SMART AI, SMARTER YOUTH

CASE STUDIES

Co-funded by the European Union

SMART AI, SMARTER YOUTH

Project Number: 2024-3-SK02-KA210-YOU-000280390

Project Duration:01/01/2025 - 30/06/2026

Project Introduction : Smart AI, Smarter Youth is an 18-month international initiative designed to strengthen the capacity of youth workers and empower young people to meaningfully engage with artificial intelligence (AI) in their everyday lives. As digital technologies increasingly shape education, employment, and social participation, the project responds to a growing need for accessible, practical, and inclusive AI literacy within youth work.

The project brings together partners from four countries Slovakia, Portugal, Lithuania, and Turkey to collaboratively explore how AI can be integrated into youth work practices in ways that are ethical, inclusive, and responsive to real community needs. Particular attention is given to young people facing barriers such as geographic isolation, social exclusion, disability, or limited access to digital resources.

Project Objectives

1.Strengthening the practical skills of youth workers in AI: Youth workers will gain hands-on experience with AI tools and applications, enabling them to integrate innovative digital approaches into their daily practice. This will enhance their ability to respond to challenges such as digital exclusion, engagement of marginalized youth, and the need for new educational methods.

2.Encouraging active participation of young people through AI-based activities: Through workshops and interactive sessions, young people will not only learn about artificial intelligence but also apply it to address real-life challenges in their communities. These activities aim to foster critical thinking, creativity, and active citizenship, particularly in tackling issues such as unemployment and digital inequality.

3.Building a transnational network of youth organizations:The project will establish a collaborative network across Slovakia, Portugal, Lithuania, and Turkey, promoting the exchange of tools, knowledge, and good practices. This network is intended to support continuous learning and ensure that the project's impact extends beyond its duration.

4. Promoting informal education in AI and digital innovation:By focusing on accessible, non-formal learning approaches, the project will help participants understand and use AI in a practical and creative way. Emphasis is placed on inclusion, participation, and problem-solving, ensuring that AI becomes a supportive tool rather than a barrier in youth work.

Co-funded by the European Union

AI & YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

1.Low Youth Participation in Civil Society Activities in Sakarya

Background: Youth Development and Enterprise Association working with young people aged 16–30 across urban and rural Sakarya. Activities include policy forums and local civic workshops.

Challenge: Many youth, especially from rural neighborhoods and low-income urban zones, feel excluded from local decision-making processes due to a lack of outreach, digital tools, and accessible formats. Civic events are often poorly promoted, use technical language, or occur during hours incompatible with student or working youth schedules. There's also little education on civic engagement in schools or informal settings.

Impact: Civic forums remain dominated by older voices or privileged youth, creating a representation gap. Young people grow increasingly disconnected from public life, resulting in political apathy, disillusionment with democracy, and missed opportunities for intergenerational collaboration.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Pol.is for capturing public opinion interactively.
- Google Forms + NLP to analyze open feedback from youth.
- Delib (Citizen Space) for structured youth consultations.

2.Limited Access to Skill-Building Opportunities for Disadvantaged Youth in Sakarya

Background: Local initiatives focus on youth aged 18–25 in rural Sakarya, especially NEET youth. NGOs offer offline workshops that require transport and fees.

Challenge: Many young people in rural villages and outlying districts face transportation difficulties, economic constraints, and poor internet infrastructure that prevent them from joining skill development programs. Even in urban centers, affordable training options tailored to youth needs are scarce. Impact: This disparity contributes to long-term inequality, particularly between urban and rural youth. Many young people internalize a sense of failure, develop low self-efficacy, and miss out on emerging industries such as tech, creative digital services, or AI-based work further limiting upward mobility.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Coursera AI Recommendations to offer tailored online learning paths.
- Replika to provide motivational support.
- ChatGPT to deliver instant and personalized learning advice.

3. One-Size-Fits-All Mentorship Models in Local Youth Programs

Background: NGOs in Sakarya serve diverse young populations (16–30) through static group mentorship programs.

Challenge: Programs often apply a standard curriculum or advice model to youth with dramatically different life realities from migrant youth in urban centers to rural school-leavers with limited internet access. The lack of needs-based matching makes many feel misunderstood or undervalued.

Impact: This contributes to disengagement and dropouts in mentoring programs. For youth already facing structural barriers like those with disabilities, learning difficulties, or unstable home lives, this lack of tailored support further isolates them and reduces chances of long-term personal growth.

Potential AI Solutions:

- CoachHub for AI-based mentorship pairing.
- Mentorloop for structured mentoring flows.
- ChatGPT API to create adaptive personal development journeys.

4. Lack of Data Literacy Among Youth Workers in Sakarya

Background: Youth-serving organizations with little prior exposure to AI or data science.

Challenge: Most youth workers have little to no formal training in data analysis or AI-assisted planning. They rely on informal conversations or manual tracking, which are insufficient for long-term planning, evaluation, or scaling. Rural organizations in particular have no access to tools or even digital literacy infrastructure.

Impact : This results in missed intervention windows and inability to adapt programming to evolving youth needs. Efforts remain reactive, disconnected from measurable impact, and unappealing to funders who seek data-driven results.

Potential AI Solutions:

- DataCamp for structured AI/data training.
- Teachable Machine to explore AI without coding.
- Peltarion for no-code data-driven decision-making.

5. Overlooked Skills in Non-Traditional Pathways in Sakarya's Youth Programs

Background: Programs often focus on academic or formal employment pathways, leaving creative youth unsupported.

Challenge: Youth passionate about gaming, podcasting, digital content creation, or social media marketing are often excluded from “serious” career paths. There is a cultural bias in both families and institutions against creative or freelance futures, especially for youth from working-class or immigrant backgrounds.

Impact:YTalented youth either abandon their ambitions or leave Sakarya entirely in search of support, creating brain drain. The local economy loses access to new industries like e-commerce, virtual services, and content creation, all fields where youth-led innovation thrives.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Canva Magic Studio for creative content design.
- Synthesia for AI-generated video content.
- Lumen5 to turn text and ideas into shareable media.

6. Digital Divide in Virtual Participation Among Sakarya Youth

Background: Youth initiatives moved online post-COVID, but many young people lack access or digital skills.

Challenge: While urban youth access Zoom events and online learning easily, rural youth may lack laptops, affordable data, or adult support to help navigate digital tools. Additionally, migrant families and youth with disabilities face specific accessibility challenges (language, screen readers, interface complexity).

Impact: This results in systemic exclusion from learning, networking, and participation opportunities. Those already vulnerable girls, low-income youth, ethnic minorities fall further behind in digital readiness and 21st-century skills acquisition.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Edmodo with AI Extensions for low-bandwidth e-learning.
- Meta AI Lite Tools to optimize online access.
- AI Chatbots for asynchronous, data-light learning.

7. Low Engagement in Online Youth Events Across Sakarya

Background: Youth organizations regularly host webinars and digital meetups targeting 18–30-year-olds.

Challenge: Digital events are often monotonous, lacking visuals, interaction, or culturally relevant content. Platforms used are unfamiliar to some, while others feel events are too academic or not responsive to youth culture. Migrant and minority youth are rarely consulted in design.

Impact: Events fail to spark engagement, feedback loops break down, and youth distrust organizers' intentions. Instead of platforms for empowerment, online events become box-checking exercises, damaging credibility and long-term impact.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Mentimeter + GPT Plugins for live interactivity.
- Runway ML to create appealing AI-generated visuals.
- Kahoot! AI Quizzes to gamify learning and boost interest.

8. Limited Use of AI Tools in Youth-Led Campaigns in Sakarya

Background: Youth associations depend on basic tools for advocacy and awareness campaigns.

Challenge: Most youth campaigners rely on Canva or Instagram without understanding digital engagement strategies. They lack access to analytics, trend-monitoring, or AI-generated visuals that increase visibility. Many don't know how to adapt messaging to reach broader or diverse audiences.

Impact: Important advocacy topics like climate, education, or youth rights don't spread beyond friend circles. Youth-led efforts remain localized and short-lived, undermining the potential for larger movement-building or community impact.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Buffer + AI Insights for smart social media scheduling.
- BuzzSumo to discover viral content trends.
- Hootsuite AI Writer to craft optimized posts.

9. Youth Voices Not Reflected in Sakarya's Youth Policies

Background: Local governments organize occasional youth consultations, often top-down and unstructured.

Challenge: Participation tools like surveys or panels are often designed by adults, without youth involvement in format or outreach. Those not in school or youth councils are excluded entirely. Language used is technical, and policies are rarely translated into accessible formats.

Impact:Youth lose faith in civic processes. Their ideas and concerns, like mental health, digital skills, or cultural spaces, remain unaddressed. Local governments miss the chance to build trust and tap into youth creativity for better governance.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Typeform + NLP (MonkeyLearn) for qualitative survey analysis.

- OpenAI Embedding Models to cluster feedback into themes.
- Remesh for moderated, real-time dialogue with policy-makers.

10. Lack of AI Integration in Youth Planning Processes

Background: NGOs and institutions collect youth feedback manually without AI-supported analytics. Challenge: Although feedback is collected during youth activities, there is no consistent system for turning it into actionable insights. Staff lack time, training, or software to analyze and categorize large volumes of feedback. AI is viewed as complex or expensive.

Impact: Programs repeat mistakes or remain generic. Youth feel their input doesn't matter, reducing motivation to participate. Funding opportunities tied to impact measurement and evaluation are often missed.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Power BI with AI Visuals for visual data summaries.
- MonkeyLearn to extract patterns from text feedback.
- Notion AI/Airtable AI to streamline project insights and workflows.

Entrepreneurship and Career Guidance

1. AI for Career Mapping: Training on tools that help young people explore career paths, identify skills gaps, and prepare for future job markets.
2. Digital Entrepreneurship: Workshops on guiding youth to use AI tools to develop entrepreneurial projects, including market analysis and business planning.
3. Future Skills Training: Equipping youth workers to teach essential 21st-century skills like AI literacy, data analytics, and programming.

1. Unclear Career Pathways Among High School Graduates in Sakarya

Background: Youth Development and Enterprise Association engages high school graduates aged 17–20 in both urban and rural districts of Sakarya.

Challenge: Many youth, especially in low-income or rural areas, lack proper career counseling or exposure to emerging job sectors. Career guidance counselors are often under-resourced, overburdened, or unaware of evolving fields such as AI, green tech, or digital freelancing. As a result, youth often rely on hearsay or family pressure when making life-altering choices.

Impact: Young people enter university programs that are misaligned with their talents or labor market needs, leading to high dropout rates or chronic unemployment. Those who don't pursue higher education fall into NEET status, with limited access to vocational alternatives or re-skilling pathways.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Pymetrics – Uses neuroscience games and AI to match users with ideal careers.
- SkillLab – Maps users' existing skills to future career paths and gaps.
- ChatGPT Career Coach – Offers simulated counseling and industry trends.

2. Lack of Entrepreneurial Mindset Among Youth in Suburban Sakarya

Background: Targeting 18–25-year-olds in Sakarya's suburban districts who have limited exposure to innovation ecosystems.

Challenge: Entrepreneurship is seen as a luxury or high-risk endeavor. Young people lack mentors, peer networks, and exposure to success stories, especially in tech or online businesses. Schools focus on rote learning and civil service jobs, failing to cultivate creativity, digital problem-solving, or self-employment thinking.

Impact: Talented and capable youth settle for insecure jobs, often in the informal sector. The city loses grassroots innovation potential and faces higher youth unemployment despite global entrepreneurial trends.
Potential AI Solutions:

- IdeaBuddy – Helps youth develop business ideas step-by-step using AI.
- Logo AI – Assists young entrepreneurs in branding without design skills.
- Bizplan Builder – An AI-supported platform to structure and budget ideas.

3. Inaccessibility of Career Guidance for Youth with Disabilities in Sakarya

Background: Programs for inclusive education and employment targeting disabled youth aged 16–30 in urban Sakarya.

Challenge: Youth with physical or learning disabilities often face inaccessible career guidance materials, platforms without screen reader compatibility, and a lack of personalized counseling. Few career services have inclusive communication practices, and many assume disability as a limitation rather than a different ability.

Impact: Disabled youth are isolated from job markets and educational institutions. Many internalize exclusion, miss the chance to explore tech-based or flexible careers, and remain economically dependent despite having the potential to thrive in supportive work environments.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Seeing AI (Microsoft) – Assists visually impaired users in navigating digital content.
- JobAI – Suggests remote and flexible jobs suitable for different ability levels.
- Milo AI – Offers speech therapy and emotional support for communication barriers.

4. Mismatch Between Vocational Training and Job Market Needs in Sakarya

Background: Local vocational schools serving youth from low-income urban and industrial neighborhoods.

Challenge: Curricula are outdated and disconnected from fast-growing sectors like automation, digital services, or AI. Schools often lack partnerships with industry, and graduates are unaware of soft skills or certifications needed for competitive careers.

Impact: Young people graduate into saturated or declining fields, creating frustration and disillusionment. Employers struggle to find qualified local talent, and Sakarya's labor market remains mismatched, limiting industrial growth and youth mobility.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Labor Market Insights by Lightcast – Tracks real-time skill demand.
- Coursera + AI Skills Match – Aligns youth education to market trends.
- Jobscan – Helps youth tailor CVs and applications to real job offers.

5. Gender Gaps in Digital Entrepreneurship Among Young Women in Sakarya

Background: Entrepreneurship support programs for young women aged 18–29, especially in conservative or rural neighborhoods.

Challenge: Girls often face social pressure to avoid technology, leadership, or financial independence. Family roles, early marriage expectations, and low digital access further isolate them from entrepreneurship. Even when interested, they struggle with language barriers or confidence in male-dominated spaces.

Impact: Women's creativity and business potential remain locked. Female-led startups are rare, and local innovation lacks diverse perspectives. Economic independence among young women decreases, reinforcing gender inequality and intergenerational poverty.

Potential AI Solutions:

- SheMeansBusiness by Meta (with AI features) – Digital literacy for women.
- Copy.ai – Helps women entrepreneurs create marketing content easily.
- Canva Magic Write – Enables content creation for small digital businesses.

6. Underutilized Talents Among Refugee and Migrant Youth in Sakarya

Background: NGOs working with Syrian and other migrant youth aged 18–30 across urban Sakarya.

Challenge: Despite having strong skills or prior education, refugee youth are often unable to prove their qualifications or understand job application processes. Cultural and language barriers persist, while digital tools for career exploration are rarely multilingual or inclusive.

Impact: Refugee and migrant youth are pushed into informal work or long-term unemployment. Integration suffers, and social tensions may rise due to perceptions of disengagement. Meanwhile, their talents—especially in areas like IT, commerce, or translation—remain invisible.

Potential AI Solutions:

1. SkillLab (Multilingual) – Helps identify and validate undocumented skills.
2. Google AI Transcribe + Translate – Overcomes language barriers.
3. TALENT.AI – Matches multilingual youth with hidden job opportunities.

7. Urban Youth Overwhelmed by Career Choices Without Guidance

Background: Young people aged 17–24 in central Sakarya enrolled in general high schools or universities.

Challenge: Youth face information overload about careers through social media, family pressure, and conflicting advice. With limited one-on-one support, they struggle to differentiate between genuine interest, trends, and feasible options.

Impact: Youth make rushed or uninformed decisions about their academic or professional future, often switching programs or burning out. This contributes to anxiety, mental health issues, and underperformance even in promising fields.

Potential AI Solutions:

- CareerExplorer AI – Provides career personality analysis and visual maps.
- ChatGPT Career Advisor Bot – Simulates conversations on pros/cons.
- MyNextMove AI (O*NET) – Suggests future-proof careers based on values.

8. Rural Youth Unaware of Remote Work and Gig Economy Opportunities

Background: Youth aged 18–30 in Sakarya's outer villages, most with limited access to higher education or urban connections.

Challenge: Remote work and the gig economy are poorly understood or completely unknown to many rural youth. Without digital literacy or role models, they assume the only jobs available require physical presence or migration.

Impact: Rural communities face depopulation, and youth potential is lost. Those who stay are locked in low-skilled seasonal labor, while young people in urban areas benefit from global digital shifts.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Remotive AI – Offers remote job listings tailored to skills.
- Fiverr AI Profile Builder – Guides youth to start freelancing.
- Turing AI – Matches junior coders with remote tasks.

9. Youth Workers Lack Tools to Teach Future Skills in Sakarya

Background: NGO educators and public youth center staff working with disadvantaged youth in both urban and rural settings.

Challenge: Even motivated youth workers struggle with outdated teaching resources and lack of training in digital, AI, or coding literacy. Institutional support is minimal, and curriculum standards don't yet reflect emerging job markets.

Impact: Youth miss out on critical future skills such as data thinking, automation awareness, and ethical AI understanding. Youth centers lose credibility, and participants disengage from programs seen as irrelevant.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Teachable Machine by Google – Helps workers teach AI visually.
- Microsoft Learn AI for Youth – Free modules for trainers and students.
- AI4Youth Toolkit (Intel) – Structured curriculum for future skills.

10. Low Awareness of Local and EU Startup Funding for Youth

Background: Aspiring entrepreneurs aged 18–30 in Sakarya's universities and youth associations.

Challenge: Many young people are unaware of national or EU startup grants, or they assume the process is too complex. Lack of English skills, legal literacy, or support in proposal writing creates barriers to entry.

Impact: Promising startup ideas are never submitted or are rejected due to poor documentation. Sakarya's startup ecosystem remains underdeveloped, and the region loses out on innovation funding that could empower youth and generate jobs.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Grantable AI – Helps draft grant applications automatically.
- AI Grant Chatbot – Explains funding steps in simple language.
- Notion AI – Assists in project planning and document prep.

Environmental and Social Impact

1. Climate education workshops

Background:A youth NGO in a small town offers climate literacy programs to youth aged 14–19, the idea of these workshops is to educate youth about climate change, sustainability and the impact of our own actions.

Despite the topic being relevant and engaging, the workshops remain lecture-based and just a few young people are willing to join them. However, it's important to get to know at least the basics of the topic before moving forward, and they have a couple of youth workers who especially specialise in the topic - one who has finished climate policy as an additional course during their studies and another who are attending different trainings, events and initiatives on monthly basis.No matter how many times they promote the workshops or try to invite people from local youth centers, schools - barely a few people show up to get involved.

Challenge:After reviewing the structure of workshops, the NGO discovered that it's very lecture-like and decided to incorporate some modern digital tools. It turns out, youth workers lack digital tools and training to create interactive, AI-supported environmental education that would be inclusive and interesting for the majority of youth.

Impact:Limited retention, passive learning, and few youth-led sustainability initiatives emerge from the program.

Possible AI Solutions:Exploring some easy and beginner friendly tools that can be easily incorporated in the workshops to make them more interactive, inclusive and keep people interested in them, possible solutions can be:

- ChatGPT (used for educational purposes): Create interactive quizzes, roleplays, and scenario-based learning on climate topics - which can help to structure ideas and improve what's been already in the talks, also help to adapt the content to be more inclusive of the bigger group and provide more of a tailored experience.
- Earth Hero AI: Support gamified eco-action planning.
- Socratic (by Google): Enhance understanding through AI-driven Q&A during learning sessions.

2. Mentorship of Youth Green Entrepreneurship

Background:In Lithuania, a regional incubator offers eco-business mentoring tailored to NEET young people working together with an innovation agency. Although they receive thousands of applications from young people looking for advice and have access to skilled local professionals with expertise level knowledge in entrepreneurship and green businesses, they face a major obstacle: a lack of useful tools to assist participants in visualising and prototyping their green company ideas.
Despite providing insightful advice based on experience, mentors have a limited capacity. Many mentors have tight schedules and tend to use their own tried-and-true methods, which aren't necessarily effective when helping one or two inexperienced business owners to start and develop something from scratch in today's world. Because of this, it becomes challenging to support early-stage concepts, create detailed action plans, and give these young entrepreneurs the hands-on help they need to go from concept to prototype. There are less and less people who complete the program fully because the advice seems not very possible and tailored to them..

Challenge:Staff helping the youth and mentors are unfamiliar with AI design tools, idea-generation platforms and making the flinches of ideas into a more detailed, step based plan that would facilitate a more fruitful dialogue between two sides.

Impact:Young people struggle to visualize and pitch ideas; just a few green business prototypes are developed.

Possible AI Solutions:

- RunwayML: Prototype visual mockups for eco-products.
- ChatGPT: Brainstorm sustainable business models and then create step by step plans based on created ideas, make more detailed plans, timelines, tables, KPI's and other plans which are needed to start making an idea become reality. Also can be used to prepare for pitches, unforeseen circumstances and resource management (in moderation when monitored by humans).
- Canva AI: Create investor decks and branding for green initiatives and design based help when starting something new in business.

3. Lack of Tools for Community-Based AI Projects

Background:A youth and kids center in a northern part of Portugal involves teens facing fewer opportunities in civic engagement, but has no tech capacity to develop data-driven community projects. They are pretty active - especially with active citizen, democracy and rural development based projects, have strong local partnerships and youth presence. As of now, a couple who were 2 of the strongest and most involved youth workers have moved out due to personal reasons. Not so long ago, the center started to explore the opportunities to create more activities connected with sustainability - recycling, water collection, local clean ups, etc. Thus after the most active youth workers left, it became evident that remaining ones are not sure on how to handle the projects, add some digital elements and be supportive with youth… to find new people would mean that it might take some time to onboard them and give space to fully understand the youth and kids center and how it all operates which takes time from the initial tasks and projects.

Challenge: Remaining staff are unsure how to co-create AI-based solutions for real-world issues like recycling or water use, etc. Youth starts being more passive and interested in the center itself, and especially when summer season is coming less and less people are showing up in the activities. Youth Workers are unfamiliar with using digital technology , AI tools and how to use them to include local kids and youth in the activities with sustainability using available sources.

Impact:Youth has many great ideas that remain abstract or unimplemented, making them less interested to further explore how to make their surroundings more nature-friendly.

Possible AI Solutions:

- MIT App Inventor + AI: Build basic apps for tracking energy or waste.
- Flourish: Visualize local data collected by youth for community discussions.
- Chat GPT: to find different sources of information, compare the information and make more inclusive and engaging content of workshops from little kids to teenagers in the center.

4. Bringing Culture to Life – Preserving Heritage Through AI

Background:In a remote but culturally vibrant region of Turkey, a youth center has long nurtured local traditions through storytelling, crafts, and music, the traditions which date back centuries.

The young people here are proud of their roots — they sing traditional songs, practice regional dances, and record their grandparents' stories, preserving as much living history as possible. But these treasures often stay within village boundaries, shared only in intimate settings or typed in notebooks and local exhibitions, not reaching the outside world.

While youth workers are motivated to help young people share their cultural identity with the other countries, they often feel out of their depth when it comes to digital tools - they are not exactly the ones to create fun content, update social media, websites and keep up with the digital technologies. Adding to the challenge is a lack of English skills, which makes global outreach difficult and discourages them from using international platforms or participating in cross-cultural exchanges.

Challenge:The center lacks accessible digital tools and the confidence to integrate AI in cultural documentation. On top of that, limited language skills act as a barrier to making this content understandable or visible to international audiences.

Impact:Local heritage remains isolated, with few opportunities for young people to connect across borders, develop digital creativity, or improve their communication in other languages. As well as this prevents them from seeking external attention and help - they don't develop any projects based on conservation or sharing the culture.. This results in missed chances to celebrate their identity on a larger stage—and to grow both personally and professionally.

Possible AI Solutions:

- Whisper (by OpenAI): Transcribe and translate stories, songs, or interviews into multiple languages, making them accessible across cultures. Youth can compare translations and refine their English skills while learning subtitling and content editing basics. Also, this can be a starting point for creating online content to be shared on different platforms to reach more people.
- D-ID or HeyGen: Make dynamic, AI-generated videos with characters, subtitles, or translated narration from recorded interviews or cultural tales. These videos are perfect for posting on social media.
- RunwayML or Adobe Firefly: Digitise and animate traditional signs or artwork. Without the requirement for a formal design experience, these technologies let young people recreate cultural images and produce short films or illustrated archives.

- ChatGPT (with translation plugins or prompts, deepl and etc): Encourage young people to rewrite video scripts, captions, and stories in English. As a writing coach, ChatGPT may assist users in developing their vocabulary, sentence construction, and cultural nuances in a supportive setting.
- Plan Quest: to help and structure culture based projects and get recognition for the work they are doing.

5. Unlocking Creativity – AI for Digital Art and Youth Engagement

Background:In the beautiful mountain resort town of Štrbské Pleso, Slovakia, a once-thriving youth arts program known for guiding young people's skills in creativity through dance, painting, drawing, singing, and more now faces an uncertain future. Despite years of success, the program is struggling to stay relevant in an evolving world.Participation in the workshops has declined, young people are finding more and more resources online, learning from their home, building communities online… and after the COVID19 pandemic it became evident that the program is no longer as popular as it used to be.

The core structure of the program remains rooted in traditional, hands-on techniques, while young people today are increasingly drawn to new forms of creative expression, many of which can be explored independently online. Digital art, animation, and music production are areas a few returning participants have shown interest in, but the program hasn't kept its pace. There's a lack of resources and digital know-how to integrate these modern formats.

The youth workers running the sessions are dedicated and open to change, but many still view digital tools especially AI as technical or coding-related, rather than as creative task based. Their workshops are typically local, small-group, and entirely offline. While they recognize that young people are engaging with creativity through social media, visual storytelling, and short-form content, they're unsure how to bridge the gap between their current methods and the digital interests of today's youth. After all, the program was so successful based on offline gatherings and hand-on skills for years..

Challenge:Youth workers lack educational training and accessible tools to integrate AI into creative practices in an inspiring and ethical way that would support the youth who are interested in exploring a more online based approach to creative arts.

Impact:Opportunities for creative self-expression are limited, and the program struggles to stay relevant to the interests of today's youth.

Possible AI solutions:

- NightCafe or Artbreeder: Let youth generate artwork inspired by personal stories or cultural elements.
- Soundraw or Boomy: Enable youth to produce original AI-generated soundtracks or beats for their projects.
- Canva's AI Features: Create memes, zines, posters, or digital comics for community campaigns or storytelling projects.
- AI Music Generator: to improve musical composition, understanding and overall creative flow in music based projects.

6. From Problem to Prototype: Youth, AI and Local Environmental Inequality

Background:The Mobile Climate Museum in Lithuania is an award-winning, youth-centered environmental education project. It uses a series of mobile, interactive exhibitions housed in repurposed shipping containers to raise awareness of climate literacy throughout the country. The museum educates young people and communities about issues including climate change, the EU Green Deal, sustainable farming, and responsible consumption by visiting both rural and urban regions.

While successful in raising awareness about sustainable issues, the museum currently lacks the integration of digital innovation and tools, especially in rural regions where environmental challenges and digital inequalities intersect. Workshops are frequently pre-planned and don't always take into account the voices of the young people who are looking at the exhibit or local environmental concerns. Although young people like the interactive aspects, they frequently return without having made an impact or created anything of their own, losing the chance to build knowledge, solutions, or prototypes that are applicable to their own settings.

At the same time, local environmental issues like waste mismanagement, water pollution, or public space neglect vary greatly from town to town. Youth workers and educators involved with the museum are enthusiastic about making the program more participatory and impact-driven, but

they lack experience in using AI to engage youth in data collection, analysis, or solution-building around these hyperlocal issues.

Challenge:Youth educators involved in the Mobile Climate Museum lack the digital tools and AI skills needed to transform environmental awareness into actionable, locally relevant projects. While youth are interested in tech and climate issues, they're rarely given the space or tools to prototype solutions that reflect their realities.

Impact:Both representation and attention to local environmental issues are still lacking. Young people lose out on opportunities to develop their digital skills, co-create climate solutions, or meaningful use of AI in the sense of the museum and connection to their environment. The museum is still a useful instrument for raising awareness, but it does not give young people the tools they need to make a difference in their communities.

Possible AI solutions:

- ChatGPT for Idea Mapping & Storytelling: Youth can brainstorm local environmental problems and use AI to help structure project ideas, write proposals, or craft community awareness campaigns.
- Flourish or Notion AI: Turn data collected from their town (e.g., litter mapping, energy audits, surveys) into visuals and dashboards to present to local decision-makers or share on social media.
- MIT App Inventor + AI Extension: Youth design simple mobile apps to report or track local issues like illegal dumping, energy use in schools, or neighborhood air quality.

7. AI-Powered Environmental Justice

Background:In a densely populated district of Kaunas, Lithuania, local schools and youth centers have long reported growing concerns about air quality, especially near busy roads and industrial zones Parents of school kids often raise concerns about their health, but the issue receives little attention from policymakers because of the absence of localized data and public pressure.

A local youth center active in community outreach and sustainability campaigns has begun to explore ways youth can take the lead to reach environmental justice. The staff sees huge potential in engaging teens through active learning, civic participation, and citizen science, yet

there are digital infrastructure and “know-how” manuals to build projects that go beyond traditional clean-up activities and poster campaigns or some local traffic around the subject.

Some of the teenagers have already shown interest in using digital tools, and even run an Instagram page that features DIY environmental tips in their school, organises small community upcycle gatherings, composting and similar. But the center and schools struggle to structurize the effort into projects especially ones that involve data, storytelling, and real-life advocacy. AI is seen as a “future thing,” rather than an accessible ally for change for the responsible educators and youth workers.

Challenge:The youth center lacks tools and capacity to empower young people to collect, interpret, and act on local environmental data particularly air quality metrics. Despite strong motivation, youth struggle to turn concern into concrete action that could influence local decisions or policies.

Impact:Air quality concerns remain just a speculation, with no tools to back them up. Youth feel powerless to influence decision-making and local visibility of environmental inequality is low. Meanwhile, environmental awareness grows but without avenues for tangible, youth-led change.

Possible AI solutions:

- Flourish + Canva AI: Teens create maps, infographics, and social media content based on collected air quality data to share with local authorities, schools, and peers. This transforms data into advocacy.

- MIT App Inventor + AI Extension: Youth co-develop a simple community app that shows air pollution hotspots in their area based on their own data, and offers health or travel tips (e.g., take alternative walking routes, reduce idling).

- ChatGPT for Scenario Writing: Help youth write civic proposals, policy suggestions, or awareness campaign materials based on their findings. They can use AI to simulate stakeholder dialogues or prepare for town hall presentations.

- Earth Hero AI (optional): Help youth set personal and group challenges for reducing their exposure and footprint—turning passive observation into behavior change.

8. Reclaiming Identity – Youth, Language & Storytelling

Background:In Žemaitija region (Lithuania) we can notice rich linguistic and cultural heritage is quietly fading - although the linguistic specifics and many other unique features, as the older generation passes, younger ones do not appreciate the language the same. Local dialects like Samogitian are spoken less and less, traditional songs and customs are remembered only during festivals, and while youth are curious about their roots, they rarely connect with cultural content in meaningful, creative ways.

A local youth center organizes cultural weekends and folklore events with regional singers, storytellers, and other artists, trying to reignite the passion for local folk and uniqueness. Yet these events feel passive—attendees watch, applaud, and go home. Young people often express that they don't see how these traditions relate to their identities in a modern world. They're fluent in digital tools like TikTok, Instagram, and the popular music is on Spotify—but rarely invited to use these creatively to remix, reimagine, or share their culture in formats that resonate with them.

Youth workers want to bridge this gap but feel under-equipped - there are so many tools to choose from yet to try all of it and find the ones that stick is almost impossible. They lack accessible training in creative digital tools and aren't sure how to introduce AI in digital storytelling or a way that's respectful to heritage but open to innovation.

Challenge:Youth workers don't have the confidence or digital knowledge to support cultural expression using AI-powered tools. There's a fear of "losing authenticity" while trying to modernize culture. Meanwhile, youth don't feel ownership of their heritage or the ability to reinterpret it through their own creative lenses.

Impact:Instead of being lived, local culture becomes static and just observed. Young people are confused about how to share their experiences in ways that they understand and feel their heritage. There is a gap between tradition and digital fluency, as well as neglected creative potential.

Possible AI solutions:

- HeyGen: Bring stories to life using avatars or video narration. Combine older recordings with visual characters to create school-friendly digital storytelling or TikTok/YouTube series about regional legends, proverbs, or customs.

- Canva AI: Support youth-led campaigns such as “My Roots, My Remix” where each participant contributes a cultural element (story, food, belief, craft) in both traditional and reimagined form. Canva helps design zines, posters, digital journals, or visual essays.
- Oscar AI Book Creator: Turn oral stories, dialect-based fairy tales, or family anecdotes into illustrated children’s books. Youth can upload text and generate entire storybooks that are both creative and culturally rich, perfect for local libraries, kindergartens, or as souvenirs.
- Rustic Mechanical Elegance: Use this visually unique AI tool to transform traditional objects like instruments, farm tools, or folk costume elements into stylized, futuristic visual artwork. These reinterpreted visuals can be part of youth-led exhibitions or online campaigns celebrating “the future of tradition.”

9. Local traditions goes digital

Background:In the small town in Turkey, a youth center known for its strong connection to local textile traditions began exploring how to keep these crafts alive among younger generations. Teens' interest in needlework and weaving has been progressively declining, despite the fact that elder community members frequently conduct these types of classes. The majority of cultural workshops are offline, simple, and rarely shared outside of the neighbourhood, and they are quickly becoming forgotten.

A youth worker passionate about digital creativity proposes to find a way to merge traditional textile patterns with AI-based digital art, creating a project where young people reinterpret their region’s symbols using AI tools. The goal of such a project could be blending heritage with digital creativity in a way that young people find engaging visual storytelling, social media design, and fashion.

Challenge:The staff lacks knowledge of creative AI tools that can visually remix traditional patterns and integrate them into modern platforms like Instagram, gaming skins, or digital zines. Participants also struggle to understand how their culture can inspire something contemporary.

Impact:Without a connection between tradition and digital creativity, interest in these regional crafts continues to fade. Local culture remains static instead of evolving with youth input and digital expression.

Possible AI solutions:

- Artbreeder: Remix traditional patterns into generative art or abstract visuals for posters, stickers, or digital zines.
- Canva AI: Generate modern layouts combining heritage visuals with youth-created slogans or poems.
- RunwayML: Animate textiles into short looping videos or video-mapped backgrounds for installations or online exhibits.

10. Voices of the Forest – Storytelling Game on Baltic Mythology

Background:A youth team in Dzūkija National Park is passionate about Baltic mythology, especially forest spirits, herbalism, and ancient seasonal rituals of the region. They've been collecting oral tales and legends from local elders, but these stories are shared to engage with through traditional means (booklets, local events, or audio recordings). Young people find them too abstract or "old-fashioned" - they don't receive a lot of engagement in their work and persistence to try and share the uniqueness of the region.

The youth decides to co-create an easy AI-enhanced storytelling game based on Lithuanian mythology to help and modernise the genre. Players can select roles (such as witch, forest spirit, or hunter), engage with virtual characters, and investigate tales through decisions, music, and dialogue.

Challenge:The team lacks knowledge of game-based learning tools and AI storytelling platforms. They also need a way to generate soundscapes, dialogues, and illustrations that feel true to their local identity but are easy to prototype.

Impact:Without a dynamic format, these stories remain archived rather than lived or just showed instead of experienced. The intergenerational cultural exchange slows, and digital learning opportunities tied to local identity are missed.

Possible AI solutions:

- Inworld AI: Create interactive NPC characters (e.g., talking forest spirits or wise herbalists) with natural conversation logic.
- ChatGPT: Build branching storylines where youth can write and prototype folklore-based role-play games.

Soundraw: Generate mystical forest soundtracks, nature-based atmospheres, or character themes.

- Genmo: Produce animated intros or transitions based on traditional symbols and stories.

Digital Competence and Innovation

1.Rigid Curriculum Prevents Gamification in Schools

Background: A consortium of NGOs including EDUMA and teachers from Gymnázium sv. Moniky in Prešov planned to implement a gamified civic education project using AI-enhanced simulations and point-based activities in several secondary schools. Despite strong teacher interest, rigid national curriculum structures and fixed lesson schedules made it nearly impossible to integrate the content into formal classroom time. Teachers lacked training in gamification and digital pedagogy, and schools had no support staff like digital coordinators to assist with implementation. As a result, the program was limited to optional afternoon sessions with low student turnout. The initiative failed to influence broader teaching practices, leaving educators frustrated and innovation efforts marginalized.

Challenge: Despite strong interest from teachers, the outdated and rigid national curriculum left no room for integrating innovative or gamified content into regular lessons. Subject time allocations were fixed, preventing the flexibility needed for project-based or experiential learning. Most pedagogical faculties had not equipped teachers with practical training in digital tools or gamification methods. Additionally, schools lacked digital coordinators or support structures to guide implementation. This left teachers isolated, underprepared, and unable to bring new approaches into mainstream classroom practice.

Impact: The project was bound to optional afternoon sessions, which attracted limited student participation due to scheduling conflicts and lack of academic recognition. Without integration into the formal curriculum, the gamified content remained on the margins of school life. Teachers, despite their enthusiasm, experienced frustration and burnout from the extra workload and lack of institutional support. The initiative failed to gain attention at the policy level and had no lasting effect on broader school practices. As a result, its long-term impact remained minimal despite its innovative potential.

Potential AI/Gamification Solutions:

- Classcraft: Could be used to gamify classroom management within existing subjects. https://www.hmhco.com/programs/classcraft

- ChatGPT: For building civic dialogue simulations students can role-play. https://chat.openai.com/

- SELFIE for Schools: Could help assess digital readiness before launching digital projects. https://education.ec.europa.eu/selfie

2. Lack of Interactive Methods in Civic Education Programs

Background:Several Slovak NGOs, including *Post Bellum* and *PDCS*, have long provided civic education programs targeting young people aged 15–25. These programs focus on topics such as democracy, human rights, active citizenship, and historical memory, delivered in schools, youth centers, and informal settings. Despite the quality of their content, these sessions typically rely on lectures, PowerPoint presentations, printed materials, and structured discussions.

Challenge: The core issue lies in the limited use of interactive methods and digital tools. Most workshops do not include elements of gamification or experiential learning. Youth participants, especially digital natives' often find the formats outdated and uninspiring. As a result, motivation and engagement tend to decline rapidly during sessions. A specific example occurred in Bratislava, where an NGO attempted to deliver a simulation-based human rights workshop for high school students. Despite the facilitator's experience and well-researched content, the activity fell flat: students remained passive, hesitant to participate, and gave low satisfaction scores in post-event evaluations. The NGO lacked tools or know-how to create interactive, game-like experiences that could bring civic issues to life.

Impact: Youth leave workshops with only a theoretical understanding of civic concepts, lacking emotional connection or practical application. NGOs struggle to maintain participation in follow-up activities or long-term civic engagement programs. Opportunities to build soft skills such as critical thinking, public speaking, and collaboration through role-playing or simulations are missed. Youth perceive civic education as boring or irrelevant, undermining democratic values in the long term.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Story Wizard ai: To co-create illustrated digital stories with youth https://www.storywizard.ai/
- Twine: open-source tool for telling interactive, nonlinear stories https://twinery.org/
- AI Dungeon: To generate interactive, role-playing story adventures https://aidungeon.com/
- Classcraft: To gamify learning and teamwork in youth workshops
- www.hmhco.com/programs/classcraft
- Genially or Storyboard That: can help create visual, interactive storytelling modules for history and human rights education. https://genially.com/, https://www.storyboardthat.com/

Digital Literacy

1. Language Barriers in Youth Work with Ukrainian Refugees

Background:Since the onset of the war in Ukraine in 2022, Slovakia has become a key host country for displaced families, including thousands of young Ukrainians aged 14–30. In response, youth organizations across the country, especially in larger cities like Bratislava, Košice, Prešov, and Žilina, have adapted their programs to support refugee inclusion through informal education, creative workshops, volunteering, and community events. These initiatives aim to build bridges between Slovak and Ukrainian youth, promote social cohesion, and support the mental well-being and long-term integration of young refugees. However, many youth workers involved in these efforts are not trained in language support or multilingual facilitation.

Challenge:One of the most persistent barriers to successful integration is language. Many Ukrainian youth arrive with little or no knowledge of Slovak or English, while youth workers often have no Ukrainian or Russian language skills. Despite good intentions, this communication gap severely limits active participation, emotional connection, and trust-building. An illustrative case occurred in Košice, where the NGO T-Systems Foundation partnered with local youth centers to run a cultural storytelling workshop intended to help Ukrainian and Slovak youth share experiences and build empathy. While some visual activities worked well, the deeper group discussions failed. Youth workers struggled to explain the context, and participants couldn't express their thoughts confidently. Attempts to use Google Translate were slow, inaccurate in real-time group settings, and caused frustration. As a result, Ukrainian participants became more passive and isolated, while Slovak youth disengaged due to confusion.

Impact: Ukrainian youth felt excluded from meaningful dialogue and leadership opportunities, reinforcing feelings of marginalization. The NGO saw reduced retention in follow-up activities and fewer cross-cultural friendships formed. Staff reported emotional fatigue and low confidence when working in multilingual environments. The absence of digital literacy among some youth workers limited their ability to find or use better tools.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Lingvanex: Ideal for fieldwork or rural areas with weak Wi-Fi. Offers real-time chat, voice, and text translation. https://lingvanex.com/
- Synthesia: Translate onboarding videos, explainers, or creative content into Ukrainian with voice + subtitles. Keeps refugee youth included and informed. https://www.synthesia.io/
- Whisper by OpenAI: Transcribe discussions or voice notes from young people, then translate using another tool https://openai.com/index/whisper/
- AI-Powered Presentation Tools (e.g., Canva with multilingual support): Help present content in both languages side-by-side for clarity.

