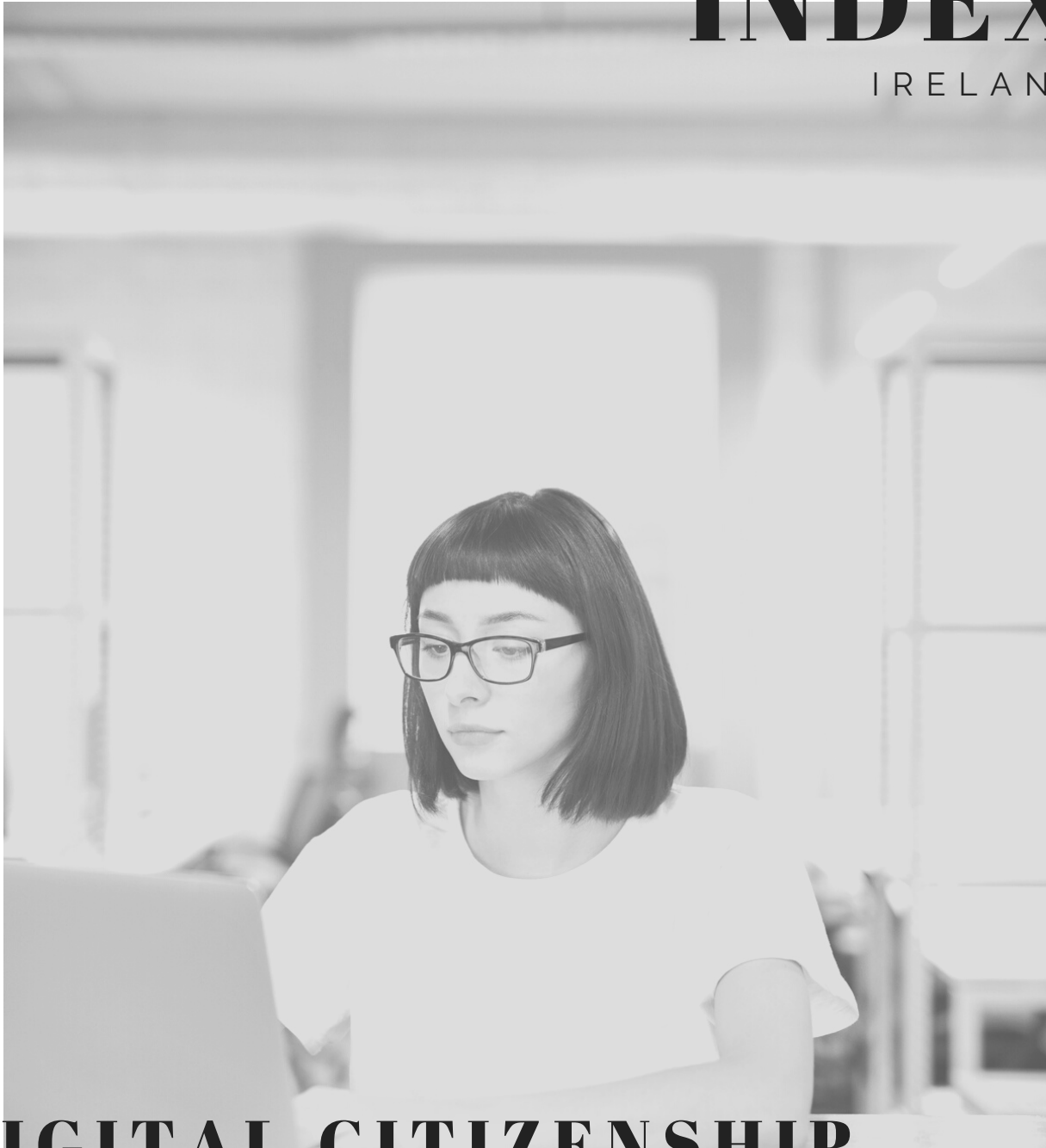# DICIPASS
European Digital Citizenship Pass
for Youth Empowerment and Participation

IO1 RESULT

NATIONAL
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IRELAND

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP
& YOUTH WORK

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INDEX

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND YOUTH WORK: DESK RESEARCH

DR-1. Current state of digital citizenship in youth policies and strategies

Ireland has developed strategies regarding digital citizenship in country's policies and in particular has launched The National Digital Strategy (NDS) document "Phase 1 - Digital Engagement" in July 2013. The main focus of the NDS is to present a number of actions and steps in order to encourage citizens and business to be involved in a digitally enabled society[1].

Thus, the policies are aiming at increasing citizens engagement, while they are mainly focus on: older people, unemployed people, people who have had less formal education or who have no formal qualifications, Disadvantaged people, which may include people with disabilities, those living alone and particularly in rural areas, single parents, travelers, ex-prisoners, migrants/immigrants.

For getting citizens more digitally engaged, two steps are essential. The first step is to raise their awareness, in order to learn more about the benefits that they can gain by being digitally involved. The second step is the development of digital skills. The digital skills that citizens need to develop, can range, depending on their existing skills and the level they want to improve them.

Ireland has a wide range of stakeholders who provide effective digital training and a series of initiatives focusing on skills. In particular, some initiatives are the following:
- ''Instigate an awareness raising and motivation campaign with industry stakeholders ''
- ''Introduce a new BenefIT 4 grants scheme to fund training for citizens ''
- ''Develop an online mapping resource to identify digital skills learning opportunities – including what is available and where ''[2].

In the field of youth, some young people in Ireland created the Digital Youth Council which aims to give a voice to young people who are involving in technology in Ireland and give them the opportunity to influence the National Digital Strategy, and the future of technology in education[3].

In addition to this, another youth council, The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) which is the representative body for voluntary youth organizations, also promotes the integration of digital elements in everyday life[4]. More specific, the NYCI has developed a Strategic Plan 2018-202, in which sets various indicators and actions related to digital youth work. One of the envisaged NYCI's actions is to provide support to youth organizations in the area of digital youth work, through a suite of training in digital youth work and offer information on relevant policies and practices. Moreover, NYCI seeks to advance its work with the Irish Government and other agencies on the field of digital youth work and improving the sector's involvement in promoting more opportunities for young

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[1] Department of Communications Climate Action and Environment, "National Digital Strategy", (Retrieved from: https://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/communications/topics/Digital-Strategy/Pages/default.aspx, 7/2/2020)

[2] Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, *National Digital Strategy for Ireland Phase 1 – Digital Engagement,* Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, Dublin, 2013 (Retrieved from: https://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/communications/publications/Documents/63/National%20Digital%20Strategy%20July%202013%20compressed.pdf, 7/2/2020).

[3] Digital Youth Council. "*Home Page",* (Retrieved from: http://www.digitalyouthcouncil.com/ 10/2/2020)

[4] Digital Youth Council, "*About*", (Retrieved from https://www.youth.ie/about/, 10/2/2020).

people[5]. NYCI also develops several training opportunities and organizes events related to the promotion of digital youth work[6].

Apart from the Youth Councils which develop several actions aiming at promoting digital engagement of young people, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs has also launched a National Youth Strategy (2015-2020), intending to support young people to realize their maximum potential and also ease their transition from childhood to adulthood. Regarding their digital engagement, the strategy focusses in the promotion the use of new technologies and support the acquisition of digital skills for young people, supported also by the implementation of the ICT Skills Action Plan[7].

DR-2. Tools and resources for digital citizenship

In Ireland there many resources aiming at building the capacity of youth workers to facilitate digital skills in their training. There are also recourses and tools, seeking to help young individuals to become digital citizens, and use digital sources in order to be more engaged in society. Some of these resources, useful for youth workers are the following:

-Screenagers International Research Project: This is an international project, aiming at the promotion of the usage of ICT, digital and social media in youth work.

-Adobe Youth Voices Guide: A Guide focusing on support educators who are planning and implementing creative media projects with young people.

- Partnership for 21st Learning Skills Framework: A framework developed based on input from teachers, education experts, and business leaders who defined the skills necessary for 21st century.

-The Clubhouse Network: Best practices and learning approaches for digital youth work.

-#BeyondTheClick: a toolkit for educators exploring Global Digital Citizenship.

For young people:

-Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures Policy Framework: A policy framework presenting country's strategies in the areas of early years, youth and participation.

-National Youth Strategy 2015-2020: A strategy for supporting youth in all aspects of their daily life.

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[5] Meister Daniel, Lowry Elaine, *STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2022,* National Youth Council of Ireland*,* Dublin, 2018, (Retrieved from*:* https://www.youth.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/NYCI_StrategicPlan_2018-2022.pdf, 10/2/2020).
[6]NYCI, "Training & Events", (Retrieved from https://www.youth.ie/training-and-events/, 10/2/2020).
[7] Department of Children and Youth Affairs, *NATIONAL YOUTH STRATEGY 2015–2020,* Government Publications, Dublin, 2015, (Retrieved from: https://www.youth.ie/wp content/uploads/2019/04/20151008NatYouthStrat2015to2020.pdf, 10/2/2020)

-All Abroad: A national project that intends to empower learners, teachers, and anyone who uses technology by supporting their work or leaning, in aspects related to digital age.

DR-3. Learning opportunities towards digital citizenship

Except for resources and tools there are also several learning opportunities regarding digital citizenship, directing to young individuals and youth workers.
In particular, for youth workers, some learning opportunities are:

-Digital Citizenship for Educators: A course aiming at assisting educators in developing their knowledge of digital literacy.

-Getting Started with STEAM in Youth Work: An online course for youth workers or educators in the youth sector who are interested in learning how to use STEAM activities to engage young people related projects.

-Citizenship in a Digital Era: A training course seeking to equip youth workers with the tools needed in order to support young people to become responsible digital citizens.

Some of learning opportunities directing to young individuals are the following:

-Digital Citizenship course: A course about rules on social media and digital technology use, focusing on the topic of "Digital Citizenship".

-Digital Citizenship Summit: An event about the promotion of Digital citizenship and its importance in the development of valuable skills.

DR-4. Key findings

In summary, several strategies have been developed in Ireland, aiming at incorporating digital citizenship, mainly by the implementation of actions related to the digitally engagement of citizens. In particular, the National Digital Strategy (NDS) plans at encouraging citizens to be involved in a digitally enabled society, by the creation of many initiatives related to trainings for digital adoption and development of digital skills.

In addition to this, Digital Youth Council and National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI), focus on actions related to youth and youth work. In detail, NYCI implements several trainings and events seeking to integrate digital activities in youth work. Apart from the Youth Councils, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs has also launched a National Youth Strategy (2015-2020), in which promotes measures for the promotion the use of new technologies and the support of the acquisition of digital skills for young people.

Also, in Ireland there are several resources, tools and learning opportunities associated to digital citizenship, for young individuals and for youth workers as well, focusing on many aspects of digital engagement of citizens.

DR. Conclusions and recommendations

In conclusion, there many opportunities for young individuals, helping them incorporate information technology in their lives and thus be digitally involved in society, as there are many resources and tools that are available and free for everyone. Ireland integrated early digital citizenship topics in its strategies, as the Government has committed to the empowerment of a more digitally society that evolves, which is supported by complementary national measures.

Nevertheless, it is essential that more actions to be developed, directing also to young people with fewer opportunities (such as NEETs), as it is possible for them to lack in digital competences knowledge, and they may not have equal access to resources and tools for improving them. For these disadvantaged groups who are struggling with social exclusion, their digital participation, given that we live in a digital age, is essential for ensuring their social inclusion, and thus their active engagement in society.

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PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT ACRONYM: DICIPASS4YOUTH

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CONSORTIUM: