vision, cooperation, membership acquisition, campaigning, events etc. The organisational pattern follows a dynamic and fluid structure since members have the opportunity to directly implement their ideas. Here, DiB challenges representative institutions and proposes innovative organisational patterns based on the values of collective intelligence and decentralised organisation.

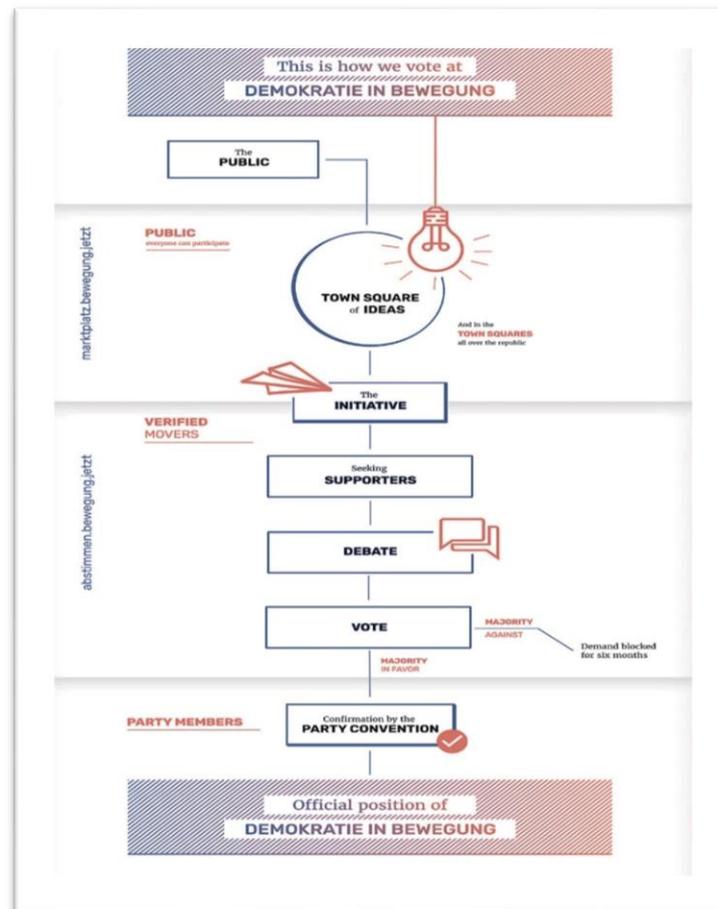
Target Groups

DiB has a short-term and long-term strategy related to the identification of its target group: For short-term member acquisition, the party addresses young German citizens and naturally digital natives. To disseminate information amongst them, DiB concentrates on social media channels and young media formats (i.e. short videos, shared posts). Following the spirit of online-petitioning, DiB focuses on low-threshold media strategies by “the use of social media and other online methods to promote a cause” (Clicktivist.com) that appeals to young digital natives in particular. To represent people experiencing discrimination, such as people of different ethnicities, people with disabilities and those marginalised by society because of their sexual orientation, DiB includes NGOs and other stakeholders that are focused on social empowerment strategies. In order to reach them, DiB implements a mixed-model strategy: Firstly, they lower the barriers for the participation of people with disabilities (i.e. audio-versions of the program, posts in simplified language etc) to facilitate participation.

Moreover, they organise events and working groups on topics such as racism and feminism to reach disadvantaged groups in particular. This is based on hybrid media channels ranging from adverts in the traditional press and online dissemination. As a long-term strategy, DiB aims to scale up the ‘marketplace of ideas’ to reach out to the political centre of German voters, evolving into a catch-all party appealing to a large amount of the electorate (Kirchheimer, 1965). During the electoral campaigning, DiB accordingly visited locations with a high percentage of elderly people as well as rural areas.

Pedagogical Approach / Methods

Since DiB is a political party it does not follow a specific pedagogical approach or method. Rather, its overarching motivation is to make political participation mainstream. To achieve this goal, DiB provides several methods - outside of its institution and as an intra-party strategy. DiB's core objective is to include initiatives developed by ordinary citizens as part of their program. Therefore, anyone who has a good idea can eventually form part of the actual position of the party. Accordingly, the main participation platform Marktplatz der Ideen (town square of ideas) is open to anyone who wants to bring in their ideas.



Source: *The town square of ideas. From: bewegung.jetzt/programm*

The party's programme consists of eighty initiatives developed on the platform by so-called "movers", anyone inscribed to the platform and people who do not necessarily have to be members of the party. DiB therefore blurs the distinction between members and non-members as typical for parties that heavily rely on ICTs (Margetts, 2007) and evolve from social movement characteristics (della Porta et al., 2017). For inner-party discourse, DiB relies on the platform Mattermost. Mattermost is a communication tool that supports decentralised organisation patterns divided into working groups and private messaging. The working groups consist of 40-50 participants that manage their own content. Only in delicate or controversially discussed issues, the final decision is being delegate to the commission.

DiB also makes use of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to diffuse information, the campaign, and share content. Its Facebook account is one of the key vehicles for reaching out to potential voters and has over 20,000 likes. However, DiB combines online and offline spaces to breach the digital divide, and offers workshops and physical meetings (regulars) about the 'marketplace of ideas'. Here, ideas are being collected and developed collectively to publish them on the official decision-making website. Furthermore, the regulars serve as opportunities to include people in decision-making who are not able to use online communication tools. The regulars are being held weekly in German cities with a fluctuating participation rate (between 10-70 participants).

Competencies / Skills Taught

DiB depicts itself as a self-learning organization. Every participant (member or mover) is encouraged to bring in his or her ideas and form part of a strategic group. Accordingly, the party promotes a high level of autonomy and individual responsibility to encourage everyone to participate. Members are being asked to realise their ideas on their own and are being encouraged to take lead in areas of their expertise. Combined with a sensitivity for groups that “normally are not being heard in politics” this participatory culture leads to an empowerment effect visible throughout the whole organisation.

Moreover, DiB teaches the proliferation of a positive political communication culture. This culture includes a code of communication for respect and efficiency. Every member and mover is being encouraged to follow political communication rules: 1) listening and respectful acknowledging, 2) think about the cause not about oneself, 3) empathising and taking into account different perspectives, 4) prioritising the organisation, not the individual. This code not only applied to physical gatherings but forms part of the online communication culture. One of the central goals of the ‘marketplace of ideas’ is to develop initiatives in a respectful and objective manner based on reason and empathy and to avoid hate speech and ‘trolls’. Here, DiB embeds a counter-culture to online hate-speech and fosters critical thinking and reasoning.



Source: © Demokratie in Bewegung

To participate as a full member in DiB, a high level of digital literacy is required such as a basic understanding of social media for disseminating information. Since internal communication mostly happens on Mattermost, a general willingness to continuously enter the platform and to work in shared working docs (Google, Etherpad) is presumed. As a result, the members of DiB are generally between 20 and 45 years old, and mostly have sufficient temporal, material and educational resources to form part of the initiative.

Impact and Outcomes

After obtaining 0.13 % of the total vote share in the German federal elections after only six months, DiB has consolidated itself as a political party. Future strategies are the focus on local issues and the establishment of constituencies on the regional and communal level. Furthermore, DiB aims to implement the idea of the 'marketplace of ideas' amongst diverse stakeholder that are rooted into civil society. On a macro-level, DiB aims to disrupt the political landscape by main-streaming participation and supporting a positive political culture. It has to be proven in the upcoming years to what extend DiB can implement its structure for local and communal issues and increase their target-group.

Transferability

DiB is part of a world-wide trend that tries to re-define the party organisation as such. Other prominent examples are the Pirate Party that implemented a platform similar to the 'marketplace of ideas' (Liquid Feedback) and parties that rely heavily on ICTs such as the Five Star Movement, Podemos, Wikipartido, Partido X, and Spanish municipal parties (Barcelona en Comú, Ahora Madrid). Learning from these early examples, DiB aims to scale up its strategy into a European project, cooperating with different European partners such as DIEM25 to transfer the initial idea to other European organisations.

Implication for Policy Makers

DiB is part of a world-wide trend that tries to re-define the party organisation as such. Other prominent examples are the Pirate Party that implemented a platform similar to the 'marketplace of ideas' (Liquid Feedback) and parties that rely heavily on ICTs such as the Five Star Movement, Podemos, Wikipartido, Partido X, and Spanish municipal parties (Barcelona en Comú, Ahora Madrid). Learning from these early examples, DiB aims to scale up its strategy into a European project, cooperating with different European partners such as DIEM25 to transfer the initial idea to other European organisations.

Testimony

"DiB combines perfectly political activism and digital culture in Germany. It promotes respectful cooperation – online and offline – and leadership is based on knowledge and expertise. These are the core values we need to defend in times of the rise of right-wing movements, anti-European and xenophobic sentiments. The founders are young entrepreneurs, they embrace a start-up mentality ground the party on tolerance, justice, transparency and sustainability. I strongly believe that this combination will gain a lot of attention in the upcoming years, leading to a positive politicization of the digital space and a fruitful digitization of politics."

Maria Haberer - Activist

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Interviewee

Maria Haberer, Activist. Interview conducted on 19 May 2017.

6. GameOverHate (GoH) – Austria, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Portugal, Sweden

Overview

How it works	GameOverHate is an international initiative to tackle hate and discrimination in video game communities and to foster inclusive communities.
Mission	To create a community of gamers and professionals in the gaming industry that do not only understand and recognise hateful behaviours online gaming spaces, but challenge it proactively.
Duration	2012 – Ongoing
Target group(s)	Young people (gamers), game researchers, journalists and developers
Learning Context	Non-formal
Organisation	Network of European Digital Youth
Key Theme	Digital and media literacy
Methods and Tools:	Digital game based learning, non-formal education, peer learning, collaborative gaming, community work
Transferability	The initiative is highly transferable, provided that funding is available.
Impact	The initiative has a high impact among the game communities as it collaborates with gamers, journalists, researchers, game developers, community managers and online activists to promote positive communication in online game communities.
Funding Sources	Council of Europe, Erasmus+, Austrian Ministry of Youth, Pedagogical Universities, Media Education Centres Project-based
Website	http://gameoverhate.tumblr.com , gameoverhate.org , inclusivegaming.tumblr.com
Twitter	@gameoverhate

Description

“GameOverHate - building better online game communities” is an international initiative to address hate and harmful behaviours in online gaming environments. The initiative was born from the Council of Europe’s No Hate Speech Movement Campaign, and works towards recognising, analysing, reacting and preventing hate in online game communities. The founder of the initiative is the Network of European Digital Youth, based in Austria. The initiative, which held its first international conference in 2013, arose from the founders’ passion for games, their personal experience in witnessing hateful behaviours in different gaming communities and the recognition of a rising trend in confronting and exposing this online behaviour.

Partly educational movement and partly as an activist movement they seek to reach out to different target groups and highlight problematic attitudes in gaming communities. The initiative further seeks to empower marginalised groups in online communities and create more inclusive communities and safe spaces.

The number of online gamers has been increasing continuously, and consists of diverse and heterogeneous groups of people. Gamers are getting more complex and require greater cooperation and communication, which fuels competition and builds endless conversation and communities. Games and game communities suffer from the same problems as other online and offline communities when large numbers of people interact without moderation and community management policies behind them as concerns discrimination, violence and abuse: bullying, hate speech, “trolling” and the darker spectrum of human interaction are also on the rise of the virtual gaming worlds. On top of that, game communities often experience increased pressure of competition and most online identities are anonymous. Without enhanced community management and clear focus on promoting inclusiveness and diversity, games can turn into toxic and dangerous environments populated by young people in which sexism, racism, general bigotry and abuse may flourish. Numerous examples exist that demonstrate the toxicity of gaming communities, which can be extremely unwelcoming and aggressive, particularly towards groups already marginalised in the offline world.

