· A L L · · · · · ·
· D I G I T A L ·
· SUMMIT 2021 ·

R E P O R T

DIGITAL SKILLS AND TOOLS
FOR A BETTER WORLD

DIGITAL SKILLS AND TOOLS FOR A BETTER WORLD
SOLVING REAL WORLD AND SOCIETAL PROBLEMS THROUGH DIGITAL TOOLS AND APPROACHES.

On 13-15 October the ALL DIGITAL Summit 2021 was held online. We had more than **500 registered participants** over the 3 days, more than **50 speakers** ranging from renowned EU policymakers, stakeholders involved in digital inclusion, academics and young hackers. We enjoyed the networking possibilities, and more than 250 online meetings were scheduled.

This event looked at how digital skills and digital tools unlock and amplify the subjects of STE(A)M Education and Digital Social Innovation, how they solve real world problems and add value to the beneficiaries.

The Summit explored **Digital Skills and Tools for a Better World** and focused on the three digital empowerment themes: citizens and competence centres; STE(A)M educators; and young people.

DAY 1
DIGITAL SKILLS AND TOOLS FOR A BETTER WORLD

The day was dedicated to policy and stakeholders' engagement. Interesting keynote speeches were delivered by the EC Commissioner Nicolas Schmit, DG EAC's Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva and Prof. Giannoumis of the University of Oslo. The speakers expressed the relevance of digital skills in the on-going and future challenges of the twin transition, presenting the initiatives and approaches put forward by policy makers and academia.

On the 1st day the European Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, **Nicholas Schmit** commented in his keynote speech:

> *Digital skills and jobs are an EU priority. Digital is everywhere as 90% of jobs require some level of digital skills. **Digital skills centres can play a very important role** to equip people with the skills they need in today's labour market.*

Antoaneta Angelova-Krasteva, Director for Innovation, Digital Education & International Cooperation at the European Commission, DG EAC stressed that:

> *We should all work together to meet the ambitious target of the Digital Decade to equip **80% of the EU population with basic digital skills** and have 20 million ICT specialists employed by 2030.*

Prof. George Anthony Giannoumis presented the importance and potential of Universal Design in the context of digital interactions. His examples showed that thinking outside of one's own experience when designing any (digital) interaction, from media, over services to education is crucial in order to make digital experiences inclusive, a prerequisite for a successful digital transformation.

> *Equality is not only not discriminating but ensuring that everyone has a reasonable and equal chance to achieve success in the field they choose.*
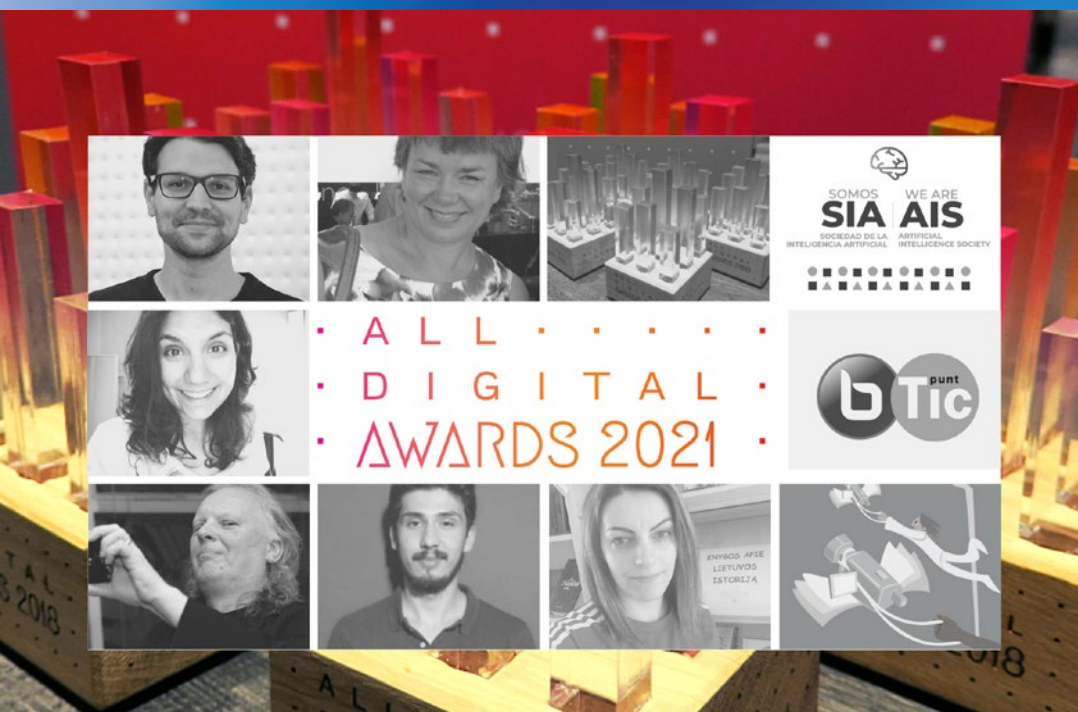
The **ALL DIGITAL Awards** celebrated the individuals and organisations across Europe that enable citizens to transform and enrich their lives through the benefits and opportunities created by digital technologies.

