YOUTH DIGITAL LEADERS

POLICY ROADMAP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN NETWORK OF YOUTH CONTACT POINTS



YOUTH FOR EXCHANGE AND UNDERSTANDING

Co-funded by the European Union

INTRODUCTION

The digital transformation of society has significantly changed the daily lives of young people. Communication, education, identity formation, and participation increasingly take place in digital environments. While these spaces offer opportunities for creativity, learning, and connection, they also create risks such as cyberbullying, misinformation, digital addiction, privacy violations, and harmful content.

Young people are often expected to manage these challenges without sufficient guidance, while youth organisations and youth workers are asked to respond despite limited tools and long-term support systems. The LED – Youth Digital Leaders project addresses this gap by strengthening the capacity of youth organisations to promote digital resilience and responsible online behaviour. Through international cooperation and participatory training methods, the project helps youth workers understand digital risks, develop key competences, and implement practical solutions in their communities.

This roadmap provides a policy and operational framework for establishing a European Network of Youth Contact Points. These Contact Points will serve as local hubs for digital education, youth support, community engagement, and access to European cooperation and mobility opportunities.

The roadmap is based on the outcomes of the Learning, Teaching and Training Activity (LTTA), a transnational training event held in March 2026 with 10 participants, focused on empowering youth trainers in digital leadership, online safety, and participatory methodologies. Its overall purpose is to move digital youth work from short-term project activities toward a sustainable system-based model, ensuring that Digital Leadership becomes a permanent and integrated part of youth work across Europe.







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2.MISSION OF THE ROADMAP

The mission of this roadmap is to establish a **coherent, sustainable, and collaborative framework** that enables youth organisations to effectively address the challenges of the digital age while empowering young people as active, informed, and responsible digital citizens.
At its core, the roadmap seeks to create a **European Network of Youth Contact Points**, functioning as interconnected structures that operate locally while contributing to a shared European vision.



2.1 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. Strengthening Digital Resilience Among Young People
Young people must be equipped not only with technical skills, but also with critical thinking abilities, emotional awareness, and ethical understanding of digital environments. This includes the ability to:

- Recognise and respond to online risks
- Critically assess digital content
- Manage their digital identity
- Maintain mental well-being in online spaces

2. Building Capacity of Youth Workers and Organisations
Youth workers need structured support to effectively address digital topics. This includes:

- Access to training programmes
- Practical tools and methodologies
- Opportunities for peer learning and exchange
- Continuous professional development

3. Promoting European Cooperation and Mobility
Mobility is a key mechanism for learning and development. Through Erasmus+ and similar programmes, young people and youth workers can:

- Exchange knowledge and practices
- Experience different cultural contexts
- Develop intercultural competences
- Strengthen European identity

4. Establishing a System of Recognition and Certification

The competences developed through Digital Leadership must be formally recognised to:

- Increase motivation and engagement
- Enhance employability
- Strengthen the legitimacy of youth work

5. Ensuring Sustainability and Long-Term Impact

The roadmap aims to move beyond short-term projects by creating:

- Long-lasting structures (Youth Contact Points)
- Continuous learning systems
- Strong partnerships and networks

3. YOUTH CONTACT POINTS - CONCEPT AND FUNCTIONING

3.1 CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION



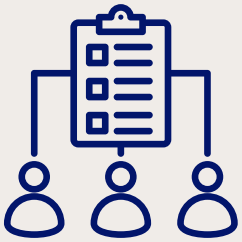
A Youth Contact Point should not be understood merely as a physical location or a temporary project, but rather as a comprehensive, multi-functional structure embedded within a youth organisation. It is specifically designed to respond to the evolving and increasingly complex needs of young people in the digital age, where online and offline realities are deeply interconnected.

In practice, a Youth Contact Point performs several interconnected roles simultaneously. It serves as a learning environment in which young people can acquire knowledge and develop competences related to digital literacy, online safety, and responsible digital behaviour. At the same time, it functions as a support system, offering guidance and assistance to young people facing challenges in digital spaces, whether these are related to cyberbullying, misinformation, or issues of online identity. Beyond this, it acts as a community hub, bringing together young people, youth workers, families, and local stakeholders to engage in dialogue, shared learning, and collaborative activities. Finally, it operates as a connection point to European opportunities, enabling access to mobility programmes, training initiatives, and transnational cooperation within the broader framework of youth work and non-formal learning in Europe.

Importantly, as highlighted through participant contributions, Youth Contact Points should also be developed as safe and inclusive spaces where young people feel comfortable expressing themselves openly. These environments should encourage dialogue and trust, allowing young people to share their experiences, challenges, and concerns related to digital life without fear of judgment, while receiving appropriate support and guidance.

3.2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Youth Contact Points have a wide range of responsibilities that go beyond traditional youth work:



1. Education and Awareness

They provide structured and non-formal learning opportunities on topics such as:

- Digital literacy
- Cybersecurity
- Online behaviour and ethics
- Media literacy

2. Prevention and Protection

They play a key role in preventing harmful situations by:

- Raising awareness about risks (cyberbullying, scams, etc.)
- Promoting responsible behaviour
- Teaching coping and response strategies

3. Support and Guidance

Youth Contact Points should act as first-line support systems by:

- Listening to young people
- Providing guidance
- Referring cases to professionals when needed (psychologists, legal advisors, etc.)

4. Community Engagement

They actively involve:

- Schools
- NGOs
- Families
- Local authorities

5. Mentorship and Leadership Development

They identify and train Digital Leaders, who act as peer educators and role models.

3.3 ACTIVITIES

The activities implemented within Youth Contact Points should not be designed in an ad hoc or fragmented manner, but rather developed through a strategic and needs-based approach. This requires organisations to actively assess the realities, challenges, and expectations of young people within their local communities, and to design interventions that are both relevant and impactful. As highlighted in the group work, activities should be diverse in format, participatory in nature, and grounded in practical application, ensuring that young people are not only passive recipients of information but active contributors to the learning process.

A central component of these activities are **educational workshops** and structured courses, for instance through transnational learning initiatives and **diverse mobility strands**. These mobility opportunities serve as key catalysts for cross-border knowledge exchange, peer learning, and practical skills development. Representing the foundation of Youth Contact Point programming. These workshops should be interactive, accessible, and tailored to different target groups, including young people, youth workers, and, where relevant, parents. Topics may include digital safety, cybersecurity, social media use, artificial intelligence tools, and media literacy. Importantly, these sessions should go beyond theoretical explanations and incorporate real-life scenarios, case studies, and hands-on exercises. For example, activities can include analysing user agreements with digital tools using AI, helping participants understand complex digital environments and make informed decisions. Workshops and structured courses should also address communication skills, boundaries, and conflict resolution in online spaces, reflecting the holistic approach to digital education proposed during the training.

In addition to structured learning, **discussion forums** play a crucial role in creating reflective and inclusive spaces. These forums allow young people to openly share their experiences, concerns, and perspectives related to digital life. Through guided discussions, participants can explore topics such as cyberbullying, online identity, social media pressure, and misinformation. The aim is not only to raise awareness but to foster critical thinking, empathy, and mutual understanding. Such forums also contribute to building trust within the Youth Contact Point, reinforcing its role as a safe and supportive environment.



To further enhance engagement, Youth Contact Points should incorporate **gamified learning activities**, which use elements such as games, simulations, and role-play to explore complex digital topics in an interactive and engaging way. These methods are particularly effective in working with younger audiences, as they encourage participation, creativity, and experiential learning. For instance, role-playing exercises can simulate online conflict situations, enabling participants to practice non-violent communication and problem-solving strategies in a controlled environment. Gamification also supports the development of critical competences such as teamwork, adaptability, and decision-making.

Another important category of activities includes **hackathons and innovation labs**, which aim to foster creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving. These initiatives provide young people with opportunities to work in teams to identify digital challenges within their communities and develop innovative solutions. This may include creating awareness campaigns, developing digital tools, or designing educational content. Such activities not only build technical and creative skills but also empower young people to take ownership of digital issues and become active contributors to their communities.

Recognising the importance of the broader social environment, Youth Contact Points should also organise **family engagement sessions**, which involve parents and caregivers in the learning process. These sessions are essential in bridging the gap between young people's digital experiences and the understanding of adults responsible for their well-being. By providing parents with knowledge about digital risks, online behaviours, and available support mechanisms, Youth Contact Points can strengthen the overall support system around young people. This aligns with the recommendation to extend digital education beyond youth workers and directly involve families in addressing challenges within the home environment.

4. STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS OF YOUTH CONTACT POINT

4.1 HUMAN RESOURCES

A Youth Contact Point should not depend on a single individual, but function as a **team-based and collaborative structure** that brings together different competences and perspectives. This approach helps ensure both the quality and sustainability of activities, while allowing effective responses to the complex challenges young people face in digital environments.

At the core of the structure are **Digital Leaders**, who deliver educational activities, facilitate peer learning, and promote responsible digital behaviour. They are supported by youth workers, volunteers, and administrative staff who contribute to programme delivery, outreach, coordination, and communication.



In addition, Youth Contact Points should build partnerships with external professionals. **Psychologists** can support emotional and mental health issues linked to digital experiences, **legal experts** can advise on privacy and online rights, and **IT professionals** can provide technical expertise and help keep activities up to date. This multidisciplinary approach ensures that Youth Contact Points provide holistic support addressing the educational, emotional, social, and technical dimensions of young people's digital lives.

4.2 INFRASTRUCTURE

The effectiveness of a Youth Contact Point is closely linked to the quality and accessibility of its infrastructure. However, infrastructure should not be understood as physical space only, but as a broader ecosystem combining physical, digital, and communication elements that support learning, engagement, and outreach.

At the physical level, Youth Contact Points should offer safe, welcoming, and accessible environments where young people feel comfortable participating and expressing themselves. These spaces may include youth centres, schools, community facilities, or organisational premises within non formal education settings, with an emphasis on trust, inclusivity, and openness. Strong digital infrastructure is equally important. This includes online platforms, digital tools, and learning systems that support workshops, online training, and hybrid activities. Digital tools also enable cooperation between Youth Contact Points in different countries through communication and resource sharing.

Communication channels such as websites, social media, and newsletters are essential for visibility, outreach, and engagement with young people and stakeholders. Overall, well-developed infrastructure improves both accessibility and visibility, ensuring that Youth Contact Points are effective, recognised, and connected to their communities.



4.3 ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

While human resources and infrastructure are essential, the long-term success of a Youth Contact Point also depends on its organisational culture. This includes the values, attitudes, and working approaches that shape how the organisation operates and engages with young people and partners.

A key element is openness to innovation, as digital environments constantly evolve. Youth Contact Points should be willing to test new tools, methods, and approaches in order to remain relevant and effective. This is closely connected to a willingness to learn and adapt through continuous development. Another important principle is commitment to youth participation. Young people should be active contributors who help shape activities, identify needs, and co-create solutions. This increases the relevance and impact of programmes while strengthening ownership and empowerment.

Youth Contact Points must also promote inclusivity and diversity, ensuring that activities are accessible to all young people regardless of background or circumstances, while paying special attention to vulnerable groups. Together, these elements create a responsive, inclusive, and forward-looking Youth Contact Point capable of delivering sustainable impact in digital youth work.

4.4 CERTIFICATION SYSTEM



The establishment of a structured certification system is essential for ensuring both the quality and recognition of Digital Leadership within the Youth Contact Point framework. Certification validates the competences gained by participants while also strengthening the credibility, consistency, and professionalism of the overall initiative.

A strong certification system should be based on clearly defined learning outcomes that describe the knowledge, skills, and attitudes participants are expected to gain through training and practical experience. **To establish a common standard of digital competences, the framework directly incorporates both the adoption (completion) and delivery (local facilitation) of the LED online learning path**. It should also include progression levels that allow individuals to gradually develop their competences and take on greater responsibility over time.

Practical experience is a key element of certification. Digital Leadership should not be based only on theory, but demonstrated through real activities such as facilitating workshops, organising local digital engagements events, or supporting and mentoring peers through the online learning path In addition, participants' achievements should be documented through records of trainings attended, activities delivered, competences developed, and participation in mobility or international initiatives.

