EUROPEAN ACADEMY ON YOUTH WORK - WORKSHOP REPORT

Cities of Learning

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TOPIC DISCUSSED

Cities and Regions of Learning is an approach to learning on a territory where a network of learning providers offers diverse educational activities using an online platform. Young people can use an interactive map to choose learning opportunities based on their passion and interests. Organisations can create learning playlists where online learning and local activities are combined into thematic learning pathways. Young people can earn digital Open Badges after completing learning activities on the platform. 12 cities and regions across Europe are part of this the network and platform of Cities and Regions of Learning (at the date of this publication).

METHODOLOGY

Step 1:
Welcome and getting to know participants and their interests – 10 min

Step 2:
Introduction to Connected Learning (visual and brainstorming on 21st century skills) – 15 min

Step 3:
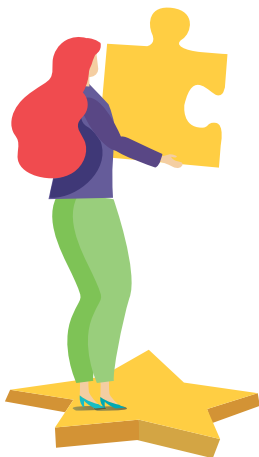Exploring Cities of Learning (videos about Cities of Learning and features of the platform) – 15 min

Step 4:
Small groups talking about how/why Cities of Learning can be innovative and beneficial to young people, learning providers and other stakeholders in their territories – 15 min

Step 5:
Sharing reflection on "central zoom out questions"- 5 min

KEY ISSUES RAISED SUCH AS CHALLENGES

Emerging learning pathways represent a challenge to more traditional thinking of how young people learn and develop their skills. Our research shows that young people learn a lot outside of traditional educational pathways. They learn from peers, by spending time online, and they join civic organisations and volunteering opportunities.

Evolving educational technology creates new opportunities surpassing traditional ways of learning and recognising skills and achievements. Any learning provider using the platform for Cities and Regions of Learning can combine both, digital and local activities and issue a digital badge – an equivalent to a certificate. Digital technology allows organisations and young people to track their progress, showcase impact, and share learning achievements online.

21st century skills are high on the agenda, yet there is a lack of access to educational opportunities to develop such skills. Very often, these skills are developed outside of formal educational curricula. Organisations that offer programmes to develop 21st century skills are not using or haven't got any tools to support young people in recording their learning and achievements. Digital Open Badges can bridge this gap by offering a technology for organisations to design and implement badge-based recognition systems that harness the advantages of digital technology.

Equity and access to learning opportunities is often fragmented and not equally distributed across cities and regions. Often, there are so-called "learning deserts" where young people are lacking opportunities. Cities and regions can use the platform to collect data of where and what learners search for in specific locations and then evaluate education and youth policies to prioritise funding for more equity and access to learning opportunities across a territory.

INNOVATIVE RESPONSE(S) TO THOSE CHALLENGES

- Local and online learning, digital recognition of achievements at the level of a city or region.
- Online platform to map learning opportunities, to offer thematic learning pathways, to recognise learning and achievements with digital Open Badges
- Networking and cross-sectorial cooperation in a territory

KEY TRENDS IDENTIFIED

- There is an increasing offer of learning opportunities outside traditional educational contexts.
- Connectivity and mobile technology enable learners to navigate through learning.
- Time spent learning online is increasing as well as digital content available on the internet.
- There is a necessity to address the need for learning 21st century skills.
- Young people want to follow their interests and passions and search for opportunities to develop them.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

The platform and concept of Cities of Learning can connect diverse learning opportunities in a territory.

It is a youthful, attractive and modern solution.

It seems that the platform can be launched in a rather quick and easy way. Yet, most work is about building a network of learning providers and quality content.

Some challenges can be anticipated when cooperating with local municipalities due to political processes.

Cities of Learning can be extended to Regions of Learning in order to reach out and engage with young people who live in remote rural areas.

The platform and digital badges have a good potential to document learning. Validation and recognition of badges and achievements may require more efforts.

"Well done, spot on delivery and interesting stuff!"
"Sounds very interesting, well developed, cross-sectorial, accessible, inspiring..."

LINKS TO FURTHER RESOURCES OR INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PROJECT AVAILABLE ONLINE

- https://www.citiesoflearning.eu
- https://clalliance.org/about-connected-learning/
- https://youtu.be/eg0z_p04TYY

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MOVIT

SALTO-YOUTH RESOURCE CENTRES
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Youth Partnership
Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth