



European Youth Panel 2015

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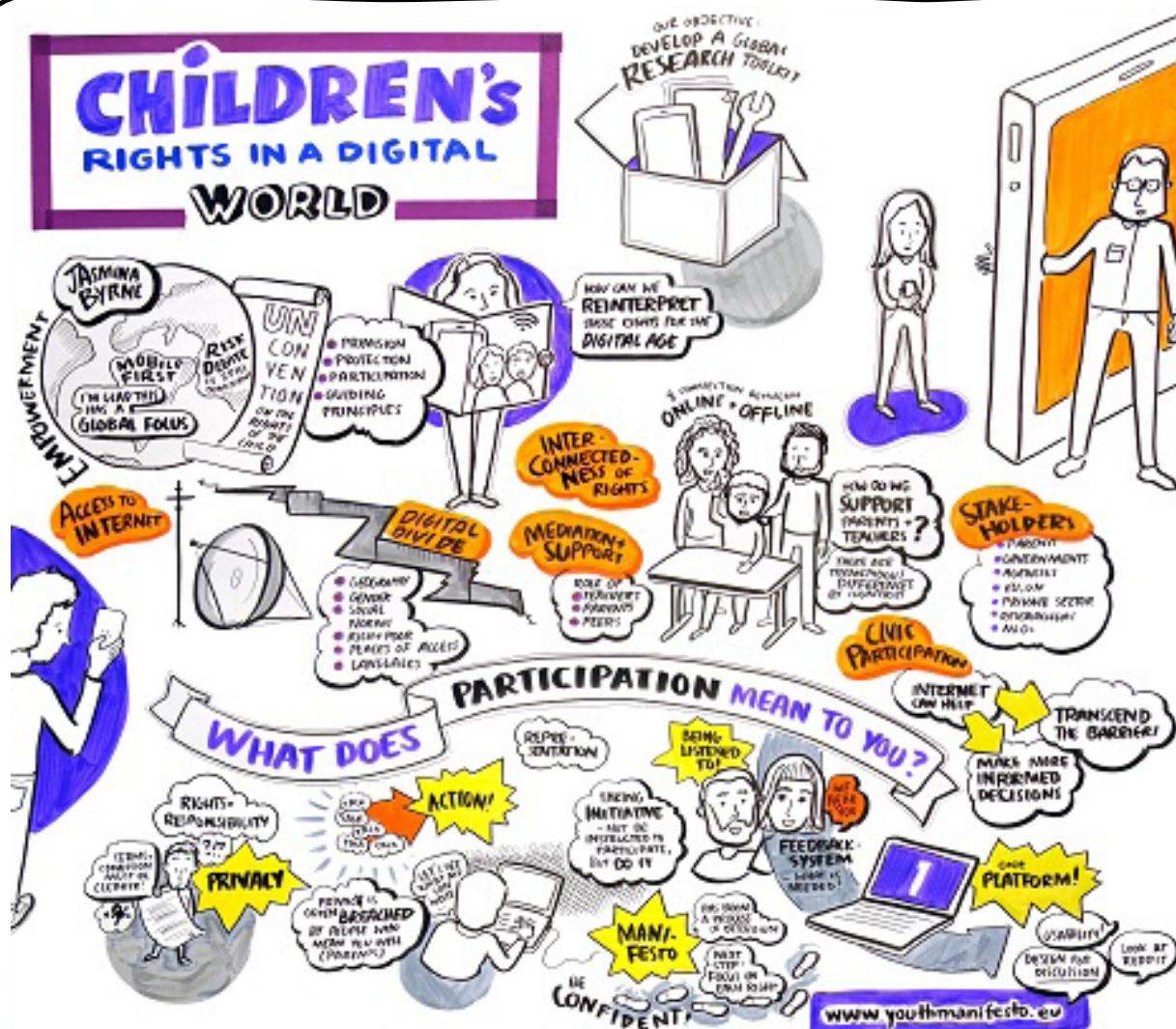


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CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN A DIGITAL WORLD



Introduction

This report, drafted by youth panellists attending the European Youth Panel (YEP) and Safer Internet Forum (SIF) 2015, provides an overview of the sessions. It is intended to serve as a dissemination tool to inform young people in Europe of the eSafety issues that we, youth panellists, consider to be meaningful to us and our peers. The main aim of the YEP is to prepare young people for active participation in the Safer Internet Forum¹, which took place on 28-29 October 2015. The SIF focused on *how to break down barriers to help make the internet a better - and more trusted - place*. This event is a key annual international conference in Europe where policy makers, researchers, law enforcement bodies, youth, parents and carers, teachers, NGOs, industry representatives, experts and other relevant actors come together to discuss the latest trends, risks and solutions related to child online safety.

In total, 16 young people from 13 European countries were selected from their national youth panels to represent their peers and to share their ideas, thoughts and comments with the stakeholders present at SIF. We worked closely with two youth ambassadors: former youth panellists and active contributors to other internet safety initiatives run by the Insafe² network. Additionally, two adult moderators helped to facilitate the understanding of topics related to safe online behaviours, and engaged us in discussions and activities that aim to empower us to be responsible users of online technologies.

All activities at the European Youth Panel were built around the 'Makerspace' concept that involves hands-on activities to engage young people in discovering new technologies and being creative. The Safer Internet Centre (SIC) in Luxembourg³ coordinates the BEE CREATIVE project⁴ which manages several Makerspaces across Luxembourg, and officially launched a new one at Forum Geesseknäppchen on 20 November 2015. Furthermore, as youth panellists, we had the opportunity to take the floor during SIF panel sessions to share experiences and views with the wider audience, ensuring that young people are at the centre of discussions.

¹ For more information on the Safer Internet Forum: <https://www.betterinternetforkids.eu/web/portal/policy/safer-internet-forum>

² For more information on the Insafe network: <https://www.betterinternetforkids.eu/>

³ For more information on BEE SECURE: <https://www.bee-secure.lu/>

⁴ For more information on BEE CREATIVE: <http://bee-creative.lu/>



Insights on the European Youth Panel and the Safer Internet Forum from a youth participant

"As a youth participant, I was invited to attend the YEP and SIF this year. The time I spent there was lovely. I've had the fortunate opportunity to go to SIF twice: I was at SIF 2014 in Brussels and, this year, SIF was held in beautiful Luxembourg. It felt the same, but also totally different.

"We were with a group of 16 adolescents between the ages of 12 and 19. We brainstormed about the internet and spent time actively breaking, making, programming and playing with the tools that the Makerspace offered us. A Makerspace is a community-operated workspace where people with common interests, often in computers, machining, technology, science, digital art or electronic art, can meet, socialise and collaborate. The nice thing about the Makerspace is that we were challenged to be creative and look at the possibilities and not the risks. In a group of creative brilliant minds, you get inspired to think further than you would believe is possible.

"The ideas and solutions that we came up with were presented at the Safer Internet Forum. We were put in bright yellow shirts so that we would attract the attention of all of the SIF attendees. In my opinion, it's very important for an event like this to have youth there to represent the users of the internet and to brag about how technically developed youth actually are. We got to join in on the sessions and panels, and it turns out that the youth have a lot of questions and are intrigued to listen to what the 'big guys' have to say. I had interesting conversations, learned a lot, and got inspired. People tend to forget that one third of internet users are actually kids. So please invite us in on the conversation that you're already having about how we use the internet, and how we should use it in a safe way.

"We ended this lovely adventure by signing each other's yellow shirts with messages, a tour around Luxembourg and saying goodbye to the youth group who've really become good friends of mine in such a short time. Sign me up for next year!"



The Makerspace

A Makerspace is a community-operated workspace where people with common interests, often in computers, machining, technology, science, digital art or electronic art, can meet, socialise and collaborate. The Safer Internet Centre (SIC) in Luxembourg, who hosted us, already runs several Makerspaces in Luxembourg.

The nice thing about the Makerspace is that we were challenged to be creative and look at the possibilities and not the risks. In a group of creative minds, you get inspired to think further than you would believe is possible. The Makerspace at the YEP was no exception. Debbie and Chris, the moderators for the event, gave us free range and full creative control in the Makerspace. New online technologies were introduced to us and we were given hands-on experience with the new technologies. We were told about the principles behind the MakeyMakey⁵ banana piano and were allowed to create a piano out of anything we wanted. We even created a human piano using the MakeyMakey. To do this, we formed a huge circle holding each other's hands to close the MakeyMakey circuit. In the beginning, transmission of the signal didn't work, but as our hands became increasingly sweaty, a signal was transmitted! This means that each of us could be a human key in an electronic piano. We were free to try out the MakeyMakey piano and control games by using ourselves as human controllers (or play dough, vegetables etc.).

We could use LED Throwies⁶ to create glowing wearables, which we wore proudly at every event. We were also given the opportunity to use an app for the iPhone or other smartphone to control a robot ball. The freedom of expression we had in the Makerspace was very refreshing for us, as well as for the youth moderators. The Makerspace that was present at the European Youth Panel was one of the most enjoyed spaces of the entire event. We were given the opportunity to freely create whatever we wanted; we were free to share ideas and creative thoughts.

had a really amazing time here at #SIF2015
and learned so much!! Thanks to
[@saferinternetat](#) [@Paneuyouth](#)



⁵ For more information on MakeyMakey: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rfQqh7ICcOU>

⁶ For more information on LED Throwies: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fAlxSm0v0Xs>

European Youth Panel: an enriching experience every year

Create your digital rights!

In this session, we worked in small groups to create our own digital rights, starting from the universal rights of children and young people in the digital age and the Youth Manifesto principles⁷.

Insights from the first session entitled ‘Create your digital rights!’.



“The first session we participated in was about creating our own digital rights. In this session we were put in groups of three, and were asked to discuss what we wanted to have for digital rights. We got inspiration from the Youth Manifesto. The entire group then talked about the digital rights we created as groups, and each group then presented their ideas. After that we discussed them and chose the ones we thought were the most important. We ended up with nine digital rights that we thought were the most important.”

“The digital rights are put in the order below of most important to least important:

1. Education about the internet for everyone.
2. Online privacy.
3. Freedom of speech.
4. The right to be forgotten.
5. Free access to the internet and information.
6. A cyberbullying-free internet.
7. Right to fair terms and conditions.
8. Different settings for children under a specific age (child-friendly button on phones, tablets and computers).
9. A spam-free internet.

“In this session, I learned the opinions of other youth: what they think can be better about the internet and which digital rights they thought were the most important. When all the youth talked together, I really saw different views on the subject.”

“When I am home I will make sure to talk about what digital rights we want and how to reach them. I will inform my friends and classmates about the Youth Manifesto, and make sure people share it.”

⁷ <http://www.youthmanifesto.eu/>

"I saw that there is a lot of information about the internet that can be important for people to know, but that it's hard to find the information. If information was easier to find, it would help a lot with the campaign for online safety."

The right to play, connect and create

In this session we worked in small groups to explore the Makerspace and to create our own LED throwies, MakeyMakey, or program a robot, and these were showcased during the Safer Internet Forum. The session highlighted the opportunities that online technologies offer to young people.

Insights from the second session entitled 'The right to play, connect and create'.

"The first day of #YEP2015 kicked off with two sessions: the first one about digital rights online and the second session about digital creativity. I will be talking about the latter."

"Technology gives us many opportunities to create exciting stuff. We just have to be given the opportunity to try and play with this exciting technology. At the beginning of the session we were told: 'This session will not be like school. Here, young people are encouraged to make mistakes and try again and again.' And it was right. The session was not like school at all."

"In the beginning of the session, we were introduced to the new initiative of Makerspaces, which will launch in Luxembourg shortly. These will be creative spaces, where young people have the opportunity to experiment with gadgets and everything tech related from drones to Lego robots."

"In our session we had the same opportunity too. Some of us played with the MakeyMakey platform playing on a vegetable piano, while others controlled a ball with a tablet."

"While experimenting with these great gadgets, we realised two things: first, that playing with technology is really fun and we should not be afraid of making mistakes when working with it and, second, that it is necessary that all young people develop the necessary skills to use the technology of tomorrow to be able to face the challenges ahead of us."

Privacy, data protection and online user experience

This session addressed our privacy and data protection concerns and looked at ways to empower us to become responsible users of the internet, by becoming aware of the data we are sharing while subscribing to different online services.

Insights on the third session which dealt with 'Privacy, data protection and online user experience'.

"This session was about privacy, data protection and online user experience."

"To start off this session Chris, one of the moderators, informed us about the things that happen when we put something online. He told us that the things we put online stay there forever and that it's stored in the databases of companies."

"Then, we were divided up in small groups of three people where we would write the negatives of internet use and then the solutions we think these negativities should have. We then presented our problems and solutions to the whole group."

"We were then shown a picture of what different companies get access to when you agree to their terms and conditions – including lots of access to our privacy."

"During this session, I learned that my phone isn't so private when I am downloading apps, such as Facebook, and give them access to my pictures. I also learned that even if the terms and conditions are long and difficult, we should read them or be aware of what we are agreeing to."

We also learned about a website named Privacy Salon⁸ - here, you can find steps on how to protect your data and devices."

