Integrated Action Plan: Online Youth Work in Eindhoven
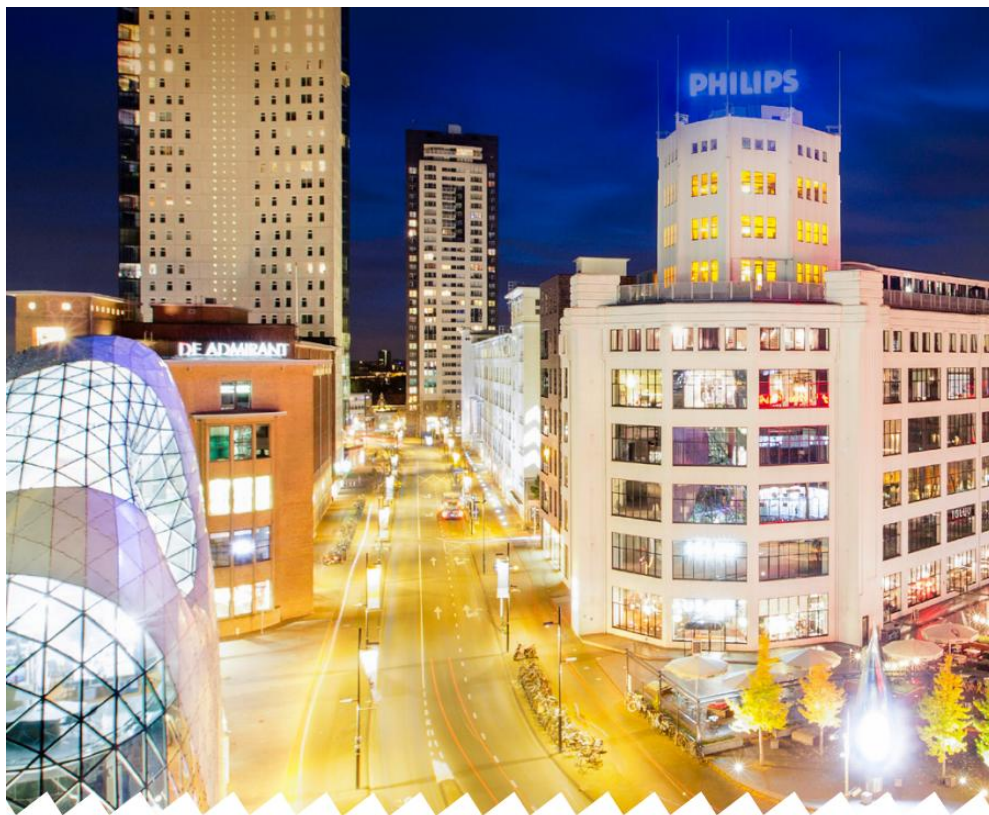
Table of Contents

Section 1: context, needs and vision

Introduction

This Integrated Action Plan (IAP) has been developed as part of the European URBACT project and focuses on improving online youth work in the municipality of Eindhoven. Throughout the project period, various activities have been undertaken to establish an effective and sustainable approach. This report provides an overview of the actions carried out, insights gained from visits to other European cities, and recommendations for the future.

The importance of online youth work continues to grow. Young people spend a significant portion of their time online, where they engage in social interactions, seek information, and find entertainment. It is therefore crucial that youth workers and other stakeholders adapt to this digital reality. This report outlines how Eindhoven can enhance this process by applying inspiration and best practices from other European cities.

City Context: a comprehensive overview of Eindhoven

Geography

Eindhoven is located in the southern part of the Netherlands, in the province of North Brabant. It is situated near the Belgian border and is well-connected to other major Dutch cities such as Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Utrecht. The city is characterized by a mix of urban and green spaces, with several parks, waterways, and natural reserves in its vicinity. The Dommel River flows through Eindhoven, contributing to its ecological and recreational landscape. The city's strategic location at the intersection of major transport routes has facilitated its development as a hub of innovation and industry.

Origins and Historical Development

Eindhoven traces its origins back to the 13th century when it was granted city rights in 1232. Originally a small town surrounded by fortifications, Eindhoven remained relatively modest in size until the 19th century. The industrial revolution marked a turning point, with the establishment of factories and increased economic activity. The foundation of Philips in 1891 had a transformative impact, positioning Eindhoven as a centre for technological advancement and industrial growth. The city's development accelerated further after World War II, with extensive urban planning and the rise of the high-tech sector.

City Characteristics

Modern-day Eindhoven is a dynamic and innovative city known for its technological prowess and design culture. It is home to the Eindhoven University of Technology (TU/e) and the Design Academy Eindhoven, which attract talent from around the world. The city is also famous for hosting the annual Dutch Design Week, which showcases cutting-edge design and innovation. Eindhoven's urban fabric is a blend of modern architecture, industrial heritage, and green public spaces. The city has a well-developed infrastructure with extensive cycling routes, public transportation, and smart city initiatives aimed at sustainability and efficiency.

Demographics

Eindhoven has a population of approximately 245,000 residents, making it the fifth-largest city in the Netherlands. 67,500 (28%) of them are aged 14-29 years old. It has a diverse and international population, partly due to the presence of multinational corporations, research institutions, and universities. The city attracts highly skilled professionals, students, and expatriates, particularly in the technology and design sectors. Eindhoven has a relatively young population compared to other Dutch cities, with a significant proportion of residents under the age of 40. However, it also faces demographic challenges, such as an aging population in some neighbourhoods and housing affordability concerns.

Economy

Eindhoven is often referred to as the "Brainport" of the Netherlands, a title that underscores its reputation as a leading European technology and innovation hub. The city's economy is driven by high-tech industries, research and development, and creative sectors. Key players include Philips, ASML, and NXP Semiconductors, all of which contribute to Eindhoven's global significance in advanced technology and semiconductor manufacturing. The presence of the High Tech Campus Eindhoven fosters collaboration between startups, established companies, and research institutions. Additionally, the city has a strong design and creative economy, supported by initiatives like the Dutch Design Foundation.

Inequality and Social Challenges

Despite its economic success, Eindhoven faces social challenges, including economic inequality and housing shortages. Certain neighbourhoods experience higher levels of unemployment, lower education attainment, and social exclusion. The city is working to address these disparities through urban renewal projects, investments in education, and inclusive economic policies. There is also a focus on integrating international residents and ensuring equitable access to services and opportunities for all inhabitants.

Urban Challenges and Policy Priorities

Eindhoven's rapid growth and transformation present both opportunities and challenges. Key policy areas include sustainable urban development, climate resilience, and mobility solutions to accommodate increasing population density. The city is actively pursuing smart city initiatives, aiming to use technology and data to enhance public services and sustainability. Eindhoven is also committed to reducing its carbon footprint, promoting circular economy practices, and improving social cohesion through community-driven projects. Through European collaborations like URBACT, the city aims to share best practices and develop integrated solutions for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

URBACT project in line with local policy

The project aligns with the ambitions set out in the [Administrative Agreement 2022-2026](#), specifically in chapter 7 (7.4): focusing on the opportunities that Europe offers, advocating for our interests, and sharing knowledge through projects with other European cities (p. 56). Additionally, it connects with the ambitions outlined in chapter 3 (3.2): reaching more young people through (online) youth work and strengthening the support for more vulnerable youth through youth work.

The [Preventive Youth Policy 2022-2026](#) states that the impact of digital online platforms, where young people spend a significant amount of time, is seen as an important challenge. Therefore, the [Course Document Youth Work](#) highlights the (further) development of online youth work as one of the key focus points for the coming years.

Finally, the project aligns with the transformation program of the social domain. This program is centred on learning and experimenting through innovative projects aimed at structurally

reorganizing existing systems of care and support. This URBACT project is an innovative initiative in the field of digitization: restructuring youth work by effectively, efficiently, and sustainably transitioning part of it into a digital/online format.

The NextGen YouthWork project, based on best practices from cities across Europe (Eindhoven, Aarhus, Gdansk, Cartagena, Veszprem, Oulu, Perugia, Villadecans, Tetovo, and Lasi), will deliver an action plan and concrete implementations/experiments focused on (further) developing online youth work in Eindhoven. Professional youth work is a crucial (and substantial) component of preventive interventions and services for young people in Eindhoven. The goal of this project is to develop (forms of) online youth work that better meet the (rapidly changing) needs of young people—who now spend a large portion of their time in the online world—thus enhancing the societal impact and effectiveness of youth work activities in a future-proof manner.

Existing policies and action plans

European policy on online youth work
In 2022 the European Commission adopted the [Better Internet for Kids (BIK+)](#) strategy. This strategy aims to promote a safe and empowering online environment for children and young people. This strategy is built around three key pillars:

1. Safe digital experiences: Protecting children from harmful and illegal online content, behaviour, and risks.
2. Digital empowerment: Enhancing children's digital skills so they can make informed and safe choices and express themselves online.
3. Active participation: Encouraging children's involvement in shaping digital services and policies to ensure their rights and needs are reflected in the online world.

These pillars will be considered when local policy on the topic of online youth work will be made. Multiple initiatives that are already active in the city and focus on prevention have integrated these pillars.

Furthermore, within the Erasmus+ programme (2021-2027), digital transformation is a key priority. This programme supports projects that enhance young people's digital skills and promote the development of digital youth work. An example is the [Digital Youth Work strategic partnership](#), where various national agencies collaborate to improve digital youth work across Europe.

These initiatives demonstrate that there is European policy and support for online youth work, aiming to protect, empower, and actively engage young people in the digital society.

Lack of national framework
There is no general national youth work policy. Therefore, municipalities are committed to make local policy. It is part of the basic educational framework as an independent provision next to school, child daycare, playgroups and organisations for sports and cultural activities. It bridges the gap between pedagogical civil society (parents/carers and family, neighbours and informal community networks) and other basic services. The decentralisation of the Child and Youth Act (2015), Social Support Act (2015) and the Participation Act (2014), which took effect on 1 January 2015, made municipalities responsible for the finances and organisation of a large part of the social domain. Municipalities are supported in their activity by [The Netherlands Youth Institute](#), a national knowledge centre collecting, enriching, explaining and sharing topical knowledge, funded by The Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport.

Preventive Youth Policy
The Eindhoven Preventive Youth Policy 2022-2026 targets all residents of -9 months to 23 years and their immediate living environment. The policy plan describes what Eindhoven wants to achieve by 2026. It has been defined through a co-creation process with youth, professionals from the youth domain, knowledge institutes and various domains within the local authority. The policy plan is based on three social ambitions:
- A good start for every young person.
- Towards an inclusive society: all young people participate.
- Every young person grows up safely

There is also a fourth ambition, aimed at further development of municipal commissioning and steering in the preventive youth domain, namely creating a new vision on commissioning, with more focus on and more intensive partnership.

Course Document Youth Work
The accompanying Course Document Youth Work 2023-2026 includes as substantial focus points:
- Young people are increasingly online (on the internet and social media), and youth networks are increasingly being formed online.
- Eindhoven wants to develop youth work further to fit in even better with the opportunities and challenges the online environment brings.
- The city works toward a future-oriented vision and method of online youth work and a proactive attitude to respond to rapid changes concerning the online living world.

Course Document Social (2)040
The Course Document Social (2)040 outlines the ambitions of the city for 2040. It stated that Eindhoven is a city for everyone and we want to ensure that it remains that way. In 2040, our residents will feel at home, can participate, look out for each other and for those who cannot participate naturally, there will be and will continue to be appropriate help and support available. The current context and developments require us to focus and make choices in our approach in the coming years to ensure that the social domain functions well in relation to this ambition. We use 3 guiding principles for this:
1. We start from the opportunities and strengths of our residents, neighbourhoods and city.
2. We focus on tackling the root causes of social problems.
3. We invest unequally for equal opportunities.

These principles will have their effect on all the policy that is made in the meantime.

Strategy of Lumens
The central organisation for providing youth work in Eindhoven is Lumens, an NGO working with the municipality of Eindhoven based on a long-term contract. Lumens Strategy 2020-2022 aims to build a socially resilient society together. It is based on four core values: Resiliency. Lumens's employees show resilience by being unbiased and curious to build social resilience. It is their mission to make people in our society more resilient. By that, they want to increase someone's ability to save themselves. Connectedness. Lumens is outward-looking towards residents and partners. They inspire and learn, take responsibility and work together as a network organisation with residents, clients and partners. Resourcefulness. Both internally and externally, Lumens wants to be able to deploy expertise with attention to the social demands of residents. Trust. Residents must be able to rely on themselves, their network and the community. They can trust that social issues will be addressed and answered collectively. Professionals must be able to trust that they are working together on sustainable solutions for social problems. Clients must be able to trust that these professionals offer a good social basis in the form of a society in which everyone can participate

Challenges

Eindhoven's key challenge is the declining participation of vulnerable youth in outdoor activities and physical youth centres. Like in other cities, the youth in Eindhoven spend much of their time online, mostly on social media or gaming platforms. The fact that young people are spending an increasing part of their time online and thus less in physical public spaces means that vulnerable youngsters can no longer be reached in the traditional ways and that youth work needs to innovate as young people need digital activities, counselling and information.

Most youth workers are aware of the behavioural change among young people. They are, therefore, looking for ways to better adapt to it and use the possibilities of digital youth work. They often also experience this as a big challenge because it is new and requires change and amendment of the work they are used to.

Although many examples of youth workers' online presence exist, youths' demands for online services, platforms, and tools still need to be fully met. There are still youth workers who need more insight into the online living environment of young people, the role that social media plays in young people growing up, and what growing up in the online living environment requires in terms of guidance. There are still a lot of opportunities in digital youth work that still need to be taken advantage of, and many youth workers barely use digital resources in their work. These opportunities are not taken advantage of for many reasons, ranging from no funding from the municipality for online work to no education of youth workers on how to work online.

Learning needs

Youth workers need to adapt to the new challenges posed by digitalisation to remain relevant in the future. With technological advancements, youth work must embrace digital tools and platforms to engage with young people meaningfully.

Youth workers need to develop digital skills to engage with young people effectively. Thus, building the digital skills of youth workers is an essential learning need for them to harness the power of digital tools to connect with and support young people.

To create a long-term and sustainable vision and organisational background for youth work, youth workers must set clear goals and develop strategies to achieve them. They must also build a solid organisational culture supporting their growth and development. Additionally, investing in the necessary resources and infrastructure, such as funding, technology, and training, should be prioritized. By taking part in the URBACT NextGen YouthWork project and the establishment of the associated ULG we try to make progress on these matters.

Local Strengths and Opportunities

Eindhoven has a strong foundation for developing innovative youth work initiatives. The city benefits from a well-established youth work infrastructure, a thriving technology sector, and active participation in European projects. These strengths create unique opportunities for advancing online youth work.

- **Strong Youth Work Infrastructure**: Eindhoven has a well-established network of youth organizations, including Dynamo Youthwork, Lumens, Pitstop, and WIJEindhoven. These organizations provide diverse forms of support, from street outreach to online engagement.
- **Technological and Innovative Ecosystem**: As the "Brainport" of the Netherlands, Eindhoven benefits from a highly innovative environment. The presence of high-tech

companies, universities, and research institutions offers opportunities to integrate advanced digital tools into youth work.

- **Existing Digital Engagement Initiatives**: Youth workers are already using social media platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, and Discord to reach young people, providing a foundation for further digital expansion.
- **European Collaboration and Best Practices**: Eindhoven actively participates in European projects like *NextGen YouthWork*, allowing it to adopt and adapt successful strategies from other cities, such as Oulu's online youth centre, Aarhus' digital inclusion program, and Cartagena's youth correspondents' initiative.
- **Strong Municipal Support**: The city's Preventive Youth Policy 2022-2026 and Course Document Youth Work 2023-2026 emphasize the importance of developing online youth work, ensuring alignment with local policies.
- **Manuel online youth work**: Lumens created a manual for online youth work to educate and increase the skills of their youth workers.

Local Challenges and Weaknesses

Despite the strengths, we face several challenges in making online youth work more effective and inclusive. Issues such as the digital divide, privacy concerns, and resistance to change must be addressed to ensure a successful transition to digital youth work.

- **Privacy and Online Safety Concerns**: Digital youth work requires careful management of data protection, cybersecurity, and safeguarding young people from online risks.
- **Lack of shared vision on online youth work**: at the moment there is no shared vision (shared by all partners) on how to address online youth work. Therefore, one of the goals of the URBACT Local Group is to formulate a shared vision.
- **Reaching Vulnerable and Hard-to-Reach Youth**: Some young people, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds, remain difficult to engage through digital channels. Many are not active on mainstream platforms or distrust online services.
- **Limited Digital Skills Among Youth Workers**: While youth workers are adapting to digital methods, there is still a gap in their expertise with emerging technologies, requiring further training and professional development. The developed manual for online youth work is not adapted by all youth workers throughout the city. It is a brief manual that has some room for improvement.
- **Resistance to Change**: Some professionals in the youth work sector remain focused on traditional offline methods, seeing digital youth work as secondary or temporary. Overcoming this mindset requires cultural and organizational change.
- **Sustainable Funding for Digital Initiatives**: While pilot projects and small-scale actions have been successful, securing long-term funding for digital youth work remains a challenge.
- **Youth subjected to negative influences**: the local online trend watchers warned for the increased dangers of criminals that reach out to our youth to act as a so-called money mule or to transport packages with the promise to earn money. They connect to our youth by Snapchat, TikTok or Telegram. The age of the youth that these criminals target becomes lower and the youth is not always aware of the dangers that they face online. With the program called Prevention with Authority we try to increase the awareness of the youth.

Local Priorities

To overcome these challenges and leverage its strengths, we have defined key priorities for the future of online youth work. These priorities focus on sustainable digital initiatives, professional development, and stronger collaboration among stakeholders.

- **Developing a Sustainable Online Youth Centre**: Inspired by Oulu, we aim to create a virtual meeting space where young people can access resources, interact with youth workers, and participate in meaningful activities.
- **Enhancing Digital Inclusion**: Following Aarhus' example, we prioritize bridging the digital gap by improving access to technology and digital literacy among both young people and youth workers.
- **Empowering Youth Correspondents**: Based on the Cartagena model, we seek to involve young people in content creation and peer-to-peer engagement, ensuring their voices are heard.
- **Building Digital Capacity for Youth Workers**: Investing in professional development and training to equip youth workers with the necessary skills to engage effectively in online environments.
- **Strengthening Cross-Sector Collaboration**: Bringing together youth organizations, schools, tech companies, and policymakers to create a holistic and future-proof approach to digital youth work.
- **Ensuring Sustainable Funding and Policy Integration**: Embedding digital youth work into local policy frameworks and securing long-term financial support through municipal budgets and European funding opportunities.

By addressing these priorities, we aim to develop a **comprehensive, inclusive, and future-proof** model for online youth work that meets the evolving needs of its young population.

ULG stakeholders

As part of the project we established an URBACT Local Group (ULG) with the following members:
- **Garage2020:** is an innovation network based in Eindhoven that co-designs radical solutions for youth care, offering tools like Jongline to support professionals in understanding young people's digital and real-world networks.
- **Pitstop:** is a youth centre in Eindhoven (ages 10–23) that offers needs-driven activities, including sports and creative workshops. It focusses on talent development, peer connection, and supportive community space.
- **Dynamo Jeugdwerk / Lumens (Digi-Coach):** supports young people with social and educational issues through community-based programs, youth coaching, and recently launched an online youth centre to foster resilience and safe digital engagement.
- **Bibliotheek Eindhoven:** Eindhoven Library actively promotes media literacy and digital inclusion, hosting digital knowledge and safety, and collaborates on youth-led design thinking initiatives.
- **Politie:** The Eindhoven Police organize youth outreach via prevention-focused programs (like youth clubs and Educatief Programma Jongeren) that build trust, enhance social awareness, and educate youth on legal consequences and online safety.
- **Gemeente Eindhoven:** The Municipality's youth policy (2022–2026) emphasizes preventive digital resilience by partnering with agencies such as EDUX to strengthen media literacy, engaging youth, parents, and professionals through campaigns and games.
- **WIJEindhoven:** offers broad, neighborhood-based support for youth and families on issues like parenting, mental health, and inclusion—working with local networks and digital initiatives to build social resilience.
- **Inspiratiebende:** is a youth-led community in Eindhoven that centers on talent discovery and connection through gaming, creative projects, and neurodiversity-aware meetups.

- **LEV groep:** is a regional welfare provider active across Brabant, offering youth work services such as DURV (10–23) focused on personal development, community connection, and empowerment through workshops and activities.
- **MediaWise:** in the Dutch context typically refers to "Netwerk Mediawijsheid," a national media literacy network that equips adolescents with critical thinking skills, media awareness, and resilience against misinformation.
- **EDUX:** collaborates with the Municipality of Eindhoven to strengthen youth digital resilience by offering media literacy training, tools like the REGIE game, and structured interventions for young people and educators.
- **Professionele werkplaats (Fontys & Summa):** applies research and training programs to empower youth professionals with digital and pedagogical skills for effective online youth work.

Though all members are determined to improve the impact of the youth work in the city not all members are involved directly. The main partners that implement youth work are Lumens (Dynamo Youthwork is part of Lumens) and Pitstop. Lumens and Pitstop employ youth workers that are active in outreach (streetwork), online, schools and in youth centres. With this work they embody the municipality's policy that is documented in the [Eindhoven Preventive Youth Policy 2022-2026](#).

Goal of the ULG
The goal of the URBACT Local Groep (ULG) is to develop the following topics during the time of the NextGen YouthWork URBACT project:
1) Adapting to the new challenges posed by digitalization.
2) Building Youth workers digital skills.
3) Creating a long-term and sustainable vision and organizational background for youth work.

Vision

The overlaying aim of our participation to the URBACT NextGen YouthWork project is to develop (forms of) online youth work that even better meet the (rapidly changing) needs of young people - who nowadays spend a large part of their time in the online world - and thus increase the social outcome/effectiveness of youth work activities (future-proof).

As stated in the paragraph "Local Challenges and Weaknesses" we missed a shared vision on online youth work. We see this as a basis from which we can work further. Therefore, it is our goal to formulate a well-founded and supported (by all partners) vision that shows our beliefs and what we are working towards. The vision is formulated and agreed on during the project by all partners. The vision is:

As professionals, we build bridges between young people and their world. We connect, support, and stimulate growth, both individually and in communities online and offline. We listen to young people, engage with their experiences, and amplify their voices.

We actively respond to online developments and stay informed about digital trends. We strengthen young people's online identity, resilience, and media literacy. Together, we build a safe, trusted, and inspiring environment where young people can develop and connect with each other.

Section 2: Overall Logic and Integrated Approach

Inspiring European Examples as a Foundation for Eindhoven's Online Youth Work

During the NextGen YouthWork project, the city of Eindhoven has gained valuable insights from various European cities. In particular, the initiatives from **Oulu, Aarhus, and Cartagena** have inspired us to further develop online youth work in our city. These cities demonstrate how digital innovations and an inclusive approach can contribute to stronger, more accessible, and more effective youth work.

- **Oulu's Online Youth Centre** provides a virtual meeting space where young people can easily connect with youth workers and each other. This concept aligns well with the needs of young people in Eindhoven and offers opportunities to expand and digitize existing initiatives.
- **Aarhus' digital inclusion program** focuses on bridging the digital divide, ensuring that all young people (regardless of their background have access to online support and opportunities. This closely matches our ambition to empower young people in the digital world.
- **The Youth Correspondents initiative from Cartagena** actively involves young people in sharing their perspectives and experiences through digital media. This model can play a key role in Eindhoven by amplifying the voices and engagement of young people in their own city.

While these initiatives serve as inspiration, we will implement them in a way that fits Eindhoven's urban context and the specific needs of our youth. Based on insights from the **small-scale actions** and collaboration within our **local project group**, we are developing an integrated approach in which these concepts will be applied and further refined. By building on these strong European examples, we are taking an important step toward future-proof, inclusive, and innovative online youth work.

The examples from Oulu, Aarhus and Cartagena were discussed during some ULG meetings. During the meetings participants came up with different ideas and initiatives for the implementation of the examples, you can see them below. We also asked a youth panel which of the examples they found inspiring and if the examples could benefit the youth in Eindhoven. The insights were helpful, and the members of the youth panel were especially interested in the initiatives of an online youth centre by Oulu and for the youth correspondents by Cartagena. The desire for an online youth centre was emphasized with the call to meet certain conditions to attract visitors.

Oulu (online youth centre/discord)
- Discord pitstop/ dynamo esport centre
- Online youth work
- Digital youth centre (is in development)

Aarhus (plan for digital inclusion in the city of Aarhus)
- (digi-)taal
- Adaptive gaming

Cartagena (youth correspondents)
- Jong040
- Meer liefde

- Youth podcast
- Post-it (voice of youth on online platform, at the moment this is not in development)

ULG meetings

We organized four ULG meetings in 2024 and one in 2025 so far.

18-01-2024
First real-life meeting. Superhero brainstorm about online youthwork.

25-04-2024
Meeting about activities, opportunities and challenges professionals face within the subject of online youthwork.

27-06-2024
In this meeting we discussed the newest online youth trends. After we discussed the best practices of Oulu, Aarhus and Cartagena and how they would work in our city.

05-12-2024

First, we started with a knowledge and trends sessions. Sharing new knowledge about the online life of youth. Then we plotted existing programs at the best practices of Oulu, Aarhus and Cartagena. So, what do we already do on the topics of online youth centre, digital inclusion and youth correspondence. By doing this we found out what Eindhoven was still missing and how we can implement this upcoming year.

13-02-2025

During this session the partners shared knowledge on their view on the needs for online youth work and we worked on the shared vision. Furthermore, we separated the group in three small groups that went further into depth on the initiatives from Oulu, Aarhus and Cartagena and how these ideas could be adapted in Eindhoven.

17-4-2025

On the 17th of April Digital Youth Centre Netherlands, an organization that already provided the services for digital youth centres for multiple cities in the Netherlands, gave a presentation during the ULG meeting. We invited them to tell more about their expertise and the need for a digital youth centre. Furthermore, we prepared the following small-scale action, the Eindhoven Game Festival.

10-6-2025

We gathered at the headquarters of Lumens this meeting and discussed the concept of DJC (Digital Youth Centre). We decided not to continue with DJC Netherlands but to build our own digital youth centre. Lumens is the organization that is taking the lead on this development. They had the idea to use Discord as a cornerstone for the Digital Youth Centre. Furthermore,

a youngster told the participants of the meeting about his experience with social media and how youth workers could use social media to connect with youth.

18-9-2025

At Dynamo we gathered and focused on the continuation of the URBACT project after the official period of the project. There was a presentation from youth workers of Lumens about the progress on the digital youth centre. We also discussed the focus of the following meetings. There should be a combination of learning and doing during the meetings. We agreed to benefit from the ULG after the URBACT project period and continue meeting regularly (once in three months).

11-12-2025

The next ULG meeting is planned for the 11th of December 2025. In the previous meeting we agreed that we meet for two hours in which we focus the first hour on sharing of knowledge or inspiration and the second hour is focused on "producing". This specific meeting we want to create/produce content.

Small Scale Actions

We implemented five small scale actions so far:

1. Interactive Survey at Night of the Nerds

Night of the Nerds is a day for youth between 12 and 18 about Innovation and Technology. We had an interactive stand at this expo. The interactive stand was used to receive input from youth about creating an online youth centre, based on the best practice of Oulu National program Online Youth. In this interactive survey which looked like a trendy barrel organ youth answered questions about how they spend their time on social media, if they would visit an online youth centre and what an online youth centre should entail. More than 70 young people participated in this interactive survey!
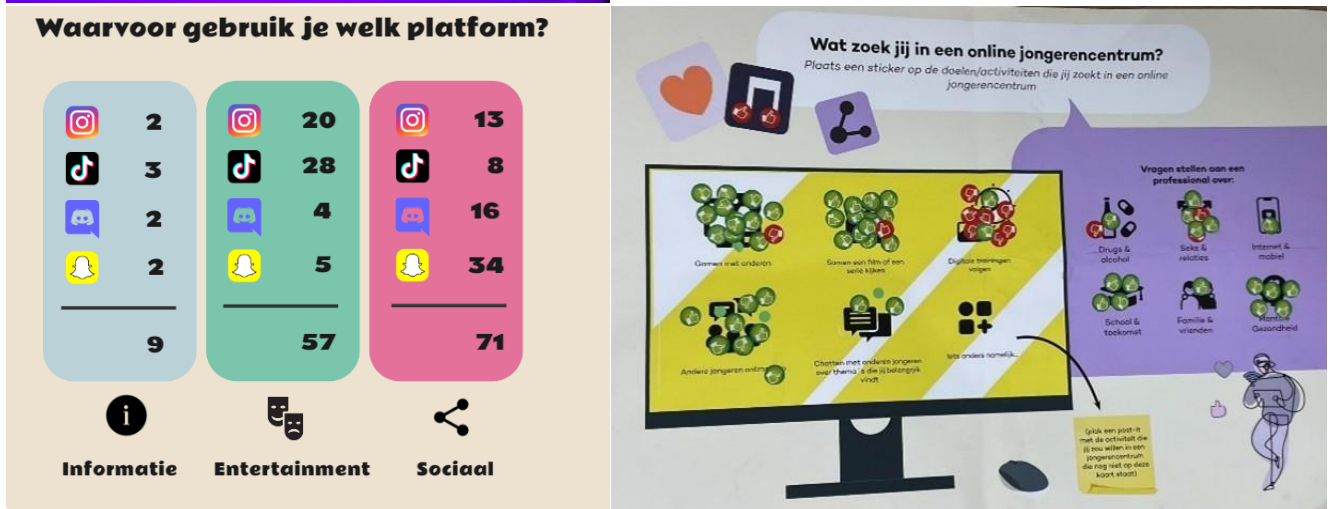
2. Workshop for youth workers to create "how to" content for their colleagues.

In this workshop youth workers created content for a digital training. Youth workers were divided into groups like "Tik Tok, Instagram, Discord and Snapchat". Each created a short video in which they share the do's and don'ts for colleagues to interact with youth on these platforms.

3. Testing of concepts with youth panel

In this small-scale action, that was held on the 10th of December 2024, the examples from Oulu, Aarhus and Cartagena were presented to a youth panel that was asked to think about the examples and express the needs to implement these examples in Eindhoven. The youth panel showed their interests in especially the examples of Oulu and Cartagena and expressed the needs from youth in Eindhoven. They also gave recommendations on how to successfully implement the examples and give it a twist of our own.

4. Attending Breda Esports Conference

The youth panel visited on the 21st of December 2024 the Breda Esport Conference where they met professionals with different skills. The panel learned from top speakers from the esport industry. There were multiple tables that visitors could join on which they could talk with other people that were interested in the esport and gaming market.

5. Eindhoven Game Festival

From the 16th of May till the 18th of May 2025 the Eindhoven Game Festival took place. This event was focused on gaming, competition, cosplay and community building, especially for young people. During the event tournaments for Mario Kart 8, Super Smash Bros, Melee and Rivals of Aether were held and visitors could even participate in Hado, a futuristic combination of dodgeball and augmented reality gaming. Members of the URBACT Local Group were active during the event and conducted a survey among visitors with questions focused on the needs of young people for a digital youth centre in Eindhoven. The participants were also asked if they would be open to give advice on the digital youth centre later.

Strategic Objectives

Our participation in the NextGen YouthWork project is driven by the ambition to strengthen online youth work in the city, ensuring it is inclusive, accessible, and impactful. Based on insights gained from study visits to Oulu (Finland), Aarhus (Denmark), and Cartagena (Spain), Eindhoven has identified three key strategic objectives:

1. **Developing an Online Youth Centre** – Inspired by Oulu, this initiative aims to create a digital space where young people can access support, engage in social interactions, and participate in youth work activities remotely.
2. **Enhancing Digital Inclusion** – Building on Aarhus' approach, this objective seeks to bridge the digital divide by equipping youth workers with the necessary tools and skills to reach vulnerable groups effectively.
3. **Establishing Youth Correspondents** – Inspired by Cartagena, this initiative focuses on training young people to become digital ambassadors who create content and provide peer-to-peer engagement on relevant topics.

Areas of Intervention

To implement these strategic objectives effectively, we have defined the following intervention areas:

1. **Digital Infrastructure & Accessibility**: Ensuring young people have access to reliable digital platforms and safe online environments.
2. **Capacity Building for Youth Workers**: Training professionals in digital tools, engagement strategies, and online safeguarding practices.
3. **Youth Participation & Co-Creation**: Actively involving young people in designing and implementing digital youth work initiatives.
4. **Cross-Sector Collaboration**: Strengthening cooperation between municipalities, youth organizations, schools, and tech companies to create a holistic support network.

Specific Objectives and Actions

Each strategic objective is broken down into specific, actionable steps:

1. Developing an Online Youth Centre
   - Design and launch a user-friendly digital platform tailored to youth needs.
   - Implement virtual spaces for community engagement, advice, and activities.
   - Ensure online safety through moderation and digital literacy campaigns.
2. Enhancing Digital Inclusion
   - Provide digital literacy training for youth workers and vulnerable youth.
   - Equip community centres with digital devices and internet access points.
   - Develop outreach strategies to engage digitally excluded young people.
3. Establishing Youth Correspondents
   - Recruit and train young people as digital ambassadors.
   - Facilitate content creation workshops on topics relevant to youth.
   - Collaborate with local media and online platforms to amplify youth voices.

Integrated Approach & Stakeholder Involvement

The integrated approach ensures that the initiatives align with existing youth policies and involve diverse stakeholders:

- **Municipality of Eindhoven**: Policy development, funding, and coordination.
- **Youth Organizations**: Implementation and direct engagement with young people.
- **Schools & Universities**: Educational support and digital training.

- **Young People**: Co-creation and active participation.

Sustainability & Scalability

To ensure long-term impact, we will:
- Secure funding through municipal and EU programs.
- Continuously evaluate and adapt the initiatives based on user feedback.
- Develop knowledge-sharing mechanisms to scale successful practices to other regions.

By leveraging the lessons learned from Oulu, Aarhus, and Cartagena, we aim to create a sustainable and innovative online youth work framework that empowers young people and strengthens social cohesion in the digital age. We use the ULG to bring the partners that are involved with youth work together and let them improve online youth work based on our shared vision. In the end, after the completion of the URBACT NextGen YouthWork project, we hope to have developed forms of online youth work that meet the (rapidly changing) needs of young people in Eindhoven and increased the social outcome/effectiveness of youth work activities.

Summary of the Integrated Approach

Eindhoven's Integrated Action Plan applies a holistic and collaborative approach that strengthens online youth work by connecting social inclusion, digital innovation and cross-sector cooperation. The plan is co-created with local partners and young people and is firmly rooted in existing municipal strategies. Below, we outline how the IAP aligns with the URBACT integration aspects.

Stakeholder involvement in planning
The IAP has been co-created through an active and diverse URBACT Local Group, involving youth workers (Lumens, Pitstop), WIJEindhoven, educational partners, libraries, MediaWise, Inspiratiebende, Garage2020, the municipality and safety partners. Young people contributed directly through the Youth Panel, the interactive survey at Night of the Nerds and additional consultations during the Eindhoven Game Festival.

Coherence with existing strategies
The plan aligns closely with key municipal frameworks, including the Administrative Agreement 2022–2026, the Preventive Youth Policy, the Course Document Youth Work and the Social (2)040 agenda. These strategies emphasise digital youth work, inclusion and strengthening support for vulnerable youth.

Sustainable urban development (social & economic)
The IAP supports social sustainability by focusing on inclusion, digital safety, equal access to support, and strengthening the digital competencies of youth workers and young people. It reinforces economic sustainability by building digital skills relevant to future labour opportunities and by leveraging Eindhoven's strong technological ecosystem.

Sectoral integration
The IAP brings together youth work, education, digital innovation partners, media organisations, libraries, social work and municipal policy teams. This cross-sector approach ensures that online youth work is embedded across multiple domains in the city.

Spatial integration
The organisations involved in the IAP are located across different parts of Eindhoven, ensuring that the plan reflects a city-wide perspective and benefits from insights and practices rooted in multiple neighbourhoods and working contexts.

Integration of cross-cutting themes
The IAP integrates several cross-cutting themes that strengthen online youth work in Eindhoven. Digitalisation is central, reflected in the development of the Digital Youth Centre, digital inclusion efforts and strengthened digital skills for both youth workers and young people. Inclusion and youth participation are embedded through co-creation with the Youth Panel and outreach to vulnerable groups. Online safety and media literacy are addressed through training, awareness efforts and the creation of safe digital environments.

Integration over time
The strategic objectives are structured over multiple time horizons. The development of the Digital Youth Centre, the digital inclusion programme and the Youth Correspondents initiative follow a phased approach from 2026–2027, enabling iteration, learning and scaling.

Complementary types of investment
The IAP strengthens soft investments such as youth worker training, co-creation processes, outreach and content creation.

Mobilising all available funding
The plan identifies potential resources such as municipal budgets, Erasmus+ and possible private partnerships.

Stakeholder involvement in implementation
Roles for implementation are clearly assigned to Lumens (including Dynamo Youthwork), Pitstop, WIJEindhoven, educational partners, MediaWise, Inspiratiebende and the municipality. Responsibilities are distributed across strategy, co-creation, digital infrastructure, outreach and monitoring.

Section 3: Action Planning Details

This section provides detailed planning for multiple prioritized actions selected from Section 2. These actions were chosen based on their strategic importance, feasibility, and potential for immediate impact.

In the Netherlands, and specifically within the municipality of Eindhoven, policy development follows a structured and cyclical approach known as the beleidscyclus (policy cycle). This cycle typically includes the stages of agenda-setting, policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. It emphasizes continuous learning and adaptation, ensuring that policies remain responsive to societal needs and grounded in evidence.

Eindhoven applies this cycle not only to broad municipal strategies but also to thematic domains such as youth work. Evaluation is not seen as a final step, but as an integral part of the cycle that informs future policy adjustments and innovations. Within this Integrated Action Plan, we embed this logic by clearly defining strategic objectives, linking them to specific lines of intervention and actions, and establishing measurable indicators for both outputs and outcomes.
This ensures that the plan is not only actionable but also evaluable, allowing for transparent tracking of progress and informed decision-making throughout and beyond the URBACT project lifecycle.

By aligning the action planning with this cyclical model, Eindhoven reinforces its commitment to evidence-based policymaking, stakeholder participation, and continuous improvement in the field of online youth work.

We formulated objectives following the strategic objectives, lines of intervention, actions. We also added result indicators relevant to the strategic objectives and output indicators relevant to the actions. The first strategic objective is:

1. Develop an Online Youth Centre in Eindhoven.

The objective will be in the intervention Line: Digital Infrastructure & Accessibility

Smart objective:
By the end of July 2026, design, launch and operate an online youth centre that provides at least three interactive digital spaces (e.g. chatrooms, advice forums, gaming/esport events) where 500+ young people engage monthly with youth workers and peers in a safe and moderated environment.

The result indicators (indicative) for this objective are:
  - Number of active monthly users on the online youth centre (baseline: 0, target: ≥500 by 2026).
  - % of youth reporting increased sense of accessibility and support online (survey, baseline TBD, target ≥70% satisfied).
  - % of young people who feel safe in the online centre (survey, target ≥80%).

Lumens/Dynamo Youthwork is already working on building the online youth centre. During the small-scale action "Eindhoven Game Festival" and during multiple ULG meetings we addressed the topic of an online youth centre. Discord, a communication tool for gamers and

communities, will play an important role within the online youth centre. The key actions for the coming months are:

- Co-design platform with youth input.
- Implement moderation and digital safety protocols.
- Run monthly online activities (cultural, social, esports).

Output indicators (indicative):
- Number of digital spaces/features created within the online youth centre.
- Number of online events/workshops organized per year.
- Number of youth consulted during platform co-design process.
- Number of moderators/youth workers trained in online safety.

The second strategical objective will focus on digital inclusion and will be:

2. Enhance digital inclusion

This objective is in the intervention line: Capacity Building for Youth Workers & Outreach to Vulnerable Groups.

The smart formulated objective will be:
By 2026, reduce the digital divide by training 100% of youth workers in digital skills, equipping at least five community spaces with digital devices and connectivity, and engaging 200 vulnerable young people annually through targeted outreach.

Result Indicators (indicative):
- % of youth workers trained in digital tools and inclusion methods (baseline TBD, target 100%).
- Number of vulnerable youth reached annually with digital support (baseline TBD, target ≥200).
- % increase in self-reported digital skills among participating youth (baseline survey, target +30%).

Key Actions
- Deliver digital skills training workshops for youth workers.
- Provide devices/internet access in youth centres and libraries.
- Conduct outreach to digitally excluded youth (via schools, NGOs, streetwork).

Output Indicators (Action-based):
- Number of training sessions delivered to youth workers per year.
- Number of youth workers trained.
- Number of community spaces equipped with devices and connectivity.
- Number of outreach campaigns or activities targeting digitally excluded youth.

The third strategic objective will focus on youth participation and co-creation. The strategic objective is:

3. Establish Youth Correspondents

This specific objective has the intervention line: Youth Participation & Co-Creation.

The smart formulated objective is:

By mid-2026, recruit and train at least 30 young people as "youth correspondents" to produce 100 pieces of youth-driven digital content (e.g., podcasts, blogs, short videos) annually, amplifying youth voices and increasing online peer-to-peer engagement.

Result Indicators (indicative):
- Number of active youth correspondents trained and engaged (baseline: 0, target ≥30).
- Volume of youth-generated content produced and shared annually (baseline: 0, target ≥100 items).
- Reach of content (views, listens, shares, followers across platforms, baseline TBD, target growth ≥20% annually).
- % of correspondents reporting improved media skills and confidence (survey, target ≥80%).

Key Actions:
- Launch recruitment campaign for youth correspondents.
- Organize training in content creation, media literacy, and online safety.
- Partner with schools and local media for visibility and dissemination.

Output Indicators (indicative):
- O3.1: Number of recruitment campaigns/events organized.
- O3.2: Number of training sessions/workshops delivered for youth correspondents.
- O3.3: Number of partnerships established with schools, local media, or platforms.
- O3.4: Number of digital campaigns run with youth correspondent involvement.

The fourth objective will focus on partnership and continuation of the insights from the URBACT NextGen YouthWork project within the online youth work in Eindhoven.

4. Establish permanent partnership and secure funding for continuation of the online youth work beyond the URBACT project.

This objective is in the intervention Line: Cross-Sector Collaboration.

The smart formulated objective is:
By 2026, establish a permanent cross-sectoral partnership (municipality, youth organizations, schools, tech companies) and secure at least two long-term funding streams to sustain online youth work beyond the project.

Result Indicators (indicative):
- Number of active organizations formally collaborating in online youth work (baseline: current ULG, target ≥15 by 2026).
- Number of joint initiatives/policies adopted by the municipality (target ≥3).

Key Actions:
- Convene regular multi-stakeholder meetings (ULG).
- Develop shared vision and operational guidelines for online youth work.
- Integrate online youth work in municipal Preventive Youth Policy.
- Apply for EU/national funding.

Section 4: Implementation framework

Monitoring – Strategic or Operational Objectives

Strategic or Operational Objective	Result Indicator	Baseline Value	Target	Source	Responsibility
Develop an Online Youth Centre	Number of active monthly users	0	≥500 by 2026	Platform analytics	Lumens / Dynamo Youthwork
Develop an Online Youth Centre	% youth reporting increased accessibility/suppor t	TBD	≥70% satisfied	Annual survey	Municipality of Eindhoven
Develop an Online Youth Centre	% youth feeling safe in the online centre	TBD	≥80%	Annual survey	Lumens / Dynamo Youthwork
Enhance Digital Inclusion	% youth workers trained in digital tools	±30%	100%	Training records	Municipality of Eindhoven
Enhance Digital Inclusion	Number of vulnerable youth reached annually	±80	≥200	Outreach reports	WIJEindhoven / LEV groep
Enhance Digital Inclusion	% increase in youth digital skills	TBD	+30%	Pre/post survey	Fontys / Summa
Establish Youth Correspondent s	Number of youth correspondents trained	5	≥30	Training records	MediaWise / Jong040
Establish Youth Correspondent s	Volume of youth-generated content	±20 items/yea r	≥100 items/yea r	Content logs	MediaWise / Inspiratiebend e
Establish Youth Correspondent s	Reach of content (growth rate)	±10%	≥20% annually	Social media analytics	MediaWise
Establish Youth Correspondent s	% improved media skills/confidence	TBD	≥80%	Survey	MediaWise / EDUX
Establish Permanent Partnership	Organizations collaborating	12	≥15	ULG records	Municipality of Eindhoven
Establish Permanent Partnership	Joint policies adopted	1	≥3	Municipa l policy docs	Municipality of Eindhoven

Monitoring – Actions

Action	Output Indicator	Baseline Value	Target	Source	Responsibility
Co-design platform with youth input	Number of youth consulted	±70	≥50	Workshop reports	Lumens
Implement moderation and safety protocols	Number of moderators trained	0	≥10	Training records	Lumens
Run monthly online activities	Number of events organized per year	±6	≥12	Event logs	Lumens / Dynamo
Deliver digital skills training	Number of training sessions per year	2	≥10	Training records	Fontys / Summa
Provide devices/internet access	Number of spaces equipped	2	≥5	Inventory reports	Municipality of Eindhoven
Conduct outreach to excluded youth	Number of outreach campaigns	2	≥4 per year	Outreach logs	WIJEindhoven / LEV groep
Recruit youth correspondents	Number of recruitment events	1	≥3	Event reports	MediaWise
Organize training for correspondents	Number of training sessions	2	≥5	Training records	MediaWise / EDUX
Partner with schools/media	Number of partnerships established	2	≥5	MoUs	Municipality of Eindhoven
Run digital campaigns	Number of campaigns run	2	≥4 per year	Campaign reports	Jong040 / Inspiratiebende
Convene multi-stakeholder meetings	Number of meetings held	6	≥6	Meeting minutes	Municipality of Eindhoven
Develop operational guidelines	Number of guidelines developed	0	≥1	Policy documents	Municipality of Eindhoven
Apply for EU/national funding	Number of applications submitted	1	≥2	Application records	Municipality of Eindhoven

Action 1: Develop an Online Youth Centre in Eindhoven (Inspired by Oulu)

Implementation Steps	1. Finalize concept and platform design (Discord-based) 2. Co-create with youth panel 3. Develop moderation and safeguarding protocols 4. Launch pilot version 5. Evaluate and iterate based on feedback
Timings	Q1 2026 – Q4 2026
Responsibilities	Lumens (Dynamo Youthwork), Pitstop, Garage2020, EDUX, Bibliotheek Eindhoven
Costs	Estimated €75,000
Funding	Municipal budget, Erasmus+ Digital Transformation, EU structural funds
Monitoring Indicators	Monthly youth engagement, digital participation increase
Risk Mitigation	Youth-led design, targeted outreach, gamification

Action 2: Digital Inclusion Program for Youth Workers and Vulnerable Youth (Inspired by Aarhus)

Implementation Steps	1. Assess digital literacy levels 2. Develop training modules 3. Organize workshops 4. Provide access to devices 5. Monitor progress
Timings	Q2 2026 – Q1 2027
Responsibilities	Gemeente Eindhoven, Fontys, Summa, WIJEindhoven, LEV groep
Costs	Estimated €60,000
Funding	Erasmus+, municipal innovation funds, private sponsorships
Monitoring Indicators	Youth workers trained, outreach capacity improvement
Risk Mitigation	Showcase success stories, involve ambassadors

Action 3: Youth Correspondents Program (Inspired by Cartagena)

Implementation Steps	1. Recruit youth correspondents 2. Train in storytelling and podcasting 3. Launch content series 4. Collaborate with media 5. Evaluate and scale
Timings	Q3 2026 – Q2 2027
Responsibilities	MediaWise, Jong040, Inspiratiebende, Dynamo Youthwork
Costs	Estimated €45,000
Funding	Erasmus+, media sponsorships, youth engagement funds

Monitoring Indicators	Content pieces produced, youth voice in policy
Risk Mitigation	Partner with influencers, cross-platform promotion

Governance

Lead Body: Municipality of Eindhoven

Coordinating Entity: Lumens

IAP Steering Group: Digital Youth Work Steering Committee (ULG continuation)

The Digital Youth Work Steering Committee functions as the IAP Steering Group, responsible for overseeing the implementation of the IAP and coordinating the three Strategic Objectives. The Steering Group ensures alignment with existing policies, monitors progress, and supports partners in translating the shared vision into practice.

Mandate of the IAP Steering Group
The IAP Steering Group provides continuous oversight of the implementation process, maintains coherence across the strategic objectives, and ensures that youth participation, digital inclusion and cross-sector collaboration remain central throughout the execution of the plan. Lumens acts as coordinating entity and prepares updates and inputs for review; the Municipality of Eindhoven holds final responsibility for policy alignment and strategic follow-up.

Formal Reporting Cycle
A quarterly reporting cycle supports structured monitoring and joint reflection. Quarterly meetings bring together partners for participatory monitoring and the involvement of the youth panel. Additionally, an Annual IAP Progress Review summarises implementation results, identifies adjustments needed and informs follow-up actions.

The IAP Steering Group is the mandated body that receives, reviews and discusses these reports and ensures that conclusions are integrated into ongoing implementation.

Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement
Stakeholder involvement continues through quarterly meetings, youth panel engagement and participatory monitoring, allowing learning and adjustments throughout the implementation period.

Overall Costing and Funding Strategy

Total Budget: €180,000

Sources: Municipal budget, Erasmus+, EU Structural Funds, private partnerships

Overall Timeline

Quarter	Key Activities
Q1 2026	Finalize vision, design online youth centre
Q2 2026	Launch digital inclusion training
Q3 2026	Recruit youth correspondents
Q4 2026	Pilot online youth centre, begin content creation

| Q1 2027 | Evaluate and iterate programs |
| Q2 2027 | Scale successful initiatives |

Risk Assessment

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Low youth engagement	Medium	High	Youth-led design, gamification
Resistance from professionals	Medium	Medium	Peer training, success stories
Funding gaps	Medium	High	Diversified funding strategy
Privacy concerns	High	High	Strong safeguarding protocols