

Participatory and digital – International youth work at its best “wir weit weg” and “Memopolis” – participatory and digital international youth exchange projects

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Abstract

Surely international youth work is complex enough. Why should it be turned into a participatory or even digital process? Using two projects by the organization KINDERVEREINIGUNG Leipzig as an example, this article demonstrates two things: a participatory approach is indeed compatible even with complex projects. And be it during a pandemic or not, digitalisation, or the use of suitable digital tools, offers a wealth of educational potential for participatory (international) youth work. To leverage this potential, the international youth work team at KINDERVEREINIGUNG Leipzig developed a digital games platform allowing participants without coding experience to design basic computer games. These multimedia games enable team leaders to engage with curricula and participants to share their experiences. The team's initial conviction that even complex projects can be run in a participatory manner, or at least using participatory elements, even grew while running the project “wir weit weg”, as described in the article. The article goes on to illustrate the potential of digital participatory youth work in general and outlines the role that a digital game design platform such as “Memopolis” can play.

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