

netWorked Youth Research for Empowerment in the Digital society

Year 2 Quality and Evaluation Report WP10_D10.9





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1. Introduction

This document collects the findings of the evaluation process carried out between June and late November 2017 for the WYRED project (García-Peñalvo, 2016b, 2017; García-Peñalvo & Kearney, 2016). The process involved examination of project documentation and deliverables and extensive group and individual interviews with partners. The document constitutes the second evaluation-related deliverable of the project, the first of these was the quality and evaluation plan, and the insights (Griffiths et al., 2017) from the process will contribute to later versions of that document. More important, however, is the formative aspect of the evaluation, which involves the identification of achievements so far, and potential improvements to the project. Indeed, the key function of the evaluation process during the project is to provoke reflection. Potential improvements are suggested in a list of recommendations at the end of the document.

1.1 The WYRED Project

The emergence of the young as a distinct social group, and their slowly increasing empowerment through the availability of digital technology, has brought with it an understanding that they have a key role to play in the digital society, as drivers of new behaviours and understandings. However, their active participation in society is not reflected sufficiently in policy and decision-making, especially in relation to digital issues. Because of this, they are not well represented and unheard, and this makes it hard for research and policy to identify and understand their needs. These issues are further complicated by the fact that the group is a swiftly moving target, it is as heterogeneous as the wider society, and children and young people can be unwilling to be subjects of research.

The WYRED project aims to provide a framework for research in which children and young people can express and explore their perspectives and interests in relation to digital society, but also a platform from which they can communicate their perspectives to other stakeholders effectively through innovative engagement processes. It will do this by implementing a generative research cycle involving networking, dialogue, participatory research and interpretation phases centred around and driven by children and young people, out of which a diverse range of outputs, critical





perspectives and other insights will emerge to inform policy and decision-making in relation to children and young people's needs in relation to digital society.

The project is informed by the recognition that young people of all ages have the right to participation and engagement. It has a strong focus on inclusion, diversity and the empowerment of the marginalised. The aim is to replace the disempowering scrutiny of conventional research processes with the empowerment of self-scrutiny and self-organisation through the social dialogue and participatory research.

1.1.1 Objectives of the project

The overall aim of WYRED is the empowerment of children and young people. The WYRED project has several central objectives:

- 1. To <u>provide a framework for research</u> in which children and young people can express and explore their perspectives and interests in relation to digital society.
- 2. To <u>provide a platform</u> (García-Holgado & García-Peñalvo, 2018; García-Peñalvo, 2016a; García-Peñalvo & Durán-Escudero, 2017; García-Peñalvo, García-Holgado, Vázquez-Ingelmo, & Seoane-Pardo, 2018) from which children and young people can communicate their perspectives to other stakeholders effectively through innovative engagement processes.
- 3. To engage children and young people in <u>a generative research cycle</u> (WYRED Consortium, 2017a, 2017b) involving networking, dialogue, participatory research and interpretation.
- 4. To generate a <u>diverse range of outputs</u>, critical perspectives and other insights that can inform policy and decision-making in relation to children and young people's needs in relation to digital society.
- 5. To make this process <u>continuous and sustainable</u>.

These objectives involve a series of challenges that are a natural corollary of the work we propose, these are as follows.

1. ENGAGEMENT - children and young people are to a large extent immersed in a set of activities that take up most of their time, and their free time is precious. The engagement





- in WYRED of children and young people can involve competition for attention with existing activities.
- 2. RESEARCH research is frequently understood in society as a dry activity divorced from everyday reality. This misconception can affect the way that WYRED is perceived both by the young participants and by third parties. Horizon 2020 is a research programme, but exploration may be a more fruitful word to use in this context.
- 3. LEGITIMACY one of the ultimate aims of WYRED is to help children and young people communicate their issues and concerns to those who take decisions about them. There is a sense in which WYRED functions as a bridge. The challenge will be to ensure that the work done by children and young people in WYRED and its outputs are perceived as legitimate by decision-makers
- 4. TECHNICAL ISSUES configuring a safe space for the activity in WYRED, that is both sufficiently attractive to children and young people and compliant with the necessary ethical requirements, is a challenge. In particular competing with the digital expectations of the young on a very tight budget will be bracing.
- 5. DIVERSITY WYRED is committed to diversity and inclusion, however it is frequently the case that the easiest children and young people to access are to be found in middle-class schools with receptive families, the challenge is to move beyond this context.
- 6. SUSTAINABILITY the activity in WYRED is initially resource hungry, hence the need for EC funding, making the activity sustainable involves promoting self-management among children and young people and facilitating the transition from funded project to self-funded youth-led activity. This is a considerable challenge activity.
- 7. ETHICS OF EMPOWERMENT the central conundrum in a project like WYRED that focuses on facilitating the empowerment of children and young people and their agency is the question "when is the right moment to let go" (of the balloon). This is an ethical question.

Many of these challenges are identified in the proposal, others acquire significance as the process progresses. These are particularly areas of importance in a project that aims to innovate in this way.





1.1.2 Structure of the project

The project work plan involves 10 work packages. The first of these focuses on the definition of the different processes involved in the research cycle, the second is dedicated to the preparation and implementation throughout the project of the inclusion strategy, and the third focuses on the development of the WYRED platform, which will be used throughout the project as the space in which the activities and interaction take place. These first three preparatory WPs are followed by 5 WPs which cover the full cycle of research activity in WYRED. This starts with network building in WP4, in which the children and young people who will participate in the research cycle are attracted and engaged, and the principal themes that represent their concerns are identified. The next work package (5) focuses on social dialogue around these themes, which are further explored to identify key research questions relating to the digital society that concern children and young people. In the subsequent work package (6) these children and young people, supported by the partners, will focus on designing and implementing research activities to explore these questions and issues in a range of ways. WP7 focuses on the interpretation and evaluation of the process and its results in the production types by the young research participants and the partners, of different formats and artefacts that will be used to present the results, principally insights and recommendations to different target groups at policy level and in the wider society. The final phase of the cycle in WP8 focuses on the dissemination and exploitation of these results, though this work package runs throughout the project engaging in the valorisation of the WYRED activity through workshops, event participation, online activity and and the creation of an association to manage WYRED activity after the funding period.

