Mandate of the expert group on digitalisation and youth

Expert group on

'Risks, opportunities and implications of digitalisation for youth, youth work and youth policy'

Duration of the mandate: June 2016 – December 2017

Coordinator: Directorate General for Education and Culture – Unit C.1: Youth policy

Chair

The expert group will be responsible for appointing its chair or co-chairs at the first expert group meeting. The election of the chair or co-chairs will be conducted in an open and transparent manner coordinated by the Commission acting as the secretariat of the expert group.

Membership

The participation of Member States in the work of the expert group is voluntary and Member States can join it at any time.

Experts will be nominated as members of the group by Member States interested in participating in the work of the expert group. Notwithstanding the right of every Member State to appoint the person of its choice, it is advisable that the experts have a strong connection to the national policy level and administration to ensure effective communication with competent national authorities.

Member States will ensure that the nominated experts have practical experience at national, regional or local level with online youth work and/or continued professional development programmes for youth workers aiming at upgrading their digital skills and changing their attitudes towards digital media. The experts should either be involved in concrete practices or in steering policy experimentation addressing the risks, opportunities and implications of digitalisation.

The nominated experts should commit to participate actively in the mutual learning process and have the ability to contribute to the outputs of the expert group (for practical reasons, a good knowledge of English is essential).

The Commission shall coordinate the nomination exercise.

Background

Young people in Europe spend an increasing amount of their time consuming digital media (video streams, messaging, blogs or social media). These tools can provide a place for young people to learn, to share their experiences, to exchange their views, to have fun with their friends and to actively participate in society.

However, there are also concerns over the use of the internet, such as the safety of children and young people, and its effects on their behaviour, for example, increasing solitude as young people withdraw to private places to go online. Furthermore, some children and young people may have their privacy violated when they are online or may be exposed to bullying or potentially harmful content, which may create dependency, anxiety or aggression (*Eurostat 2015*).

The term 'digital native' falsely suggests that young people intuitively know how to use digital technologies. But evidence shows that a substantial percentage of young people in Europe lack basic ICT skills (*ECDL Foundation 2015*). Another challenge is the digital divide: access to the internet and social media can become problematic in many EU countries for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds when they leave school or are not in training (*Study on Youth participation in democratic life 2013*). This inevitably leads to a 'voice divide' in online platforms.

As stated in the *2nd European Youth Work Declaration*, 'there is clearly a role for online youth work practice, in terms of exploiting a new space for youth work in a meaningful way, supporting digital literacy and enabling young people to deal with some of the associated risks. The practice implications for youth workers lie in new competencies required and new forms of boundary maintenance in relationships with young people.'

Literature review suggests that there are a lot of youth work practitioners who lack the digital skills or attitudes to fully benefit from the opportunities created by digital technologies for delivering quality youth work. If there is any truth to such a divide between 'digital kids' and 'analogue youth workers' (*DIG-IT up! Training course on including digital tools in Youth work!*), there should be a high demand for youth workers' continued professional development in this area – as well as scope for youth work to go online.

The new expert group on digitalisation and youth will be set up under the priority 'Contribution to addressing the challenges and opportunities of the digital era for youth policy, youth work and young people' of the European Union Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018. It should build on the achievements of the previous Work Plan (2014-2015) and thus take into account the findings and outcomes of the two previous expert groups dealing with youth work (expert group on youth work quality systems, expert group on the contribution of youth work to address the challenges young people are facing – see background documents and following section 'What is youth work?') in line with the Council documents on the framework for European cooperation in the youth field.

Furthermore, the new expert group should seek synergy with the ET 2020 Working Group on Digital Skills & Competences[1] and the expert group on youth work for active citizenship, preventing marginalisation and violent radicalisation. It should also refer to the study (to be launched) on the impact of internet and social media on youth participation and youth work.

What is youth work?