GameOverHate (GoH) is an initiative created by gamers for gamers, with the aim of fighting hate and discrimination in online game environments. It offers workshops for gamers and game professionals, alongside non-formal and game pedagogical approaches, allowing players to deal with hate and discrimination in video game communities on a secure basis. GoH collaborates with gamers, journalists, researchers, game developers, community managers and online activists to engage with the industry and to support gamers.

Through this initiative, gamers want to spread the idea that keeping game fun and competitive should not mean that gamers cannot be friendly and welcoming for all kinds of players. To achieve this goal, several events have been organised which include gaming sessions, but also discussions and debate about them, meetings with gaming journalists, academics and game developers. Participants develop community based actions, share good online practices and created of a set of recommendations on the development of better online gaming communities. During 2015 and 2016, several information sessions and trainings were organised within the framework of the initiative, hosted by youth workers, such as:

- **Gender and Sexuality in Videogames** (Austria): discussing gender and sexuality based hate in videogames and the representation of female and LGBTQ characters in gaming culture.
- **Sports and Competition** (Sweden): discussing how to play and compete in gaming spaces.
- **Diversity in Videogames** (Germany): trying out and discussing different genres, playstyles and finding out what player type you are.
- **Gaming Bootcamp** (Austria): focus on basic skills needed to stand your ground when it comes to gaming. We will try to help you out of the way.

In a constant effort to gather and organise the online discussions and resources related to hate in gaming environments and the promotion of inclusive gaming, the founders of the initiative launched an online “Knowledge Centre”. It offers links and media addressing hate in gaming communities and inclusive gaming and gives an introduction to the troubles present in gaming communities.



Source: ©GameOverHate

Target Group(s)

The target group for the workshops include young people, adults, educators and teachers, students and multipliers, but the core target group are young gamers. The initiative further targets game developers and game journalists that support the dissemination of the initiative and increase its visibility. The diversity of the target group reached by the initiative is reflected in the contributions provided in the knowledge centre section of the website: a large number of contributions have been published that address hate in gaming communities and inclusive gaming from various perspectives and points of views. Emphasis is also set on reaching out to marginalised groups in video game communities.

Through active presence and outreach in online social networks, including Facebook, Reddit, Twitter, Tumblr, and Discord, they successfully approached many small communities and self-organised social structures, whereby the activists reach out to gamers in different ways, depending on the country. Some of them used Social Media, especially Facebook, to disseminate the initiative and its objective, while others involve famous players that feature the initiative in their blogs, others, like the case of Portugal, who reached participants via channels popular to LGBTQ communities.

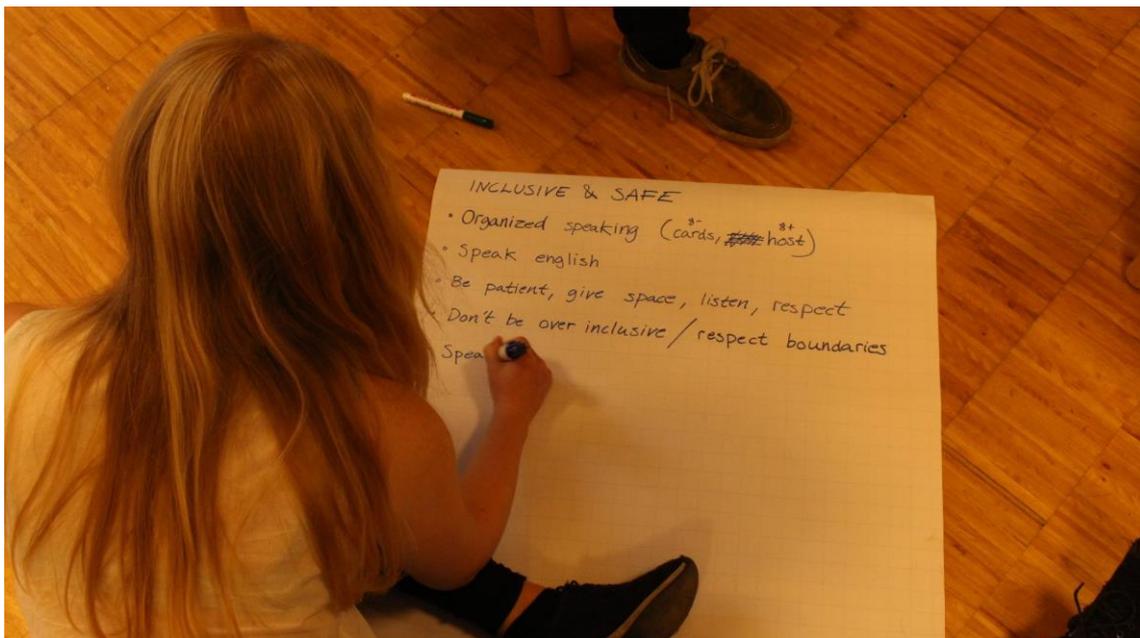
Particularly from its inception, the initiative did not receive entirely positive feedback. Generally, some from gamers feared a politicisation of the gaming community. In order to avoid creating controversy and inhibit their participation and involvement, the European Commission's logo was deleted from the project's website.

Pedagogical Approach / Methods

The activities performed within the initiative usually have the format of training session and workshops, while the scope of the session has moved from classic non-formal education to digital game-based learning.

Youth workers host these activities and also facilitate the processes and discussions online, which requires great many digital competencies. The gaming communities that participate develop their own communication codes and political structures. It is therefore important to have a clear overview of the particular online community before they are approached in order to remain authentic. In light of increasing radicalisation that is experienced in these environments, a suchlike approach is important to facilitate a participatory approach to learning, while utilising non-formal education methods.

During the workshops and session, GoH seeks to unmask some stereotypes about games and gamers to understand how mainstreamed this reality has become. Participants discuss and reflect how players interact online, what types of games they play and what happens when as many people cooperate and compete online. GameOverHate looks at how exactly players engage with each other and how mediation looks like to ensure that these environments do not get out of control. In an effort to raise awareness, the workshops include real cases from different communities, such as Anita Sarkeesian (FeministFrequency), Phil Fish (FEZ), Carolyn Petit (GameSpot), Zoe Quinn (Depression Quest), and FatUglyOrSlutty.com are discussed. The examples showcase the toxicity of gaming communities, which can be extremely unwelcoming and aggressive particularly towards women, minority groups, new gamers and developers.



Source: ©Facebook GameOverHate

Participants further discuss how they can contribute making these environments safer and more inclusive, by using inspiring examples of good practices from developers, journalists and players that shaped communities and left their mark on video game culture (e.g. Guild Wars 2, League of Legends, #onereasonwhy, Feedbackula). This exercise helped participants to reflect on their own behaviour and the potential that changing their actions can have.

Recent sessions have mainly focused on methods of digital game-based learning, which allow the participants to explore their medium as a medium of learning and reflect on themselves as an actor in the game and their role in the community. These methods require technical aids such as gaming computers, game consoles, video games, webcam, and live streaming.

GoH also make use of social media for internal communication. In particular they create safe spaces on various platforms as channels where players can find likeminded players to avoid harassment while playing together.

Competences / Skills Taught

The initiative builds on the premise that digital communication is closely linked to many communication channels and aspects of digital culture. This requires a broad scope of awareness and knowledge of the "geek culture" to understand aspects of digital communication. However, it also depends on how "digitalised" the young people are: in the particular case of gamers, these tend to be highly immersed in the digital culture and express themselves as part of those communities. The initiative tries to promote a positive communication.

Therefore, the skills and competences that participants gain from the initiative not only relate to game use, but include a critical view on media, media ethics, empathy, language and social competence. The initiative helps to raise awareness and encourages game players to reflect on their own behaviour in order to make their own contribution to making online communities a friendlier and more inclusive place without abandoning what made them so popular in the first place. Many of the youth workers and activists organising session or online discussions and have a background in political education and human rights, and they take a pedagogical approach to educating young gamers.

Impact and Outcomes

The initiative has reached out to a large group of young audiences via Reddit, Facebook, but also transitional magazines that featured the initiative and helped to disseminate it to game communities. An evaluation exercise further centres on Facebook group created for participants to share their experiences and view. The group has about 700 members of which many are active and enables participants to stay in contact and follow up on the initiative.

GameOverHate and the topic of hate and discrimination in online gaming spaces were the further subject of a radio piece in Deutschlandradio Kultur, a German public radio station. David Pinto and Martin Fischer (GameOverHate) and Elain Boström (Sverok) were also interviewed and shared their experiences and perspectives on the topic.



Source: ©Facebook GameOverHate

Transferability

The initiative has been established on an international level and includes many actors, such as gamers, developers, community managers, political institutions and game journalists that work together to improve game communities and expulse hate speech. The approach is a player's approach based on real experiences, and brings together relevant stakeholders to reach the objective of more inclusive gaming environments.

The successful transfer of the initiative largely depends on funding and a tailored approach to reaching out to gaming communities. Up until today, the largest share of funding came from the Erasmus + programme (€60.000), while contributions have been received from the Council of Europe, the Austrian Ministry of Youth, Pedagogical Universities, Media Education Centres on a project basis. Next to the challenge of finding sustainable funding, another large obstacle is to remain authentic – following the premise that it is an initiative by gamers, for gamers.

Implication for Policy Makers

Online gaming communities are spaces that claim not to be politicised. Therefore, the involvement of governments, or even the EU, in awareness-raising initiatives like this constitutes a challenge, as any involvement of public authorities, including funding, could create controversy or may prove alienating or confusing to the members of the respective online community, eventually deterring their participation.

Testimony

"I feel that youth work itself is not catching up with digital environments and networks and a lot of gamers create their social networks now online in video games with people they have hardly ever met. It is very difficult for youth work to reach out to gamers. GameOverHate set out to try to reach these people and see what kind of education they need and what kind of education works on them to involve them on their level, with a basic understanding that we do political youth work and want to refine political ideas and prevent extremism. We want to make sure that radicalization stops as early as possible."

Martin Fischer - Co-founder GameOverHate

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Interviewee

Martin Fischer, Co Funder, GameOverHate. Interview conducted on 8 September 2017.

7. Generation 1010 – Croatia, Cyprus, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Turkey

Overview

How it works	Seven partner organisations have been involved in a study on the implementation of the Digital agenda in their countries focusing on youth unemployment. Seven educational modules in the ICT field were developed aimed at training youth trainers that pass their knowledge to young people.
Mission	To promote policy changes in Digital Agenda, to design curricula and course materials that develop valuable skills in the Digital industry, as well as to implement digital projects that provide valuable solutions to local communities.
Duration	2014-2016
Target group(s)	Young people, youth workers
Learning Context	Non-formal
Organisation	Centre of Technical Culture Rijeka
Key Theme	Digital and media literacy, Empowerment
Methods and Tools:	Training for trainers, Hackathons, Skype, Google Calendar, Trello, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Giphy, Pixlr
Transferability	The educational modules developed within the project are available in six different languages and they can be used for non-profitable purposes by any organisation.
Impact	Young people from several countries were able to learn new ICT related skills and competences that are valuable in today's work market and were introduced to potential carrier paths.
Funding Sources	Erasmus+, Government of the Republic of Croatia Office for Cooperation with NGOs
Website	https://www.generation0101.eu/

Description

The Project Generation 0101 is a strategic partnership among 6 countries with the aim to promote policy responses to the digital agenda, design curriculums and course materials that develop valuable skills and to implement digital projects that provide valuable solutions to local communities. All project partners have created different course materials used by youth workers to teach young people ICT skills that are needed in the workplace for people who want to start their careers.

The idea came up from a Croatian organization - the Centre of Technical Culture Rijeka - specialised in non-formal education, with a specific expertise on ICT culture (robotics, modelling, multimedia). The idea was to find a way to tackle the issue of youth unemployment and combine it with the ICT education offered together with the other partners from all over Europe by means of a strategic partnership.

The initiative involved seven partner organisations: The Centre of Technical Culture Rijeka, Centro Studi Città di Foligno, Telecentar, Cyprus Community Media Centre, LIKTA, Langas Ateitj, and Izmir Üniversitesi. Most of them are NGOs, except for the

public body from Italy and the private university from Turkey (although a few months before the end of the project the university was closed due to the coup).

When this project began, the partners carried out research to find out how young people who live in Lithuania, Latvia, Croatia, Cyprus, Italy, and Turkey assess their ICT skills and knowledge in this field. They then compared it with how employers value ICT skills and knowledge of young people just entering the job market. It was found that young people underestimate their ICT skills as employers are in need of a lot more of the digital skills young people possess.

The partners subsequently introduced courses to the trainers based on these research findings. Their task was to train 16-30 year old people in different areas:

- E-journalism;
- Web design;
- Video development;
- Community Web Radio;
- Easy coding;
- Online collaboration;
- Mobile App Development.

Each module had its own curriculum and education materials, for both trainers and students. Once the modules were developed, the organisations trained the youth workers who would then go on to educate young people. Overall, 35 youth workers were trained and were able to pass on their knowledge. During the training phase, they had the opportunity to interact and get to know other youth workers who provided training in the same ICT field in other countries and also with the youth workers who provided training in other modules.

After the training of the youth workers, the youth education phase started. More than 300 young people aged between 16 and 30 from Croatia, Cyprus, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania and Turkey were trained through the ICT courses established within the project. They experienced how to solve ICT needs for local community groups or NGOs and share ICT ideas with their peers. Overall, they developed digital literacy and specific ICT skills that they are able to use for employment or self-employment in digital industry, further education, and e-volunteering activities.

Besides many hours of practical work during the youth education phase, the participants experienced something very similar to real life business at the Hackathons: the young people trained within the framework of the project ICT solutions for different types of social organisations with the support of team leaders and local/regional/national organisations. These ICT solutions have a big social impact in terms of improvement of quality of life of many different groups, such as children, elderly people, Roma people, gaming enthusiasts, and people with diverse economic, social or physical disabilities.

Participation in the project had a number of positive social impacts for the young people involved: it increased social sensitivity and young people's understanding of importance of their role in the society. Furthermore, the ICT solutions (services, tools, products) developed during the international Hackathons, in close collaboration with local and national NGOs, are still being used by local organisations in partner countries.



Source: ©Centre of Technical Culture Rijeka

Based on the project, guidelines for policymakers on a local, regional, national and European level were developed. These were disseminated to policy makers at different levels during the project and the partners actively participated in discussions on ICT policy making in the countries involved and across Europe as a whole.

Target Group(s)

Within the course of the project, 35 youth workers from Croatia were trained that passed on their knowledge to young people. More than 300 individuals from partner countries received the chance to gain new skills and knowledge in the seven ICT fields they are now able to use for employment or self-employment in digital industry, further education, e-volunteering activities, etc.

Among these 300 young people, there were several disadvantaged groups such as NEETs, people with disabilities, and those economically and socially disadvantaged. For example, from Croatia alone, there were 70 individuals involved in the leader organisation and all of them were unemployed. A secondary target group has to be taken into account: this includes national and local stakeholders who contributed specifically in helping to develop policy recommendations related to the national Digital Agenda Strategy. They also participated in national events and contributed to the dissemination of the project activities.

Pedagogical Approach / Methods

The approach and the method used largely depended on the group, the trainer and the organisation in each of the partner countries. In general, the main online tools used during the project included Skype, Google Calendar, Trello, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Vimeo, Giphy, and Pixlr. The Social Media use was related to the external and internal communication. In the case of Croatia, a private group for each educational model was created on Facebook and it was used as main communication tool among the participants, while in order to reach and engage young people, all partners made use of Open Calls and Hackathons.

In total, 7 Hackathons were organised, one by each organisation partner, and 18 ICT projects were developed during these events. Hackathons were the first business interaction in which participants of educational modules demonstrated what they learned during the education phase, practiced teamwork and business interaction.

The international Hackathons were particularly useful, as they allowed young people to learn about different phases of a project lifecycle. Specifically, they learned how to make the first plan, to conduct the research of the data related to the specific topic and its analysis, to find solutions and interface with unexpected situations, and lastly, to learn how to communicate with “consumers” and understand needs while putting them into practice.



Source: ©Centre of Technical Culture Rijeka

Partner organisations effectively shared their resources. Each of them contributed with expertise and guided other partners through the implementation of specific project activities, such as: planning and implementing research, developing reports and educational modules and materials, organising Hackathons, and researching and analysing policies and communicating with decision makers.

To prepare tasks for the hackathons, the partner organisations published open calls for NGOs to suggest ideas for ICT products and services that could be created by project participants. In Lithuania the best proposal was submitted by the Safer Internet Centre’s Youth Forum. Their idea was to create a computer game that would teach children about safety online and dangers of the internet.

In addition, each partner developed ICT educational module based on its know-how. It shared module materials with other partners and educated youth workers of partner organisations for implementation of its module. At the end of the first project year, each partner had up to 5 educated trainers and 6 new educational modules, which can still be used after the project ending. The modules are available in 6 different languages and they can be used for non-profitable purposes by any organisation.

Competencies / Skills Taught

From the youth workers side, the level of the competencies required was very high. Each organisation trained 5 youth workers to master the topic covered of each of the seven modules developed: e-journalism, web design, video development, community web radio, easy coding, online collaboration, and mobile app development. They had to be expert on ICT education, but also in training young people on using the internet, social media and mobile devices in a safe and responsible way. Furthermore, each

organisation developed educational materials like student and teacher guides. These materials were open for download from the webpage of the project in 6 different languages.



Source: ©Centre of Technical Culture Rijeka

The young people did not require any specific digital skills in order to participate, only the basics of digital media (familiarity with social media, video streams, messaging and blogs).

Impact and Outcomes

The overall impact on youth work and young people in terms of participation and ICT skills acquired has been very positive. In fact, expectations for the participation were exceeded by far: in Croatia, the Centre of Technical Culture Rijeka was supposed to host 35 people, but it received more than 100 applications and it finally decided to involve 70 young people.

The project strongly focused on ICT skills and their development and it guided young people to make use of the benefits that technology has to offer in accordance with European policies that try to make use of those skills for solving everyday youth problems. In fact, many of those 300 young people involved in this initiative were highly motivated to follow other programmes inside the organisations: some of them started to film; some of them decided to go to the college and become journalists; and others are now working in IT industry. Specifically, among the Croatian participants, some decided to develop themselves professionally within the IT industry, while others started to work or volunteer in NGO's and are actively taking part in local communities. Yet again others started to find possibilities for themselves abroad, especially in organisations across Europe through the European Voluntary Service.

It seems clear that NEETs have made a good use of the knowledge acquired and they have realised that there is a big opportunity to find jobs in digital world. Through this project they started to use computers and digital media not only just for fun and spare time, but in a prospective for a future job. This initiative highlighted the important value that the International Hackathons offer in terms of opportunity for young people to collaborate and experience real business, first-hand.

Transferability

The key facilitator for the transferability of this initiative is the coordination among the organisations, local communities, stakeholders and the understanding and response to the specific needs and opportunities of local youth. The geographical scope of this initiative is clearly international, and it requires extensive efforts in terms of coordination in order to develop homogenous and structured educational materials

that meet quality and standards. Also, the organisation of the Hackathons requires differentiated approaches based on the country-specific circumstances.

Implications for Policy Makers

Through the project Generation 0101, actual research on the implementation of the Digital Agenda was conducted in different EU member states with a focus on its implications on youth unemployment. The research showed clear differences among countries as concerns the use and update of digital technologies and skills to tackle the issue of youth unemployment: while in some countries, the Digital Agenda has been implemented to a large extent, in some countries it was mentioned only on the official webpages of the government bodies, while no impact or implementation could be assessed. In Croatia, for example, most of the interviewed stakeholders on local and regional levels were not aware of the existence of the strategic document and there was a need to work on its recognisability. It clearly demonstrates that more must be done by some EU member states to fully exploit the benefits that digitalisation can bring.

Testimony

"Nowadays it is very hard to work with youngsters without new technology and everything that it offers. Youth workers have to know how to use these new tools and choose one or more that suits the occasion. With that approach youth workers can have better results, outreach and impact on young people's lives."

Hana Galogaža - Project assistant

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Interviewee

Hana Galogaža, Project Assistant, Centre of Technical Culture Rijeka. Interview conducted on 28 August 2017.

8. Mediacoach - Belgium

Overview

How it works	Mediacoach is a transnational initiative of media resource centres in Europe promoting media literacy through professional media coaches.
Mission	To provide training opportunities for the professional and educational staff of libraries, adult education organisations, teachers primary and secondary education, youth workers
Duration	2012 - Ongoing
Target group(s)	Youth workers, teachers, professionals from NGOs
Learning Context	Non-formal
Organisation	Mediawijs, Média Animation, Mediaraven, Linc vzw, CultuurConnect (NGOs)
Key Theme	Digital and media literacy
Methods and Tools:	Training courses, Workshops, MOOC (Massive Online Open Course), Webinars, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Vimeo, Snapchat, Socrative, Mentimeter, Trello, Powtoon, Layar, Aurasma, QR, Action Bound, Adobe Spark, Microsoft Sway, Edu creations, Animoto, Moovly, Genial.ly, Kahoot, Explain everything, Sonic pics, Sock puppets, Puppet pals, Book creators, iMovie en Kinemaster
Transferability	The initiative is easily transferable to other countries, but requires an adaptation to the specific requirements and characteristics of each country to which the initiative is transferred, in particular, in terms of funding of media literacy projects and the media literacy policy of specific departments in the country (like education, culture, welfare)
Impact	A Mediacoach can bring a concrete change in their respective organisation in terms of media literacy as a factor to achieve active citizenship in today's knowledge and information society.
Funding Sources	Flemish Government, Evens Foundation
Website	www.mediacoach.be
Twitter	@MediawijsBe

Description

Mediacoach is a transnational initiative of media resource centres in Europe promoting media literacy through professional media coaches. The initiative offers training opportunities for the professional and educational staff of libraries, adult education organisations, teachers in primary and secondary education, youth workers and staff of parent organisations. Mediacoach builds on the premise that media literacy is a fundamental competence for the young generation but also adults, elderly people, parents, teachers and media professionals. The Mediacoach partnership considers media literacy as an important factor for active citizenship in today's knowledge and information society.

Mediacoach in Flanders is the result of a strong collaboration between the organisations LINC, Mediawijs.be (iMinds), UCLL, Mediaraven, and CultuurConnect. In 2016, Mediawijs took over the coordination of the Flemish partnership. Together with Média Animation and the Walloon Partners, they work on a collaboration and exchange on a federal level.

The major contents of the Mediacoach project are provided through Massive Online Open Courses (MOOC) and some ex-cathedra moments. Participants are invited to attend workshops which are offered by media professionals and media educators. This process is accompanied by practical exercises and by a final work. The final work consists of a project implemented within participants' own organisations after attending several contact sessions which include presentations, exchange and practice, and open online course (MOOC) with videos of experts and tests of material processed in sessions. Apart from direct feedback in the sessions, the participants receive support and guidance to design their project also via online and offline tools, while the final implementation and execution of the project is supervised by a personal supervisor. With a positive assessment of their project, participants receive the competency document "Mediacoach", based on the competency profile achieved within initiative. Participants that do not receive a positive assessment for their final projects receive a certificate of participation.

The framework of this training was established during the first project cycle (Media Coach 1 in 2012-2013 was created with a Flemish subsidy), but the organisers aimed to include more tools that would allow participants to be involved more actively in this process by exploiting the benefits of digitalisation, including mobile technologies. After a preliminary evaluation of the online material in 2014 (the Media Coach Massive Open Online Course, "MOOC"), large parts of the training material were translated into online content to enable a wider dissemination of the training and to reach larger audiences of professionals. A second evaluation of the MOOC took place in 2016, resulting in a new program shaped in collaboration with the partners and based on the evaluation of the previous trainings. A new, shorter Massive Open Online Course was created, that puts increased attention to themes like creating images, coding and fake news. In the program there was also more focus on differentiation through *keuzemodules*.

In 2016-2017, a spin-off of Mediacoach "Mediacoach for duos" has been established. This training is realised by Konekt, an organisation focussing on people with mental disabilities and Digitaal.Talent@Gent with the support of Mediawijs. The training targets supervisors of people with disabilities and people with disabilities themselves. They aim to coach them on media literacy in their environment (schools, institutions, etc.). The organisations involved in this project are planning to develop also a spin-off for the teachers in adult education.



Source: ©Mediawijs (2015)

In 2016-2017 the initiative expanded the training for teachers of primary education, with the training being adapted on their specific needs. The fifth edition launched in 2017-2018 showed an increase of the participants from this sector, indicating a high demand by teachers and educators to improve their competencies in media literacy.

Target Group(s)

The main target groups are youth workers, teachers in primary and secondary education, libraries staff and professionals from NGOs interested in the challenges and opportunities of using digital media in their work. The partner organisations follow an established communication plan to reach its audience. In addition to this, Mediacoach enjoys high visibility in the country thanks to the support of the Department of Education of the Flemish government.

In the last edition of the training course, an increased demand of teachers in primary education has been recorded, which shows that media literacy training has become an area of concern to educators. In addition, the last editions set increased attention to providing training to professionals working with disadvantaged groups of people (including physical disabilities or learning difficulties). The idea is to increase knowledge and insights to the needs of these specific vulnerable groups, which will eventually support the respective Mediacoaches in the creation of targeted projects within their own organisations.

Pedagogical Approach / Methods

The main objective of the project is to train people to become Mediacoaches, who share their knowledge and competences as mentors to their target group (children, young people, adults, etc.) and colleagues. The ultimate goal is therefore to increase the media literacy skills and capacity of the participants who eventually teach media literacy to a wider audience. Within the course of the project, participants follow a series of contact moments where experts and practitioners in the field of media and/or

media literacy present the main issues of the media landscape and media literacy, analytical tools and practical exercises on multiple themes

During this elaborate 10-day training course, the professionals get to know good practice, methods and tips about the integration and use of digital media in their everyday work. Besides this, the media coaches in training are coached in setting up a media literacy project in their own work environment. The participants use the online learning platform "Mediacoach MOOC" in preparation of each session, which includes online films from experts with theoretical information about a theme and an online assignment that is discussed during the session. Every session or workshop lasts about 6 hours and 30 minutes, the first one being a welcome day where participants receive information about the concept of media literacy, the competency profile of a Mediacoach, practices from previous trainings and exchange opportunities, following by an introductory session about media and media culture of young people and adults. After these sessions follow the theme sessions. Each of the different theme sessions focusses on specific topics, such as:

- Media production;
- Media and relations;
- Media, citizenship and privacy;
- Media, news, advertisement and information;
- Media and games.

During the 8th session, the projects developed by the participants are presented and analysed by a jury. Participants receive feedback on their project and those one with a positive assessment receive the competency document 'Mediacoach'. Several digital tools and social media are used during the training that can be included in the final media literacy project of participants. These include Facebook and MOOCS, Snapchat, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, Socrative, Mentimeter, Trello, Powtoon, Layar, Aurasma, QR, Action Bound, Adobe Spark, Microsoft Sway, Edu creations, Animoto, Moovly, Genially, Kahoot, Explain everything, Sonic pics, Sock puppets, Puppet pals, Book creators, iMovie, and Kinemaster. Among the projects that have been developed in 2015 were:

- Facebook Reporters involving students in the Facebook page of the school;
- Raising awareness about online privacy through a health project with wearables;
- Media Ways: Working on an integrated media literacy policy;
- Online platform on media literacy and how to use this in a teaching environment, developed by a local library for teachers;
- Social media and privacy workshop for children;
- A tablet game that allows young people to discover the school library;
- Workshop about Gopress and create a news report for children.



Source: ©Mediawijs

The graduated participants receive regular updates on Mediacoach through the Facebook group, which enables former participants to share their experiences and interact with each other. In addition, a Mediacoach Update for the graduated Mediacoaches is organised twice a year, which provided participants the opportunity and platform to exchange about new projects and contents on a personal level.

Competencies / Skills Taught

The initiative builds on the idea that media literacy is indispensable in today's society. Within the framework of the initiative, media literacy comprises a whole set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable increased awareness and enable people to perform as critical and active citizens in a complex, changing and fundamentally mediated world. The Mediacoach eventually becomes a mentor to his target group (children, young people, adults, etc.) and must therefore demonstrate complete awareness of impacts of technology on society.

The trained Mediacoach must demonstrate the motivation to convey this message and cover that role within his own organisation in order to receive the competency certificate. The Mediacoach must be open-minded and apply a constructive approach in the use of various digital tools. As a mentor for his target group, he must stimulate their creativity and the exchange of knowledge among each other. As a result of participation in the training, the Mediacoaches must be able to teach to his target group how to create media products, how to manage their online identity, how to safely use internet and online games, but also to understand the ethical and legal consequences of their actions. The digital competencies required by the participants themselves have changed and improved during the different editions launched since its initiation. In line with the changes brought about by technological advances, the initiative has become very demanding in terms of coaching and mentoring.

In 2016, a new competence model for media literacy was developed at Mediawijs. The content of the training and the project of the participants are based on this

framework. A 'pilot' profile test to screen the competences of the participants was created, which will be fine-tuned and re-used in the new training launched in 2017-2018.

Impact and Outcomes

The overall impact on professionals in terms of media literacy acquired and participation is very positive. In fact, the edition 2016-2017 reported a high demand and participation of professional from a range of different sectors like education (41), library staff (25), socio-cultural sectors (12), cultural sector (2) and the welfare sector (3). In the internal evaluation conducted for the 2015 edition, every trained Mediacoach, except one, who filled out the evaluation form, indicated that they would recommend the initiative to others.



Source: ©Mediawijs

A majority of the participants reported that Mediacoach brought about a concrete change in their respective organization, while the overwhelming majority indicated that implementing a specific project within their own organization or school brought an added value to the course, so as the use of the MOOC provided within the training.

Transferability

The level of transferability of this initiative largely depends on the opportunities and willingness of specific organisations, schools and political landscapes of the country. Organisations and especially schools often face budget constraints that hinders them from investing in training courses for their staff members. While the participation costs for Mediacoach can be considered moderate (€350), it could nevertheless be a financial burden to some smaller NGOs.

In some countries, however, local media literacy projects for NGOs are funded directly by the government, as is the case in the Netherlands. In this particular case, freelancers are formed and trained, who can disseminate their knowledge as consultants elsewhere. The key to transferability is therefore to understand the

specific requirements and characteristics of each country to which the initiative is transferred, in particular, in terms of funding of media literacy projects.

Implication for Policy Makers

The support of the department of education of the Flemish government is one of the major benefits to this initiative. However, increased attention by policy makers from other departments of the government could be very beneficial for the raising of awareness and improvement of media literacy for the ultimate beneficiaries of the initiative, such as young people and disadvantaged groups.

Testimony

"You are media literate if you can teach others to be media literate."

Laure Van Hoecke - Project Coordinator Mediacoach

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Interviewee

Laure Van Hoecke, Project Coordinator, Mediawijs. Interview conducted on 23 August 2017.

9. Parlameter - Slovenia

Overview

How it works	Parlameter is a web application that facilitates the monitoring of the work in the National Assembly through the public provision of data on voting behaviour and actions taken by representatives.
Mission	To enhance the transparency of the functioning of the most important democratic institution and effective insight into the decision-making process.
Duration	2015 – Ongoing
Target group(s)	Journalists, youth workers, young people
Learning Context	Non-formal
Organisation	Danes je nov dan (NGO)
Key Theme	Active Citizenship
Methods and Tools:	It provides voting analysis and does natural language processing to automate the analysis of MPs' speeches. Information cards (visualisations) are generated automatically and can be easily embedded into web articles or exported to print media.
Transferability	The open source and open data nature of the tool allow an analysis of complete past voting records of a single MP or even an entire political party made available for free.
Impact	Since the launch of the initiative, Slovenia experienced an increase of reporting about political work in the parliament by local web media.
Funding Sources	Google Digital News Initiatives, private grants
Website	https://parlameter.si/
Twitter	@Parlameter_si

Description

Which member is most often present at the National Assembly? Which member is most often advertising? Which member most often or rarely votes in accordance with the instructions in the parliamentary group?

Parlameter provides answers to these questions: it is a web-application created by the non-governmental organisation, Danes Je Nov Dan, to facilitate the monitoring of the work in the National Assembly by analysing voting and transcripts of appearances, while making it accessible to the wider public. The initiative was launched in 2015 with the presence of the President of the National Assembly, Milan Brglez.

The idea for the tools came up because the founders are convinced that political reports often do not look like they should: vast amount of information is missing, and journalists, but also anyone interested in their work, face difficulties to transparently report on the actions and behaviours of their representatives.

The application structures data in information cards about members of parliament (MPs) and political groups. It supports political journalists and researchers to more efficiently analyse and present information on MPs' activities in the parliament to the public. It provides voting analysis (e.g. similarity of voting records) and does natural

language processing to automate the analysis of MPs' speeches via content analysis and basic statistics about speaking habits. The information cards, which are automatically generated based on parliamentary data, can be easily embedded into web articles and are readily exportable for print media, so journalists can use them without relying on specialised developer teams.

Danes Je Nov Dan, created in autumn 2012, has been working as an institute focusing on digital political participation, transparency and oversight since 2013. Their work rests on an understanding of democracy as a continuous process, a social contract as a permanent and inclusive debate, and political participation as a responsibility for its own empowerment. With projects in the form of digital interventions that use innovative online communication approaches, they try to respond to current socio-political events, raise awareness, alert and activate people. The project was boosted with a 331.860 Euro grant from Google's Digital News Initiative on innovation in journalism. According to its founders, Parlameter is intended to help citizens, journalists, researchers and software developers interested in the National Assembly. The NGO want that the tool helps to improve openness of democratic institutions, and increases public interest in the democratic process. In a statement⁸, COKS, Slovenia's open source advocacy group, says that Parlameter is one of the most advanced platforms for overseeing the work of parliamentarians.

The initiative builds on the premise that effective journalism is interactive journalism. Out of the 10 most read articles of 2016 in New York Times' political section 9 contain enriched non-prose content. While 6 articles embed media, 6 articles were enriched with computer generated visualisations, and 5 featured documents or quotes prominently. Fortunately, media groups like the New York Times have the capacity to produce these features in-house, while the majority of other media outlets face capital restrictions that prevent them from producing interactive content. Parlameter levels the playing field. Each media outlet has its own (political) view on the world.



Source: ©Vecer

The creators of the initiative believe that a plural and diverse media landscape is not only beneficial, but strictly necessary for the functioning of a democracy. While fake news is plaguing the ecosystem, only the richest media houses can afford to dig through troves of data produced by the parliament. This creates a perverse system in

⁸ <http://bazar.coks.si/?p=1395>

which smaller and grassroots media outlets as well as citizens themselves can't contest the "truth" regarding the work of their representatives. However, sifting through these vast troves of data can be prohibitively expensive even for large media houses. Instead they focus on tried and cheaper methods like "political barometer" research, where they effectively ask people who they would vote for if elections were held tomorrow. However, this feedback is practically useless to citizens. Knowing what voters think is something politicians want to know. Voters, on the other hand, want to know what politicians do, not what other people think of them.

While solutions for government and parliamentary tracking have existed before, none of them enable journalists and bloggers to easily generate their own content and embed it elsewhere without relying on technical teams or outsourcing the research and development necessary for the article. Parlameter aims to solve exactly that. It empowers journalists to report on what happens in the parliament in more depth and with greater ease. Parlameter serves customisable visualisations of parliamentary data and allows journalists to embed these visualisations just like tweets or Youtube videos.

Inside the organisation there is a team of young people covering several competencies such as developers, web designers, mathematicians and social scientist.

Target Group(s)

The tool is intended for the general public, journalists and media houses, researchers and developers, and anyone who is interested in the work of the National Assembly. The tool is also used by youth workers who work in organisations particularly active in eParticipation. Any organisation or private person interested in the working of the parliament can ask for an update about a specific MP or a parliamentary group in charge of a specific issue in their interest. While the initiative does not target any particular group, it can be used by anyone interested in monitoring National Assembly member's activities. However, there is evidence that the website is particularly used by LGBTQ young activist that are interested in the activity of the MPs working for their rights.

Pedagogical Approach / Methods

With Parlameter, data collection and analysis are automated and democratised. Because of the open source and open data nature of the project, analysing a complete past voting record of a single MP or even an entire political party is provided free of charge and has become accessible to anyone. The application resides on Parlameter.si, while the information cards are being embedded across the entire Slovenian media landscape. Slovenian Parlameter cards are already being embedded by both local and nationwide online media, most notably by the Slovenian Press Agency, which integrated Parlameter cards systematically into their website.

Among more than 100,000 unique cards and nearly twenty different analyses, users can find information about the recent activities of any MP or party, as well as a variety of analyses of transcripts and voting patterns. The tool is endowed with a particularly advanced search engine that allows users to browse through parliamentary speeches and votes, thereby simplifying monitoring, exposure and analysis of specific topics.

As regard the engagement of people, the organization actively use Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and also the Danes Je Nov Dan 's website.



Source: ©Parlameter

Competencies / Skills Taught

The initiative helps bringing politicians closer to the people, and enables them to access and exploit open data to make informed judgements. The project had many spill-over effects in terms of fostering engagement and learning in the wider community beyond the people who were actively developing the project. The level of skills required by users is very low, but a basic understanding of how the internet works is a prerequisite for anyone who is interested in exploiting the tool. However, inside the organisation, people with different levels of expertise and skills deploy a range of technological stacks that can be fairly complex. Specifically, 3 different databases are used, together with 6 programming languages (Python, Javascript, Java, PHP, CSS, HTML) and the staff has written more than 270,000 lines of code.

The online tool consists of several building blocks providing APIs for datasets gathered from the website of the Slovenian parliament, as well as visualisations of those datasets in an embeddable card format (like a YouTube video).

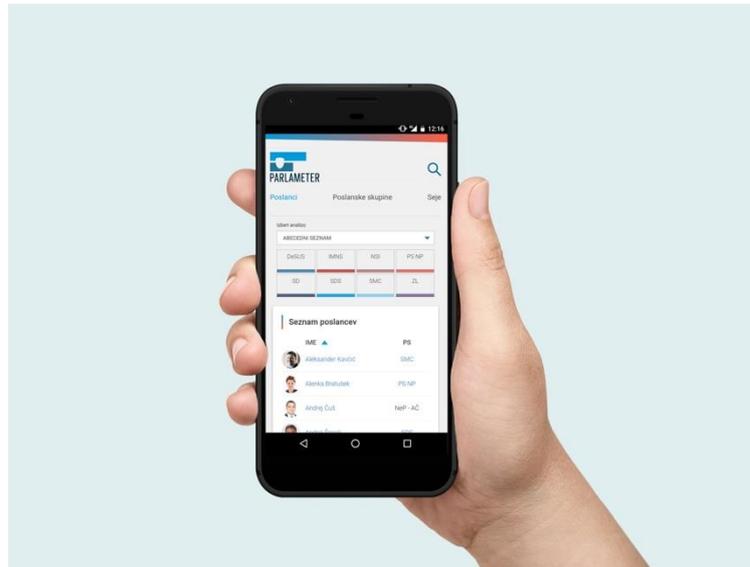
The organisation has further an editorial team in place, which tries to showcase the abilities of the platform to journalists and bloggers. In order to achieve this, they produce various editorial content ranging from long articles to short internet videos. The people involved with the initiative have learned to research political news, read articles from all sides of the political spectrum and analyse ad hoc coalitions in the parliament. It has also fostered their writing skills as they became a sort of citizen journalist group.

Impact and Outcomes

Since its launch in Slovenia, Parlameter has significantly increased the amount of political reporting of the parliamentary work featured in local web media, together with a public profiling of elected representatives. This phenomenon is rather new and has been inhibited before by high costs associated with such reporting. The information cards produced by Parlameter have been embedded by media outlets from both sides of the political spectrum, and have enabled in-depth reporting that has never been publicly accessible before.

The evaluation of this initiative starts from an understanding of the number of people who accessed the website, how many media made use of the information made accessible through the tool and how many people read the articles featuring the

information obtained through Parlameter. Secondly, the launch of the tool has produced several side effects, such as MPs providing own datasets of voting records that have not been officially recorded. While the overall impact of the initiative has been very positive, the outreach of the initiative has nevertheless been limited to the capital of the country. Direct outreach to communities outside Ljubljana could provide even better results in terms of open data and access.



Source: ©Parlameter

Transferability

The practice can be replicated and/or adapted in any country with a representative parliamentary democracy. The technology used for this project is highly replicable and easy to manage. Organisational barriers are slightly more significant because it requires a local team to check and vouch for the data and reports that are generated. Regulatory barriers in turn could constitute a rather significant problem, as legislation concerning information may vary across countries. Similarly, the availability and publishing of voting records and transcripts in a readable machine format may differ significantly across countries. In fact, the availability of data is the main challenge for the transferability, as well as issues relating to copyright. In some countries, there is still not a technologically-facilitated recording of the voting phase, especially in municipalities, where voting often takes place by raising hands. The team surrounding Parlameter has ambitious plans to transfer the initiative to other countries, such as Bosnia, Croatia, Denmark, Serbia, the FYR of Macedonia and the UK, or even on a global level, which requires additional funding and local partners to be realised. By the beginning of 2018, a first step towards this goal will be made, as Parlameter will be replicated in at least 2 new countries.

Implication for Policy Makers

This software brings a lot to the table, but it should never be the end game. Intimate collaboration with all stakeholders is incredibly necessary, not just in terms of keeping in touch, but also in terms of making them active participants in the design of the app.

Testimony

"The main difference in the way our generation perceives internet as opposed to older generations is the fact that we don't see it or use it as a tool, but rather a living space. There is a whole generation of youngsters, who identify as netizens (be it Redditors, 4channers, Youtubers or members of whichever online community built around content), realizing they have more in common with their fellow users from all over the globe than their fellow citizens. This has huge implications for the gradual fall of national identities, and it's a definitely a good thing."

Filip Muki Dobranić - Developer /activist

Sources

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Interviewee

Filip Muki Dobranić, Developer and Activist, Danes Je Nov Dan. Interview conducted on 13 July 2017.

10. Simbioza Šola - Slovenia

Overview

How it works	The project integrates 142 primary and secondary schools across Slovenia into a network, where every school implements computer workshops with the help of pupils that become teachers and seniors become students.
Mission	To promote an inclusive digital society and active participation of youth. Seniors learn about modern technology, but young people gain experiences on functional learning, recognising the applied use of e-literacy and ICT tools and at the same time practice social values of solidarity, lifelong learning, responsibility and a trust- based society.
Duration	September 2014 – Ongoing
Target group(s)	Students aged 10 to 19 years
Learning Context	Non – formal
Organisation	Simbioza Genesis, social enterprise
Key Theme	Digital and media literacy, Inclusion
Methods and Tools:	At least 20 workshops per year, per school, with a special methodology and training across the country providing unique mutual learning opportunities.
Transferability	High level of transferability, the module is applicable to any country with similar social challenges.
Impact	Pupils and young people get in touch with local community, they learn about aspects of old age, solidarity and, most importantly, active participation.
Funding Sources	Sponsorship
Website	http://www.simbiozasola.eu/
Twitter	n/a

Description

Simbioza School is a project of sustainable collaboration between generations within local communities to promote e-literacy. Local schools that have capacities, infrastructure and interest to include informal learning, as well as strengthening social values, represent the perfect bridge between sustainable Simbioza activities and social inclusion of the local senior and youth community. Currently, the project integrates 142 primary and secondary schools across Slovenia into a network, where every school implements computer workshops with the help of pupils. The idea behind the initiative is that young pupils become teachers and seniors become as students. This initiative is completely free of charge for everyone involved. Simbioza offers support to schools with the curricula, which are developed by a young team of professionals with special methodology and approach, and helps them connect with local authorities and stakeholders. Through volunteering to teach seniors, young people get to know the local community better and they also learn from seniors. At the same time, they actively use the internet as well as social media and digital tools, and they are able to understand the implementation of ICT tools so they can become more active citizens.

This initiative is not only about intergenerational dialogue, but also about encouraging lifelong learning, creative thinking and responsibility.

The main objective of Simbioza School is to promote an inclusive digital society and active participation of youth. Seniors learn about modern technology, but young people gain experiences on functional learning, recognising the applied use of e-literacy and ICT tools and at the same time get to know and practice social values of solidarity, lifelong learning, responsibility and trust based society. Both target groups have a unique chance to spend their free time with quality and informally exchange intergenerational dialogue. Everybody should be entitled to the right to access to information society and this is what Simbioza stands for. The geographical scope of the initiative is currently national, and the goal is to include remote regions and towns as much as possible (every town has a school), so the practice is based on decentralisation, while offering the same opportunities as people in cities have. The specific objectives set for the initiative are the following:

- To be implemented by 65% of all Slovenian Schools by 2020;
- Empower a minimum of 4,000 young pupils per year: the initiative's social impact grows in conjunction with the project as it gains more participants each year;
- Increase the participation of girls and raise their interest in digital topics: currently the ratio is 46:54 in favour of boys, whereas girls take initiative in the workshops with seniors, but less in the digital learning;
- Strengthen methods of participation: based on a learning-by-doing approach (idea-action). With this, Simbioza promotes inclusive learning and mentorship between generations;
- Integrate local communities into the educational system of Slovenia: schools are encouraged to contact stakeholders in their local community;
- Contribute to Slovenia becoming a digital reference country based on the premise that a digital society must be inclusive for all.



Source: 2016 ©Simbioza Šola

Simbioza Genesis, a social enterprise behind the initiative, was founded in May 2014. It was a consequence of an organic growth from a project 'Simbioz@ e-literate Slovenia', which started in 2011. Its principal activities are based on empowering people by means of digital literacy through intergenerational cooperation. By raising the e-literacy level of elder population with the help of young volunteers, the Simbioza School initiative promotes social inclusion, active participation and inclusive digital society, combining the energy of young people with the experience of seniors to prepare both target groups for a digital future. Simbioza Genesis has a long track record of successful initiatives on the topic of digital society that include all stakeholders. Its pioneering model of seniors' integration into digital society is tested and proven to work, where in the future it may be applicable also on other topics that address challenges of ageing society with the help of digitalisation. Simbioza Genesis, social enterprise, strives to become the ambassador of a social economy, which is becoming the foundation of sustainable development of society and environment that we live in.

The team of Simbioza consists of young Generation Y representatives, which creates opportunities of future digital society. With the purpose of strengthening cooperation between different stakeholders on the topic of inclusive digital society and to promote Slovenia as a case of good practice on the topic of social innovations, they wish to contribute to build up the Slovenian reputation in the international community. Their vision is to create and spread a universal model of intergenerational cooperation that can be applied to every environment with similar social challenges.

Simbioza makes use of social network communication via Facebook and Twitter. It also used YouTube to host promotional videos made by the team and the ambassadors of the project.

The initiative received many awards and recognitions for its work, among the most notable is the European Citizen Award by the European Parliament in 2012, Nomination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for United Nations Population Award 2014, State Award of the Republic of Slovenia for Voluntarism 2014, conferred by the President of the Republic of Slovenia Mr. Borut Pahor, and Best of Best Award 2014 by American Chamber of Commerce in Slovenia.

Target Group(s)

Two main target groups are addressed in this initiative: young people and seniors. Among the first target group are primary or secondary school students between 10 to 19 years. The second target groups cover people aged at 60+ (retired or close to retirement, with no, or few digital skills). There is also a sub-target group which includes teachers and educators. Simbioza informs them about digital literacy of students, their way of thinking and interacting with ICT tools, to introduce them to ICT smart tools and how to use it in education. Slovenian youth that participates in Simbioza activities, has a unique opportunity to participate as actors of a trust-based society, develop solidarity, social awareness and devotion to lifelong learning. From an early age, they have the chance to develop applied knowledge of digital skills with ICT tools outside regular formal education cycles. With Simbioza they learn about social inclusion and proactive citizenship, change their attitude towards their perception of seniors and raise awareness on the global scale of ageing population and people with less opportunities. The initiative is inclusive to disadvantaged groups, including young people with disabilities and the Roma population.

Pedagogical Approach / Methods

The youth workers, in the shape of educators/teachers, run the workshops together with pupils, go through prepared materials and do evaluation afterwards. They make use of the Simbioza online platform, designed especially by and for Simbioza, where

they can get all the materials for workshops, promotional materials, evaluation forms and guidance on how to implement and promote the project's activities. They also post upcoming workshop dates on an online calendar, so they are publicly visible, which ensures equal access to all groups of participants.

The education program is divided into 5 modules.

- “Computer, my friend”, participants find out what a computer is and what it is used for. They were introduced with the computer’s outer parts, learned how to navigate with a mouse and how to use a keyboard. Volunteers showed how to turn on a computer, talked about the desktop, files and folders. The participants learned how to write a text in the program MS Office Word and about the basics of text editing. They learned how to change the colour, size and font type and how to use space. The participants selected the text, cut it, copied it and pasted it. In the end, they saved the text and turned off the computer.
- “A click into the World”, participants are explained with the concept of internet and what it is used for in everyday life. They were taught how to access information and use a printer. They browsed over various internet pages, searched for recipes, train and city public transport schedules, watched news and so on. They learned how to save bookmarks and many other things they will be using in everyday life.
- “No-go without an e-mail”, participants were taught how emails work and were briefed on Internet etiquette, safety and safe connections. Each participant created his or her own email address and learned how to write a message, send it and receive it, how to read an email and reply to the sender. They learned how to forward a message and attach files as well as how to handle their personal information with care.
- “Get connected!”, here the participants met with social networks: how they function and what they are used for. The stress was on Facebook. They created their own Facebook profile and were taught how to use it: how to set personal information, add photographs, search for and add friends, like pages, write on their own and friend’s wall, and so on. Special focus was also on safety, when operating with personal information. In the end, they were told how to delete their Facebook profile, if it didn’t suit them.
- “Mobile telephony”, in this module the participants learned how to use their mobile phones – from the basics to the more complicated content. The participants were taught how to insert the SIM card into the telephone and turn it on, look through the directory and add new connections to it, use the mobile camera, send photographs via MMS messages, use other additional tools (stopwatch, voice recorder, calculator and games).



Source: 2016 ©Simbioza Šola

Competencies / Skills Taught

The curriculum used in Simbioza Šola is based on applied ICT tools, with the main aim to teaching end users why and how to use social media (Facebook, Instagram), applications like calendar, city bus info, or other communication tools like Skype, Viber, or Whatsapp. The educators have 10 textbooks on ICT topics that are easily understandable to learners in their double role: being the teachers for seniors as well as gaining new knowledge on the applied use of ICT tools and e-skills.

The initiative's approach intends to address the target groups' needs related to digital literacy, lifelong learning, social inclusion and active participation in society.

- Digital literacy: Promote e-skills to empower pupils and prevent future digital skills shortages, gaps and mismatches; promote the adoption of best ICT practices, tools and solutions in schools and educational environments.
- Lifelong learning: putting the concept into practice through intergenerational cooperation, establishing strong collaboration with formal education pillars and changing the Slovenian mind-set that education stops with the end of schooling.
- Social inclusion: ensuring equal access and participation of all target groups regardless of any different background. Including especially vulnerable part of youth, like ethnic minorities and underprivileged youth to enjoy the right to information literacy free of charge.
- Active youth participation: encouraging youth to participate in socially responsible initiatives and including them in the process of idea creation, organization, implementation, evaluation and analysis.

Simbioza strives for an implementation of the initiatives on an equal access principle, guaranteeing all participants equal access and possibility to participate in its activities. Participants are also encouraged to propose potential changes to the program, making it flexible so it covers the topic at its best. All proposals are equally treated and recognised. Innovative knowledge exchange is achieved through the practical and interactive implementation of workshops. This enables participants to develop critical

thinking, decision-making, independence and proactivity, while strengthening organizational and leadership skills, public performing and teamwork. It further encourages cognitive and critical thinking, promoting and encouraging solid argumentation using the debate method. Young people in the role of educators are responsible for planning, organizing and implementing workshops in some activities, as well as preparing evaluation and final analysis. This way their motivation for the topic grows as they get directly included in the process.

The following skills and competences are taught in the initiative: skills on information, communication skills, skills for problem-solving, and skills for using software.

E-skills on information:

- Data searching through www (online services, products, health, etc.);
- Finding useful info on various institutions;
- Copy/paste files and/or folders;
- Knowing cloud services (how to use Drive, OneDrive, Dropbox, etc.).

Communication e-skills:

- Sending/receiving emails;
 - Using social media;
 - Using online communication (phone chat or video chat);
 - Uploading photos, videos, texts on websites;
 - Using the SIMBIOZA WEB SYSTEM APP;
 - Knowing and using the online survey apps.

E-skills for solving problems:

- Transferring data between various connected devices (computers, USB, smart phones);
- Using web tutorials for lecturing;
- Communication with Simbioza team through the app.

E-skills for using software:

- For editing texts;
- For editing photos/videos;
- Communication and pedagogical skills: before each season they get tutorials on Simbioza methodology of teaching: slow teaching with many repetitions, interactive inclusion of pupils and learners (seniors).

Simbioza provides training through online handbooks on how to participate as leading coordinators in the classrooms before the new season starts.

During the course of the year, monthly e-newsletters are disseminated across the network with engaging news and information on the topic of e-skills for educators and learners (the news includes various partners on the topic).

Impact and Outcomes

The key message and goal for young pupils is that they get in touch with real local community, they learn about aspects of older life, solidarity and, most importantly, they learn about active participation.

This project is co-created with local communities as they give evaluation forms on every workshop they implement. Seniors are usually the most vulnerable social group as they face many social and health challenges with ageing. In general, the most relevant are loneliness and depression - this is why Simbioza connect them with pupils and engaging them to spend time with seniors, share their knowledge and experiences in an informal environment, which is a basis for social inclusion.

The schools involved use direct promotion materials (posters across towns, calling local senior associations, retirement homes etc.) and pupils invite their grandparents and their friends. Often, local media channels cooperate for free to spread the news and invite all generations and social groups to participate. Citizens are directly or indirectly informed through local media and by the word of mouth. On a national level, the Simbioza team has promoted the project as best practice on several occasions.

The evaluation of the initiative has usually been conducted in two phases. The first one has the aim to support all the schools which have some difficulties to engage participants. The second one is the final evaluation of the project that, generally, is conducted after the end of the school year.

In 2016, the project received a nomination for the UNESCO Al-Khalifa award for using ICT in education and an invitation to be part of the consortium for the 5-year long project "strengthening competences of entrepreneurship and encouraging flexible transition between education and environment in primary schools", granted by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia.

The main learning outcomes are the following:

- Knowledge on ICT skills. Most of the young people know how to use a computer, but lack in depth understanding of the tools they are using. With the programs easy to understand teaching modules for seniors, the young can also learn about the meaningful usage of these devices and programs. So, young people are not only teachers but also learners.
- To present and promote digital jobs: young people in primary schools today will go on to undertake 65% of jobs in the future that yet to be created.

This initiative uses ICT tools and knowledge to connect local communities, educational institutions, local stakeholders and local media. It promotes inclusive digital society for all. Simbioza School project is a win-win initiative for all target groups as well as for schools who also gain important roles within this process. In this regard, they build a local network of inclusive participation, cooperation, intergenerational dialogue and empower vulnerable social groups.

When young people take up the role of being "the teacher", they become very empowered, so Simbioza School raises responsible youth that are aware of world challenges, the world around them, and that know how to appreciate the value of silent knowledge of seniors through mentorship process between them and seniors, which is two-sided.



Source: 2016 ©Simbioza Šola

Transferability

Simbioza School practice has a very high level of transferability, the module is applicable to any country with similar social challenges. They already tested it in culturally and economically different environments like China, Croatia, and in 2017 in Albania, and the results obtained are the same as in Slovenia.

What is special with the way of working is that the team provides the tools and materials and then encourages local communities to engage within their environment. In some remote areas, schools are the only meeting point for the whole town to be socially active and this initiative helps shape local activities, development, and in some areas also influences local governance. This bottom-up module highlights a high level of involvement at local level.

Implications for Policy Makers

The Simbioza School initiative serves as best practice on the topic of intergenerational cooperation and digital literacy. So far, it enjoys the moral support of the national stakeholders, but in order for this initiative to be sustainable, our vision includes co-funding by the policy makers. They should participate through national funding of Simbioza School Initiative as it is a nationwide educational program that promotes lifelong learning and social inclusion. As the society is becoming more and more digital, the challenge of e-literacy arises not only among seniors, but youth also needs advanced digital competencies to prepare for the workplaces of the future. That is why Simbioza School bridges generations through collaborative »hands-on« learning and shares the vision of inclusive digital society that Slovenia strives for in its Digital Coalition development strategy. Moreover, the teachers should get official formal credits for coordinating the project throughout the school year and pupils as volunteers should get credit points formally recognized for their mandatory curriculum activities on a chosen topic. Establishing a national network of primary and secondary schools and engaging young volunteers provides big social impact with international potential. Therefore, Simbioza can and will build better common future and empower generations with more engaged support of national stakeholders and policy makers.

Testimony

"In my opinion knowing the Internet and social media is a basic skill of 21st century and its understanding is becoming a way of life, especially for young people as social participants and active citizens. Youth empowerment is based not only on access to information but also understanding and choosing right information. Therefore, youth workers should understand the equality of soft skills and digital skills, and help future generations reach their full potential.

Our vision of Simbioza School is for our module of intergenerational cooperation to get included into the formal curricula of primary and secondary education level as well as spreading our project internationally. We enjoy the moral support of our national stakeholders and material sponsorship from business sector, but we don't have any sustainable funding. The projects' costs are estimated to around 7000 euro per year, which is not a high number regarding to the great results we achieve and impact we build."

Tjaša Sobočan - Project Manager

Sources

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- Simbioza Šola project's website, <http://www.simbiozasola.eu/>, retrieved on 23.08.17.

Interviewee

Tjaša Sobočan, Project Manager, Simbioza Genesis. Interview conducted on 28 June 2017.

11. SocialWeb - SocialWork - Germany, Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Spain

Overview

How it works	SocialWeb - SocialWork provided face-to-face training courses accompanied by online learning units, materials and tools for professionals working with children and youth at risk and measured the effects of the training for the improvement of internet safety for vulnerable children.
Mission	Its mission was to guide children and young people at risk safely through the challenges of the internet and support them to benefit from the great advantages of social media.
Duration	2012 – 2014
Target group(s)	Professionals working with young people at risk
Learning Context	Non-formal
Organisation	Stiftung Digitale Chancen
Key Theme	Digital and media literacy
Methods and Tools:	The project was based on two complementary activities: the provision of a training campaign for professionals working with children and youths and in parallel the evaluation of the training effects on their work.
Transferability	This project is a show case example of how lessons are learned, repeated and eventually fully integrated in the daily work of professionals to sustain the project achievements beyond its runtime.
Impact	The project had a positive impact on improved safety for vulnerable children in the internet. By targeting the youth workers as multipliers, the project indirectly addressed many young people.
Funding Sources	European Commission (Safer Internet Programme 2009 -2013)
Website	www.socialweb-socialwork.eu

Description

SocialWeb – SocialWork was established within the framework of the Safer Internet Programme with participating organisations from Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland and Spain, coordinated by Stiftung Digitale Chancen, Germany.

The primary objective of the SocialWeb – SocialWork project was to improve children's online safety by availing the positive energy and influence of social work on vulnerable children and young adults. The project built on the fact that the internet and digital media nowadays form an essential part in young people's daily lives. At the same time, socially and educationally disadvantaged children and youth are less likely to receive guidance in their family or through their school education, let alone, go to school at all. As vulnerable children and youth, including minors belonging to high-risk groups such as socially disadvantaged families, are literally falling through the net, increased attention was dedicated to the specific needs of this target group in terms of protective measures in the media.

The project strategy built on professionals' detailed knowledge and experience with situations of daily life and the needs of the young target group, while sensitively addressing their possible reluctance to the use of digital media in social work. For young people who face a higher vulnerability due to social or educational disadvantages, having disabilities or other special needs, educational professionals in the broad field of social youth work often fill the role of a confidant. Thus, the underlying idea of the initiative was the improvement of the Internet safety, especially for children and youth at risk, via relevant qualifications of professionals who would eventually become multipliers. This involved the development and testing of a training curriculum for safer Internet usage for those who work with children and young people at risk, as well as an evaluation of this measure.

During the 24 months runtime of the project, a training campaign was piloted in each of the participating partner countries (Czech Republic, Germany, Lithuania, Poland, and Spain) and evaluated in regular cycles in order to measure the effects of the respective professionals' qualification for the improvement of internet safety of young people. The evaluation was conducted in order to find out what kind of impact such a qualification has on the daily work routine of those professionals working with vulnerable young people and which educational approaches and activities they develop in regard to the online behaviour of their target group. Overall, the project SocialWeb - SocialWork resulted in:

- A training curriculum for professionals working with children and young people at risk;
- Accompanying tools and learning material for the trainees for professionals working with children and youths at risk in six languages);
- 13 Online Learning Units in six European languages on the projects' website;
- 681 trained professionals working with children and youth at risks and 98 trained trainers (professionals who participated in the train-the-trainer sessions);
- Lessons learnt from the pilot training campaigns resulting in a train-the-trainer strategy that has proven its transferability and scalability to other European countries.

A study on the effects of a training provision for the improvement of internet safety for vulnerable children exhibited that the professionals are motivated to learn more about digital media, and that they are well fit as multipliers for this target group. These findings led to the development of a successor project (Digital Skills for You(th)) which builds on the SocialWeb – SocialWork's project results to create a blended learning qualification that focusses less on safety issues and more on the opportunities the internet has to offer.

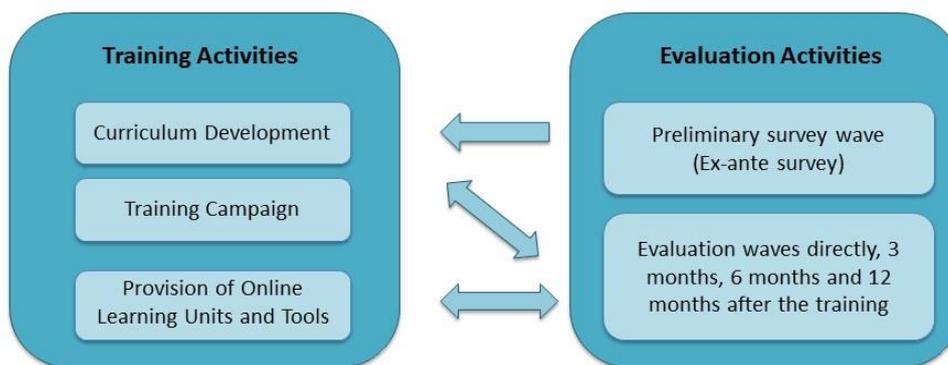
Young people often spend their leisure time at care centres, community centres, youth clubs, children's homes, but also public libraries, sports clubs and other institutions where they seek support and advice and at the same time often use the internet together with their peers. Social work for children and young people in general offers socio-educational aid for young people, that helps to compensate their social disadvantages on the one hand and overcomes their individual impairments on the other hand. And, as proven by the evaluation results of the project, social youth work can contribute to the Internet safety of these young people.

Target Group(s)

The direct target group of this project are professionals working with young people, while a second important group of beneficiaries include young people, in particular, socially and educationally disadvantaged children and young people. However, a differentiated answer must be given with view to the effects on the online safety of vulnerable children and young adults which can be achieved by training professionals working with this group. Learning to know how they benefit from increased digital literacy and awareness of the adults responsible for educating them would allow to design a broader strategy and training approach not only for professionals in social youth work but also for parents and other adults in charge of minors.

Pedagogical Approach/Methods

The project was based on two complementary strands of activities: the provision of a training campaign for professionals working with children and young people the evaluation of the training effects of their work.



Source: *Final public report for publishing (2014)*

A preliminary ex-ante survey was carried out with 189 respondents from five partner countries to better understand the learning needs and working circumstances of the target group of professionals, and to receive an overview of the content needed in the training. Based on the survey results, the training curriculum with a modular structure was developed and piloted with professionals working with vulnerable children and youths.

The training campaign was accompanied by a formative evaluation with quantitative survey waves and additional qualitative focus group interviews to identify effective awareness raising strategies for the online safety of the target group. The findings of up to four, but at least three, evaluation waves held subsequent to the training, were incorporated into the regular updating and development of the curriculum and the supplementary learning units. This evaluation of the training effects on social work in

the field allowed both to analyse the strategies that are of value for European-wide upscaling and transfer to other countries and social work conditions, as well as on the scalability of the projects approach in a larger European context.

The internet and social media-based tools used in the youth work activities of this initiative can be accessed within the online learning units made available⁹.

Competencies / Skills Taught

The professionals were trained in a face-to-face training course which was accompanied by six online learning modules¹⁰. The professionals acquired basic knowledge of the internet and its appliances and developed an improved understanding of the internet usage of children and young people, together with ways to address their online behaviour. They were also made aware of the risks and threats that this group are exposed to in online environments and learned how to react and mediate these risks. Knowing the dangers and how to avoid or encounter them was regarded as a step to become an active citizen as safety also means being self-determined. The professionals learned how to improve the digital skills of their young target group and how to strengthen their resilience. In each country, ten training sessions were organised by the national partner organisations in their national language.

On Monday, 18th February 2013, the very 'first' training session of the SocialWeb - SocialWork project took place - a kind of test run of the newly developed training curriculum during a 'train-the-partner' meeting. It took place in Warsaw, Poland, and was attended by at least one representative of each of the European project partners. Each project partner sent its trainer or a person responsible for the trainings to the Polish partner - the Nobody's Children Foundation - who hosted the meeting.

This 'train-the-partner' training provided the opportunity to discuss the training curriculum, methods and materials and to adapt the content to local needs, which facilitated the development of local face-to-face training session accompanied by online. The main objective of the meeting was to synchronise the training content in all partner countries, while responding to national differences in training methods and understanding of the curriculum. The partners discussed the special needs of the different trainees and how to address these by the curriculum. The exchange among the project partners was essential for the enhancement and finalisation of the training curriculum and materials prior to the start of the training campaign. Nevertheless, although the situation of social youth work and the groups of vulnerable children and youths vary in the different European countries, the common basis for participants of the training is the online safety for the young target group.

The qualification provided to professionals was adapted to their working reality, since they mostly have some digital skills, but usually limited to their own personal use. During the qualification, the professionals were trained how to use the online learning units and with the help of the 'learning-by-doing' approach they gained experience to performing their guiding role in, for example, online chats - the setting where young people have a large presence.

⁹ A full list of online units can be accessed via <http://www.socialwebsocialwork.eu/content/sections/index.cfm/secid.22>

¹⁰ A full outline of the Online Learning Units that have been developed by the project consortium within the SocialWeb - SocialWork project can be found via <http://www.socialweb-socialwork.eu/content/sections/index.cfm/secid.22>

Impact and Outcomes

Although young people are often being seen as digitally skilled, they often do not know much about the risks and how to use the internet to their advantages. By targeting the professionals working with vulnerable young people as multipliers, the project indirectly addressed and reached out to many of these young people. Qualifying the professionals meant that they could support young people in exactly these areas.

The same applies to media literacy. One big part of internet security is to critically assess the information and especially the sources of content on the internet. SocialWeb – SocialWork did not train the young people directly, but ensured that they are supported and supervised regularly in their environments by the qualified professionals. In addition, the awareness-raising and support of these professionals ensured that the young people became more sufficient and confident internet users which results in the long run into competent and responsible citizens. The project highlights that keeping up with the fast development and innovation of the internet and its appliances especially in the area of social media will be one of the most challenging tasks in education in the years to come. The results of the project deliver a clear message and a profound rationale for the joint efforts of all stakeholders.

- Professionals in all countries have shown a high awareness for the need to deal with the topic and a high motivation to get themselves ready to guide their children and youths through the digital world.
- The training strategy (face-to-face training, accompanying online learning units, and train-the-trainer sessions) has proven to be the appropriate measure to qualify professionals working with vulnerable children and youths on online safety – fitting into the tight schedule of most social workers but also providing the learning resources they need.
- The training strategy led to an increased awareness on online risks and threats, a better self-confidence on the issue of online safety and allowed for the adaptation of the previous social works' educational approaches on the online topic. Furthermore, an increasing acceptance in communication about online topics on both sides – professionals working with vulnerable children and youths and their target group – can be documented.
- Attention to the special needs of certain groups of vulnerable children – gender-specific online behaviour, special guidance for young disabled users – has to be paid.

Transferability

With regards to the transferability of the project's approach and outcomes, the interaction of all components of the developed training strategy shows that it is a very effective way that the lessons are learned, repeated and finally integrated in the daily work of the professionals to sustain the project achievements beyond its runtime. In addition, the training strategy could successfully enhance professionals' motivation and encouraged them to improve their own, but also the digital skills of their target group. While it should be considered that the situation of social youth work and the groups of vulnerable children and young people may vary to a significant extent in the different European countries, it still remains the responsibility of professionals working in the broad field of social youth work to respond to the different types of vulnerability and to integrate this relatively new topic of digital media usage behaviour of their young clientele and their corresponding online safety into their daily work. The fact that the content of this qualification measure is subject to replacements and adjustments regarding the permanent innovations of the social web and its appliances depicts the urgent necessity of a continuous qualification – not only in the piloting partner countries, but also in every country of the European Union.

The curriculum and the learning materials are in English and can and should be exploited in other contexts and countries. The content of the project has a CC licence: CC-BY-NC-SA, therefore there are some restrictions (e.g. technical and regulatory barriers could be a problem, while practical and organisational barriers only to a small extent).

Piloting projects such as SocialWeb – SocialWork hold the responsibility to draw conclusions for its general transferability and scalability. With regards to the scope and content of SocialWeb – SocialWork, it was important to assess whether the project's approach and outcomes are transferable to professionals in the broad field of social youth work in other European countries as well as to additional groups of professionals working in general with children and youth. Furthermore, it was necessary to demonstrate how the developed training offer is scalable to set up a nationwide training campaign for more sustainability.

The project demonstrated the necessity to open up its approach to additional groups of professionals, but also for young people who are not defined as educationally and socially disadvantaged.

In terms of the transfer to other countries and additional groups of professionals, the training curriculum, methods and materials were designed to enable an adaption of its content to further local contexts. Nevertheless, a public provision of the train-the-trainer strategy and the training curriculum requires the provision of notes for its adaption. For the adaption of people that do not possess at least a basic educational background, it is important to provide additional helpful information on didactic methods and sources for further information and platforms especially developed for parents.

The format of the training offered through SocialWeb – SocialWork, including offline, online, and blended learning, plays a significant role and requires adaptation to the national contexts and needs. A face-to-face training allows to react directly to the needs of the participants and to adapt the learning content to the local requirements. Additional online learning strengthens the effects of a face-to-face-training and serves as a long-term opportunity to improve, repeat and/or expand the knowledge gained during the one-day training course.

Due to the precarious financial situation of the social sector, especially in the area of children and youth work, financial support for qualification programmes funded by state and/or public budgets (in this case also the Digital Agenda Germany and Digital Agenda Europe) facilitates the reception by the persons working with children and youths and their professional umbrella organisations and networks.

Additionally, a close cooperation with and support by leading authorities such as national ministries, universities, professional associations, government agencies, local governments and civil society organisation should lead to a common open training offered nationwide with a continuous follow-up qualification throughout the working life of these professionals (life-long learning).

Implication for Policy Makers

The existing potential to overcome the mentioned challenges by joint efforts is as huge as the high demand of professionals working with children and young people for such a (continuous) qualification and the existing efforts made by institutions and organisations for providing information and counselling services on topics related to the online safety of their young target group. Here, the set-up of a well-defined awareness raising and communication strategy throughout Europe on training professionals working with (vulnerable) children and young people concerning their online safety would attract the attention of not only the target group but also of the broader society to find allies and establish binding responsibilities within the political decision makers

Testimony

"Professionals working with young people have to be curious about what constitutes the young peoples' daily life. Here, digital media usage plays an essential role and the professionals must recognise it as their task to deal with it and to support their young target group."

Carolin Müller-Bretl & Sandra Liebender - *Project Managers*
„Digital Skills for You(th)“

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Interviewee

Carolin Bretl, Project Manager, Stifung Digitale Chance. Interview conducted on 11 July 2017.

Sandra Liebender, Project Manager, Stifung Digitale Chance. Interview conducted on 11 July 2017.

12. SpunOut.ie - Ireland

Overview

How it works	Established by a group of young people in 2005, SpunOut.ie is Ireland's youth information website by young people, for young people.
Mission	Its mission is to empower young people with the information needed to live active, happy and healthy lives.
Duration	2005 – On going
Target group(s)	Young people
Learning Context	Non-formal
Organisation	Community Creations (CLG) trades as SpunOut.ie (currently as its only project)
Key Theme	Empowerment
Methods and Tools:	Peer-to-peer education, Social media to empower young people via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, Online platform
Transferability	The internet, as part of mainstream youth culture, is an ideal and cost-effective vehicle for reaching large numbers of young people, both rural and urban, on a 24/7 basis.
Impact	In 2016, SpunOut.ie was recognised with a number of awards for its success in engaging young people online including; Winner of 'Best Web Only Publication' at the Irish Web Awards, 'Best in Universal Design' at the Irish Internet Awards and 'Best Use of Technology for Good' at the IIA Awards for the fourth time in five years. Over 900,000 people used the website in 2016 and readers rated it 8/10 in a survey of 1,000 readers aged 16 – 25.
Funding Sources	Health Service Executive, Department of Housing & Planning, Department of Children & Youth Affairs, Fundraising events.
Website	www.SpunOut.ie
Twitter	@SpunOut

Description

SpunOut.ie is Ireland's award-winning youth information website for young people, by young people. The service provides relevant and accessible information to young people in Ireland to vindicate children and young people's right to access information that promotes her or his civic, social, mental and physical wellbeing.

SpunOut.ie also provides a space for young people to have their voices heard and to share their life experiences with other young people: the website features articles written directly by readers for its audience. The internet, as part of mainstream youth culture, is the main vehicle for reaching large numbers of young people, both rural and urban, on a 24/7 basis. This initiative combines an interactive online and offline community providing:

- Over 3000 **professionally proofed factsheets** on youth health and information issues including drugs and alcohol, mental health, sexual health, food and diet, disability, work, education etc.;
- **Inspirational true-life stories** from young people who have overcome difficulties in life;
- **A platform for youth media** where young people publish their opinions on the health and social issues that affect them;
- **Signposting to over 1,000 help and support services** via a searchable database
- **National health promotion social marketing campaigns** and partnerships with agencies including HSE, Google, Facebook, Twitter and national media.

Previously based in Donegal and Galway and recently relocated to Temple Bar in Dublin, SpunOut.ie is a registered charity with a board of directors who have wide range ranging expertise in health promotion, youth development, media, technology, HR, finance and governance. It has a staff team of 9 full-time professionals, funded by the Health Service Executive, Department of Housing & Planning and Department of Children & Youth Affairs.



Source: ©SpunOut.ie

Target Group(s)

The target group of the initiative are young people between 16 and 25 in need confidential, accessible, relevant, youth-friendly, preventative and participatory services and supports from all over Ireland. SpunOut.ie is conscious of the different groups among its large demographic target and, especially, of their needs. Indeed, this initiative uses several specific tools in order to target young people. For example, young people from the LGBTQI community want specific information about sexual health content, while young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) require more information about learning and employment opportunities or

training. Drugs and alcohol are two of the most important health issues that young people are facing nowadays, and this is reflected by their popularity as topics within this online community. The initiative's information factsheets and health promotion campaigns provide support to young people who require education, awareness and signposting on these issues.

A vast majority of its audience is reached via Google, Facebook and Twitter. Google supports SpunOut.ie with about 400,000 Euros per year to promote their content, while Facebook supports the initiative by promoting content from the website on its platform.

Pedagogical Approach/Methods

One of the basic objectives of the initiative is to fill the gaps that formal education could not provide to young people relating to a variety of issues and topics, such as education, health or employment. The website is created by young people, for young people. This means that by means of a peer-to-peer approach, young people are empowered with the information they need to live an active, happy, and healthy lives.

The website supports young people to improve their ability to find a job, teaches them to write a CV and cover letter, and many other issues that are often not taught inside the classroom. For example, in December 2016, "Compass" has been launched, an innovative new tool to point jobseekers in the direction of new learning and work opportunities. Compass was developed in conjunction with the Community Foundation for Ireland's youth committee and youth participation panel. The tool serves as a one-stop-shop for young people seeking information about education and employment including: current opportunities; how to apply for social welfare support, jobs, available training and education schemes; workplace rights and new business grants for young entrepreneurs. The new tool asks young people to filter their employment information needs based on a number of factors including their employment status, location educational attainment level, age, and barriers to employment. Once a young person has expressed his or her information needs, a results page recommends personalized content that is served to the reader.

SpunOut.ie is also active in the area of youth civic engagement and active citizenship as demonstrated by the project EU Hub launched in January 2017 by the Vice President of the European Parliament, Mairead McGuinness. The Hub is a great resource for anyone who wants to learn more about the EU and its institution and keep up-to-date on European news. SpunOut.ie further hosted a very successful Facebook Live Q&A with the Members of European Parliament Lynn Boylan and Liadh Ni Riada. Young people from all over Europe have contributed to the EU Hub with their experience of being EU citizens, reactions to Brexit and many more issues that are of concern to them.



Source: ©SpunOut.ie

Competencies / Skills Taught

The initiative empowers young people by providing a space to have their voices heard and to share their life experiences with others. It helps them to take a holistic and interconnected view to all health and social issues, and supports them to face a range of issues related to education, employment, health and life in general. SpunOut.ie provides information and support services to around 115,000+ active readers each month.

A team of nine staff members manage the day-to-day running of SpunOut.ie and rely on reader analytics and the SpunOut.ie Action Panel to provide with the direction and leadership to stay in touch with the views and needs of the readers. The staff facilitates the mechanism for young leaders to be heard and then follow their lead. SpunOut.ie also has a voluntary board of professional types who take responsibility for the good governance of the organisation. The board also ensures to stay true to their mission of being a website run by young people and for young people.

While the support staff is endowed with high digital skills, these are not strictly required by the young people to benefit from the website and its services – a prerequisite is to have basic internet skills such as being able to use the internet and be familiar with social media.

Impact and Outcomes

The overall impact on young people in terms of online participation is very positive. In fact, the evaluation report related to the first quarter of 2016 showed a high number of social media followers and visits to the website. Facebook was by far the most used platform (89%), followed by a large Twitter community. In 2016, SpunOut.ie boasted a vast editorial production, comprising:

- 661 pieces of content;
- 187 Opinions;
- 114 Health and Lifestyle;
- 110 Politics and News;
- 177 Education and Employment;
- 85 Homepage Campaign;
- 50 Videos.

The evaluation exercises are usually based on several online surveys. The April 2016 SurveyMonkey reader survey went live and was promoted on the SpunOut.ie website, via social media (including boosted Facebook ad) and using the organisation's 2,000+ email list. The survey was closed on 23 May 2016 when 1,000 responses had been gathered. This was an excellent response rate, which was no doubt aided by the use of an incentive (completed surveys being entered into a prize draw for an iPhone SE). Questions were also asked about respondents' willingness to participate in a strategy focus group and to have their individual stories potentially used as a case study. In both instances, high levels of interest were expressed.

The initiative has a positive impact on awareness raising. The majority of respondents (53%) 'strongly agreed' that they feel informed by SpunOut.ie. Regarding the question what type of information SpunOut.ie should provide to young people, the majority indicated "greater outreach in second and third level educational establishments (as well as non-formal education settings like youth clubs) and "much greater use of all types of social media (including far more interaction)", followed by "more video content (including vlogs)", "more publicity about the existence of SpunOut.ie ", "accessibility of site mentioned on a number of occasions, "tension between those who wish SpunOut.ie to be (more) neutral and those who wish to see more active debate on issues". Other suggestions included the provision of a weekly email newsletter, monthly magazine, text alerts, quizzes, polls, competitions, events, road shows, annual youth conference, ask a young person column, Q&A with over-26s section and last but not least, articles written by professionals.



Source: "Report for Quarter 1, 2016" (March, 2016), ©SpunOut.ie

Transferability

The key facilitator for a successful transferability of this initiative is the capacity to reach young people online. The geographical scope of the practice so far is national (Ireland) and, as an online initiative, it can potentially reach young people in national, regional, and local levels from both rural and urban areas.

The sustainability and replicability of the intervention to other countries largely depends on the source of funding and the online engagement skills of youth workers. In fact, a success factor for the initiative is a team that possesses high digital skills with experience in the relevant subject matters. SpunOut.ie also has a voluntary board of professionals who take responsibility for the good governance of the organisation. The board also ensures the initiative stays true to its mission to be a website by young people, for young people.

Implication for Policy Makers

The organisation was set-up in 2005 based on the findings of studies that showed how young people desperately require confidential, accessible, relevant, youth-friendly, preventative and participatory services and supports. The internet, as part of mainstream youth culture, in this case is the main vehicle for reaching large numbers of young people, both rural and urban, on a 24/7 basis. This formula is in keeping with the recommendations of the 2001 report 'Get Connected – Developing an adolescent friendly health service', which was published by the National Child Health Committee. It is also aligned with the National Youth Strategy, National Alcohol & Drug Strategy, the National Strategy for Self-harm & Suicide Prevention, and the National Health Promotion Strategy. Considering the impact and the involvement of young people all over the country, it would be desirable if policy makers take account of the information that young people provide within the framework of the initiative in order to develop evidence-based policy responses.

Testimony

"I think the internet and social media provide youth work with exceptional opportunities to engage young people in using their digital skills to provide solutions to challenges experienced by themselves and their peers. While youth workers might initially find it difficult to incorporate digital into their youth work practice, I would encourage them to start now and very soon they will see how effective it is in engaging young people."

Ian Power - Executive Director

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Interviewee

Ian Power, Executive Director, SpunOut. Interview conducted on 5 September 2017.

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