

Window to the Future

INSTRUCTIONS



Hello there!

You are about to open a window into the future, a reflection tool to kick off interesting and balanced conversations around what the future might hold for our communities and how we can act now to co-create a better future. Use it when you want to practise future-thinking skills, such as imagination, empathy, critical thinking and strategic thinking.

Number of participants: 3-5. For bigger groups, you can use several sets so that small groups play simultaneously.

Age: 12+

Aim: Participants will cooperate to get all seven badges for their team by imagining future scenarios together. These scenarios should be balanced regarding optimism/pessimism and cover several areas of society.

Duration: You can adjust the duration of this activity to suit your needs, but we recommend allocating at least one hour for a brief exploration and two hours to allow for deeper reflections.

Facilitation: This activity requires one or more facilitators, depending on the size of the group. Facilitators are responsible for providing step-by-step instructions to the group(s) and managing the time effectively.

The board: You will find the board at this QR code. You can print it (best in A2 size) or replicate it by hand on a large sheet of paper.



<https://www.eayw.net/resources/window-to-the-future/>

Activity set up: Place the board on a table or a wall. Place all seven *Badge Cards* face up and let participants read them before the activity. Add the die and the *Living in the Future* card facing up. Place the *Ask a Futurist* cards on a pile face down. Give each participant a pack of post-its and a pen. To define the place on the board where each round will be played, write the 3 rounds on post-its and add them to the board. You will also need a timer or watch.

Possible rounds: As a facilitator, you can decide what kind of rounds you want to add to this activity and how many. The basic three rounds are:

- . **Round 1** - Today's View
- . **Round 2** - 15 Years Ahead
- . **Round 3** - A Better Future



Let's play!

Activity Introduction | 5 min¹



The facilitator introduces the activity in general terms and clarifies any questions the participants might have. It's not necessary to explain all the tasks of each round from the beginning.

For extra fun and engagement, the facilitator(s) can dress up as window cleaner(s) and present the activity from that character's point of view. Here's a way to do it:

"Hi! My name is Ms/Mr. Clearview, your friendly neighbourhood window cleaner for today. In my line of work, I've found that a clean window is much like a clear vision of the future—it lets you see through to the possibilities ahead. So today, I'll guide you through 'Window to the Future.'

In this activity, we will polish our perspectives by analysing present trends and envisioning future scenarios together. We'll ensure our outlook is balanced—neither too optimistic without cause nor too pessimistic without hope. This activity is divided into three rounds, just like the different parts of a window: the outside, where we face the world; the inside, reflecting ourselves and our world today; and the space in between, where all our dreams and possibilities lie.

As we clear each pane, you'll work together in your teams to earn seven badges. In the end, you'll decide together if your teamwork deserves all badges.

¹ The times listed are the minimum required; feel free to extend them as needed.

Remember, I'll explain each round and all the cards as we go. Take one minute now to explore the *Badge Cards* and ask any questions you might have."

Round 1 - Today's View | 10 min

Each participant writes on separate post-its 1, 2 or 3 trends, challenges or opportunities they see happening in the present that will influence the future of society (e.g., *Young people are becoming addicted to social media.* or *AI is developing quickly*). The facilitator gives participants two minutes to write and eight minutes for everyone to place their post-its in the "Today's View" section of the board, read their post-its out loud, and give any extra explanation needed. Any time left should be used to discuss the trends identified.

Round 2 - 15 Years Ahead | 20 min

This round entails three tasks for all participants:

1 - The *Area* cards are shovelled, and each team member gets one. If the group has less than 5 people there will be cards left out, the facilitator can decide to leave those areas out or give extra cards to some of the participants. Each participant has to write one post-it with an imagined scenario, 15 years from now, for each of their areas (there are two areas per card). This should be simplified in one or two sentences. Drawings are also accepted. (E.g., *Health & Wellbeing*: In 15 years, rich people will have body scan devices able to diagnose many diseases at home.) If someone cannot think of a prediction in a certain area, they can take an *Ask a Futurist* card.

This is an individual choice. The facilitator gives everyone 3 minutes to complete the task. After all team members have completed the task, the facilitator then gives 7 minutes for everyone to place the post-its (or *Ask a Futurist* cards) on the board and read their predictions for each area. The team has a total of 10 min to complete this task. For clarity, the areas are explained further at the end of this instruction book.

2- One by one, each participant now has to throw the die and describe verbally the life of someone living in that future according to the number they got on the "*Living in the Future*" card. These descriptions are not written down. Each participant just improvises their story for about 30 seconds and then passes the die to the next one until all have described a situation of a person living in that future scenario. (E.g.: Ana got number 4 on the die and says, "I became an activist against DNA manipulation in children".) The team has a total of 5 minutes to complete this task.

3 - To finalise this round, the team takes at least 5 minutes to comment on the future scenario they've created together.

Round 3 - A Better Future | 20 min

This round entails three team tasks:

In this round, participants collaborate to envision a more desirable scenario for 15 years into the future. They will achieve this by collectively reimagining the earlier predictions, transforming them into new visions they aspire to. While some predictions from the previous round may already be optimistic, the team will decide

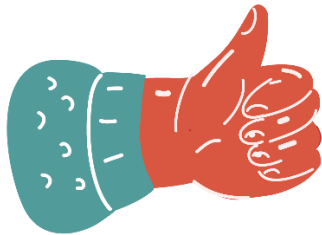
which of them to keep or change. (E.g.: *Health & Wellbeing*: in 15 years, all people will have body scan devices able to diagnose many diseases at home.) Participants may also use new 'Ask a Futurist' cards. The scenario should be hopeful yet achievable. All previous predictions should remain visible for comparison.

One by one, each participant now has to throw the die and verbally describe the life of someone living in that future according to the number they got on the "*Living in the Future*" card, as they did before.

Lastly, the group should take at least 5 minutes to share their feelings about the new scenario created.

Badge Awarding | 5 min

Participants are encouraged to review the badges and decide, which ones the team or individual members have earned. If a member deserves a specific badge, the entire team is awarded that badge. Participants should strive for honesty and fairness when analysing the teamwork and discussions held during the activity.



Debriefing

After the activity, debriefing the experience with the entire group is advisable. Below are some questions to facilitate a deeper reflection on the activity.

- Why is it important to talk about the future?
- What does it mean to have a balanced conversation about the future?
- How did the process of imagining the future affect your view on our present?
- Is paying attention to trends in the present important? Why?
- What competencies did you find most valuable when thinking about and discussing future scenarios?
- Which aspects of the future scenarios discussed today felt most relevant to your personal or community life?
- In what ways can we involve others in our community to engage in future thinking?
- Looking at your desirable scenario, what can we do now to create a better future?



Understanding the Areas

Governance and Policy

- How governmental structures and policies adapt to changes, including issues of global cooperation, regulation of emerging technologies, and public administration.

Environment and Sustainability

- The future state of the environment, focusing on climate change, biodiversity, natural resources management, and sustainable practices.

Technology and Innovation

- The development and impact of technologies, including artificial intelligence, biotechnology, nanotechnology, and information and communication technologies.

Economy and Employment

- Economic trends such as globalisation, the gig economy, shifts in trade, and the impact of technology on job creation and displacement.

Education and Learning

- Changes in educational methodologies, access to education, lifelong learning, and the role of technology in reshaping education.

Health and Wellbeing

- Advances in medical technologies, healthcare delivery, mental health, ageing populations, and public health strategies.

Society and Demographics

- Shifts in demographics, migration patterns, urbanisation, family structures, and cultural norms.

Security and Safety

- Considerations around national security, cybersecurity, data privacy, and the ethical implications of technological advancements.

Infrastructure and Urban Development

- The development of smart cities, transportation networks, energy grids, and buildings.

Arts and Culture

- Explorations of evolving artistic expressions, interactions between technology and art, changes in literary and visual art forms, and the influence of global connectivity on local cultural identities.

Variations

You can introduce additional rounds such as 'Legacy,' where participants reflect on the past, discussing values, skills, or experiences society has gained that could be useful in the future. Another option is to explore future horizons further with rounds like '30 Years Ahead,' where participants project the first 15 years and then 30 years into the future. Another possibility is to add an "Actions Now" round where participants are invited to come up with five actions they could do now to support their vision of a *Better Future*. Note that adding more rounds will require extending the duration of the activity.



Download this tool at:

<https://www.eayw.net/resources/window-to-the-future/>

Author: Anita Silva

Designer: Maja Cerjak, AIKO

Project coordination: Sonja Mitter Škulj

Place of publication: Ljubljana

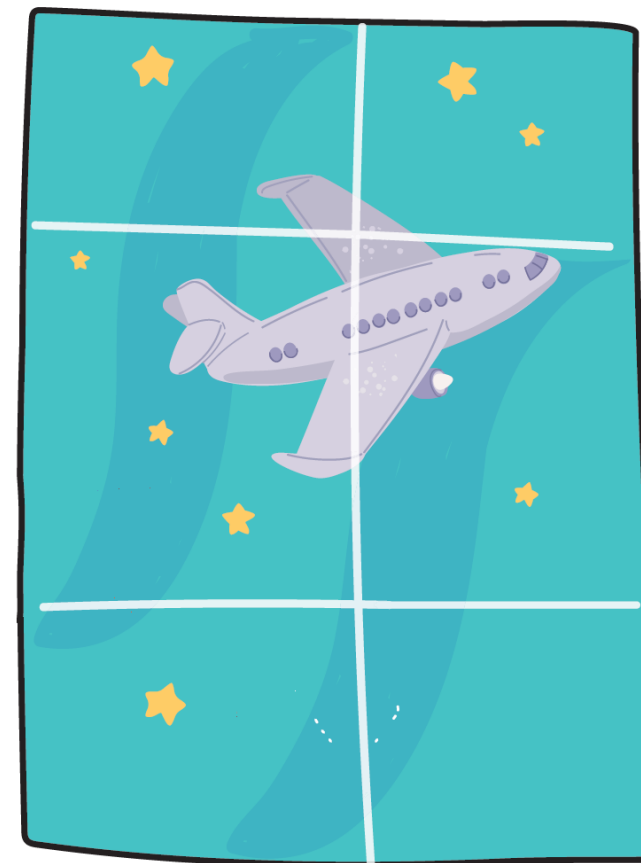
Year of publication: 2024

Publisher: European Academy on Youth Work

About the European Academy on Youth Work

The EAYW aims to promote the development of quality youth work, to support its capacity to react to current and future developments, and to contribute to creating a common ground on youth work and youth work policy. To this end, it focuses on supporting innovation in youth work, as a response to the trends, challenges and uncertainties faced by young people in today's fast-changing societies.

The EAYW is a strategic cooperation of the National Agencies of the Erasmus+ programme, youth field, and the European Solidarity Corps of Austria, Belgium-FI, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden and SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres. More information: www.eayw.net



Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.