The Council Resolution of 27 November 2009 on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018) points out that 'youth work is a broad term covering a large scope of activities of a social, cultural, educational or political nature both by, with and for young people. Increasingly, such activities also include sport and services for young people. Youth work belongs to the area of "out-of-school" education, as well as specific leisure time activities managed by professional or voluntary youth workers and youth leaders and is based on non-formal learning processes and on voluntary participation.'

The two previous expert groups used the following **working definition** of youth work: actions directed towards young people regarding activities where they take part voluntarily, designed for supporting their personal and social development through non-formal and informal learning.

Youth work takes place in many different forms and settings. The most common ones are: youth centres, youth projects, outreach/detached youth work, informal youth groups, youth camps/colonies, youth information, youth organisations, youth movements. These different forms of youth work can be carried out and/or governed by different entities (municipalities, NGOs, etc.) and take place in different localities (youth centres, schools, churches, etc.). These are the most common forms of youth work; due to different terms used in different countries and/or local conditions, there are other (sub-) forms of youth work that still apply to the working definition above.

Youth work understands a young person not as a unit of labour or as a problem to be solved, but rather as a person with talent, skills and abilities some of which have yet to be realised. It engages with young people, builds relations and trust and empowers them to use their strengths and address their weaknesses.

Youth work also supports young people to become active citizens and engage in decisions and actions which affect them and their community. As a result it enables young people to better understand the views and concerns of others and those of wider society, which in turn contributes to greater harmony and social inclusion. In this context, youth work also has a preventive effect on polarisation and radicalisation potentially resulting in violent behaviour.

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[1] http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups/2016-2018/et-2020-group-mandates_en.pdf

Expected outcomes

The expert group will concentrate on delivering a small number of concrete and useable results on the subject requested. The expected outcomes are:

▪ Based on identified good practice, barriers and gaps in online youth work and youth workers' continued professional development, **the creation of training modules** aimed at upskilling youth workers on methods of online youth work and on the risks, opportunities and implications of digitalisation. These shall include:

   a) **how youth work can develop young people's digital skills** – such as their knowledge about safe, responsible use of the internet, social media and mobile devices, or helping young people to understand the need for a 'healthy' balance of online and offline activities; as well as…

   b) **how youth workers can provide online youth work and use digital tools in their work with young people**. In addition to upgrading their digital skills, this training module should aim at changing the attitudes of youth workers towards digital media and provide them with new and creative ways to engage directly with young people.

   The content of these training modules should be useable in different Member States and for different forms and settings of youth work. They should be easy to adapt to the respective national, regional or local contexts.

▪ **Recommendations addressed to policy-makers** as input to possible Council conclusions on the development of innovative methods in youth work, including digital tools (see Action E5 of the EU Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018). This shall include ideas about:

   a) **upgrading existing practices in youth work**, especially those which can benefit from new solutions of digitalised services and online tools; plus…

   b) **developing new digital tools, methods or services for young people and youth workers** to increase the participation of young people in youth work activities.

The Group will also be invited to table suggestions in order to ensure an optimal **dissemination and take-up of the outcomes**.

Indicative roadmap

The number, timing and focus of expert group meetings is **purely indicative** and may be subject to change.

To communicate and make progress between meetings, the expert group will use an online collaboration platform (Yammer group restricted to the experts nominated by the Member States and to other participants invited by the expert group).

June 2016

▪ **In preparation of Meeting 1**: the nominated experts shall identify good practice in online youth work and existing youth workers' continued professional

development programmes on digitalisation; identification of possible chairs of the expert group;

- **Meeting 1** *(*15 June 2016*)*: introduction; appointment of the chair or co-chairs; preparation of the work schedule; decision to invite other participants; decision on how to create the training modules for youth workers (possibly by using the five steps of the ADDIE model: analysis, design, development, implementation, evaluation); discussion on how to organise synergy with the ET 2020 Working Group on Digital Skills & Competences and the expert group on youth work for active citizenship, preventing marginalisation and violent radicalisation (see Action B1 of the EU Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018).

July – December 2017

- **Meeting 2** *(*September 2016): adoption of the work schedule; assessment of the training needs of youth workers; mapping of existing training resources.

- **Meeting 3** (November 2016*)*: assessment of the training needs of youth workers (continuation); mapping of existing training resources (continuation).

- The chair or co-chairs of the expert groups will report to the Working Party on Youth on progress made.

January – June 2017

- **Meeting 4** (February 2017): assessment of the training needs of youth workers (finalisation); mapping of existing training resources (finalisation); start developing the training modules for youth workers.

- **Meeting 5** (April 2017): continue developing the training modules for youth workers.

- **Meeting 6** (June 2017): discuss the preliminary results of the study on the impact of internet and social media on youth participation and youth work (see Action E4 of the EU Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018); continue developing the training modules for youth workers; start drawing up recommendations addressed to policy-makers (seeking synergy with the ET 2020 Working Group on Digital Skills & Competences and the expert group on youth work for active citizenship, preventing marginalisation and violent radicalisation).

- The chair or co-chairs of the expert groups will report to the Working Party on Youth on progress made.

July – December 2017

- **Meeting 7** *(*September 2017): review draft outcomes.

- **Meeting 8** (November 2017): finalise outcomes.

- In view of (possible) Council Conclusions on the development of innovative methods in youth work, including digital tools – to be adopted in the first half of 2018 – the chair or co-chairs of the expert group will report to the Working Party on Youth on outcomes produced in December 2017.

- Publication and dissemination of the final results.

Background documents

Relevant European Union policy documents

- Council Resolution on a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018), http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1390996863108&uri=CELEX:32009G1219%2801%29

- EU Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:42015Y1215(01)&from=EN

- EU Youth Report 2015, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015XG1215(01)&from=EN

- Council Resolution on encouraging political participation of young people in democratic life in Europe (2015/C 417/02), http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:42015Y1215%2802%29

- Paris Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education (17 March 2015), http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/2015/documents/citizenship-education-declaration_en.pdf

- Communication from the Commission – European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children [COM(2012) 196 final http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2012:0196:FIN]

- Communication from the Commission – A Digital Agenda for Europe [COM(2010) 245 final, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52010DC0245]; https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/

Studies

- European Commission (to be launched, report expected end 2017 – see Action E4 of the EU Work Plan for Youth 2016-2018), Impact of internet and social media on youth participation and youth work

- European Commission (2015), European Youth, Flash Eurobarometer 408, TNS Political & Social, http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_408_en.pdf

- European Commission (2015), The contribution of youth work to address the challenges young people are facing, in particular the transition from education to employment. Results of the expert group set up under the European Union Work Plan for Youth for 2014-2015, http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/contribution-youth-work_en.pdf

- European Commission (2015), Quality Youth Work. A common framework for the further development of youth work. Report from the expert group on Youth Work Quality Systems in the EU Member States, http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/quality-youth-work_en.pdf

- European Commission (2014), Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union, ICF GHK, http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/working-with-young-people-pbNC0414172/

- European Commission (2013), Youth participation in democratic life, LSE, http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/youth-participation-in-democratic-life-pbNC0313225/

- Eurostat (2015), Being young in Europe today (Chapter 7: Children and young people in the digital world), http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-statistical-books/-/KS-05-14-031

- Eurostat, Database 'Youth in the digital world (yth_isoc)', http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/data/database

- Mickoleit, Arthur (2014), Social Media Use by Governments: A Policy Primer to Discuss Trends, Identify Policy Opportunities and Guide Decision Makers, OECD Working Papers on Public Governance, No. 26, OECD Publishing, http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jxrcmghmk0s-en

Other information

- Clive Bonnici (2015), The role of the internet and social media: new forms of young people's participation, in: European Commission (2015), Youth work and non-formal learning in Europe's education landscape. A quarter of a century of EU cooperation for youth policy and practice, http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/youth-work-nonformal-learning_en.pdf

