# WYRED

netWorked Youth Research for Empowerment in the Digital society

# MANIFESTO

# Our WORLD now

We, young people, have always been defined by decision makers, educational systems and our own families as future actors for change, shapers of our societies and drivers of new behaviours and understandings.

Unlike previous generations, we were born into a different world - interacting with digital technology from an early age, which made us more acquainted to computers, mobile devices and internet. We live in a world with a blurred distinction between reality and virtuality, between humans, machines and nature. The world we live in should reflect us - its inhabitants, but we do not feel free to shape it. We are referred to as users, but even if that is the only world we know - does it really belong to us?

The cost of freedom can be very high - not everyone is aware of what it brings. We need to be able to exercise our freedoms without fear of being judged for who we are, but also to stay safe. We are not aware of the pre-internet and pre-technology era and we did not have to adjust our lives to it. Internet and technology are an indivisible part of it.

As the WORLD we live in - we are diverse. Hence, thinking that all young people are alike and the same, might lead to losing the immense diversity we live in every day.

We believe in our own diversity and each individual's with their own complex identities, backgrounds and attitudes that create their own sense of self, which in all cases cannot be reduced to a single element or aspect. We believe in equality and the importance of having a safe space to develop and create based on our own varieties.

Privacy doesn't matter much, because it seems like we don't have any. I want to know what data can be collected and shared but the terms and conditions are ununderstandable.

# The WORLD as we want it

We, young people, in the scope of WYRED space, want to feel that our voices matter. We feel like the people with power are carrying out their agendas without listening to our needs and voices. We want to be heard constantly, not only when you need us.

We want to define the topics that are burning issues for us, to take part in deciding on how we will discuss them and what kind of WORLD we want to live in.

We are aware that all data is interconnected and available to someone. Privacy doesn't matter much, because it seems like we don't have any. We want to know what data can be collected and shared, but the terms and conditions are ununderstandable.

We feel like we are being watched and listened to, even when we are told that we aren't. What if in the near future, internet and technology, will know what we want before we do?

Our world was and is being shaped by others, without us having a say - there is always somebody else deciding instead of us. We want to have our say, we want to define our WORLD - rules, rights, expectations, responsibilities and obligations. We do not want to be simple users, beneficiaries in the hands of others.

We feel like we are being watched and listened to, even when we are told that we aren't. What if in the near future, internet and technology will know what we want before we do?

# Our WORLD –
# WHAT WILL WE DO TO MAKE IT BETTER

We will build a network of peers around the world, in all our differences, to raise our voices and create safe spaces to express, interact and create. We need a space in which we can explore our perspectives and interests in relation to society - online and offline.

We need a platform from which we can communicate our perspectives to other policy and decision makers. We want policy and decision makers to be in touch with us directly, and for them to hear what we have to say.

We will be ourselves - creative, innovative, free. We will use different means of engagement - arts, technology, research, face to face meetings, online tools to express ourselves and our needs.

We will be positive - We need to show more respect by not just writing bad comments without real reasons, but also by giving some advices for better content. When we are online, we shouldn't forget that we are talking to a real person. Internet is not for hate speech.

We recognise the diversity of others. We must invest less effort in finding the apparent similarities between us and others, and accept the diversity in which we live. This will give equal opportunities to all population groups, enabling them to progress as part of the society, and enjoy a human diversity that will shape us to become better as human beings.

WYRED is a space that allows us to embrace this diversity that each and one of us has to offer. WYRED is set to offer a space for all individuals to engage and not be treated just as passive consumers, but ultimately as leaders, creators and main actors.

Listen to us when you ask about our opinions and do it without prejudice - no point in asking if nothing is done about it. Don't listen to us only when you need us.

# We, young people are calling upon the stakeholders:

We, young people, commit to shape and be part of the WYRED activities in accordance with the values of non-discrimination, (regardless of age, gender and sexual orientation, social and cultural background, political or religious belief), freedom of expression and speech, respect for human rights, dignity and care in a democratic way.

**To be heard:** Listen to us when you ask about our opinions and do it without prejudice - no point in asking if nothing is done about it. Don't listen to us only when you need us. Join our spaces, take part in discussions, listen to what we have to say. Decision makers need to be available and open for our opinions. But make sure you are listening and not just hearing. Once you get the power - don't forget your promises.

**To be safe:** We want to feel and be safe, live without fake news and hate speech. Internet is not a place for hate and lies but for keeping us connected, informed and human,where we can feel safe, wanted and valued. We don't want to be afraid when being online. Online safety and protection of individual privacy must become a priority for decision makers. Privacy is and should be a right of every individual. Make sure that you don't overregulate - there is a thin line between hate speech and freedom of speech

**To know, be informed and aware:** Make the rules of the internet understandable and clear. We want to know what kind of data is being collected about us. We want internet to be free and neutral. We want to exercise our right to be be able to remove and be deliberately forgotten. We are aware that there is a lot of false information and that not everything is true on the internet. There is a strong need to distinguish between fake news and actual facts - support us in this struggle!

Internet is not a place for hate and lies but for keeping us connected, informed and human,where we can feel safe, wanted and valued.

**TO HAVE DIGNITY AND RESPECT:**   Digital society needs to be respectful, inclusive and non-violent. We want friendships, a human approach and not to be bullied online. We want to see supportive and safe environments that will boost our self-esteem rather than crash it with hateful comments. Educating on the values of mutual respect, tolerance and human dialogue, will support in solving the root problems and be more effective than treating the consequences.

**TO STAY HUMAN:**   All generations need to be supported, to be online, and internet needs to be accessible and free for everyone. We want digital and overall education to be improved, with more resources to be invested in education and new methods to improve the quality of teaching. We don't all have the same starting points or same digital experiences. We want to see investments in people and their learning, not only in digital infrastructures and artificial intelligence. Machines and technology don't have one thing that we have - human perspective.

Note:
The WYRED Manifesto has been created based on consultations with young people in different face to face meetings and events, Delphi2 research and the WYRED platform. At least 300 young people from all over Europe, between 15-30 years of age, took part in its creation and formulation. The manifesto will continue to be a consultative document throughout WYRED project. This document is a collection of young people's thoughts.



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