These 5 work packages form a cycle that is aimed to generate insights relating to the perspectives and concerns of children and young people in relation to digital society. The cycle repeats twice during the funding period of the project and will continue after the funding period indefinitely under the aegis of the WYRED Association. The WYRED cycle is supported by 2 other work packages focusing on management (WP9) and quality (WP10).







WP no.	WP Title	WP Owner
WP1	WYRED PROCESSES DEFINITION	BOUNDARIES
WP2	INCLUSION	MOVES
WP3	WYRED PLATFORM DEVELOPMENT	USAL
WP4	BUILDING THE WYRED NETWORK	YEU
WP5	SOCIAL DIALOGUE PHASE	EARLY YEARS
WP6	PARTICIPANT RESEARCH PHASE	DOGA SCHOOLS
WP7	EVALUATION AND INTERPRETATION PHASE	PYE GLOBAL
WP8	VALORISATION	OXFAM
WP9	PROJECT MANAGEMENT	USAL
WP10	QUALITY MANAGEMENT	BOUNDARIES

It is worth noting that there are challenges involved in implementing a project that begins with a traditional work package structure, but in which the aim is to move towards a continuous cycle of activity in which the divisions between work packages 4 to 8 will increasingly be elided.

1.1.3 Project consortium

The consortium is made up of nine partners, and is very diverse, with partners from academic organisations that focus on research and others whose principal focus is youth work.

1	UNIVERSIDAD DE SALAMANCA (USAL)
2	OXFAM ITALIA ONLUS (OXFAM)
3	PYE GLOBAL (PYE)





4	ASİST ÖĞRETİM KURUMLARI A.S. (DOĞA SCHOOLS)
5	EARLY YEARS – THE ORGANISATION FOR YOUNG CHILDREN LBG (EARLY YEARS)
6	YOUTH FOR EXCHANGE AND UNDERSTANDING INTERNATIONAL AISBL (YEU)
7	MOVES (MOVES)
8	THE BOUNDARIES OBSERVATORY C.I.C. (BOUNDARIES)
9	TEL AVIV UNIVERSITY (TAU)

The diversity involved is of great value but also constitutes a challenge since the organisational cultures and ways of working among the different partners are diverse, as are the cultures in which they work.

1.2 Quality and Evaluation in WYRED

The activity within WYRED, specifically the WYRED research cycle, involves its own specific evaluation and interpretation process in which the outputs of the cycle are subject to scrutiny and assessment. It is there, in WP7, that the participants and consortium evaluate whether the research cycle developed is producing useful and valuable results for society.

The focus in this report, though related in very general terms, has a different focus insofar as it centres on evaluating the project as an EU financed project which has a set of outputs (deliverables) and processes that have been previously defined in the funding proposal. Though both sets of work share the ultimate objective of evaluating the quality of WYRED the perspectives are different, the work covered in this report focuses on quality management and the evaluation of the overall progress of the project.

1.2.1 Quality

The purpose of the internal quality processes in WYRED is to ensure that the project deliverables are completed with an acceptable level of quality. This involves attention both to the quality of the deliverables themselves and the quality of the processes used to manage and create them.







While project outputs, the deliverables, are subject to an internal quality control process using predefined criteria, the processes of the project, including internal aspects such as management, communication and collaboration, participation and reporting as well as the research cycle activities are evaluated independently. The results are incorporated into this Quality and Evaluation report, and the other evaluation reports planned during the project. The ethical perspective will be subject to a separate reporting process,

The focus of quality control is on the deliverables of the project. Quality control monitors project deliverables to establish that the deliverables are of acceptable quality and are complete and correct. The deliverables are assessed for completeness and fitness through a peer quality content inspection during the development of deliverables and to mark the completion and approval of the deliverables. As mentioned previously, quality assurance, which focuses on the processes adopted in the project, is carried out through the processes of project evaluation, described in the next section.

At the start of the deliverable production process, the proposed structure of the deliverable is approved according to the following indicators:

- the contents are in accordance with the objective stated in the project description
- the allocation of the tasks is realistic and consistent with the roles of the partners as defined in the proposal, unless modifications have been made
- the timetable reposed is realistic and matches the deadline set out in the project proposal, unless modifications have been made

During the production of the deliverable, all partners are responsible for playing their part in checking the quality of the deliverable as it progresses and making appropriate comments and suggestions for modification.

The key quality criteria used for the final review of each deliverable are as follows:

- compliance with the objectives as stated in the project description in the Grant Agreement
- the completeness of the documentation describing the work done in the corresponding work package





- compliance with templates and editing guidelines as described in the project handbook
- clarity and legibility
- the degree to which the deliverable constitutes a complete response to the task
- usefulness to the target reader and audience
- complete history of document versions

For the purposes of this report, the quality management process has been monitored and the degree of fulfilment of these criteria has been examined. Though there has been some slippage in the upload to SYGMA (EU deliverables portal), the deliverables produced so far in the project comply. Where this is not the case, comment is made in the main body of the report.

1.2.2 Evaluation

The project evaluation framework in the WYRED project is intended to support the project activities and provide opportunities for continuous improvement both of project processes and the products created, especially the network itself. This will be done by observing and interpreting the different actions carried out by the consortium and providing feedback at appropriate moments within the project cycle and is done principally through the independent internal review process, which is the responsibility of P8 (Boundaries). The overall objective is to support the consortium both in the achievement of the specific project objectives and in its compliance with the funding requirements. This involves attention both to the <u>management</u> perspective - the extent to which the administration, communication, collaboration and other aspects (such as, for example, compliance with deadlines) are appropriate – and to the <u>development</u> perspective – the extent to which the different activities are successful in achieving the objectives, with respect as much to the design and development of the products and services as to their valorisation.

The project evaluation process will contemplate both formative and summative dimensions, and will also focus on identifying lessons that can be learned from the project, both in terms of operational and management aspects, and in development terms. The principal evaluation criteria that will be used to define the scope of the monitoring and interaction during the project evaluation process, and to guide feedback and reporting, are similar to what could be termed the





'standard' evaluation criteria used in a wide range of EU project management and evaluation processes. They include:

- correspondence with the proposal the match of the activities, products and services developed, and the overall results, to the aims and objectives of the project
- appropriate activity the efficient management of the activities, appropriate
 communication and collaboration, the completion of work by agreed deadlines and to a
 sufficient degree of quality, and the fulfilment by all partners of the tasks assigned to
 them, as well as appropriate use of the outputs
- impact in the short, medium and long term, and the sustainability potential of the project outcomes. In this last respect, particular attention will be paid to the appropriateness and success of the dissemination and exploitation activities.

Against this background, the process also has a series of specific project evaluation objectives:

- To carry out ongoing monitoring of the project design and development activities, providing feedback and recommendations for corrective action whenever needed.
- To carry out ongoing monitoring of the project management activities, with special attention to communication and collaboration.
- To facilitate reflection and critical thinking among the partners on different aspects of the project, in order to ensure an integrated approach to the project, in which all are participants.

The methodological approach has used a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods, though the focus, given the need for flexibility in the project evaluation process, has been on a qualitative approach. The quantitative methods have focused on analysis of project data to derive an overall impression of the degree of activity generated, and the interest in the project, but the emphasis has been on interviews. Throughout the year there has been continuous observation of and reflection on project processes and outputs focussing especially on the impressions derived from the EU and from the Advisory Board. After informal contacts during the project meeting in Bath (June 18), a round of online interviews took place in October 2018, to explore the issues different participants had in relation to the project activity. These allowed the interviewees





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to set the agenda and to discuss the issues that they considered to be important. This ensures that all the perspectives of the different participants are represented and taken into account in the evaluation process. These were combined with a semi-structured interview process, which while it ensured a similarity of approach across the interviews, also let the interviewer delve deeper into the reasons and issues involved in their responses in order to reveal underlying issues and permit confidential discussion of sensitive issues. The results of these were then shared with the consortium and a round of group reflection took place.

Throughout the project, the evaluation has also involved observation of the work, and periodic discussion of the progress of the activities has taken place, including interaction with young participants in order to ensure their perspective is included. This observation forms part of the continuous monitoring of the project. This report is the outcome of all these processes.





2 Current situation of WYRED at M24

It is important to recognise that WYRED is a highly innovative project, involving a new way of approaching youth empowerment and engagement, with an explicit focus on diversity and inclusion, which necessarily implies a very heterogeneous consortium and target groups. It is therefore perhaps unsurprising that there are differences in understanding, working styles and expectations. These became clear at the start of the project, and during the first year of the project many of them were addressed and recognised. Over the second year this process has continued, and as the partners have become more used to the approach, they have become more confident and proficient in implementing WYRED. It is important also to notice that efforts were made to adapt the project to the needs of each partner context. The previous evaluation report (D10.8) identified three issues particularly that required attention. These were scheduling, engagement and privacy.

2.1.1 Key issues addressed in the second year

The challenge relating to scheduling related to the very diverse and heterogeneous contexts and timelines of the different stakeholders we are working with. While some synchronisation of the project activity across the partners is valuable, especially in order to coordinate international projects, during the first cycle in 2017 this derived into a "lockstep" that hindered the partners from working effectively with children and young people. There had been an initial understanding that the work should run in tandem in all countries, particularly in the networking and dialogue phases. This created considerable problems with scheduling and as a result, some of the work has been conditioned by the need to meet deadlines, in order to coincide with others, and this has affected the depth of engagement with tasks.

Subsequent reflection on this issue, during the evaluation process, identified the need to understand the WYRED cycle as a framework, rather than a blueprint, or a series of fixed dates. It was decided to update the project timeline so that it reflects more appropriately the rhythms of children and young people's lives, and this includes a need for built-in flexibility. To this end, the partners adapted the time frame of the project, since the initial dates and deadlines planned were not fully realistic. This meant that instead of beginning in early 2018, the next cycle was brought forward to autumn 2017 so that the key periods of the cycle would not coincide with







times when the majority of children and young people are unavailable due to exams and other commitments in late spring and summer. This change in timetable, and the increased flexibility was helpful in that it avoided the problem of lockstep, but it has increased the challenge of achieving international interaction between different cohorts in the project. Though some of this has been done during the second year, it becomes an important area of focus for the final year.

With regard to engagement, a key lesson learned during the first year was that the full engagement of the young and their meaningful participation, which is central to the work of WYRED, is not as easy to achieve as might be expected. Participation in an ongoing process, which is furthermore open-ended, is much harder to commit to than participation in a single event, such as a youth panel, and it is particularly challenging to achieve online. Partners have found that engagement is easiest to achieve in local contexts, and have become proficient at this, though there is evidence that the degree of availability of children and young people for this kind of work varies widely from country to country. Increasingly in Western society the lives of children and young people have very little free space so that a project like WYRED may have to compete with, and displace other activities, unless it can integrate with them. The schools context tends to follow a clearly defined set of activities which children and young people are expected to participate in. Where integration with these activities has been possible WYRED has worked successfully. However, in some countries, access to schools is a continuing challenge.

The local focus has been successful, wherever access has been possible, and as the approach has become consolidated and familiar for the partners (the streamlining of the cycle has also helped in this regard) it has become clearer that it is enriching and fruitful. It is initial engagement that is the challenge, and this often has more to do with gatekeeper attitudes than the receptivity of the children and young people themselves. Gatekeepers have in some cases, faced with a very heavy workload already, had difficulties seeing the benefits of participation. A task in progress now is to make greater efforts to valorise the shared results (over 100 projects have now been completed) in order to show the insights that the work has produced, and the impact it has had. It is expected that this will be beneficial in promoting the value of WYRED so that the receptivity of these actors is increased





The local focus has been to some extent at the expense of the international dimension in WYRED. There have been challenges in achieving continuous interaction in the platform, and partners have identified the need to organise a schedule of online events and specific collaborative work between WYRED groups from different countries. This is currently under way. It is expected to contribute to the wider impact of the project and to the value gatekeepers and children and young people ascribe to the project.

With regard to privacy issues, the key challenge related and continues to relate to the project platform. In general terms ethical issues are well covered in WYRED, partners were already familiar before the project with aspects such as safeguarding and informed consent evaluation of the WYRED proposal, and the Participant Protection Policy covers all relevant issues. We also had a successful External Ethical Review in the second quarter of 2018. However, in the context of the project platform, the strong ethical foundation of the project causes challenges.

The WYRED platform is a safe space for children and children and young people to engage with each other within the project. The option of using existing social media, such as Instagram or others, despite their familiarity and convenience for young people, had to be ruled out because their business models are based on the notion of personal data as a saleable commodity. Therefore, none of them comply with the ethical foundations of WYRED. Although the sensible decision was taken not to develop from scratch, the complexity of the emerging WYRED approach and the requirements involved caused delays. The platform functions appropriately and complies with all the ethical requirements of the project. It is however a less dynamic and less attractive instrument than most children and young people are used to, and this affects its use, particularly as a continuous communication tool. Specific organised events and collaborations do however work and the focus in the final year of the project will be on using it in this way.

2.1.2 Achievements in the second year

These ongoing issues notwithstanding, it is important to note the successes of the project over this second year. The positive outcomes achieved in the first year continue to be relevant and have been further developed, providing a solid basis for further work as the project proceeds into its final year, and the consolidation of the WYRED approach to youth empowerment. These are listed here:





- A new methodological approach for working with children and young people, centred on developing their agency and their voice. As the year has proceeded the approach has been refined and several partners have received very positive feedback from gatekeepers such as university professors and school teachers.
- 2. A substantial number of children and young people, across seven European countries, and a wide range of ages and socio-economic backgrounds, have been given an opportunity to share their views and explore their understandings of issues that concern them. Increasingly there is evidence of common ground.
- 3. The Delphi work in the project has helped to drive a wider continuous process of youth dialogue that identifies concerns that are of particular importance to European children and young people at present.
- 4. The consortium has further developed its understanding of appropriate and ethical ways to network with and engage children and young people in social dialogue both online and off, which is evolving into a collection of good practices.
- 5. The consortium has supported a good range of youth-led exploratory and research projects (more than 100 on the platform) in which children and young people have had the chance to go beyond opinion to more in-depth understanding of the issues that concern them.
- 6. The project has developed a platform that functions as a safe space for children and young people to carry out their explorations and exchanges, which also serves to connect children and young people from different countries and environments, and acts as a repository for their work.
- 7. A wide range of different organisations across Europe have been made aware of the WYRED project and its approach.

The key success factors in WYRED are the engagement of children and young people through the process, their emerging agency, and their sense of ownership of that process. Engagement, agency and sense of ownership are not however simple to measure. At this stage the report on cycle 1 is currently in preparation and this will provide indications of the value of the work done, both to the young beneficiaries involved, and other stakeholders.





As the achievements listed above show, the project is having some success. During the year the project has received a lot of evaluation feedback, both from the Advisory Board, and from the EU evaluators. This feedback has been positive, but it has identified several issues that the project needs to engage with in order to achieve its objectives in the final year.

2.1.3 The EU review – issues arising

The review report speaks of "significant progress", and a "collection of rich artefacts", but emphasises that not all partners are achieving the same level of progress. The report highlights the need for greater coordination across the cycle. This is an aspect that the consortium is conscious of, the greater flexibility introduced in the second year has in some respects led to a tendency to focus on the optimal way to achieve results, which is to focus on the local contexts, which is what we do well. There is a need to address this and work towards greater intergation, though this may be more fruitfully focused on thematic coordination, and shared projects, rather than a return to synchronization.

In relation to this, the report recommends the introduction of minimums that all partners have to comply with, in relation to what is done in the cycle, how we talk about it, and how we communicate it. It does also refer to impact targets but there is a recognition in the report that impact may have more to do with how we do things than how much. The report refers to a "framed research approach", and there is specific reference to the need to draw conclusions across the generated outputs, and a narrowing of focus in order to contribute to the state of the art. The critique is made that "It is difficult to see how all these projects serve as research for empowerment of C&YPs in digital societies". The sense is that the project is quite fragmented and dispersed, and that the local focus of most partners is what gives rise to this.

In response to these comments, the consortium has adopted various strategies. First the Project Handbook in its new version substantially simplifies the WYRED cycle, providing a streamlined version that all partners can adopt, so that all, albeit at different times, do the same thing in the WYRED cycle. It is recommended that the updated process handbook description of the WYRED cycle be synthesised down into a short description of the steps, to ensure all implement it in the same way, and give a clearer idea of the framed research approach that WYRED involves. Reporting also needs to be further homogenised. Second, the project has adopted a set of





thematic areas derived from the Delphi, dialogues and projects so far, that all focus more narrowly on the digital society. The aim of this is to focus the work far more so that conclusions can be drawn across outputs, which is vital if WYRED are to have an impact. In particular, this is important because if a conclusion comes from various projects in different contexts, then it is far more like to be considered legitimate and generalizable. All partners should commit to sticking to these themes. Thirdly, in parallel with the WP7 First cycle report, which looks at the impact on the young participants and identifies potential outputs for policy, the consortium will produce a WYRED Insights document, which draws conclusions from the projects, dialogues and Delphi results to create a vision of what is learned and what is of interest. This document will provide a coherent narrative of the arc of WYRED and its value and will be a key tool for valorization and impact and will be produced yearly going forward, in order to situate WYRED in the conversation. It will prove especially valuable in the process of deepening the process of network building and getting in touch with other projects, and improving how the work is actually reaching and impacting policy makers. It is recommended that this document be produced as soon as possible, ideally before the end of November so that it can be used as soon as possible, since it is the keystone for many other actions within the project.

The comments made in the review regarding the WYRED platform focus on the integration of functionality. It is interesting that they focus on "inclusive, safe and individual led content production rights", this also forms part of the autonomy WYRED aims to facilitate, and it is clear that these rights may have a motivational component. The consortium is considering these issues and has been focusing on the added value of the platform, particularly thought the organisation of events and specific collaborations. It is recommended that the existing schedule of activities be as continuous as possible, in addition to the Online Festival.

In general terms the key issue that is identified is that there is a lack of synergy and integration across the board that is affecting the consortium's ability to collect a coherent set of results and to achieve impacts. This has already been commented on in relation to the overall local focus of partners. For this reason, there is a strong need to <u>ensure coordinated international online activity on shared themes</u> to avoid wasted or duplicated efforts, and ensure that what is a good approach to the empowerment of children and young people can actually achieve impacts.





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The last area of commentary in the review report, refers to sustainability. Since the report, the consortium, and in particular Oxfam who are to be commended for their leadership in this area, have created the documents relating to sustainability and the WYRED Association. However, the report points out that the consortium does not appear to have a clear vision of how WYRED fits in to the conversation or where it can have an influence. There is a strong need to address this as soon as possible and plan actions to rectify this issue.

Most of the challenges faced by the project in its final year have to do with bringing the efforts together in order for WYRED to achieve an impact. Though WYRED clearly works and has generated a lot of interesting outputs in local contexts, the lack of coordination between projects across countries means that the results remain largely anecdotic. To move beyond this requires collaboration. Though some partners have worked hard to try to put together a coordinated schedule of activities, there is a vital need for all partners to commit to this as soon as possible, since the success of the project depends on this coordination between countries. If this is done there is a strong potential for the WYRED project to produce very interesting results that can have an impact and amplify youth voices as intended. In the following sections, the work done in each of the work packages is examined, and recommendations are made for the final year of the project.





3 WYRED Year 2 - Framing and infrastructure

These work packages provide the WYRED framework in which the cycle can take place, they include processes, ethics, diversity, and the online platform.

3.1 WP1 Processes

This work package was the entry point to the project for the partners. The work of creating the handbook served as a useful mechanism for defining, exploring and explaining the project's philosophy, approach and mechanisms. In the second year, there has been less activity in this work package, as it was a question of updating, rather than creating. The other main activity in this work package was the External Ethical Review which was very positive. The ethical aspects covered in this work package are considered to be exemplary.

The process handbook serves the role of these handbooks is to document and track the evolution of the approach so that it functions as a continuously updated source of guidance. Its existence, and the commitment to updates, provides guarantees that the approach can be flexible without losing sight of its objectives. During this year, an updated version of the process handbook was created which, in the light of the results so far, redefined and streamlined the WYRED cycle, on the basis of partner suggestions and comments. The cycle is now much simpler, and this will make it easier for partners to ensure that the cycle is implemented within the framework set out in the handbook. This is important since the more the projects all keep to this framed research approach, the more the results will be perceived as legitimate. It is recommended that a very simplified one-page document be produced to capture the steps involved in the cycle, in order to facilitate this commonality of approach.

3.2 WP2 Diversity

The work done on diversity in the project is very solid. Throughout the two years of the project it has proceeded satisfactorily, with strong commitment and good quality work from the leadership. The documents produced are of very good quality. The challenge of adapting to the different contexts of each partner has been very successfully addressed. Diversity is at the heart of WYRED, and a driver of the philosophy of inclusion that underlies the work of the project. In





general, the project is achieving an acceptable degree of diversity across the consortium, though in the final year it may prove necessary to take explicit action to ensure this. Some initial resistances to this focus on diversity were expressed at the start of the project, framed particularly in terms of questioning of the level of detail required in data collection relating to diversity. In particular some of the questions asked were not considered appropriate in the Turkish context, and for this reason a slightly altered version of the inclusion questionnaire is used in that context. The application of the diversity criteria adds a level of complexity to the project that can at times be challenging but the work adds a value and depth to the project that is important. Barring the Turkish case, there is consensus around the diversity criteria and their expression in the instruments, and the diversity criteria are being appropriately implemented by all partners.

3.3 WYRED platform

Some comments have already been made earlier regarding the platform. As mentioned previously, the platform development suffered delay, due to technical complications relating to the need to ensure the privacy and protection of the participants within the safe space that the platform provides. These delays had some repercussions in relation to the international dimension of the project, and although there has been opportunity to recover the time lost, it is possible to say that during the period of more than a year that the consortium was without the platform, partners became used to focusing on local interactions. In order to change this, clear action is necessary, and it is recommended that all partners commit explicitly to using the platform as part of the shared schedule of online activity that is being developed.

The platform design involved very careful consideration of data security and ethics issues, and a progressive simplification of the processes involved, in order to improve personal experiences of online interaction in the platform. What is important, the partners have found, is that expectations need to be managed. If the platform is presented as specific to WYRED, and deliberately safe (in like most social media) but for this reason not as attractive as the toosl they are used to, then children and young people are more accepting of it. The most valuable strategy appears to be to frame it as a repository and a place for specific collaboration rather than as a site for continuous interaction. Doing this frees the platform from having to compete for





attention. The WYRED platform is now running with a very large target group with considerable diversity in terms of ages, languages and communication styles, and it provides a reasonable safe space for WYRED activity.

It is worth noting that the functionality of the platform and its attractiveness is sufficient rather than brilliant, but it appears that with the correct framing and support children and young people do commit to using it for the purposes of the WYRED activity. The key is to ensure that there is an engaging activity to participate in, and that there is a commitment from partners to facilitating and guiding it. It is vital to emphasise the role of the partners in committing to the use of the platform as a key element in the future success of WYRED, and in helping the users to engage with it. It is central to the international activity that can generate conclusions across contexts, and hence impact. In relation to this it is necessary to implement the planned training in facilitation as soon as possible.

4 The WYRED Cycle

These work packages make up the WYRED cycle. As previously mentioned, the decision was taken to start the second WYRED cycle earlier than originally planned in autumn 2017, in order to adjust the cycle to the rhythms of the target groups involved. This means that for some time, the first and second cycles were running in parallel. This is not considered to be an issue, particularly when it is taken into consideration that as the project moves forward the WYRED cycle is increasingly expected to become a continuous cycle in which different groups may be in different stages of the cycle at the same time. However, though the flexibility it has afforded has allowed the partners to adapt better to their local contexts, the issues around international participation mentioned earlier need to be addressed.

4.1 WP4 Networking

The work in this phase of the project has been successful in attracting a diverse collection of participants to the project in the different countries, most of whom have carried forward to subsequent phases. In general partners are successful in engaging participants, though this has always been more challenging than originally anticipated as discussed earlier. The networking







phase originally involved a series of different actions designed to function as attractors to facilitate the networking process. These included the manifesto, slogan competition, the Delphi and the initial questionnaire, and while each of these constituted an interesting tool for engagement, they were organised into a very tight timeframe in which delays created bottlenecks that affected the whole networking process.

For this reason, this was the work package that was most subject to streamlining in the second year. The principal objective of the workflow is to promote engagement of participants while simultaneously identifying their concerns. Some elements were felt to be principally elements that helped to kickstart the process at the very start of the project, but that once the process was underway they were no longer as necessary. This is the case of the initial stakeholder questionnaire and the slogan competition, which were initially intended to spark interest in the absence of other elements, but which were later increasingly superseded by the evidence generated by the work of the project itself. It was therefore decided to drop them.

The role of the manifesto was subject to much discussion, which has in the end been resolved by the recommendation of the EU review report to revisit it. Further work has been done and a new version will be ready for publication very soon. It will continue to be treated as a living document, and thought is being given to how to articulate this effectively.

The Delphi process works well, and it is very well organised and managed. However, it functioned as a bottleneck in the first cycle since it was responsible for generating ideas for the dialogues. In the second year it was decided that this role was as necessary since the consortium has material for seeding the dialogues from the previous cycle. However, the Delphi is seen to fulfil an important observatory role in the project. It feeds discussions, dissemination and engagement, as well as articulating initial conversations on a policy level, and its results are valuable outputs to share with policy, which will be done in the Insights document mentioned earlier. The decision was therefore taken to continue to implement the Delphi but in parallel with the rest of the networking activity.

These different decisions led to a streamlining of the networking process, which is considered to make the networking activity easier to implement. The focus of the networking activity has in the





second half on 2018 shifted to policy makers. Partners are capable of networking within their own contexts but there is a need to articulate the conversation at European and international level, and it is recommended that this be the focus of this work package. It is also recommended that the networking activity be very closely coordinated with the valorisation work package, as at this stage of the project there is substantial overlap.

One challenge in the networking process had to do with issues of terminology. The language used in the proposal is not necessarily the language used by those who work with children and young people. Though partners are making adjustments continuously, there is a need to give thought to the language used in the different contexts of the project. Work has been done recently to produce documents that define what WYRED is in a common language that all can use and it is recommended that all partners adopt the terminology used in these.

As the second cycle has progressed, and there has been more flexibility, it is increasingly clear that the WYRED cycle is becoming a continuous process it also becomes clear that networking needs to be continuous as well. In the final year as impact becomes a key element to consider, the focus on policy makers is necessary and important. However the sustainability of WYRED will also depend of the sustainability of its networking strategies. Each partner has employed different strategies and it is strongly recommended that this work package collect good practices relating to networking from the partners and bring them together into a short document that can feed the work of the WYRED Association, again the need for close liaison is clear.

4.2 WP5 Social Dialogues

The social dialogues continue to function well, a wide diversity of participants have engaged in these processes over the course of the project so far and valuable perspectives have been shared. Reflection over the second year has pointed to the fact that it is unfortunate that the outputs of the dialogues only feed the next stage of the cycle, and are not more widely shared since they have a value in themselves. For this reason, the WYRED Insights document, mentioned earlier in this report, will draw on the results of the dialogues as well as the outputs of the projects.

There is a strong perception among the partner of the value of the dialogues, not only as a stage in the cycle that makes the rest possible - the discussions provide the momentum and the ideas





to move forward into the research phase - but also as intrinsically valuable in themselves. They constitute a valuable opportunity to engage children and young people in analysing, reflecting and critically thinking about their own generation in terms of what they identify as their principal concerns and problems in relation to the digital society. The result of the process is frequently that the children and young people involved derive a sense of empowerment through sharing their knowledge and perspectives, and furthermore that the issues that concern them are also relevant for their peers and for society. For many the discussions also involved exploration of core values and views of the future. Going forward, as mentioned earlier, there will be a slight change in the dialogues, which is in fact already taking place. As the EU review report points out there is a need for greater focus in the themes WYRED covers, and there is therefore a commitment to the use of a set of themes relating to the digital society. It is expected that though this may limit that freedom for the conversation to range, it will lead to greater potential for impact.

In relation to this, the reporting of the dialogues remains an issue. Though it is perhaps understandable that as the dialogue sessions are often now the first contact with WYRED, and therefore facilitators feel the need for a light touch, there is a need for greater homogeneity in the reporting. Though the template created is very clear and easy to use, work needs to be done to provide a greater degree of detail in some reports since this is vital for the extraction of useful insights from the dialogues. Partners need to commit to more detailed reporting of the dialogues. Another issue, mentioned elsewhere, is the need for more online events to take place in the project, and efforts should be made to ensure some of these are online dialogues.

4.3 WP6 Research projects

WYRED has generated a large number of projects, there are more than 100 on the platform. It is clear that the flexibility and openness of the project to numerous different forms of exploration research and the capacity to adapt to the needs of the participants is extremely valuable. Though the initial reaction to the idea of doing research (often framed as exploration) can be of slight bemusement for some children and young people, there is evidence that when sufficient autonomy to take decisions about the nature of the exploratory process they will undertake is given to the children and young people (which is a fundamental principle of WYRED), the response





is very positive. They take ownership of the process, and the work involved is proficient and of good quality.

The main tangible output so far of this work package is the Research Toolkit which is a very valuable package with a good range of activities and suggestions for participants to orient them when this is necessary. Some feedback indicates that it can be difficult to engage with as it is rather large, and it has been suggested that it may be a good idea to reduce the size of the toolkit to make it more manageable. Other suggestions include making a shorter version. Work is currently under way on the second version of the Toolkit.

4.4 WP7 Evaluation and interpretation

The focus of the work in this package covers two areas. The first is evaluation of the experience of the children and young people who have participated in the WYRED cycle. The second involves the interpretation of the results of the projects in order to decide what insights and outputs can be shared with others (other children and young people in the platform, specific policy makers and organisations and the wider society). In the case of the evaluation part there is a set of tools to evaluate the dialogue and research process. Different tools have been developed for different ages of participants, and the focus has been on developing a slim and accessible methodology that would not overload participants at a sensitive stage in their engagement with the WYRED process. The methodology focuses on a self-evaluation process that involves creative responses to ensure engagement.

However, with regard to the second part of the work, the interpretation some more work needs to be done. During reflection on this work during the second year it has been seen that there is a need to focus more intensively to look at ways in which the outputs of the research done by the participants may be of interest to society or policy makers. The process is therefore undergoing a process of revision, however this has been delayed due to the fact that the personnel involved left the project during 2018. Work has now resumed however, and it is expected that interpretation will be more fully articulated. It is noticeable however that the planned WYRED insights document is in fact an interpretative document of the kind the work package needs, and it is therefore recommended that the work focus on developing a procedure to help each project







and its outputs to feed this document appropriately, so that this document makes up the second part of the Evaluation report (D7.3).

At various points in this report there has been a focus on the need for coordinated international activity. There is a sense in which this international activity forms part of the interpretation process in WYRED. It should be based on clusters of projects that share their results together discuss them, perhaps extend them, and then identify key points to be shared more widely. It is recommended that a basic (though flexible) structure is created for this activity, and that it be implemented as soon as possible as part of the online interactions and events in WYRED. It should be incorporated as an integral part of the WYRED cycle, as to do this would help to guarantee the legitimacy of the WYRED outputs and contribute enormously to the generation of impacts. This is perhaps the link that has been missing so far in the project.





5 Valorisation

5.1 WP8 Dissemination and sustainability

The valorisation work in WYRED has been progressing appropriately over the second year of the project. The WYRED Stories strategy in which partners share stories about the work they are doing in WYRED has to a large extent functioned well. There is a greater degree of commitment to the work of dissemination and, increasingly, there are stories to tell. The valorisation plan is being implemented more fully, and the lead partner is doing very good work. However, as can be seen from the comments made in the EU review report, the current issue is that what can be shared is mainly at the level of anecdote. For the valorisation work (and increasingly the networking activity) to be more effective and powerful there is a need to be telling stories not about individual projects, in one context (interesting though they may be) but about common insights that derive from several projects. When this is achieved, then the valorisation work will be able to achieve a much more substantial impact.

In order to ensure this, it will be important for this WP8, together with WP4, liaise with the work in WP7 to create the WYRED Insights document. It is recommended that the contact database, and the network of organisations WYRED is in touch with, or could be in touch with, be referred to during the creation of the document. so that recommendations can be targeted into the right places in the conversation and towards the right interlocutors. (This may imply further work to identify the place of WYRED in the conversation about children and young people and the digital society). As elsewhere in the project there is a need to start joining the dots.

The other part of the work done during the second year of WYRED has been the valuable work done on the WYRED Association. Though at first it was felt that it might be premature to work on this at the point reached, especially when the international dimension had been identified as requiring work, a business plan and articles for the Association have been produced. These will undoubtedly evolve and there is much work to be done in the final year to consolidate the WYRED Association, but they serve as a solid base for further discussion about the future of WYRED after the funding period.





6 Management

6.1 WP9 Project management

The administration of WYRED is effective and well-managed, providing help where necessary and when questions are asked. The project handbook is of good quality with a useful collection of templates and materials for the project to standardise documents and processes. The tools that the project uses are generally acceptable, and the organisation of meetings has been efficient. As regards the coordination of the project, in the second year, partners have in general been quite content with the "light touch" approach. The organisation of the work into Working Groups has helped to articulate a horizontal approach to the work which has functioned quite well. though some of the groups are more active than others. However, this horizontal approach though it has given partners freedom to work as they need to in their contexts has the disadvantage that it can lead to a lack of coordination. The recommendations of the EU review report point to this, the central message is that the project needs more clear articulation and a sense of working together in the same direction; the references to a framed research approach, a set of themes to work on and common conclusions in order to achieve impact all point to a need for there to be a degree of central coordination. It is recommended that this coordination focus on these transversal impact-related issues, and that it be done separately from the work of the administration of the project which should continue to focus on the deliverables the project needs to produce as well. It is suggested that it be carried out as part of the work of WP1.

