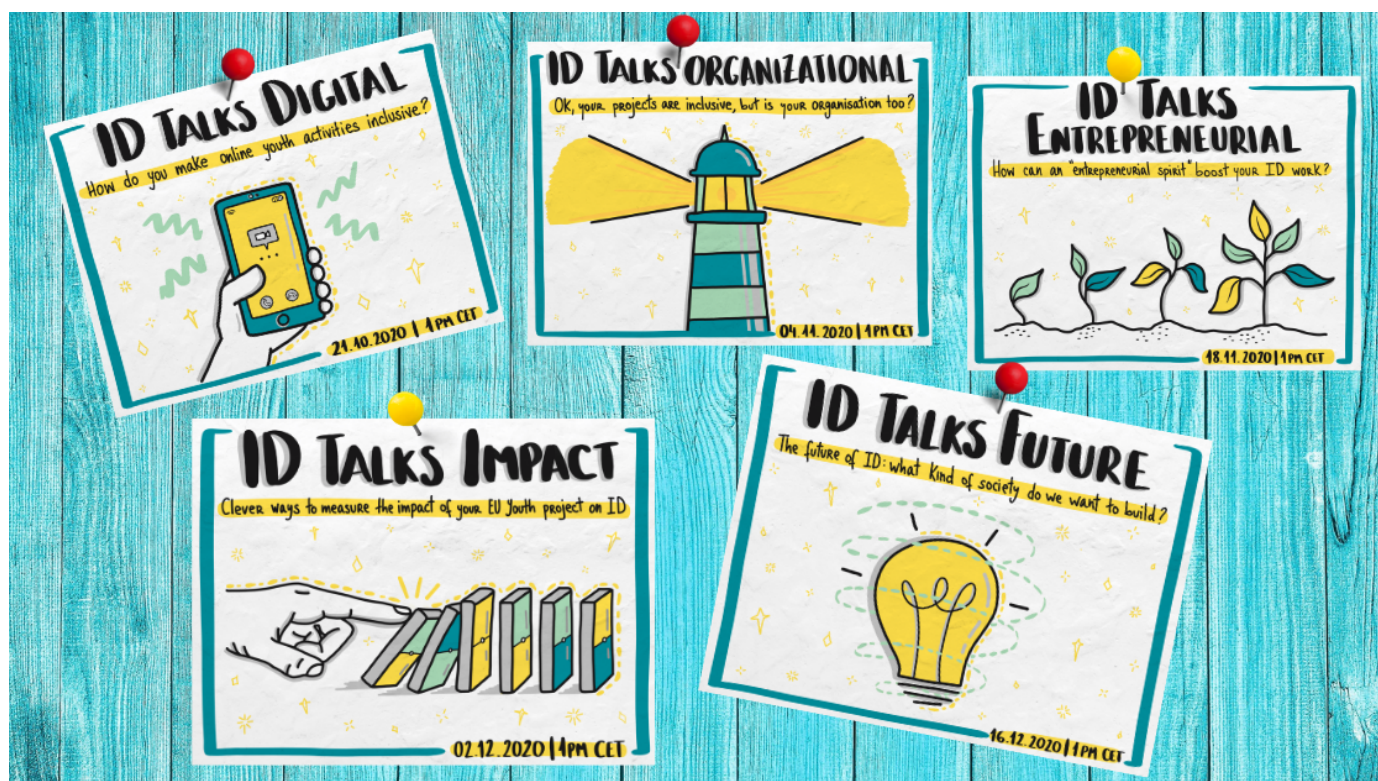


ID TALKS!

A series of 5 online workshops on 5 major topics in the promotion of Inclusion & Diversity (ID) and quality youth work.



ID Talks:

DIGITAL
ORGANISATIONAL
ENTREPRENEURIAL
IMPACT
FUTURE

Download this and other SALTO Inclusion & Diversity booklets for free at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/. This document does not necessarily reflect the official views of the European Commission, the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resource Centre or the organisation co-operating with them.

ABOUT SALTO

...‘Support and **A**dvanced **L**earning and **T**raining **O**pportunities within the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes’. The European Commission has created a network of seven SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres to enhance the implementation of the EU Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes, which provide young people with valuable non-formal learning experiences.

SALTO’s aim is to support the implementation of the European Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps Programmes with regard to priorities such as Social Inclusion, Diversity, Participation, and Solidarity. SALTO also supports co-operation with regions such as EuroMed, South-East Europe, or Eastern Europe and The Caucasus and coordinates all training and co-operation activities, as well as information tools for National Agencies.

In these European priority areas, SALTO-YOUTH provides resources, information, and training for National Agencies and European youth workers. Most of these resources are offered and disseminated at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net. Find online the [European Training Calendar](#), the [Toolbox for Training and Youth Work](#), the database of youth field trainers active at the European level ([Trainers Online for Youth or TOY](#)), links to online resources, and much more.

SALTO-YOUTH actively co-operates with other actors in the European youth field, among them the National Agencies of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum, European youth workers and trainers, and training organisers.

THE SALTO-YOUTH INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY RESOURCE CENTRE WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/INCLUSION/

The SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion and Diversity Resource Centre (based in Belgium Flanders) works together with the European Commission to support the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Through that, it works to contribute to social cohesion in society at large. SALTO Inclusion and Diversity also supports the National Agencies and youth workers in their inclusion work by providing training, developing youth work methods, disseminating information via the newsletter, etc. By offering opportunities for training, exchange, and reflection on inclusion practice and diversity management, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity works towards the visibility, accessibility, and transparency of its inclusion & diversity work and resources, and towards making ‘inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities’ and ‘positive diversity management’ a widely supported priority.

For more information and resources, have a look at the Inclusion & Diversity pages at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/



DISCLAIMER

This magazine contains pictures as a result of the Graphic Recording which is an integral part of all the ID Talks events. There are four types of styles throughout the whole magazine.

- **General Cover Picture.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events. It is displayed as a cover picture of each ID Talks version.
- **Portrait of Speaker.** It depicts each speaker and a few graphic recording elements such as written parts of their "speech" and/or any other graphics according to the style of each ID Talks version. It is displayed on top of the speaker's description page.
- **Main Graphic Recording Card.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events, including the specific name of the event, the portrait of the speaker, written quotes of their "speech" and/or any other graphics. It is displayed on top of the first page of each article.
- **Graphic Recording Elements.** Throughout each article, the graphic recording elements complement the text with essential parts of each speaker's "talk".

ID TALKS!

What is it all about?

A short description

ID Talks is a series of 5 stand-alone online events (workshops) of up to 90 minutes each, with inspiring guest speakers, thought-provoking insights, discussion in small groups, and Q&A sessions.

For the international youth work sector, 2020 marks the end of the current Erasmus+ programme and European Solidarity Corps, while a new generation of the EU programmes is forthcoming. On a wider scale, the COVID-19 pandemic is causing a profound impact on cross-border learning activities and mobility projects. Organizations and youth workers have been pushed to find alternative solutions to carry on with their activities.

For all those who wave the Inclusion & Diversity flag, this is the right moment to reflect on what has happened, on what we have achieved, and how to build further on existing knowledge and experiences to get us prepared for current and future challenges.

For whom?

Youth workers, youth leaders, professionals, and volunteers involved in ID in the EU youth programmes, as well as all those interested in youth work and Inclusion & Diversity topics.

Main objectives:

- To provide food for thought and learn from inspirational ID stories;
- To provide an opportunity to learn about ID topics from the youth work sector and beyond;
- To get information, inspiration, methods to help the youth sector address ID;
- To inform about and contribute to quality (international) youth work;
- To identify and learn how to tackle existing and future challenges within ID;



Event Dates:

- 21 October 2020 > **ID Talks Digital:** How do you make online youth activities inclusive? Inclusion & Diversity on the focus of international projects in the age of Digitalization. Guest speaker: Michele Di Paola
- 04 November 2020 > **ID Talks Organisational:** Ok, your projects are inclusive, but is your organisation too? How to build a culture of Inclusion & Diversity beyond mobility projects! Guest speaker: Rahel Aschwanden
- 18 November 2020 > **ID Talks Entrepreneurial:** How can an 'entrepreneurial spirit' boost your Inclusion & Diversity work? Inspiring practices of social entrepreneurship within the Inclusion & Diversity field. Guest speaker: Areg Tadevosyan
- 02 December 2020 > **ID Talks Impact:** Clever ways to measure the impact of your EU Youth project on inclusion & diversity. Measuring the impact of Inclusion & Diversity work within EU youth mobility projects and online activities. Guest speaker: Özgehan Şenyuva
- 16 December 2020 > **ID Talks Future:** The future of Inclusion & Diversity: what kind of society do we want to build? Guest speaker: Erica Bol

ID Talks Digital

How do you make online youth activities inclusive?

