DISCUSSING THE DIGITAL AGE AND YOUTH WORK

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INTRODUCTION

The idea that led to developing this material was kicked off in 2017 as part of a process aimed at developing a new curriculum for youth work at the University of Tartu, Narva College. In thinking about the competencies future youth workers will need, one theme repeated itself in different forms – digital technologies bringing change in the lives of young people and in youth work. It was evident that any programme aiming at equipping youth workers with the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies, needs to pay thorough attention to digitalisation in society and the impacts it brings.

After numerous meetings, seminars and a conference, the authors of this material have the clear opinion that in order to understand the developments connected with digitalisation and to adopt new methods, tools and areas of work, it is important to talk about these topics more. The complexity of technological developments and their impact entail a multitude of perspectives that go far beyond technical issues and tools. And the development goes on – there are many more themes emerging – artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, constant online presence and others are developing, and it is increasingly difficult to draw a line between "real" and "virtual" life. These changes concern economies, social relationships and personal development.

Young people and those working with and for young people are all experiencing these changes. The experiences however do not automatically result in understanding and learning. Also, in issues connected with the technological changes neither young people nor adults are "digital natives" who intuitively grasp *the Digital*. As with any experience, one has to acknowledge, reflect and critically analyse the experience in order to learn from it.

Conversations and discussions in smaller or larger groups have for a long time been one way of learning. Youth work values the participation, empowerment and agency of young people, and discussions, especially in groups, are the central feature of many methods in youth work. Discussion as a teaching method has found importance also in formal education.

The authors of this material hope that it can be of use in initiating and organising discussions on themes related to the digital age and the impact it has on young people's lives and youth work. It could be used to kick-start a discussion session with a group of people of any age; however, the authors mainly had youth workers and other specialists working with young people in mind when choosing the subjects. That said, the authors also believe that it is of utmost importance to create more opportunities for young people to express their viewpoints and share their experiences in connection with the digital era and the material could also help to facilitate these opportunities.

The process that has contributed to creating this discussion aid has been supported by the Estonian Youth Work Centre, the Estonian Youth Agency of the Archimedes Foundation and the ERASMUS+ programme, the office of the Nordic Council of Ministers in Estonia and the University of Tartu, Narva College.

1. THE DIGITAL AGE OF CHANGE

In 2014, Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee described the era influenced by computers as "the second machine age" characterised by "tremendous progress in digital technologies" that will deliver changes that will be highly beneficial for people; but digitalisation will also entail new and painful problems.[1] The OECD (2018) has drawn a picture of the future ahead, stating that the digital transformation is affecting all economic sectors and is characterised by almost universal connectivity and ubiquitous computing: "The wide scope of technological changes creates significant uncertainty about their future directions and impacts. Indeed, predictions about technological timelines are often inaccurate and overestimation of their short-run impacts is common."[2]

The digitalisation of society involves much more than just technical advancements or changes for businesses. The impact technological changes have on social relationships (and on professional fields based on those relationships, as also youth work could be described) is a question for ongoing analysis and predictions. Technological transformations have been linked to the emergence of new social agency, new social forces of influence, where mechanisms of success and failure depend significantly on the well-timed use of different practices and resources, and combining skilfully different time expenditures in different spheres of life[3]. Sociologist Noortje Marres has argued[4] that digital technologies are increasingly being re-designed to be "social" – to support interaction, connection and exchange – at the same time, these technologies actively structure and format social life in a way that makes social life analysable and influenceable.

The realities for young people are being influenced by the changes that digital technologies bring in society. The changes have an impact on what it means to be young and to navigate the path from childhood to adulthood. Based on youth work practice, policies for youth and research conducted in many areas where digital changes have an impact on the lives of young people, some interesting themes for further analysis emerge:

- the digital era and self-determination, social connections: constructing identities, self-image, interconnections, interactions, being alone, co-operation;
- youth experiences and the generational gap: values, contacts, transfer of knowledge, traditions, values;
- young people as agents in digital developments: rights, protection, youth-led content, peer-advice;
- young people and the relationship to the state, citizenship: participation, e-participation, online-offline activism.

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1 Brynjolfsson, E.; McAfee, A. (2014). The second machine age: Work, progress, and prosperity in a time of brilliant Technologies.

2 OECD (2018) Transformative Technologies and jobs of the future. Background report for the Canadian G7 Innovation Ministers' Meeting. Montreal, Canada 27.-28.03.2018. http://www.oecd.org/innovation/transformative-technologies-and-jobs-of-the-future.pdf

3 Lauristin, M, Kalmus, V., Keller, M., Kiisel, M., Masso, A., Opermann, S., Vihalemm, P., Vihalemm, T. (2017) Eesti ühiskonda kujundavad protsessid ja tulevikuarengud. In Vihalemm, P., Lauritin, M., Kalmus, V., Vihalemm, T. (eds) Eesti Ühiskonnad kiirenevas ajas, Uuringu "Mina. Maailm. Meedia" 2002-2014 tulemused.

4 Marres, N. (2017) "Digital sociology". Polity Press.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES	CHANGES IN ECONOMIES	CHANGES IN SOCIAL CONNECTIONS	NEW COMPETENCIES IN DEMAND	COPING WITH CHANGES
data	new businesses	potential for better access to information, services, education	"right mix of skills required"	need for all to adapt to benefit
algorithms	some jobs disappearing, new types of jobs emerging	new ways for inclusion	new opportunities for skill development	peaople-centered "adotion agendas"
automatisation	new ways to work	new risks of exclusion	self-organisation and management competencies	strategies for coping

TIPS FOR DISCUSSIONS
Group: best for groups of up to 12 people
Method: brainstorming

When conducting a brainstorming session you can use online tools, for example https://usecandor.com/ or https://dotstorming.com/main or https://bubbl.us/. Choose a programme that suits you and you think will be convenient for your group. You need a good but short description of the subject to start: what, why, how? Best to choose some aspect to focus on.

This method helps participants take time and grasp different aspects of their opinion, preconceptions, experiences and fears. Brainstorming sessions help identify themes and concepts that are acknowledged and voiced in everyday discussions. It is important when using the method not to criticise, give assessments and not to dismiss opinions, even if they are not suitable. The opinion of each person is important, and all opinions matter.

2. COMPETENCIES FOR A DIGITAL LIFE

The changes brought on by recent technological transformations demand a new set of skills that include cognitive as well as non-cognitive and social skills. Being digitally competent is one of the aspects of skills development that is increasingly important. Discussing and defining the competencies needed to live and succeed in the digital era has been an important area of cooperation in the European Union for more than a decade. In order to map and describe digital competencies, the European Digital Competence Framework, also known as DigComp, was developed by the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission as a scientific project based on consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. It was first published in 2013 and has become a reference for the development and strategic planning of digital competence initiatives.

In 2016, a renewed version 2.0 of the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens was developed that consists of an updated conceptual reference model, a revision of the vocabulary and more streamlined descriptors. DigComp 2.0[5] presents a list of 21 competences (aka the conceptual reference model) where eight proficiency levels and examples of use can be found in DigComp 2.1[6]. In 2018, a new guide called DigComp into action[7] was published to support further use and awareness of the Digital Competence Framework. It presents 38 inspiring examples of DigComp use through case studies and tools from all over Europe. The authors of DigComp 2.0. (2016) have categorised three different uses the framework can have in the context of education, training and employment as follows:

- Policy formulation and support
- Instructional planning for education, training and employment
- Assessment and certification

At the individual level, the Digital Competence Framework can help with self-evaluation, setting learning goals, identifying training opportunities and facilitating job searches. At the government level, it can help monitor a citizen's digital skills and support curricular development.

The DigComp framework can also be of use as a source for analysing the content, methods and quality of youth work. Considering the importance of digital competencies, both for young people and youth workers, thorough examination of the developed model with its proficiency levels could advise youth workers on the training and development needs in their practice.

In 2018, the expert group on "Risks, opportunities and implications of digitalisation for youth, youth work and youth policy" set up by the European Commission proposed a set of policy recommendations and training needs for youth workers relevant to digital youth work[8]. As a combination of analyses of different competence frameworks – for digital skills, for youth work, for teachers – the training needs identified could be another rich source for discussing the practical needs in a youth work organisation.

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5 https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/digcomp-20-digital-competence-framework-citizens-update-phase-1-conceptual-reference-model

6 https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/digcomp-21-digital-competence-framework-citizens-eight-proficiency-levels-and-examples-use

7 http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/bitstream/JRC110624/dc_guide_may18.pdf

8 „Developing digital youth work. Policy recommendations, training needs and good practice examples for youth workers and decision-makers". https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/fbc18822-07cb-11e8-b8f5-01aa75ed71a1

DIGITAL COMPETENCIES	
Information and data literacy	Browsing, searching and filtering data, information and digital content Evaluating data, information and digital content Managing data, information and digital content
Communication and collaboration	Interacting through digital technologies Sharing through digital technologies Engaging in citizenship through digital technologies Collaborating through digital technologies Netiquette Managing digital identity
Digital content creation	Developing digital content Integrating and re-elaborating digital content Copyright and licences Programming
Safety	Protecting devices Protecting personal data and privacy Protecting health and well-being Protecting the environment
Problem solving	Solving technical problems Identifying needs and technological responses Creatively using digital technologies Identifying digital competence gaps

The expert group suggested there are training needs for youth workers in 7 areas:

1. Digitalisation of society
    1.1. To understand how digitalisation is shaping societies, including its impact on youth work and on young people
    1.2. To be able to take young people's digital cultures into account in youth work practices
    1.3. To be able to encourage young people to shape the process of digitalisation themselves
2. Planning, designing and evaluating digital youth work
    2.1. To develop an agile mindset towards digital youth work
    2.2. To know how to support existing youth work goals with digital media and technology
    2.3. To be able to plan digital youth work according to the needs and hopes of young people: their interests, preferences, aspirations, hobbies, styles and online habits
    2.4. To know how to involve young people in all stages – design, development, implementation and evaluation – of digital youth work (e.g. peer activities, giving responsible roles to young people, volunteering), and to recognise the barriers to participation in these stages of digital youth work and how to overcome them
    2.5. To be able to develop, implement, reflect and redesign engaging activities supported by/with/about digital media and technology
    2.6. To be able to assess the risks involved in digital youth work activities and to mitigate them by applying appropriate measures
    2.7. To be able to design individual and collaborative activities using digital media and technology
    2.8. To be aware of digital devices and applications available and to be able to choose them for youth work
    2.9. To be able to use support technology to assist young people with disabilities in accessing youth work; to recognise barriers to participation that may be presented in the use of digital technology
    2.10. To be able to use digital technologies to increase social inclusion and participation in society
3. Information and data literacy
    3.1. To be able to challenge young people to think critically about digital content and services
    3.2. To understand the digital literacy level of each young person (and to adjust digital youth work activities to suit)
    3.3. To know what information can be stored from a legal perspective (protection of young people's privacy, personal data, etc.)
4. Communication
    4.1. To know how young people communicate in digital environments and to adjust digital youth work activities to suit that
    4.2. To be able to help young people make informed choices about the appropriate digital tools with which to interact, collaborate and share with different target groups
    4.3. To be able to help young people be aware of cultural and generational diversity in digital environments
    4.4. To be able to help young people become active citizens in a digital society
    4.5. To know how to react to hate speech, cyber bullying and other unwanted behaviour online, and to encourage young people to do so
    4.6. To be able to reflect on the youth worker's own digital identity in a youth work setting

5. Digital creativity
   - 5.1. To be able to encourage young people to create and edit digital content and to express themselves through digital means
   - 5.2. To be able to give young people opportunities to explore coding or become acquainted with maker culture
   - 5.3. To understand how copyright and licences apply to data, information and digital content
   - 5.4. To be aware of the available tools for digital creativity (including free and open source tools)
6. Safety
   - 6.1. To be able to encourage young people to make informed decisions about how they want to portray themselves and engage online, who they want to share their content with and how to control this using privacy settings
   - 6.2. To be able to help young people to understand the terms and conditions of digital services and ownership of their data
   - 6.3. To be able to help young people deal with problems they have encountered in digital settings; for example, cyber bullying, grooming, sexting and exposure to content they find upsetting or shocking. To be able to refer young people on to the appropriate support services if necessary
   - 6.4. To be able to help young people minimise the environmental impact of digital technologies and their use
   - 6.5. To be able to establish appropriate professional boundaries in their online relationships with young people
7. Reflection and evaluation
   - 7.1. To understand where the youth worker's own digital competence needs to be improved or updated
   - 7.2. To be able to use evaluative techniques to reflect on the effectiveness of undertaking digital youth work and to improve practice
   - 7.3. To know how to share experience and learn from other youth workers

TIPS FOR DISCUSSIONS
Group: up to 6–8 people
Method: group discussion "Competencies Map"

In order to discuss competencies, training needs and the need for innovation, mapping concepts relevant to the personal and/or organisational situation provides a good basis for starting discussions. Small groups can create maps of interconnected competencies that are relevant and important to develop – for young people and/or for youth workers. Maps can have "uncharted" areas that need more exploration; in other words, areas where there is no clear vision about competencies, but there are challenges, issues, themes etc. Developing maps of competencies can help identify different perspectives and problems that people associate with digital technologies.

For online mapping tools https://sketchboard.io/ or https://www.lucidchart.com/pages/ can be used.

3. RECOGNITION OF LEARNING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The question of how to ensure the recognition of learning that takes place outside formal education has long been discussed. It is important for young people to acknowledge different learning experiences and the competencies gained through those, but also to have this learning recognised by others. For those active in youth work or providing learning opportunities in other fields outside the formal education system, it is equally important to raise awareness about the value of their work in terms of developing competencies that are needed and sought.

The issue of raising awareness to acknowledge informal and non-formal learning and of finding ways to recognise this learning in school or job-related contexts, has been addressed and discussed for decades. What impact digital technologies have on the issue of recognition has been discussed much less. The discussions can start from exploring two questions:

- What is learned in digital environments and how to be more aware of this learning?
- Can digital technologies help increase recognition and how?

LEARNING IN THE DIGITAL AGE

The digital age offers new learning opportunities, both online (e.g. information, interaction, gaming) and offline (e.g. data-awareness, social connections impacted by using technology, increased technology in everyday life). The constant connectivity offered by smartphones creates new ways for social relations and changes in the perception of freedom, control, autonomy and time impacting how young people live and learn (see for example analyses by Gitte Stald[9]). Discussing radical change theory in connection with the digital life of young people, Koh[10] has pointed out that "Digital age information behaviour offers a new type of learning opportunity, which supports both autonomous and social learning."

However, these experiences become meaningful learning when understood and thought through. In order to acknowledge and showcase competencies gained through learning online and/or using digital tools, young people need to think and also talk about experiences. Preferably with adults who can help place them in the context of learning and gaining competencies. It is therefore important that not only parents but also those working with young people in different contexts be able to understand and recognise the experiences young people gain online as learning experiences.

TOOLS FOR RECOGNITION

Digital technologies expand opportunities for different competencies to be recorded, presented and recognised. Most importantly, new technologies and tools help young people to be in charge of recording and presenting of the competencies they have gathered, and in charge of their learning.

Erasmus+ Youthpass[11] and the Council of Europe's Youth Work Portfolio[12] have been available for many years helping young people and youth workers to make sense of the competencies gained in projects, exchanges, in youth work in general. The Open

9 Stald, G. B. 2016 Youth cultures. In „Dialogues on Mobile Communication"

10 Koh, Kyungwon (2015). Radical Change Theory: Framework for Empowering Digital Youth. The University of Oklahoma: Norman. Available at http://www.yalsa.ala.org/jrlya/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Kyongwon-Koh_Radical-Change-Theory.pdf

11 https://www.youthpass.eu/en/

12 https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio/home

badge system is another technological tool to gather different types of learning experiences as digital data to be used and showcased when needed by the learner.[13] This is also not limited to the youth sector; the application of badges in formal education has also been discussed and analysed.[14]

TIPS FOR DISCUSSIONS
Group: up to 8 people in small groups, up to 40 in total
Method: Group and Panel discussion.

Discussing experiences of learning in digital environments and/or experiences of getting this learning recognized in smaller groups could lead to focussing on some viewpoints – both critical and supportive, that could be later discussed in a panel of representatives from small groups. The moderated panel discussion could be helpful to set the stage for analysing if there is a need and a way to experience, acknowledge, improve and present/recognize learning in digital environments.

For online mapping tools https://sketchboard.io/ or https://www.lucidchart.com/pages/ can be used.

[13] For example, the Trusted Badge System developed badge issuing technology by make it possible to complete quests and upload evidence when earning a badge. It also created a mobile application Badge Wallet for young people. Project partners have designed tailor-made badge systems for national volunteering, youth participation, youth entrepreneurship and more. The European Badge Alliance created tailor-made badge systems to be used for almost any type of learning mobility. See also https://www.badgecraft.eu/; http://www.badge-badu.eu/en

[14] For example see Põldoja, H., Jürgens, P., & Laanpere, M. (2016). Design Patterns for Badge Systems in Higher Education.

4. THE CONCEPTS OF SMART AND DIGITAL YOUTH WORK

In 2012, the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research instigated discussions about the future aims and objectives in youth policy and youth work in Estonia. The preparation of the national strategy for the youth field "Youth Field Development Plan 2014–2020" included discussions about the ICT skills and competencies of young people, but also about the increasing impact digital technologies have on working with and for young people. During those discussions the term "*nutikas noorsootöö*" (i.e. smart youth work) was born. This was also included in the text of the strategy approved by the Government in 2013. Smart youth work was developed as a term to encompass the need to determine specific focal areas for innovation in youth work taking into account the digitalisation of the society. It was also intended to address the need for the development of digital competencies among young people and youth workers.

Digital youth work and using digital tools in youth work was by that time already an important issue for many countries and organisations in Europe. Finland has been one of the frontrunners in this area. According to Tuominen, digital media and technology have been included in youth work in Finland as long as digital media has existed; since the early 2000's young people in Finland have been offered the possibility to get in contact with youth workers in online communities and social media services; a network of youth work organisations working with online services aimed at young people in Finland was created in 2007; etc.[15]

The experiences of Estonia and Finland illustrate the emerging importance of understanding the impact digital technologies have on working with young people in any context, but especially in youth work.

CONCEPTUALISING DIGITAL YOUTH WORK IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

The emergence of the importance of digitalisation in the cooperation framework of the EU youth field and the development of its meanings, concepts and common understanding is evident when examining the documents adopted by the Council of the EU and prepared by the Youth Working Party. The development has included many perspectives and stages echoing the changes in digitalisation itself: from media literacy and digital skills to the digital era as a societal phenomenon. The content of the emerged perspectives is evolving; for example, the importance of media literacy was formulated more than 15 years ago and until now the need for digital skills and competencies has not decreased but evolved into an increasingly important area of concern. The examination of policy formulation in the framework of EU cooperation in the field of youth during the years 2010–2018 indicates the increasing expectation of the education and training of youth workers to reflect on the digitalisation of society. Digital youth work and smart youth work have been discussed more intensively since 2016, with agreeing on a specific priority in the European Council Work Plan for Youth 2016–2018. Under the Work Plan, the expert group on 'Risks, opportunities and implications of digitalisation for youth, youth work and youth policy' was set up and proposed a set of policy recommendations, description of training needs and good practice examples in developing digital youth work across the

[15] Tuominen, S. (2017) Brief history of Finnish digital youth work. https://www.verke.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Digital-youth-work-a-Finnish-perspective_web.pdf

EU.[8] Representatives from 21 Member States of the European Union took part in the expert group; the European Youth Forum was invited as a permanent participant.