A related aspect that has been commented on throughout is the planning of work. Some partners have made repeated requests for there to be a plan that defines exactly what has to be done and when, while others feel this would lead to a repetition of the lockstep issues that hampered the project in the first year. It is clear that to avoid deadline slippage in the final year it would be very valuable to have a plan of actions for the final year with objectives and deadlines for each partner, but more importantly there needs to be careful planning of the collaboration online between partners and between groups of children and young people. The final year requires planned teamwork.





6.2 WP9 Collaboration and communication

Communication and collaboration work well within the project. Partners are committed and generally enthusiastic, though aware of the challenges. There has been a process of acculturation as partners become used to different experiences in working styles and as partners have got to know each other it has become easier to work together. While some partners have had some difficult situations, with changes of personnel and other difficulties, these have been resolved appropriately and this aspect of the project provides grounds for optimism regarding the challenges of the final year.

6.3 WP10 Quality and Evaluation

Quality and Evaluation in WYRED, delayed a little in the first year, have come back into line in the second year. The Advisory Board has met 3 times and will meet again at the November meeting in Istanbul. The members of the Advisory Board have provided valuable insights and helped the project to improve. This work package also managed the External Ethical review which had a very successful outcome. This WP provides useful spaces for the discussion of the work of WYRED and for reflection on the challenges involved and the improvements that can be made, individually and collectively, to further the progress of WYRED.





7 Conclusions and recommendations

The WYRED project continues to progress adequately. It has overcome the challenges it faced in the first year and though it has produced significant work, has other impact-related challenges to address in the third year. It is hoped that the recommendations in this report, along with those of the Advisory Board and the EU review report, can help the consortium to consolidate the WYRED approach and generate valuable results in the final year and after the funding period. The final section of this report provides a list of these recommendations.

7.1 Summary of recommendations

AREA	RECOMMENDATION
OVERALL	There is a need for all partners to take into account the need to work
	towards greater integration, focused on thematic coordination, and
	shared projects.
OVERALL	It is vital for all partners to commit to organising and participating in a
	schedule of online events and specific collaborative work between WYRED
	groups from different countries, in order to valorise the shared results
	and generate impacts in the final year. This schedule should be as
	continuous as possible.
OVERALL	All partners should commit to the collection of digital themes that has
	been agreed and keep to these in their implementation of the WYRED
	approach
OVERALL	It is recommended that the planned WYRED Insights document be
	produced as soon as possible, ideally before the end of November, so that
	it can be used as soon as possible, since it is the keystone for many other
	actions within the project.







OVERALL	There is a vital need to develop a much clearer vision of the way WYRED
	fits in to the wider conversation around children and young people and
	the digital society, and put this vision into practice.
WP1	It is recommended that the updated process handbook description of the
	WYRED cycle be synthesised down into a short description of the steps, to
	ensure all implement it in the same way, and give a clearer idea of the
	framed research approach that WYRED involves and facilitate a
	commonality of approach. Reporting also needs to be further
	homogenised.
WP1	The updating of the process handbook is an area that will need to be
	considered soon while the lessons learnt from the first cycle are still fresh.
WP2	Though appropriate attention is being paid to diversity and inclusion in
	WYRED, it will be important to continue to ensure that the diversity criteria
	are appropriately implemented by all partners.
WP3	It is recommended that all partners commit explicitly to active use of the
	platform as part of the shared schedule of online activity that is being
	developed. It is central to the international activity that can generate
	conclusions across contexts, and hence impact and there is a need to
	encourage users to engage with it. In relation to this it is necessary to
	implement the planned training in facilitation as soon as possible.
WP4	Networking in the final year should focus especially on the need to
	articulate WYRED participation in the conversation around children and
	young people and digital society at European and international level,
WP4	Work has been done recently to produce documents that define what
	WYRED is in a common language that all can use, and it is recommended





	that all partners adopt the terminology used in these in their networking activity
WP4	It is recommended that WP4 collect good practices relating to WYRED
	networking from the partners in a short accessible document.
WP5	Partners need to commit to more detailed and consistent reporting of the
	dialogues.
WP6	The schedule of online events should include online dialogues.
WP7	It is recommended that a procedure be developed to help each project
	and its outputs to feed the WYRED Insights document appropriately, and
	that this document makes up the second part of the Evaluation report
	(D7.3).
WP7	It is recommended that a basic (though flexible) structure is created for
	the online clustering of projects (understood as part of interpretation in
	WP7), and that it be implemented as soon as possible as part of the online
	interactions and events in WYRED. It should be incorporated as an
	integral part of the WYRED cycle, as to do this would help to guarantee the
	legitimacy of the WYRED outputs and contribute enormously to the
	generation of impacts.
WP8	It is recommended that the contact database, and the network of
	organisations WYRED is in touch with, or could be in touch with, be
	referred to during the creation of the WYRED Insights document so that
	recommendations can be targeted into the right places in the
	conversation and towards the right interlocutors.
WP9	It is recommended that there be central coordination to focus on the
	transversal impact -related issues the project faces in its final year, and
	that this be done separately from the work of the administration of the





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	project which should continue to focus on the deliverables the project
	needs to produce as well. It is suggested that it be carried out as part of
	the work of WP1.
OVERALL	It would be very valuable to have a plan of actions for the final year with
	objectives and deadlines for each partner, but more importantly there
	needs to be careful planning of the collaboration online between partners
	and between groups of children and young people. This could be
	prepared by WP1.





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