2.Overwhelmed by Manual Coordination in Trnava's Youth NGO

Background: A civic-focused NGO European Dialogue based in Trnava engages NEET youth aged 18–30 through a variety of activities including volunteering, skill-building workshops, and mentoring programs. The organization aims to support young people's social inclusion and personal development through consistent, hands-on engagement. Their programs often involve diverse groups of participants and multiple events running in parallel. Most of the work is carried out by a small team of youth workers and volunteers. The NGO relies heavily on manual coordination and basic tools for managing logistics.

Challenge: Youth workers manage participant registrations, event reminders, and attendance tracking using spreadsheets and group chats on WhatsApp. These tools are time-consuming and inefficient, especially when multiple activities take place at once. The team has limited knowledge of AI or automation tools that could streamline coordination. During busy weeks, overlapping event schedules led to confusion about who was attending what, and some youth were left out entirely. This caused operational stress and exposed a critical need for smarter systems.

Impact: The lack of organization led to missed sessions, double bookings, and unprepared facilitators, which negatively affected the quality of the youth programs. Participants began to lose trust in the NGO's ability to deliver consistent and reliable experiences. Staff reported feeling overwhelmed and unmotivated due to the repetitive workload and ongoing logistical problems. Volunteer turnover increased, and fewer young people returned for follow-up activities. The NGO's reputation and long-term engagement efforts were weakened as a result.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Zapier: Automates routine tasks like sending reminders or updating event lists. https://zapier.com/
- Notion AI: Helps organize project notes, deadlines, and meeting summaries. https://www.notion.com/product/ai
- ChatGPT: Writes workshop descriptions, follow-up emails, and translates for international volunteers. https://chat.openai.com/
- IFTTT(If This Then That): Auto-post events to social media when added to Google Calendar, or send reminders to volunteers. https://ifttt.com/

- Airtable: Track participants, projects, and trigger reminders or document creation
  https://airtable.com

3.Lack of AI Use in Co-Creation with Young Creatives in Trnava

Background: The Kubik Cowork Creative Hub in Trnava offers media and art labs for young creatives aged 18–29, with a focus on personal storytelling, identity, and digital expression. The hub provides space, mentorship, and equipment for projects ranging from podcasts and short films to visual art and zines. It serves as a vibrant platform for youth to explore social topics and express their views through creative formats. Many of the participants are emerging artists or youth with limited access to formal arts education. The hub encourages experimentation, collaboration, and community-based content creation.

Challenge: While the hub is rich in creativity, youth workers supporting the projects do not actively use AI tools to help with story development, editing, or idea generation. Most storytelling sessions rely on traditional brainstorming, paper planning, or informal peer feedback. Youth participants often feel stuck when it comes to structuring narratives, generating visual concepts, or refining their scripts. The lack of accessible, supportive technology means projects move slowly or stall during the creative block phase. There's also limited guidance on how to transform raw ideas into polished digital content.

Impact: Many promising creative projects remain incomplete or are scaled down due to lack of structure and support. Some young creatives lose momentum or confidence and quietly abandon their work before showcasing it. Opportunities to build portfolios, public visibility, or community engagement are missed. The hub's potential to foster emerging digital talent and promote youth voices is underutilized. This limits both the reach and impact of the programs offered.

- Potential AI Solutions:
  Runway ML: For AI-assisted video editing. https://runwayml.com/
  ChatGPT: To co-write storylines, generate prompts, or create dialogue.
  https://chat.openai.com/
  Canva AI tools: To help design visuals for stories or zines quickly. https://canva.com/

Leadership and Advocacy

1. Lack of Data Weakens Youth Mobility Advocacy in Trnava

Background: A youth NGO in Bratislava, mladí.info, initiated a local advocacy campaign to demand safer bike infrastructure and more affordable public transportation for young people aged 15–25. The campaign aimed to respond to mobility issues that many youth face when commuting

to school, work, or leisure activities. The organization conducted outreach through schools, social media, and events to gather feedback and mobilize support. Their goal was to present a youth-driven proposal to the municipal council, backed by real data and lived experiences. The initiative drew wide initial interest among young residents.

Challenge: the NGO collected numerous open-ended survey responses and personal testimonies from young people, the team lacked the digital and analytical skills needed to process the data effectively. They relied on manual review of responses, which made it difficult to identify patterns, quantify needs, or present key arguments clearly. The final policy proposal was vague and lacked compelling visuals or statistics. It failed to translate youth voices into structured recommendations. Without technical tools like data analysis or AI support, their findings remained underdeveloped.

Impact: The proposal was submitted to the city council but it was dismissed due to a lack of concrete evidence and measurable indicators of demand. Officials cited insufficient “proof of need” to prioritize the recommendations. The outcome left young participants disheartened and less motivated to engage in future civic initiatives. The NGO’s credibility as an advocacy actor was weakened, despite its strong connection to the community. The missed opportunity highlighted a growing gap between youth engagement efforts and digital advocacy capacities.

Potential AI Solutions:

- MonkeyLearn – to perform sentiment analysis and categorize open responses. https://monkeylearn.com/en/
- ChatGPT – to summarize key findings and generate persuasive text for policy proposals. https://chat.openai.com/
- Flourish or Datawrapper – to visualize youth opinions in compelling interactive maps and graphs. https://flourish.studio/ https://www.datawrapper.de

2. Missed Opportunity for Youth Voice in Digital Participation Campaign

Background: The NGO Youth Watch (Rada mládeže Slovenska), based in Bratislava, launched a national campaign in 2023 aimed at improving digital participation and access to public consultation tools for youth aged 15–25. The campaign was part of a broader effort to advocate for inclusive e-governance policies, especially for rural and marginalized youth. As part of their approach, the organization collected feedback from young people through online surveys, discussion groups, and social media interactions. Their intention was to present youth-driven recommendations to the Ministry of Education and municipal offices.

Challenge: While the initiative gathered valuable insights from over 600 young participants, the

NGO lacked the digital tools and data analysis skills to process the input meaningfully. The team used Google Forms and Excel to manage responses, but they couldn't effectively code qualitative data or extract patterns from open-ended answers. The resulting policy paper was too generic, lacking emotional storytelling and strong data visualization. Although the content was relevant, it failed to clearly demonstrate urgency or offer measurable recommendations.

Impact: When presented to decision-makers, the proposal was acknowledged but not prioritized. Officials cited the lack of clearly segmented data and compelling arguments as reasons for postponing further action. Young participants who contributed felt their voices were diluted and expressed disappointment in follow-up evaluations. The campaign missed a key opportunity to shape youth digital inclusion policies at a crucial moment. Internally, the NGO recognized the need for digital upskilling and AI-supported methods in future advocacy efforts.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Datawrapper– Create maps, bar charts, and timelines that visually communicate what young people say, think, or need. https://www.datawrapper.de

- Google Sheets + Google AutoML Tables – Process large datasets, visualize survey trends, and forecast campaign impact, suitable for tech-savvy teams or with training support.. https://cloud.google.com/vertex-ai

- Monkeylearn – Automatically analyze open-ended survey responses by categorizing answers, detecting sentiment, and uncovering common patterns. https://monkeylearn.com/

3.Project Overload in Rural Slovak Inclusion Initiative

Background: In the rural region of Rimavská Sobota, the NGO Otvorená Hra is actively engaged in inclusion-focused youth work with Roma youth and young migrants. The organization runs workshops, mentoring sessions, and small-scale community projects aimed at improving social integration and youth empowerment. With limited staffing and funding, the organization relies heavily on one dedicated youth worker who coordinates most aspects of project implementation. These efforts are vital in a region where youth face multiple barriers, including discrimination and limited opportunities.

Challenge: The youth worker is responsible for a wide range of tasks such as project planning, budgeting, outreach, activity delivery, reporting, and mentoring, without the support of a digital project management system. All operations are managed manually through emails, spreadsheets, and paper documents. This fragmented workflow consumes valuable time and increases the chance of oversight or duplication. There is also limited digital literacy and no familiarity with AI tools that could streamline scheduling, communication, or progress tracking. As

a result, the worker is constantly multitasking under pressure, with no central system to manage tasks efficiently.