The system may be organised into three levels. **The Beginner level** focuses on basic knowledge of digital literacy, online safety, and communication, through the complete adoption of the LED online self-training modules **The Intermediate level** reflects active involvement in delivering training and supporting local activities. **The Advanced level** is intended for experienced Digital Leaders who can design programmes and contribute to international initiatives.

Certification should not be limited to a diploma, but function as a **portfolio of competences** that reflects both formal and non-formal learning experiences. This approach recognises not only what participants know (adoption) , but also what they are able to apply in practice (delivery) .

5. TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

The activities implemented within Youth Contact Points should be designed according to a **needs-based and participatory approach**, ensuring that they respond directly to the realities, challenges, and expectations of young people. This requires continuous engagement with the target group, including needs assessments, feedback mechanisms, and co-creation processes. Rather than applying a one-size-fits-all model, Youth Contact Points should tailor their activities to local contexts while maintaining alignment with the broader objectives of the network.

5.1 TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Training activities form the core of Youth Contact Point programming and represent the primary method through which knowledge and competences are developed. **To ensure quality, transparency, and European alignment, training design is anchored in the LED European Qualifications Framework (EQF) for youth workers and digital leaders as its primary reference framework.**

These activities should be carefully designed to be **interactive, practical, and learner-centred**, moving beyond traditional lecture-based formats. Instead of passive knowledge transfer, training sessions should actively engage participants through discussions, group work, simulations, and hands-on exercises.

To effectively translate this framework into practice, programming should leverage key tools such as the LED online learning modules and transnational learning opportunities. A key principle in training design is the use of **real-life scenarios**, which allow participants to explore situations they are likely to encounter in their daily digital lives. For example, participants may analyse cases of cyberbullying, evaluate the credibility of online information, or explore the consequences of sharing personal data. Using the modules from the LED online learning platform alongside interactive cross-border exchanges, will help participants to develop practical problem-solving skills and informed decision-making abilities.

Training activities should also strongly encourage **participation and interaction**, creating a safe environment where young people feel comfortable expressing their opinions, asking questions, and sharing experiences. This contributes to deeper learning and strengthens peer-to-peer exchange, which is particularly effective in youth work contexts.

The thematic scope of training activities should cover a broad range of relevant topics. **Digital safety** is a fundamental area, including understanding privacy settings, recognising online threats, and protecting personal information. **Media literacy and fake news** are equally important, helping participants critically assess the reliability of information and identify manipulation or misinformation. The **impact of social media** should be explored from both positive and negative perspectives, including its influence on mental health, self-image, and social relationships. Additionally, **AI tools and digital technologies** should be introduced in a practical and accessible way, enabling young people to understand their potential, limitations, and ethical implications.

Training should also incorporate transversal skills such as communication, non-violent interaction, and conflict resolution in digital spaces, reflecting the holistic approach to digital education highlighted during the project activities.

5.2 AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Awareness campaigns are an essential component of Youth Contact Point activities, as they extend the impact of the initiative beyond structured training sessions and reach a broader audience within the community. These campaigns should be designed to raise awareness about key digital issues while encouraging responsible behaviour and informed decision-making. Furthermore, all promotional and educational outreach should explicitly highlight the context of the LED project, direct audiences to the official project website and acknowledge the co-funding and support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

A defining characteristic of effective awareness campaigns is that they should be youth-led. By involving young people directly in the design and implementation of campaigns, Youth Contact Points ensure that the messages are relevant, authentic, and relatable to the target audience. This approach also empowers young people by giving them a voice and a sense of ownership over the issues that affect them.



Campaigns should make strategic use of **social media and digital platforms**, as these are the primary environments where young people interact and consume information. Through videos, posts, infographics, and interactive content, campaigns can effectively reach large audiences and stimulate engagement. At the same time, Youth Contact Points should ensure that the content produced is accurate, responsible, and aligned with educational objectives.

Importantly, awareness campaigns should focus on **real and pressing issues**, such as cyberbullying, online harassment, digital addiction, misinformation, and privacy risks. By addressing concrete challenges that young people encounter in their daily lives, campaigns can have a meaningful and lasting impact. **Properly embedding the LED project branding and Erasmus+ funding acknowledgements ensures visibility, transparency, and European-wide alignment across all local and online dissemination efforts.**

5.3 SUPPORT SERVICES



IIn addition to educational and awareness activities, Youth Contact Points should provide support services that respond to the individual needs of young people, especially when they face challenges related to their digital experiences.

These services must be **accessible**, allowing young people to seek help easily through in-person or online options, clear communication channels, and a welcoming environment. They must also ensure **confidentiality**, so that young people feel safe sharing sensitive issues such as cyberbullying, online harassment, or mental health concerns without fear of judgment or exposure.

Finally, support services should be **responsive and adaptable**, offering timely assistance through guidance, mediation, or referral to specialised professionals such as psychologists, legal advisors, or social workers. Youth Contact Points should serve as a first point of contact while maintaining links with relevant support services for more complex cases.

5.4 INNOVATION ACTIVITIES

Innovation activities play a key role in maintaining engagement and motivation among young people, while also fostering creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. These activities provide opportunities for participants to actively explore digital topics in dynamic and creative ways, moving beyond traditional learning formats.

Hackathons are a particularly effective tool in this context. They bring together young people to work intensively on specific challenges over a short period of time, encouraging teamwork, innovation, and practical application of knowledge. Participants may develop solutions such as awareness campaigns, digital tools, or educational resources addressing issues like online safety or misinformation.

Creative labs offer a more flexible environment where participants can experiment with different ideas and approaches. These labs can focus on areas such as content creation, digital storytelling, or media production, allowing young people to express themselves while developing technical and creative skills.

Digital storytelling is another powerful method, enabling young people to share their experiences and perspectives through various formats, including videos, podcasts, blogs, or social media content. This approach not only enhances communication skills but also promotes reflection, empathy, and peer learning.

Innovation activities are particularly valuable because they position young people as **active creators rather than passive learners**. By engaging in creative and collaborative processes, participants develop a sense of ownership and responsibility, which contributes to their overall empowerment and engagement within the Youth Contact Point.

6. COOPERATION MECHANISMS

Effective cooperation mechanisms are essential for ensuring that the Network of Youth Contact Points operates as a **coherent, connected, and mutually supportive system** rather than a collection of isolated initiatives. Given the transnational nature of the project and its ambition to create long-term impact across different contexts, cooperation must be structured, continuous, and based on shared principles and tools.

The objective of these mechanisms is not only to facilitate communication, but also to enable **knowledge exchange, joint action, capacity building, and collective growth among participating organisations.**



6.1 NETWORK STRUCTURE

The Network of Youth Contact Points should be organised in a multi-level structure, allowing for both coordination and flexibility.

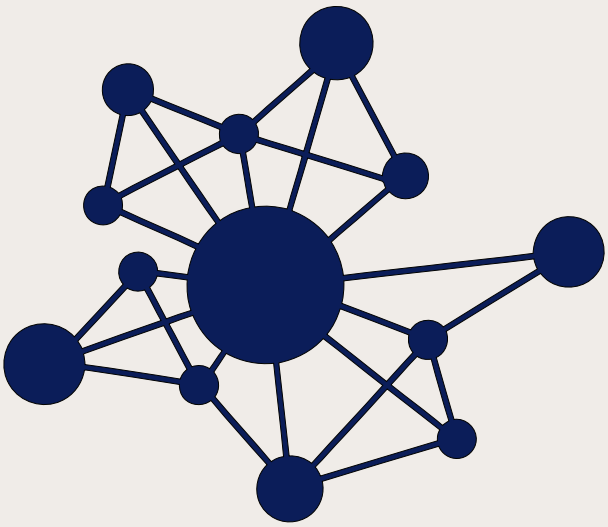
At the European level, a central coordinating body is represented by (the project coordinator) The Apartment APS under the scientific direction of CIAPE - Italian Permanent Learning Centre. The Apartment APS will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the overall coherence of the network
- Coordinating joint initiatives and projects
- Maintaining quality standards
- Supporting communication and information flow

At the national or regional level, coordinating organisations or focal points—such as Cooperativa Sociale E.D.I. Onlus in Italy, Vice Versa CZ, z.s. in Czechia, Youth for Exchange and Understanding in Belgium, and Tralalere in France—may be identified to facilitate communication between local Youth Contact Points and the central body. These actors can help adapt strategies to local contexts while maintaining alignment with the overall roadmap.

