



European Academy on Youth Work

Futures of Youth Work

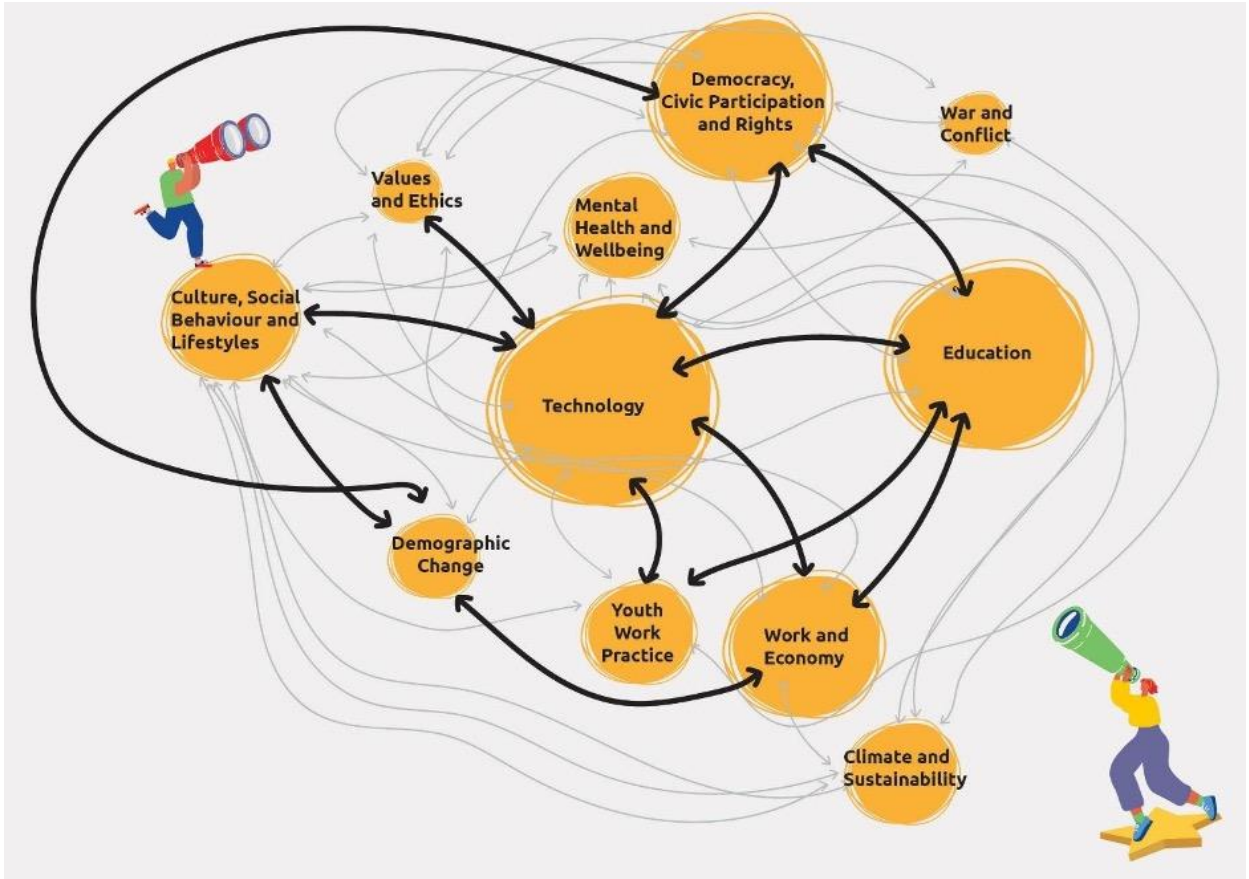
7 strategies for future-readiness

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#1 - Adopt a reflected sense of agency

- We must adopt the **position of co-creators**, engaged in a continuous 'dance' between 'what is coming to an end' on the one hand, and 'what is emerging' on the other.
- Youth workers should balance **honouring the past with openness to future possibilities**, thus fostering a realistic and agile approach to change.



#2 - A future-ready mindset

- Preparing future youth workers requires fostering a **future-ready mindset**, essential for navigating an increasingly uncertain world.
- Fostering a future-ready mindset is crucial for youth workers as they navigate an increasingly uncertain world, influenced by shifting from a 'culture of hope' to one led by anxiety and risk.



#3 - Structured spaces for future-focused discussions

- One key insight from the 'Futures of Youth Work' research is the **need for more focused and structured discussions about the futures of youth work.**
- Create more opportunities for focused conversations involving a wide range of stakeholders at all levels of youth



#2 - A future-ready mindset

Exercise: Dig into our values, assets, and competences and explore past challenges.

- What are YW values and strengths?
- How did youth work innovate in the past?

#1 - Adopt a reflected sense of agency

Book:
Hope for Cynics: The Surprising Science of Human Goodness, by Jamil Zaki

Podcast:
Huberman Lab podcast With Dr. Jamil Zaki

#3 - Structured spaces for future-focused discussions

Game:
Window to the Future



#4 - Future literacy

- Future literacy is not about predicting the future but about **understanding the types of possible futures and developing capacities to influence them.**



#5 - Embrace whole-system change

- Address future challenges through a holistic approach that includes both **individual development** and **creating systemic conditions** in the youth work sector.
- What needs to happen at the **individual level** – where is investment needed in youth worker development?
- What needs to happen at the **level of the field** – what are the collective shifts and structures needed to create conditions for change?



Exercise:

4 quadrants of future-readiness

	Inner work	External developments
Individual Youth worker	Future-ready mindset Youth workers' awareness Youth worker identity	Youth work practices Methods and methodologies Youth worker skills
Collective Youth work as a field	Inner resources Collective patterns Systemic role of youth work	Frameworks Support structures Youth work policy



#6 - Readiness to rethink the societal role of youth work

- While the core purpose of youth work—empowerment and engagement—remains constant, **the societal role of youth work should be regularly reassessed**, to ensure that it remains equipped to respond to emerging challenges. This process should also include an awareness and understanding of the **boundaries of youth work** and its connections with other sectors.



#7 - Stay alert to transformation calls

- Being future-ready means being able to hear and recognise **'calls for transformation'** in a timely manner.
- By staying attuned to the 'signals' in society, we must remain vigilant to pinpoint the exact moment **when mere innovation will no longer be sufficient** for youth work to remain relevant and effective.



<p>#4 - Future Literacy</p>	<p>#5 - Embrace whole-system change</p>	<p>#6 - Readiness to rethink the societal role of youth work</p>	<p>#7 - Stay alert to transformation calls</p>
<p>MOOC: <u>Innovation Tools for Youth Workers and Youth Organisations</u></p> <p>Playbook: <u>Futures Literacy Laboratory Playbook</u> By UNESCO</p>	<p>Methodology: <u>Participatory Action Research</u></p> <p>Toolkit: <u>Child and youth Friendly Participatory Action Research</u></p>	<p>Reflection “What if” Questions:</p> <p>Example: What if Youth Work disappeared and a new, better concept emerged?</p>	<p>Card Decks: <u>SITRA Megatrends Cards</u></p> <p><u>SITRA Hope Cards</u></p> <p>Approach: <u>Theory U</u></p>