WORKING DEFINITION OF DIGITAL YOUTH WORK

The expert group was the first to offer an EU level working definition for digital youth work, which is based on Verke's[16] understanding in Finland of digital youth work and consists of several important aspects:

- digital youth work means proactively using or addressing digital media and technology in youth work;
- digital youth work is not a youth work method – it can be included in any youth work setting (open youth work, youth information and counselling, youth clubs, detached youth work, etc.);
- digital youth work has the same goals as youth work in general, and using digital media and technology in youth work should always support these goals;
- digital youth work is underpinned by the same ethics, values and principles as youth work;
- digital youth work can happen in face-to-face situations as well as in online environments – or in a mixture of these two;
- digital media and technology can be either a tool, an activity or content in youth work.

This multi-layered definition frames digital youth work explicitly as part of general youth work and stresses the importance of the same ethics, values, principles and goals applying to both. The group made the policy recommendations in four focal areas:

1. common understanding of digital youth work;
2. strategic development;
3. youth participation and youth rights;
4. knowledge and evidence.

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON SMART YOUTH WORK

Led by the Estonian Presidency of the Council of the European Union, the concept of "smart youth work" was introduced and found its place in the document approved by the ministers responsible for youth affairs in the Member States: *Council Conclusions on Smart Youth Work*.[17] The common agreement formulated in the conclusions provides:

- a short description of the political background and the rationale for developing the smart youth work concept;
- an explanation of the concept and the characteristics of "smart youth work" agreed by all the Member States of the EU;
- guidelines for action to develop smart youth work.

Based on the list provided in the Annex to the document, the political background for developing the Council conclusions on smart youth work could be described as primarily based on three pillars:

- EU work on defining skills and competencies for living in the digital world and economy;
- EU work on developing youth work that is relevant and of high quality:
- Research and cooperation in Europe on youth issues and for a better understanding of the challenges of youth in the digital era.

There is no definition in the document that specifically says "smart youth work is …". However, the section describing the understanding and characteristics including the aims and objectives of smart youth work provides a good source for gaining an overview of different aspects of the concept. The understanding

[16] VERKE - the national Centre of Expertise for Digital Youth Work in Finland

[17] The Council of the European Union (2017b) Council conclusions on smart youth work. https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52017XG1207(01)&from=EN

of the concept 'Smart youth work' is described as "the innovative development of youth work encompassing digital youth work practice, and including a research, quality and policy component".

The conclusions include a set of guidelines for the Member States and the European Commission in order to further assist in the use and development of the smart youth work concept and could be categorised as follows:

STRATEGY	KNOWLEDGE	COMPETENCIES	COOPERATION
setting goals and instruments, including financial instruments; creating partnerships	better knowledge about the situation, inequalities etc;	training for youth and youth workers	at the national and EU level

The work of the EU on digital youth work continues, and during the Finnish Presidency in 2019, the common positions of the Member States on digital youth work are under the discussion again.

TIPS FOR DISCUSSIONS
Group: up to 10
Method: Landscape of The Digital

Discussing the components of digitalisation and its impact on youth work could lead to a list (a picture of the landscape, if you wish) with different elements that could be analysed and weighted to match their reach, role, importance et cetera, and described as interconnected unity. The visuals help the discussion.

5. TOPICS IN SMART AND DIGITAL YOUTH WORK

Regardless of whether the term used is "smart youth work" or "digital youth work", there are many important issues to consider discussing, including innovation in youth work, using digital tools in youth work and the quality of youth work.

INCLUSIVE INNOVATION AND YOUTH RIGHTS

Looking at the issue, there are several aspects to pay attention to:

- being vigilant about inclusiveness of new technologies and about the impact they have;
- making sense of and conceptualising the issue of youth rights in the evolving technological environment;
- developing an awareness of rights and how to exercise these rights in online environments, using digital technology;
- discussing the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of everybody;
- working to ensure that young people's rights are taken into account when designing digital services, technological solutions etc.

It is also interesting to reflect on the issue of youth rights in the context of different approaches to general rights, including when connected with e-services and e-governance.

VALUES OF YOUTH WORK AND DIGITALISATION

As part of understanding that smart/digital youth work is part of "regular" youth work, it is relevant to consider how the values of youth work translate into practice in the digital context – using technological tools for planning and delivering policy, organising youth work, using online tools and so on.

For example, the Estonian Youth Work Act states that the organisation of youth work has to be based on the following principles:

1. youth work is performed for the benefit of and together with young people by involving them in the decision-making process;
2. creating the conditions for the acquisition of knowledge and skills in youth work has to be based on the needs and interests of young people;
3. youth work is based on the participation and free will of young people;
4. youth work supports the initiative of young people;
5. youth work proceeds from the principle of equal treatment, tolerance and partnership.

It would be interesting and important to analyse what these principles mean in practice when developing smart/digital youth work.

QUALITY

All public services deal with the issues of how to efficiently reach their goals and maintain high quality, but also how to publicly and visibly show evidence of the results and impact. Cross-sectoral and *whole-of-the-government approaches*[18] are increasingly relevant for the public sector in many countries in Europe, adding another layer to the need for well-designed and well-aimed services.

When talking about youth policies and youth work, defining and measuring quality and describing and proving results and impact in society have

[18] The relevance for youth policy is best described in the OECD report on youth policy (2018) http://www.oecd.org/gov/youth-stocktaking-report.pdf

been discussed for a long time. The longevity of these discussions has among other things to do with the difficulties they pose. The question of what is quality in connection to smart and digital youth work and how to measure and ensure it, entails the usual difficulties when describing "*aims-objectives-methods-results-indicators*" in youth work. As digital technologies are constantly evolving, the difficulties are even more complex:

goals

what are the goals concerning digital technologies and young people / youth work?

what are the goals digital technologies provide a good setting/tool for?

how can we define priorities for/in smart/digital youth work?

delivery

how can we ensure values, ethics and quality standards of youth work are followed?

what is the best way to record, document, evaluate the work done?

will smart/digital youth work change ethics and standards?

results and impact

what is the impact of using smart/digital youth work?

how can we define and monitor results?

how can we make them visible?

TIPS FOR DISCUSSIONS
Group: up to 10
Method: Zooming in

Exchanging thoughts about digital and/or smart youth work could be different when looking at the "big picture" and when analysing details and practices. Using time for discussing first the general ideas behind the concepts could help to find themes that are most relevant for "zooming in". When focal themes are identified, a detailed analysis could be structured into individual and group sessions with practical examples and/or practice periods. Take time and then repeat to identify the next set of themes.

6. DIGITAL YOUTH CONFERENCE IN NARVA 2018

An international conference organised by the University of Tartu Narva College and Nordic Council of Ministers´ Office in Estonia in cooperation with the Estonian Youth Work Centre and Finnish Institute in Estonia took place 29–30 November 2018 in Narva, Estonia. The conference was titled "Digital Youth 2018. Future is Now".

The aim was to bring together those working with and for young people and the most important experts on youth issues – the young people themselves – students from senior secondary schools and universities from Estonia and the Nordic countries, including youth work students. The goal was to provide inspiration and a platform for exchange and cooperation in order to develop ideas and solutions relevant and necessary for young people in connection with the issues of the digital age. During the conference 13 areas of concern for young people in relation to the digital age were identified in 7 working sessions:

1. Digital tools for a digital future. With youth for youth.
2. Careers as constellations: finding your voice in tech.
3. Outside the box – what are the next hot skills or topics to address?
4. E-participation and tools for it.
5. Smart youth work. Working with young people on-life (online + "real" life).
6. How to find your passion and kick-start a business?
7. Young people's mental health in the modern world.

The aim of the sessions was to inspire and provide a platform for identifying challenges, problems and obstacles for participants in relation to digital changes and young people. The experts and themes of the sessions were chosen based on the profile of the participants and current issues around youth in the digital world. As a result of these sessions the following 13 questions and issues were identified as important areas of concern for young people:

1. How can we help young enter labour market?
2. How can we help change in careers and/or learning?
3. How can we ensure that technology is boosting creativity?
4. What are the outcomes and results of participation, how can we make them visible?
5. Youth-led participation process design – how can we achieve it?
6. How can we boost the confidence and motivation to participate in decision-making?
7. Mental and social addiction – how can we prevent going too deep and/or using technology unintentionally?
8. Disturbed reality – what to do with extreme focus on how you and others are/appear online?
9. How can we support passion and initiative, entrepreneurship?
10. Promoting youth work as a safe space and support feeling safe with the help of the experiences of other young people.
11. Formal and non-formal education: which skills to learn/teach and how?
12. How can we explain youth perspectives on the digital world to adults?
13. Gaming in youth work – how can we use this?

The ideas proposed to support/solve these issues:

- Changes to encourage new skills: integrated informal and formal learning with teachers and parents, who would not fear technology that relates to the socio-cultural context and would

include games and apps to stimulate learning, training apps and apps that assist in formal education etc.

- Tools to recognise and reflect on toxic communication: a model to help young people reflect on their communication habits and skills "Constructive communication work sheet".
- E-game with youth: training programme for young people in order to create an e-game. The process of creating a game improves social skills and provides the possibility to gain ICT skills: "learning happens between reflection and fun".
- Tackling disturbed realities online: a programme of different activities and measures such as extra-curricular activities (e.g. on digital activism, Photoshop workshop, digital and media literacy), media campaigns (#badday, #nomakeup, #badmood etc.), counter algorithms.
- Safe communities: create opportunities for positive interaction in schools and work-places; provide anonymous support in case problems arise.
- Creo: an app to support young people to be more creative by using a gaming approach to results such as randomly created every-day tasks, 5 winners each month etc.
- Digitally simplified app for youth to change jobs and search for jobs on the labour market: identification of problems and advice for youth looking for a career change including try-out periods to ensure the suitability of the new career path.
- Youth Learning on the job: internal education and training, free external training coordinated by public institutions; customized support at the individual level.
- Informative guidance at the local, regional and (inter)national level together with social media and online support for young people entering the labour market; real and high-quality internship and mentorship opportunities.
- A Road: steps for adults to obtain a better understanding of youth perspectives on the digital world. Including digimentor in school, "be your adult's IT support" campaign, students teach teachers, co-work for youth and adults, etc.: "The Force is in Cooperation".
- E-platform for local youth participation: hearings, voting, projects, debates.

Information and the conference video can be viewed on the conference web-site - https://narva.ut.ee/digy/. Conference materials, young people's ideas, input by experts that helped in the development of the youth work training curriculum and the "Digital Youth" module. The results of the conference are also to be used in several youth work courses at Narva College.

The discussions of young people and experts inspired the creation of this discussion book.

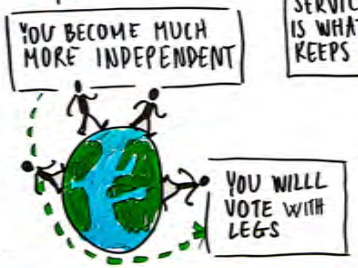
TIPS FOR DISCUSSIONS
Group: up to 8 people in small groups, up to 40 in total
Method: Ideas from ideas

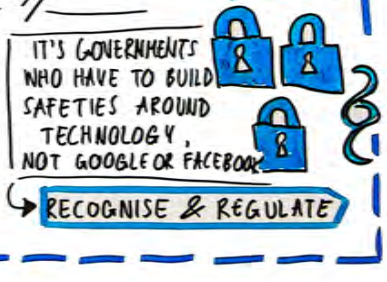
Look at the visuals from the conference with young people. Discuss together:

- what thought is unclear? What could this mean?
- what ideas provide inspiration and for what?
- what topics, questions in the area of Digital Youth would young people and youth workers like to discuss?
- how would young people like to discuss?

DIGITAL YOUTH 2018 FUTURE IS NOW

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU NARVA COLLEGE 29-30 NOV





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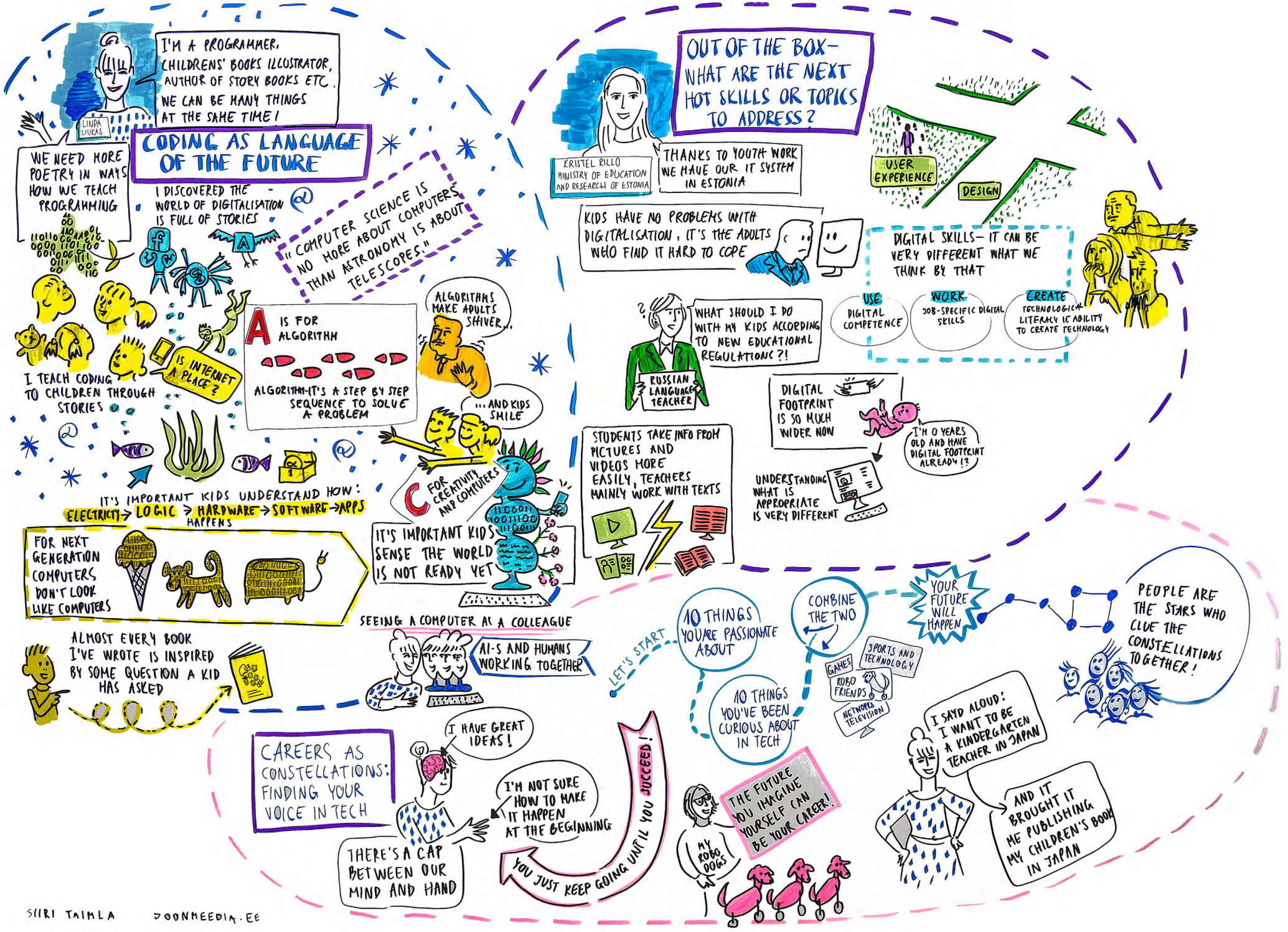

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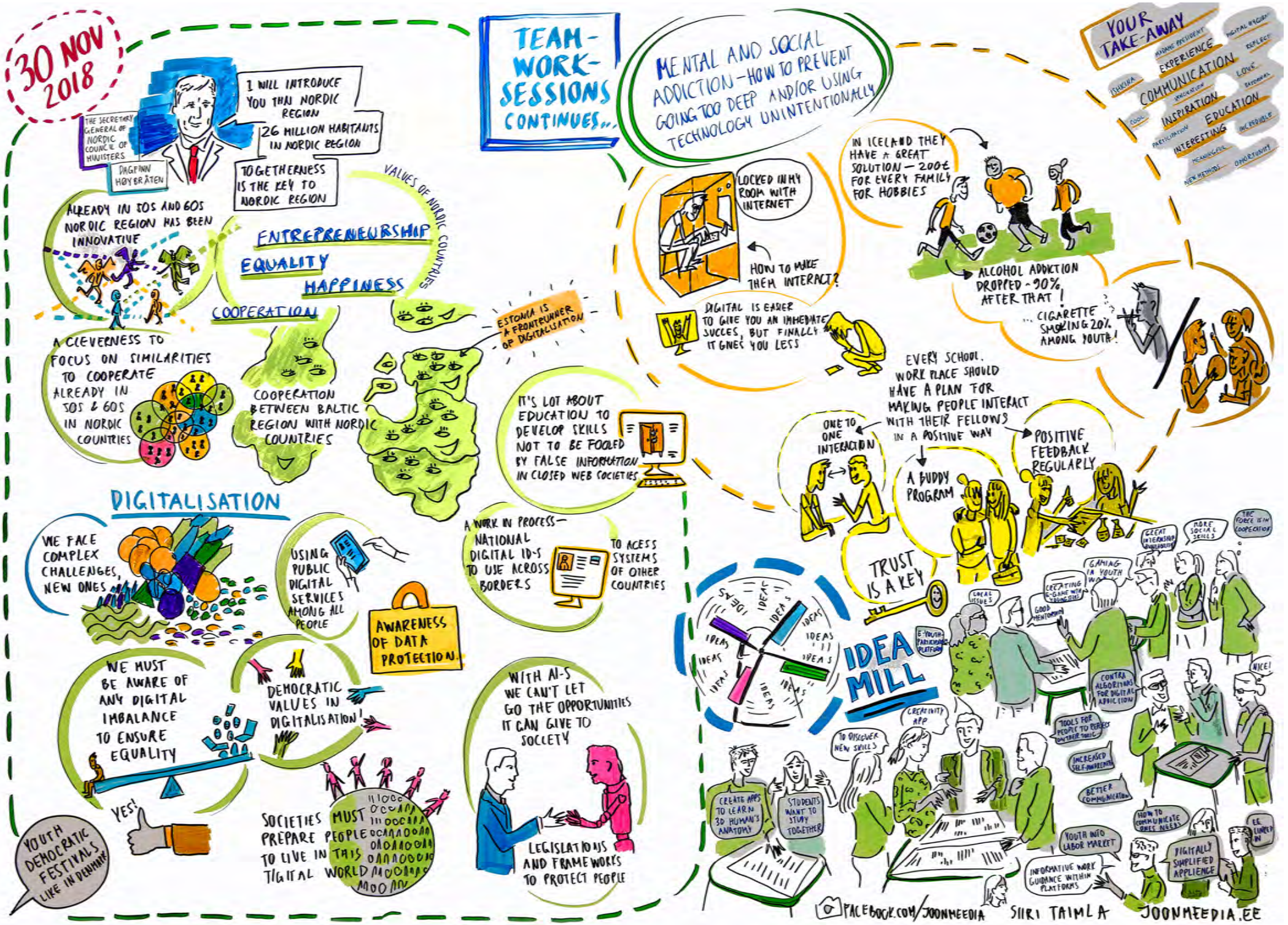

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