"My favourite part about this was that it gave me information I didn't have before - important information about my privacy rights. I took home to my friends and classmates information about what different types of social media are getting access to when you agree to their terms and conditions. I will be sharing this information with as many people as I can."



Skills, literacy, and creativity

Nowadays, digital skills and literacy have become a must for young people who are connected every-day and everywhere via mobile devices. This session explored successful ways of empowering young people to become digitally skilled and literate and to put to good use their digital knowledge and creativity to develop online positive content.

Insights on the fourth session called 'The right to play, connect and create'.

"We all concluded in our first session about digital rights that we should have a right for education about information technology. This is also true for our teachers. We should all have at least basic competencies how to work with computers... and perhaps not just basic!"

"We, young people, like the motto: 'no talk, all action'. In line with this motto, in this session, we tried to come up with some concrete actions which could improve technological literacy. We focused both on young people and teachers."

"After coming up with these ideas, we were asked to sort them into one of the following categories:

- *Ideas which could be implemented quickly.*
- *Ideas which would take some amount of time.*
- *Ideas which would take a lot of time.*

"Using this scheme, we created a complete set of solutions, some of them which we could implement quickly, others which would require more planning and time."

"And the results? Internet classes for everyone, learning process during which mistakes are appreciated, experiments in classes, IT summer camps and so on. Valuable ideas, don't you think?"



⁸ <https://www.privacysalon.lu/first-aid>

SIF involvement

As youth participants, we were actively involved in the sessions at the Safer Internet Forum as well. We made valuable contributions by being a part of multiple-stakeholder panel sessions and by asking thought-provoking questions in the plenary sessions. We were able to contribute with ideas on what we think a safer internet should look like.

We actively expressed our concerns about online safety and security and were actively involved in sharing our thoughts with the entire forum. The amount of involvement we had was incredible.



One of the youth panellists addressed the first SIF question to Roberto Viola (Director General of DG Connect at the European Commission) on net neutrality and the impact of the MEPs' vote at the Strasbourg plenary on 27 October 2015. Furthermore, we raised points about online anonymity by asking industry representatives about data protection and users' rights. Hence, our voices reiterated the importance of involving youth representatives in the policy-making process and proved that young people are proactive and capable of carrying out great initiatives such as the 'Youth Manifesto'.

Having young people participate in events such as these is vital because we need to express our opinions and concerns just as much as the adults. Our online safety is important and should be put at the forefront of everyone's actions.



Looking forward

As we look forward to the rest of this year and onto the coming years of our lives, there are many things that we can take away from being a part of the European Youth Panel and the Safer Internet Forum 2015. In the future, we would like to see more youth involvement in policy making for all things regarding internet safety. We want to have our voices heard by those who are responsible for the technology we use on a daily basis.

In terms of our education, we want teachers to have a better understanding of the technology, so that they know we are safe. Our safety online is important not only to our parents/guardians, but also to us.

Looking ahead to our future involvement with the Safer Internet Forum, we would like to be able to speak directly to the plenary and the audience. Our voices are important and our ideas and values are valid and should be understood.



During the YEP, we came up with four ideas that we would like to see implemented so that all young people can be secure online.

These are:

- Internet classes for everyone.
- Learning processes during which mistakes are appreciated.
- Experiments in classes.
- IT summer camps.

We want to learn, we want to participate, and we want our voices heard. We have digital rights and we deserve to have them recognised now and in the future.



About Insafe

Co-funded by the EU, in the past under the Safer Internet programme and now under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), the Insafe network of Safer Internet Centres (SICs) collaborates to create a safer and better internet, supporting and empowering children and young people (and their parents and carers) to use the internet and other online technologies positively, safely and effectively.

Through a network of SICs, typically comprising an awareness centre, helpline, hotline and youth panel, children and young people, and their parents, carers and teachers, can access information, advice, support and resources, or indeed report any illegal content they encounter online.

For further information see www.betterinternetforkids.eu.

About EUN

European Schoolnet (EUN) is the network of 31 European Ministries of Education. As a not-for-profit organisation, it aims to bring innovation in teaching and learning to its key stakeholders: Ministries of Education, schools, teachers, researchers, and industry partners. Since its foundation in 1997, EUN has used its links with education ministries to help schools make effective use of educational technologies, equipping both teachers and pupils with the skills to achieve in the knowledge society.

For further information see www.eun.org.





Safer Internet Day 2016

Tuesday
9 February

Play your part for
a better internet

www.saferinternetday.org



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