Impact: The lack of structure and digital tools has led to delays in project evaluation and missed funding deadlines. Collaborative opportunities with other NGOs or municipalities are often lost due to poor planning or lack of visibility. The youth worker faces ongoing stress and burnout, reducing their capacity to provide quality support to the target groups. Program quality suffers, and participant engagement decreases when logistics are unclear or activities are postponed. Without digital project management support, the sustainability and growth of inclusion efforts in the region remain at risk.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Asana AI – provides smart task prioritization, goal tracking, and time-saving templates. https://asana.com/product/ai
- Clockify with AI Analytics – tracks time spent per task to improve workflow. https://clockify.me/
- ChatGPT – helps quickly write reports, social media posts, and monthly updates. https://chat.openai.com/

4.Youth Council in Bratislava Uses Outdated Methods for Leadership Skills

Background: The Bratislava Youth Council (Rada mládeže Bratislavy) provides leadership training for secondary school students aged 15–19. The program aims to equip young people with the knowledge and confidence to engage in public discussions, express their views on policy, and participate in local decision-making. Sessions typically cover topics like democratic values, advocacy, communication, and youth rights. The council plays a key role in fostering civic-minded youth leaders in the capital region.

Challenge: Despite its valuable mission, the Youth Council still relies heavily on traditional methods such as lectures, flipcharts, and PowerPoint presentations. The trainings are mostly theoretical, offering little room for interactivity or practical skill-building. There are no simulations, decision-making roleplays, or AI-powered tools to personalize learning or simulate real-life civic scenarios. As a result, participants have limited opportunities to apply what they learn in dynamic or realistic environments. The absence of modern, experiential methods restricts deeper engagement and leadership development.

Impact: Many participants report feeling unprepared for real-world leadership challenges such as negotiating with adults, presenting proposals to public officials, or speaking in front of large groups. While they understand civic topics in theory, they lack the practical confidence and skills to take initiative in real settings. This gap diminishes the effectiveness of the training and limits the youth's influence in decision-making processes. Without modern tools and methods, the

council struggles to fully empower the next generation of civic leaders.

Potential AI Solutions:

- ChatGPT Roleplay Prompts – simulate stakeholder meetings, media interviews, or community disputes. https://chat.openai.com/
- Replika AI – personal AI coach for practicing communication and emotional intelligence. https://replika.ai/
- Branchtrack – create decision-tree-based leadership simulations. https://www.branchtrack.com/

5. Low Engagement in Leadership Camp Due to Passive Learning in Žilina

Background: A leadership development camp organized by INEX Slovakia in Bratislava brings together youth aged 16–21 to build soft skills in a non-formal, camp-based setting. The camp is designed to support personal growth and civic readiness, combining structured workshops with outdoor activities and group projects. Participants come from diverse backgrounds and are typically involved in youth councils, school initiatives, or community volunteering. The setting provides a supportive environment for leadership exploration in a non-formal education context.

Challenge: The camp offers valuable sessions but organizers struggle to maintain participant engagement outside of scheduled workshops. Activities are mostly delivered in a one-directional format, and there are no tools to encourage ongoing reflection, self-assessment, or personalized feedback. Between sessions, youth lack opportunities to interact meaningfully with content or apply new skills in real-time. The program also does not incorporate AI-driven elements that could help tailor learning or simulate leadership situations. As a result, motivation and continuity of learning are low.

Impact: Some participants remain passive throughout the camp and don't fully connect with the content or their peers. Engagement drops notably by the final days, with several youth opting out of the concluding presentations or team challenges. The intended outcomes improved confidence, leadership initiative, and communication skills are only partially met. The camp's long-term impact is reduced when young people leave without a sense of ownership or visible growth. A more interactive and tech-supported approach could help revitalize the learning experience.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Classcraft – gamifies leadership learning, rewarding participation and collaboration. https://www.hmhco.com/programs/classcraft

- ChatGPT Journaling Assistant – helps youth reflect on leadership challenges and daily experiences. https://chatgpt.com/g/g-I3V6gqcCa-journalist-assistant
- Kialo Edu (AI-supported debate tool) – for practicing structured argumentation and group decision-making. https://www.kialo-edu.com/

Mental Health and Wellbeing

1.Limited Access to Mental Health Support for Rural Youth in Slovakia

Background: A youth organization in northern Slovakia works with young people aged 16–24, including NEET youth and those from low-income families living in remote rural areas. Many of these young people face long travel distances to access professional psychological services, and public transport is limited. The organization provides occasional workshops on well-being, but these are not frequent or specialized enough to address ongoing mental health needs. In many communities, mental health remains a sensitive or misunderstood topic, often shaped by stigma and lack of awareness.

Challenge:The organization struggles to provide consistent and meaningful mental health support due to a shortage of qualified professionals and limited funding for specialized services. Youth workers, while trusted, are not trained to handle complex psychological issues and often feel unprepared when serious concerns arise. At the same time, stigma discourages young people from openly seeking help, especially in small communities where privacy is difficult to maintain. The absence of digital tools further limits the possibility of offering remote, anonymous, or continuous support, leaving significant gaps in care.

Impact: As a result, many young people experience emotional distress in isolation, without timely or appropriate support. Participation in well-being programs remains low, particularly among those who need them most. Mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression often go unnoticed until they escalate, contributing to disengagement from education and vocational training. This leads to higher dropout rates, reduced motivation, and a growing sense of disconnection, both from opportunities and from supportive social networks.

Solutions:

- Wysa: An AI chatbot designed for mental health support. It offers anonymous, 24/7 emotional support using evidence-based CBT techniques.
- Tess: A psychological AI companion that monitors emotional state and provides real-time conversations tailored to the user's mood.
- AI-Driven Needs Detection: Use AI tools to analyze anonymous feedback and engagement levels to detect emotional distress or disengagement trends among youth.

2.Migrant Youth in Turkey Excluded by AI Language App

Background:A local integration center in southern Turkey supports migrant youth aged 16–20 who are in the process of adapting to a new linguistic and cultural environment. Many of these young people rely on community-based programs to learn the host country's language, which is essential for their education, employment, and social integration. To expand its reach, the center introduced an AI-powered language learning app intended to provide flexible, self-paced learning opportunities.

Challenge:Despite its potential, the AI tool does not adequately meet the needs of the participants. It supports only major languages, leaving out several native languages and dialects spoken by the youth. The content is not culturally adapted, making it less engaging and sometimes difficult to relate to. When the AI fails to understand user input, there is no human support to guide learners, leading to frustration. Additionally, staff lack the training needed to customize, evaluate, or effectively integrate the tool into their teaching practices, limiting its usefulness.

Impact:These limitations result in increased frustration and disengagement among migrant youth, many of whom already face barriers to inclusion. Dropout rates from the language program rise as learners lose confidence in both the tool and their own abilities. This slows their integration into education systems and the labor market, while also reinforcing feelings of exclusion. For staff, reliance on an ineffective tool creates inefficiencies and forces a return to less structured or inconsistent teaching methods.

Solutions:

- Duolingo for Schools with custom classroom tracking and support for less common languages
- ChatGPT API for building multilingual, conversational chatbots adapted to the user's language and context
- Text-to-Speech and Voice AI Tools like Google Cloud Text-to-Speech to improve engagement with spoken interactions

3.Portuguese Smart City Plan Excludes Youth with Disabilities

Background:A municipality in Portugal is implementing a smart city initiative aimed at modernizing urban mobility through AI-powered navigation systems integrated into public transport and pedestrian areas. These systems are intended to improve efficiency, accessibility, and real-time travel information for residents. Among the city's youth population are young people aged 16–25 with physical disabilities who regularly participate in activities organized by local youth centers and rely on public infrastructure to access education, social spaces, and services.

Challenge:Despite its innovative intent, the smart city infrastructure has been developed without sufficient consideration for accessibility. Smart bus stops and digital navigation tools are not designed to accommodate wheelchair users or visually impaired individuals, lacking essential

features such as screen readers, audio guidance, or alternative input methods. Youth workers and disability advocates were not included in the planning or design phases, resulting in a disconnect between technological development and real user needs. Furthermore, there is no structured feedback mechanism allowing young people with disabilities to report barriers or influence improvements.

Impact:As a result, many young people with disabilities find the new systems difficult or impossible to use, leading them to avoid public transport altogether. This reduces their participation in educational, social, and community activities, reinforcing existing barriers to inclusion. The situation contributes to frustration, decreased independence, and a sense of marginalization among affected youth. At the same time, significant public investment is directed toward infrastructure that fails to serve all citizens equally, highlighting a gap between technological progress and inclusive design.

Solutions:

- Be My Eyes (AI-based version): Assists visually impaired users in navigating spaces
- Microsoft Azure Cognitive Services for voice interaction, speech-to-text, and image recognition
- Inclusive UX Audits using AI tools to simulate disabilities and test accessibility in design

4. AI Hiring Filters Out Neurodivergent Youth in Lithuania

Background : A vocational training center in Lithuania supports young people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and ADHD in preparing for internships and employment. These participants often have valuable skills but follow non-linear educational paths and may communicate differently from neurotypical candidates. The center collaborates with local companies to facilitate job placements, many of which have adopted AI-based recruitment systems to streamline hiring processes.

Challenge: AI-driven resume screening systems used by partner companies tend to favor standardized career paths and conventional language, disadvantaged candidates with atypical profiles. Gaps in education or work experience are often interpreted negatively, while the more literal or less expressive communication style common among some individuals with ASD may be misread as a lack of competence or motivation. At the same time, youth workers have limited understanding of how these AI systems function, making it difficult for them to effectively advocate for their participants or help them adapt their applications.

Impact: As a result, many neurodivergent young people are filtered out before their applications ever reach a human recruiter, reducing their chances of employment despite having relevant abilities. This repeated rejection can lead to decreased confidence, motivation, and self-esteem among participants. Employers, in turn, miss out on capable and diverse talent, while youth

workers face frustration and uncertainty in trying to navigate opaque hiring systems that they do not fully understand.

Solutions:

- Unbiasify or FairHire.ai to audit AI recruitment systems for bias
- Textio to assist in writing neuro-inclusive and compelling CVs
- Explainable AI (XAI) techniques to clarify how decisions are made and allow for human override

5.Rural Slovakia Lacks Mental Health Data in Youth Work

Background:An NGO in eastern Slovakia organizes weekend workshops for young people aged 14–18, focusing on life skills, emotional well-being, and social development. These activities provide a valuable space for connection, particularly in rural areas where access to structured youth services is limited. However, the organization relies primarily on informal observation and occasional paper-based feedback to understand participants' emotional states.

Challenge:There is no systematic or data-driven approach to monitoring youth well-being over time. Staff depend on casual conversations and handwritten surveys that are rarely analyzed in depth, making it difficult to identify patterns or emerging issues. Many emotional struggles remain hidden, as young people may feel uncomfortable expressing concerns openly due to stigma or fear of judgment. Without reliable data or tools, early signs of anxiety, stress, or disengagement often go unnoticed.

Impact: This lack of structured insight leads to missed opportunities for timely and targeted intervention. Emotional difficulties may only become visible once they have intensified, limiting the effectiveness of support measures. Group dynamics can suffer as unresolved issues affect participation and relationships, and dropout rates may increase. Over time, the organization struggles to build a clear understanding of the long-term needs of the youth it serves, reducing the overall impact of its programs.

Solutions:

- AI Sentiment Analysis Tools to evaluate anonymous digital feedback from youth
- Woebot: AI chatbot that allows young people to check in on their mood in a casual way
- Youth Compass: AI-based dashboards that visualize emotional trends and flag risks for youth workers

6. AI Workshops Lack Accessibility for Deaf Youth

Background: A youth tech hub in Portugal offers online workshops in AI and digital skills for young people aged 18–25, with a focus on unemployed youth from diverse backgrounds. These sessions are typically delivered through video conferencing platforms and are designed to improve digital literacy and employability in a rapidly evolving job market.

Challenge: The workshops are not designed with accessibility in mind, particularly for deaf or hard-of-hearing participants. Sessions lack real-time captioning and sign language interpretation, making it difficult for these participants to follow discussions or engage fully. Learning materials are not adapted for visual learners or users of assistive technologies, and trainers often lack awareness or training in inclusive digital practices. As a result, accessibility is treated as an afterthought rather than an integral part of program design.

Impact:Deaf and hard-of-hearing youth are effectively excluded from the learning experience, leading many to drop out or avoid registering altogether. This undermines the program's goal of inclusivity and equal opportunity, while also affecting participants' motivation and sense of belonging. Additionally, the lack of accessibility may put the initiative at risk of non-compliance with funding or legal requirements, further threatening its sustainability.

Solutions:

- Otter.ai or Google Meet AI Captions for real-time transcription
- SignAll: AI tool that translates sign language into text and speech
- Accessible learning platforms like Microsoft Learning Tools with immersive reader features

7.Limited AI Access for Neurodivergent Youth in Rural Portugal

Background:A youth NGO in the Alentejo region of Portugal works with young people aged 15–22, including those with autism and learning difficulties. The region is predominantly rural, with limited access to specialized services and fewer opportunities for tailored career guidance. The organization aims to support personal development and employability but operates with constrained resources and limited exposure to emerging digital tools.

Challenge:Youth with autism and other neurodivergent conditions often struggle to engage with standard career preparation programs, which are not adapted to different communication styles or learning needs. Staff members are not familiar with AI tools that could support personalized learning or communication, and workshops tend to follow a generic format that does not accommodate diverse cognitive profiles. This limits the effectiveness of the support provided and reduces engagement among participants.

Impact: As a result, neurodivergent youth frequently feel excluded from mainstream activities and unsupported in their transition to employment. Job placement rates remain low, and participants may experience reduced confidence in their abilities and future prospects. The lack of tailored support reinforces existing inequalities and prevents these young people from fully developing their potential.

Solutions:

- Replika AI – A personal AI chatbot for communication practice and emotional support.
- Textio – Assists in writing inclusive, adaptive CVs and cover letters.
- XAI Explainable AI Tools – Help youth workers understand how AI hiring tools rank candidates and adapt accordingly.

8.Mental Health Stigma Among Roma Youth in Eastern Slovakia

Background: A Roma youth group near Prešov in Slovakia works with teenagers aged 13–18, providing a safe space for social interaction and personal development. The community faces multiple challenges, including social exclusion, limited access to services, and persistent stigma around mental health, which is often not openly discussed within families or the wider community.

Challenge: Young people are reluctant to speak about emotional difficulties, fearing judgment or misunderstanding. Youth workers lack tools that would allow for private or anonymous check-ins, making it harder to identify those who may be struggling. In many cases, family attitudes further discourage conversations about mental health, reinforcing silence around emotional well-being.

Impact: Without early support, emotional and psychological issues can escalate unnoticed, leading to increased conflict, disengagement, and school dropout. Young people may experience isolation and a lack of support, which affects both their well-being and their future opportunities. The absence of open dialogue around mental health perpetuates a cycle in which needs remain unaddressed.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Woebot: Chatbot that supports mood tracking
- Sentiment analysis to detect distress trends
- Youth Compass: Dashboards to track well-being patterns

9.Language Gaps Block AI Training for Ukrainian Youth in Lithuania

Background: In Vilnius, Lithuania, a youth tech lab offers courses in AI and coding to migrant youth, including young people from Ukraine. These programs aim to equip participants with digital

skills that can improve their education and employment prospects. However, participants come with varying levels of language proficiency and educational background.

Challenge:Most courses are delivered in Lithuanian or English, creating a barrier for those who are not yet proficient in either language. There are no integrated real-time translation tools, and learning materials are not adapted to different literacy levels. Trainers may struggle to bridge these gaps, as they lack resources to provide multilingual or simplified instruction.

Impact:Language barriers lead to frustration, reduced comprehension, and ultimately higher dropout rates among migrant participants. This slows their integration into both the education system and the digital workforce. Trainers also face challenges in maintaining engagement and delivering effective instruction, limiting the overall success of the program.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Whisper by OpenAI: Converts and translates speech
- Lingvanex: Real-time translation for speech and text
- Synthesia: Create multilingual video lessons

10.Youth with Disabilities Excluded from Digital Training in Rural Turkey

Background: A youth center in rural Turkey provides online entrepreneurship training for NEET youth, aiming to foster self-employment and digital skills. The program is delivered primarily through online platforms, offering flexibility for participants in remote areas.

Challenge:The training is not designed with accessibility in mind, particularly for young people with hearing or visual impairments. Sessions lack essential features such as screen reader compatibility, captions, or alternative content formats. Trainers are not equipped with the knowledge or tools needed to create inclusive digital learning environments, and accessibility is not systematically considered in program design.

Impact:Young people with disabilities are either unable to participate fully or drop out of the program altogether, leading to their exclusion from valuable learning opportunities. This undermines the program's inclusivity goals and reduces trust among participants. Over time, the lack of accessibility contributes to wider inequalities, as those who could benefit most from such initiatives are left behind.

Potential AI Solutions:

- Be My Eyes: Real-time AI visual assistant
- Otter.ai: Live captions and transcription