At the local level, **Youth Contact Points** act as the primary implementation units, delivering activities, engaging with communities, and contributing to the network through their experiences and outputs.

This structured approach ensures both **top-down coordination and bottom-up participation**, allowing the network to function effectively while remaining responsive to local needs.



6.2 COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

Strong and consistent communication is the foundation of effective cooperation. The network should establish a **combination of digital and in-person communication tools** to ensure regular interaction and information exchange.

A central element should be the development of a **shared online platform or dashboard**, where organisations can:

- Share resources, tools, and methodologies
- Upload reports and activity outcomes
- Communicate with other members
- Access training materials and updates

In addition, the network should maintain a **shared database** of all participating organisations, including contact information, areas of expertise, and ongoing activities. This facilitates collaboration and helps organisations identify potential partners for joint initiatives.

6.3 COLLABORATION MODELS

Cooperation within the network should be operationalised through concrete collaboration models that enable organisations to work together in meaningful ways.
One key model is the development of **joint training programmes**, where organisations co-design and co-deliver training activities. This allows for the exchange of methodologies, expertise, and perspectives, while also ensuring consistency in the quality of training across the network.
Another important model is the implementation of **cross-border projects**, including Erasmus+ initiatives. These projects enable organisations to collaborate on shared objectives, engage participants from different countries, and promote intercultural learning.

6.4 MOBILITY INTEGRATION

Mobility is a central pillar of cooperation within the network, as it enables direct exchange, experiential learning, and the development of intercultural competences.
Youth Contact Points should actively participate in and promote **mobility opportunities**, including:

- Youth exchanges
- Training courses for youth workers
- Staff mobility and job shadowing

These activities provide participants with opportunities to:

- Experience different cultural and organisational contexts
- Develop new skills and perspectives
- Build international networks

7. STRATEGIES FOR EXPANDING THE NETWORK

The long-term success and impact of the Network of Youth Contact Points depend not only on the quality of its initial implementation, but also on its capacity to **grow, adapt, and expand over time**. Expansion should not be approached as a purely quantitative process focused on increasing the number of organisations, but rather as a **strategic and qualitative development**, ensuring that new members share the values, standards, and objectives of the network.
A well-planned expansion strategy enables the network to reach more young people, diversify its activities, strengthen its geographical coverage, and increase its influence within the youth sector and beyond.

7.1 STRATEGIC GROWTH APPROACH

The expansion of the network should follow a **structured and gradual approach**, based on clear criteria and priorities. Rather than rapid, uncontrolled growth, the network should aim for sustainable scaling, ensuring that each new organisation is adequately prepared and supported to function effectively as a Youth Contact Point.



This process should include:

- Identification of potential partner organisations with relevant experience in youth work
- Assessment of their capacity, motivation, and alignment with the roadmap
- Provision of onboarding support, including training and mentoring

A key strategy for growth is the use of **peer-to-peer recruitment**, where existing Youth Contact Points actively promote the network and engage new organisations within their local or national contexts. This approach is particularly effective, as it builds on existing relationships and trust.

7.2 OUTREACH AND VISIBILITY

To attract new organisations and stakeholders, the network must invest in **visibility and outreach strategies**. These strategies should communicate not only the existence of the network, but also its value, impact, and opportunities.

Youth Contact Points should actively use **digital communication channels**, including social media, websites, and online campaigns, to:

- Showcase their activities and achievements
- Share success stories and testimonials
- Promote opportunities for involvement

To maintain compliance and European-wide coherence, all outreach activities must strictly adhere to mandatory dissemination requirements. In all relevant publications, online posts, and promotional materials, partners and Youth Contact Points are required to:

- Explicitly acknowledge the project by its full official title and project number: Youth Digital Leaders - European youth workers as active agents in the promotion of digital resilience and online safety of vulnerable adolescents - nr. 2024-1-IT03-KA220-YOU-000243926
- Indicate the co-funding programme (European Union's Erasmus+ Programme);
- Tag the official social media pages and communication channels of the LED / Youth Digital Leaders project.

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/youth_digital_leaders_led/
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/people/Youth-Digital-Leaders-LED/61576287700239/

In addition, collaboration with **schools, municipalities, youth councils, and other local institutions** can significantly enhance outreach efforts. By positioning Youth Contact Points as valuable community actors, organisations can increase their visibility and credibility.
Participation in European **platforms, events, and networks** also plays an important role in expansion. These spaces provide opportunities to present the initiative, connect with potential partners, and build strategic alliances while ensuring the project's brand identity, European funding source, and official channels are consistently highlighted.

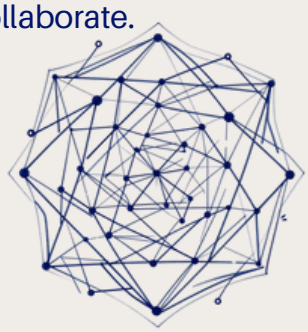
7.3 ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION OF MEMBERS

Expansion is not only about bringing new organisations into the network, but also about ensuring that they remain **actively engaged and committed** over time. Without strong engagement, the network risks becoming inactive or fragmented.

To maintain engagement, the network should implement a **variety of motivational and participatory mechanisms**, including:

- **Joint initiatives and collaborative projects**, which give organisations a clear role and purpose within the network
- **Competitions and challenges,** encouraging creativity and innovation while fostering a sense of community
- **Recognition systems**, highlighting the contributions and achievements of individual organisations and Digital Leaders

Regular interaction, both online and offline, is essential to maintain a sense of belonging and shared identity among members. This includes meetings, exchanges, and informal communication spaces where organisations can connect and collaborate.



8. IMPLEMENTATION IN ORGANISATIONS

The successful realisation of the Youth Contact Point model depends on its effective implementation within participating organisations. While the roadmap provides a common framework and shared standards, its impact ultimately relies on how well it is adapted, integrated, and operationalised at the local level. Implementation should therefore be understood as a **structured yet flexible process**, allowing organisations to align the model with their specific contexts, capacities, and target groups.
At the same time, it is essential to ensure that all Youth Contact Points maintain a **consistent level of quality and coherence**, in line with the overall objectives of the network.

9. TRAINING ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH WORKERS

The development of effective and sustainable Youth Contact Points relies heavily on the capacity, competence, and confidence of youth workers. As key facilitators of learning, support, and engagement, youth workers must be equipped with the appropriate knowledge, tools, and methodologies to address the complex realities of the digital environment. For this reason, training activities for youth workers represent a **central pillar of the roadmap**, ensuring both the quality and the long-term impact of the initiative.

To guarantee high pedagogical standards and transparency across European contexts, all youth worker capacity-building activities must be closely aligned with the relevant LED EQF for Youth Digital Leaders. Training should not be understood as a one-time event, but rather as a **continuous and evolving process**, supporting lifelong learning and professional development.

To facilitate seamless local implementation, trainers can directly leverage the extensive collection of existing training resources already available online as Open Educational Resources (OERs). These materials can be freely accessed, used, and adapted to support both self-paced learning and face-to-face facilitation. By combining theoretical understanding with practical application, it enables youth workers to translate knowledge into effective action within their local contexts.

9.1 CORE TRAINING TOPICS

Training programmes for youth workers should cover a comprehensive range of topics, reflecting the multi-dimensional nature of digital youth work.

A fundamental area is **digital safety and cybersecurity**, which includes understanding online risks, protecting personal data, recognising harmful behaviours, and responding appropriately to incidents such as cyberbullying or online harassment. Youth workers must be able not only to understand these risks themselves but also to explain them in accessible ways to young people.

Another key component is **media literacy and critical thinking**, focusing on the ability to analyse and evaluate digital content. This includes identifying misinformation, understanding algorithms, recognising bias, and promoting responsible consumption and sharing of information.

The **impact of social media on mental health and well-being** is also a crucial topic. Youth workers should be trained to recognise the emotional and psychological effects of digital environments, including issues related to self-esteem, social comparison, and online pressure, and to provide appropriate support or referrals when needed.

In addition, training should include **communication skills**, with a particular focus on non-violent communication, active listening, and conflict resolution. These skills are essential for facilitating discussions, managing group dynamics, and supporting young people in resolving digital conflicts.

Finally, youth workers should be introduced to **digital tools and emerging technologies**, including artificial intelligence. This enables them to both use these tools effectively in their work and guide young people in understanding their opportunities and risks.

These topics reflect the recommendations developed during the training process, which emphasised the importance of combining technical knowledge with social, emotional, and educational competences.

9.2 TRAINING METHODOLOGY

The effectiveness of training depends not only on its content but also on the methods used. Training for youth workers should adopt a **participatory, experiential, and learner-centred approach**, in line with the principles of non-formal education.
This includes:

- Interactive workshops
- Group discussions
- Role-playing exercises
- Case studies based on real-life situations
- Peer learning and knowledge exchange

Experiential learning methods are particularly important, as they allow participants to actively engage with the content and reflect on their own experiences. For example, simulations of online conflict situations can help youth workers develop practical skills in mediation and communication.
Peer learning is another key element, enabling participants to share their experiences, challenges, and good practices. This not only enriches the learning process but also strengthens collaboration and mutual support among youth workers.



9.3 STRUCTURE OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Training programmes should be designed in a **modular and flexible structure**, allowing for adaptation to different contexts and levels of experience. As a practical example, the LED training pathway is structured around four thematic modules based on the 4C Model:

- "MODULE 1 - CONTENT Understanding, decoding, and co-creating responsible digital content"
- "MODULE 2 - CONTACT Interactions, exposure, and online relationships"
- "MODULE 3 - CONDUCT Behavior, ethics, and responsibility in the digital space"
- "MODULE 4 - CONTRACT Rights, responsibilities, and commitment in the digital world"

To maximize impact and sustainability, **each module of the pathway is supported by a series of Open Educational Resources (OERs)**. This provides a comprehensive, open-access, and readily available knowledge base that participants and youth workers can freely access, use, and adapt throughout and beyond the programme.

This modular approach allows organisations to:

- Adapt training to specific needs
- Combine different modules depending on the target group
- Provide progressive learning pathways

Training programmes should also adopt a **blended learning approach**, combining face-to-face sessions with online learning components, utilizing the LED online platform and its library of OERs. This increases accessibility and allows participants to learn at their own pace.

10. CHECKLIST FOR ORGANISATIONS

The establishment of a Youth Contact Point requires careful preparation and a clear understanding of the organisational capacities and commitments needed to implement the model effectively. In this regard, the checklist for organisations serves as a **practical self-assessment and guidance tool**, helping organisations evaluate their readiness, identify gaps, and ensure alignment with the standards and expectations of the network.

Rather than being a rigid set of requirements, this checklist should be understood as a **flexible framework** that supports organisations in preparing for sustainable and high-quality implementation.

10.1 ORGANISATIONAL READINESS

The first step in establishing a Youth Contact Point is ensuring that the organisation has a clear strategic direction and alignment with the objectives of the roadmap.

Organisations should have a **defined mission and vision** that includes a commitment to youth empowerment, digital education, and community engagement. This alignment ensures that the Youth Contact Point is not an isolated initiative but rather integrated into the broader goals of the organisation.

In addition, organisations should designate a **dedicated team or coordinator** responsible for leading the implementation of the Youth Contact Point. This includes overseeing activities, coordinating with partners, and ensuring consistency and quality. Having clear leadership and accountability structures is essential for effective functioning.

Organisations should also assess their **experience and engagement with youth**, including their ability to reach and involve young people, particularly those from vulnerable or underrepresented groups.

10.2 OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

Operational capacity refers to the practical ability of the organisation to deliver activities and manage the Youth Contact Point on a day-to-day basis.

This includes access to **appropriate spaces** where activities can be conducted safely and comfortably. These may be physical locations such as youth centres or schools, or hybrid environments that combine offline and online engagement.

Organisations should also have access to **basic digital tools and equipment**, such as computers, internet connectivity, and software platforms, which are necessary for delivering training and communication activities.

Furthermore, effective **communication channels** must be in place, including social media accounts, websites, or mailing systems, which allow the organisation to reach young people, promote activities, and maintain visibility within the community.