MICHELE DI PAOLA
Digital youth work expert



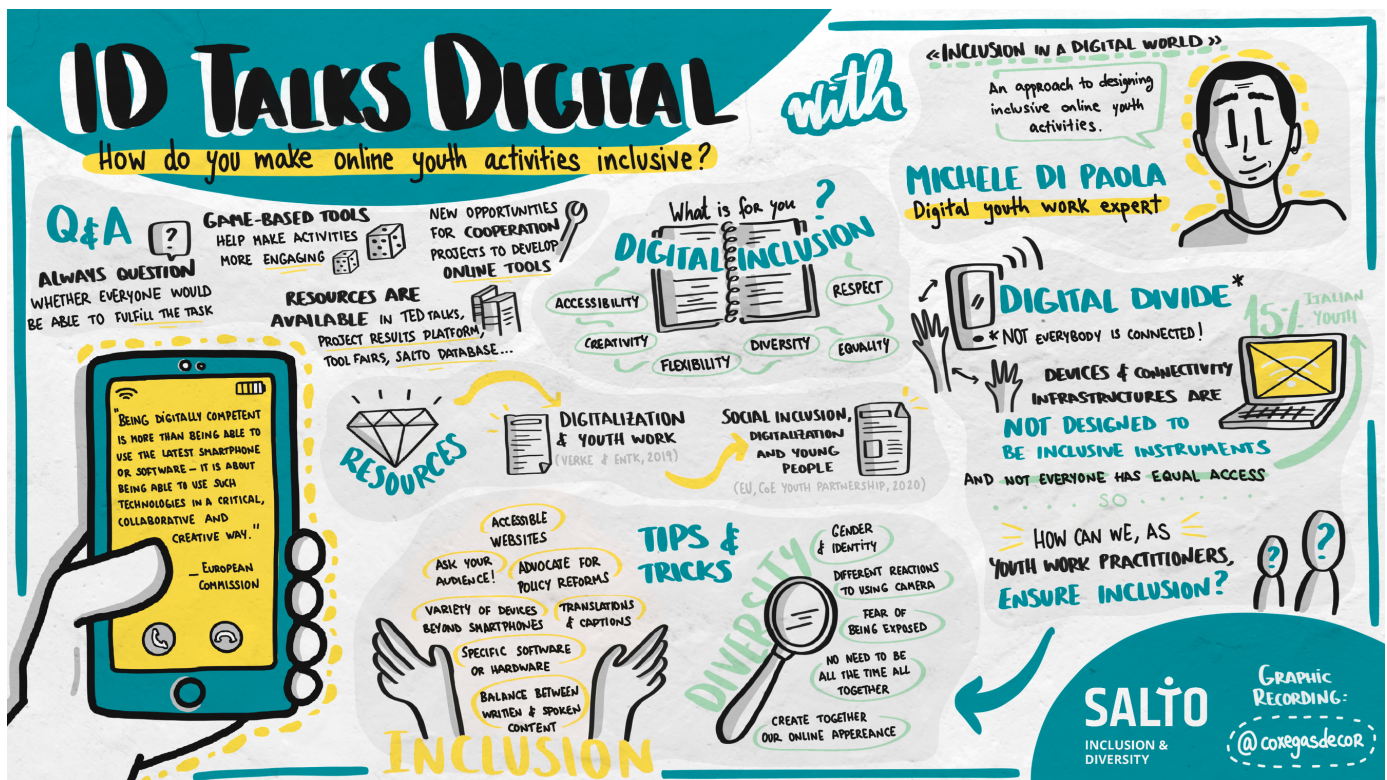
GUEST SPEAKER: MICHELE DI PAOLA

Michele Di Paola is a worker since the end of the last century, and a computer nerd since even before, he spent the last 10 years exploring different ways to combine non-formal education and digital environments, tools, and media. After completing SALTO ToT in 2015, he created with other colleagues the first training course on this specific topic, DIG-IT UP!, which had 4 editions so far. In February 2020 he facilitated the European conference #ExploringDigital in Wien, to define the digital dimension of youth workers' competences. He is now active in several projects of digitalization of youth work tools, from Council of Europe's Compass manual to European Training Strategy competence models for trainers and youth workers, and currently preparing another training course, Citizenship Reloaded, about new opportunities and threats for citizenship in online environments.



Article

by Michele Di Paola



This question stormed the youth work field when coronavirus lockdowns started to strike Europe last March: how do we make online youth activities?

Now, after 8 months, we may not be ready enough to face the second wave of lockdowns (even if we had enough time to prepare, I would say) but we should surely be much more ready to work online, in a more confident, effective and inclusive way. So it is a good thing to ask ourselves now: how do we make online youth activities more inclusive?

First of all, when we talk about youth work and digital tools – media – environments, we should always remember we are talking about something which is still very new. When we started our training course Dig-It Up!, in 2015, we were among the very first to promote the use of digital in youth work, but the notion and the definition of “digital youth work” were still quite uncommon.

Exploring digitalization in youth work was the aim of an Expert Group created by the European Commission during the Work Plan for Youth for 2016-2018, officially to analyze Risks, opportunities, and implications of digitalization for youth, youth work, and youth policy; the publication summing up their work is worth reading, even just for the “working definition of digital youth work” which they wrote, and which made this simple fact finally clear: youth work is wide, digital youth work is just a part of it.

In 2019 Verke from Finland, joined forces with the National Youth Work Center of Estonia, ENTK, for another very relevant publication about Digitalisation and youth work, in which a whole chapter was dedicated to equality: a step towards inclusion in online and digital activities for youth. In 2020 the EU-CoE Youth Partnership published a research study coordinated by Lana Pasic, which gives us another insight into inclusion in online activities for youth. The title is Social Inclusion, Digitalisation, and Young People, and it features a very rich list of links, experiences, tools too.

What we learned from lockdowns

When Italy, where I live, went under total lockdown, it took quite some time for the formal education system to switch to online lessons, among general lamentations (still ongoing...) that school is a school only with teachers and students sitting all together in the classroom. I believed since the first minute that the matter would be more how to design these online lessons, turn them into shorter and more interactive activities, taking full advantage of the inner characteristics of online environments... otherwise a lot of students would be helplessly bored. It happened indeed, but another aspect was soon to consider: the number of students who would not even get to be bored by online lessons, because they simply could not get online.



That amount is still debated, but many researchers place it in a range between 10 and 15% of the school population: this means thousands of youngsters deprived of their constitutional right to education for months – and many more not having anyway access to quality education, for lack of teachers’ training, lack of proper devices and connections, lack of support by adult figures, who simply could not be there with their sons and daughters in need, or even if they were there, they simply had no clue about possible support.

This is the real implication of what is called the digital divide, and I believe this should be the first element we discuss while treating inclusion in online non-formal activities.

Online, everything is connected – but not everybody

When a few cyber-activists in the 90s of the last century were campaigning for “one head – one access”, requesting the (free) access for everybody to the young internet of that time, when the web was newborn, as a citizenship right, it would all sound very odd. Now it is probably clearer what they – well, we - were talking about. The amount of knowledge, opportunities, connections, learning, etc. that the internet can unfold for everybody is so important and relevant, that it is simply not right that someone could be cut out of it. But if you live in a rural area, or a less privileged neighborhood, you know what I am talking about: broadband connections are simply not available, sometimes even mobile data connections are too weak, or maybe you do live in a place where you could get a good connection, but you or your family cannot afford it, or cannot afford a device to use it – in this conditions, how could youngsters take part in any kind of online activities? And how much is this condition of digital divide taking from them, in terms of opportunities, learning, and all that was mentioned above?



Someone could say this is not a matter for youth work, but infrastructures are usually a good way to measure inclusion: how long does it take you to get to an airport from where you live? And how much, if even possible, to get online at a decent speed? This is when I love to remember that youth work does have a political implication. I believe it has many, by the way, but it surely has the one of advocating for youth, of contributing to shaping youth policies that are not only about free time and sport but about infrastructures to be used to overcome inequalities.

Moreover, many of the most used videoconference platforms allow people to join the conversation also via a simple phone call, often giving you the chance to call, if not a free number, some local numbers in different areas of your country, to make it more affordable. This means that old “dumbphones” are still relevant and can still be used to join a Zoom call by someone in digital divide conditions – but then the whole call should be designed inclusively from the point of view of facilitation and proposed activities. We will get back to this later.

There is also something else that youth work could do to support youth in digital divide conditions, at least partially – supporting the planet as well. The ecological footprint of the so-called e-waste, the huge amount of electronic waste we produce, is high, so as youth workers we should know, endorse and support all the attempts to repair electronic hardware instead of just dumping it, and who is campaigning to make devices more easily repairable, as they used to be. On the other side, one would need the skills to open and repair computers or smartphones, in order to be able to distribute them to youngsters in need, later on. Here is where the makers' culture of creating or recreating what you need, can leave its birthplace, the hundreds of fab-labs, maker spaces, and hackerspaces all over Europe, and meet youth work and non-formal education in a mutually profitable relationship. Some attempts are already happening, and I do root for them all.

Screens are for eyes – only?

If we analyze the experiences we offer in online activities, if we even make it to design some, we will agree that they are mostly based on a visual approach. Digital activities mean screens, and screens want to be watched, sometimes touched... so what if this is not possible for my target groups, for several reasons?

We should learn that specific hardware solutions are now available to support specific needs, for instance in the case of people with different abilities. If I am visually impaired or blind, I can use a USB Braille bar, which will translate the text on my laptop screen into Braille characters that I will read with my fingers. These devices are out there, and if maybe they are still expensive to be bought, they can be usually rented from NGOs supporting these specific needs and issues. I might be in need of sign language translation – and when you are on any video conferencing platform, it is easier to get a sign language translator connected with you from home, so that you can watch the translation in the very video call you are attending. In specific cases, you may want to set a maximum time length to your online activities or recommend people with specific needs to have someone on their side, to avoid anybody being captured by the online platforms' attitude to absorb all your attention.

This is worth spending a few words about online platforms, and in particular social media, are rarely designed for inclusion, but only as a system to absorb your attention and keep it focused while they serve you advertisement and profile your behavior through offering you contents and observing your actions/reactions patterns. In the last weeks, the Netflix docu-drama *The Social Dilemma* re-ignited the debate about these topics, and I find particularly interesting that all the developers appearing in it, the “good guys” who stepped back from the big platforms they contributed to creating, to now denounce their problematic behavior, are all males in their 30s, and mostly white. I am not a fan of diversity-by-law, but I am quite sure that some more diversity in the places where online environments are shaped, could bring some more attention to inclusion in the final products too.

Issues are hiding even in places you would not consider, as in your website design. Braille bars or software screen-readers are great tools, but for instance, how could they describe the image you placed on your webpage if you are not providing the alternative text-description of it that is often missing in so many sites? EU Directive 2016/2102 on Web Accessibility and following implementing decisions should affect web designers all over Europe, and some countries already introduced national laws regarding website accessibility, depending on that directive – but I wonder how your website would score being assessed by an accessibility tool, which would check if you can give the user the possibility to increase contrast, change background colors, increase the font size, choose a readable font. Everything could be achieved with simple, free plugins on the main content management system platforms, but fully accessible websites are anyway still a minority.

Even if the case is not specifically about special needs, languages are still a big barrier to inclusion, and providing translations is easier when online inside digital environments, with captions/subtitles that could be typed by translators in real-time, below the video call you are attending or automatically generated by some AI tool that may still be a bit clunky, but it is pure science fiction if compared to 20 years ago. Another possible strategy is taking good care of the amount of spoken or written words we are using and sharing: this also means considering the creation of podcasts, videos, etc. besides the ordinary ways to share tasks and instructions, in order to comply with our target group needs. How to understand these needs is a sensitive issue, but asking kindly is always a possible solution, and in digital environments, it can be done previously and anonymously, via surveys or interactive quizzes.



Cultures matter – online too

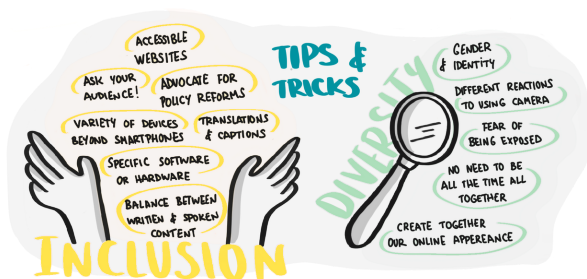
Some cultural issues will be a possible source of conflicts online too: the most common is the attitude towards keeping the camera open while connected. We easily tend to believe it just means that you want to mind your own business and not properly attend my sessions – and sometimes it can be true, but in some cultures, showing your face online is simply something that you do not want to do. We should also consider a possible sense of shame, or being judged when showing your room, your house, etc. while online, and so opening it to comparison with other participants' ones. A possible way out could be for instance to design an activity where everybody would draw their avatars and background images, and if they do not feel like keeping their cameras open, that would be the image we would ask them to have as their profile pic. For the same reason, it could be another step towards online inclusion, to consider using platforms that allow custom backgrounds, or at least a blur effect, to somehow avoid rooms and houses being shown during online activities.

Gender and identity issues can appear in online activities too. It is interesting to underline that while online, bodies simply are not there - so we should take full advantage of this situation as a way to include our participants more, designing activities where bodies simply do not matter so much. Regarding gender, an interesting trend in social media profiles could help us: it is becoming more and more common for many people online, to directly declare in their profiles or bio, the pronouns they want to be referred with; if you do not want, or cannot check this, just including an optional line with this question in application forms could be helpful.

Youth workers' creativity is the best tool for inclusion

We already mentioned the fact that designing activities in inclusive ways is the most important aspect to grant inclusion: as platforms and technologies are often not designed at all to be inclusive and respectful of diversities, we should grant that, at least, the ways we choose to use them during our activities would be. We offered some hints so far, and others emerged while presenting these elements during the first SALTO ID Talk dedicated to inclusion in online activities, thanks to the many questions asked by participants.

