

Call for Inputs on digital education for young people

Civil Society's Reply from Germany



Details of the respondent

Respondent profile: Young person (18-35)

Gender: Female

Country: Germany

Organization: VIDES Germany

1) What are the main challenges that young people in your country face in accessing digital education? Please consider the specific situation of marginalized young people and those in vulnerable situations in your response.

I think the main challenge is the financing. Or the accesses to digital devices, mainly because not everyone, especially young people can't afford those. And to access digital education, a digital device like a laptop or anything else is required. As well as many digital courses come with costs. But still in Germany you can access many digital courses for free. Many universities offer free education programs. But you still need the digital device.

2) What steps is the Government taking to ensure that digital education is accessible and promoted among young people? Please provide examples of specific laws and regulations, measures, policies, and programmes directed at ensuring young people's universal access to digital education.

The initiative of the German Parliament is called "digital education" wants to foster the digital education in Germany among young people, especially students and university students. The initiative wants to create digital cyber rooms with experts one every topic that will provide free and easy accessible education on almost every topic. But right now Germany is still lacking laws for digital education. The FDP party, one of the coalition parties in the German parliament, stated in its manifesto the provision for the expansion of digital education in schools and universities. However, the digitalization process is still very slow in Germany.

3) What steps is the Government taking to ensure that young people can realize their human rights online in a safe, empowering, and inclusive way?

In 2017, the law "Netzwerkdurchsetzungsgesetz (NetzDG)" came into force in Germany. It provides the hate thread in the Internet. This law fights hate speech, fake news and other cyber criminally. If this law is broken in any way, violations will be fined. Therefore, young

people can freely express their opinions. Their human rights are not really threatened in any way in Germany, only if they contain hate or fake information.

4) What are the main gaps and challenges to young people's protection from online threats in law, policy, and practice in your country and the impacts on young people's human rights? Please consider the specific situation of marginalized young people and those in vulnerable situations in your response.

Like in every other country the dark net is a problem. And of course, the spread of fake news is really hard to disable. But this doesn't really impact the expression of young people's human rights.

5) What steps is the Government taking to ensure that young people are protected from online threats? Please provide examples of specific laws and regulations, measures, policies, and programmes.

Many social media apps do have an age restriction. Many apps like WhatsApp, Snapchat, Facebook and others are only available for young teenagers starting at the age of 16. This is due to a regulation of the EU from 2016/2017. So younger teenagers are protected. Since 2023 the law Netzwerkdurchsetzungsgesetz – NetzDG controls hate and threats in the internet. It filters hate speech and similar things. Therefore, protection will be provided in most of the cases. But still the Internet is a very complex thing and its very hard to control.