- Périne Brotcorne / Gérard Valenduc (2013), Fondation Travail-Université, Les jeunes en risque de marginalisation numérique : un besoin de passerelles, http://www.ftu-namur.org/fichiers/ACTES_JE1_Jeunes-et-Medias_mars2013_Brotcorne-Valenduc.pdf

- Dana Cohlmeyer (2014), Developing a Technology Philosophy for Digital Youth Work, http://concept.lib.ed.ac.uk/index.php/Concept/article/viewFile/250/236

- Developing Digital Youth work. Seminar to exchange good practice, http://trainings.salto-youth.net/5692

- DIG-IT up! Training course on including digital tools in Youth work!, http://trainings.salto-youth.net/4805

- Digital Superpowers: the Use of Digital Games and Tools for Youth Work – Long-term training course, http://trainings.salto-youth.net/5246

- ECDL Foundation (2015), The Fallacy of the 'Digital Native': Why Young People Need to Develop their Digital Skills, http://www.ecdl.org/index.jsp?p=2417&n=3000

- EU-CoE youth partnership, Symposium on youth participation in a digitalised world, Budapest, Hungary 14-16 September 2015, http://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/digitalised-world

- European Commission (2015), Their future is our future – Youth as actors of change. Research projects on youth inclusion, employment and participation supported by the European Union's Research Framework Programmes, http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/their-future-is-our-future-pbKINA27205/

- A common European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp), http://openeducationeuropa.eu/sites/default/files/DIGCOMP%20brochure%202014%20.pdf

- European Framework for Digitally-Competent Educational Organisations (DigCompOrg), https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/digcomporg

- European Youth Forum (2014), Policy paper: Youth work in the European Youth Forum and youth organisations, http://www.youthforum.org/assets/2014/12/PP-Youth-Work1.pdf

- Fraunhofer-Institut (2014), Bericht zur Befragung von Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeitern zu ihrem Internetstreetwork. Eine Auswertung der Methode des Fraunhofer-Institut, http://www.mobile-jugendarbeit-stuttgart.de/public/Internetstreetwork%20Frauenhofer%20-%20Institut%202014.pdf

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- National Youth Council of Ireland, Web Safety in Youth Work, http://websafety.youth.ie/

- National Youth Council of Ireland (2016), Using ICT, digital and social media in youth work. A review of research findings from Austria, Denmark, Finland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, http://www.youth.ie/sites/youth.ie/files/International%20report%20final.pdf

- Pascal Plantard (2015), INEDUC : les inégalités éducatives ? Focales sur les pratiques numériques des adolescents, http://www.unilim.fr/colloquesemiodefisshs/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2015/11/P.Plantard_semiodefi_nov_2015-1.pdf

- Sonja Reichmann / Hans Schwab / Björn Bertram (2011), Jugendarbeit im Zeitalter der digitalen Revolution, http://www.ljr.de/uploads/media/JAonline.pdf

- Olivier Steiner / Marc Goldoni (Hrsg.) (2013), Kinder- und Jugendarbeit 2.0 – Grundlagen, Konzepte und Praxis einer medienbezogenen Sozialen Arbeit mit Heranwachsenden

- Sunderland Voluntary Sector Youth Forum (2011), Youth Work in a Digital Age – Social Media and online technology – Guidelines for safe and effective work with children and young people, http://www.cvsnewcastle.org.uk/assets/files/networkinginvolving/youth_work_in_a_digital_age_guidelines_June_2011_3.pdf

- Levente Székely / Ádám Nagy (2011), Online youth work and eYouth — A guide to the world of the digital natives, in: Children and Youth Services Review, Volume 33, Issue 11, November 2011, Pages 2186-2197, http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740911002404

- The 2nd European Youth Work Declaration – making a world of difference, Brussels 27-30 April 2015, http://eywc2015.eu/the-declaration

- Youthmanifesto, an initiative of young people across Europe, supported by the European Commission, which aims to give young people a voice in shaping the online world of tomorrow, http://www.youthmanifesto.eu/home

- Youthpart, a multilateral cooperation project by IJAB on e-participation, https://www.ijab.de/en/youthpart/