This brought up some more tips, like being inclusive before starting the online activities. For instance, even if it is quite common in many countries among youth, you should not propose activities based on messaging platforms, like WhatsApp, which would not respect the privacy of participants, sharing their phone numbers with all the members of the same group. Maybe this could be a good platform to start contacting youngsters (and in this case, be sure that you are ok with sharing your phone number too, or at least that you can use a work number different from your personal one...) but then the conversation should happen in more privacy-aware platforms, like Telegram or Signal.



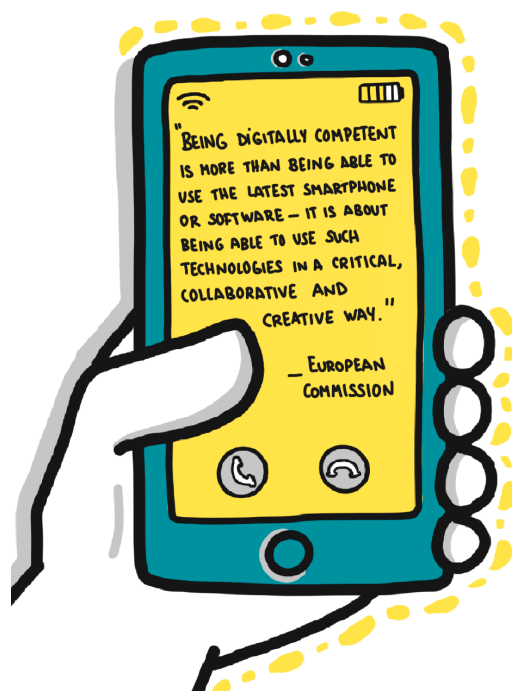
Another aspect that was mentioned was how to be engaging and attractive in our online activities: there are ongoing attempts (in which I have been involved for a few years, too) to use video games as learning tools, which could be a possible answer. Other discussion topics included for instance how to include participants with specific needs, like people with mental disabilities. This is a very sensitive topic because many platforms and tools, as mentioned above, have been designed to absorb your maximum attention and this could affect these participants more than others – so a possible solution could be to arrange fixed times for using these platforms, or having someone directly supporting these participants if possible, to ensure that this situation would not affect them. On the other side, it has been noted that some mental conditions where physical contact and sharing of personal spaces are an issue, could benefit from a mediated relationship happening online – even if research data on this aspect still bring no validated evidence.

Which competences?

As a final topic, we discussed which competences are needed by youth workers to properly work online; a revision of SALTO European Training Strategy models for trainers and youth workers is being carried out in these months, to give more evidence to the digital dimension of their competences – even if in many cases, the way to behave and to design activities and interaction with learners is not different when you are online or offline, and it is more a matter of familiarizing with new environments and tools. It is anyway worth remembering what the European Commission wrote a few years ago regarding this topic:

“being digitally competent is more than being able to use the latest smartphone or computer software — it is about being able to use such digital technologies in a critical, collaborative and creative way”

We should always remember to add inclusion to the ways digital technologies should be used by digitally competent youth workers.



YOUTUBE LINKS:

- [ID Talks Digital – Full Version](#)
- [ID Talks Digital Teaser](#)

RESOURCES:

- Digitalisation and youth work. Editors: Heikki Lauha & Kati Nölvak. Publisher: Verke & EYWC: <https://www.verke.org/material/digitalisation-youth-work/?lang=en>
- Social Inclusion, Digitalisation and Young People – research study. Coordinated by: Lana Pasic. Publisher: EU – CoE Youth Partnership: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/study-on-social-inclusion-digitalisation-and-young-people>
- Makers activities in youth work. Editor: Juha Kiviniemi. Publisher: Verke: <https://www.verke.org/material/maker-activities-youth-work/?lang=en>
- SALTO Educational tools portal: <https://educationaltoolsportal.eu/>
- SALTO Toolbox: <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/>
- SALTO European Training Strategy in the field of youth: <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/training-and-cooperation/trainingstrategy/>
- Michele's blog HandShaking: <https://www.dipaola.me/en>



EDITORIAL INFORMATION

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On behalf of the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity!