BEST E-FACILITATOR

Gabija Ščiukauskaitė
Lithuania — nominated by Kaunas District Municipality Public Library

BEST DIGITAL CHANGEMAKER

Tobias Marczinzik
Germany — nominated by Lara Zeyßig

BEST DIGITAL RESOURCE

"SomosSIA"
Spain — created by Digital Agenda Department — Government of Extremadura & AUPEX

The afternoon panel discussion focused on the European strategies and policies on digital skills and education, and the key principles and recommendations of ALL DIGITAL's **"Manifesto for enhancing digital competences in Europe"** on how to maximise the impact of education and training in digital competences for all European citizens.

Chiara Riondino, Head of Unit at DG EMPL, reiterated the importance the European Commission is ascribing to enhancing digital skills in its work. She underlined the commitments stated previously by Commissioner Schmit through detailing current and upcoming policy initiatives and renewed the invitation to stakeholders to get involved and collaborate.

Arja Krauchenberg, Vice-President of the Lifelong Learning Platform (LLLP) informed the attendees about existing barriers to the acquisition of digital competences and identified ways to tackle them.

Angeliki Dedopoulou, Senior EU Public Affairs Manager for Huawei, shared the perspective of the industry while highlighting the support for initiatives, for example through the Pact for Skills.

Victor Negrescu MEP (S&D) rounded out the presentations, calling on all actors to contribute to the implementation of the on-going initiatives.

The panellists agreed in calling on Member States and national actors to make effective and inclusive use of European frameworks, both existing and being developed. They also expressed their gratitude for ALL DIGITAL's continuing support in these initiatives.

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A major initiative among those mentioned by the keynote speakers and the panellists is the **Digital Skills and Jobs Platform**, which was presented in detail by **Jakub Kajtman**, Policy Officer at DG CNCT. The platform provides a wide range of high-quality information, resources and opportunities related to the area of digital skills and jobs across all levels, from very basic to advanced.

Lightning talks and informative sessions covered different projects such as STEAMonEdu, Social Hackademy, AMELiE, BIBLIO, EQUALS-EU, TRANSVAL-EU.

The day was rounded out by **four parallel workshop sessions**, offering a detailed insight into activities undertaken by projects and initiatives on themes ranging from online disinformation, over cybercrime and teenagers, and the Smart Cities Body of Knowledge, to the Validation of the update of the DigComp Framework to version 2.2.

Our partner LieDetectors presented new findings and recommendations on how media-literate children use their critical thinking in an age of **online disinformation**. The workshop was based on media literacy work with 700 teachers and 15,000 school children and showed the important role of teachers in fighting fake news, through classroom conversations on news literacy and source verification.

The overall overview of the RAYUELA project and the Raising Awareness Campaign on cybercrime included in this Horizon 2020 project have been presented during the workshop. Participants have also been engaged in an active discussion on the meanings of specific terminology and behaviour related with **cybercrime affecting young people**, such as "online grooming".

The DevOps competencies for Smart Cities project (**Smart DevOps**) workshop presented the Smart City Body of Knowledge book and fostered discussion about the future skills needs and developments in the Smart City sector. The book is the main deliverable of the project, and it represents the first systematic approach to smart cities competencies development. It also features new job professions for smart city professionals, namely Smart City Planner, Smart City IT Manager and Smart City IT officer, together with their competence profiles. Get your copy of the book here.

The last Interactive workshop was run by the **EU Joint Research Centre** and highlighted the necessity of bringing the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens up-to-date.

DAY 2
STEAMonEdu

Increasing the adoption and impact of STE(A)M education by the professional development of STE(A)M educators conference.

The event focused on three main aspects related to the field of STE(A)M education:

- the results from STEAMonEdu project
- the current innovations within STE(A)M and
- the future challenges in the field.

Participants to the event gain knowledge on the latest achievements, EU positions and **action plans to support and facilitate broader adoption of integrated STE(A)M within the educational system**. They learn more about the activities promoted by STEAMonEdu project, its aims and outcomes related to the community of stakeholders, the professional development of educators, and the tools and training developed.

Integrated STE(A)M sounds like the next urgent goal within the field, where disciplines can be merged with a balance between them. During the 2nd day we learnt STEM/STE(A)M is one of the priorities of the 2030 Digital Compass supported by a variety of initiatives announced as part of the European Skills Agenda, European Education Area and the Digital Education Action Plan with the aim of **upskilling educators, facilitate women in accessing STEM careers and train professionals to solve real world problems**. STE(A)M prepares learners for current and future careers independently from the sector or field of interest and life when dealing with complex situations.

Two excellent keynote speakers educated the audience on the basics of STE(A)M education and the latest policy developments.

EU policy officer **Anusca Ferrari**, DG EAC, through her keynote speech shed light on the EU objectives and initiatives:

> " *We set STEM as a priority for cooperation projects in Higher Education in the Erasmus+ 2021 Work Programme.*

> " *Only 1 in 5 young people in Europe graduates from STEM tertiary education, and we have less than 2 Million of STEM graduate in the EU every year.Even if we try to promote an inclusive approach to STEM education, actually we know that women are strongly under-represented in the sector: 1 in 3 STEM graduate is a woman. It is even worse when we look at ICT studies where we have 1 in 5 ICT graduate that is a woman.*

Professor Anastasios Mikropoulos, University of Iannina, highlighted the need for and importance of combining STEM and STE(A)M education to stimulate citizens in being able to solve real problems, introducing the circular process needed to facilitate the integration.

> " *We want students and teachers to be able to solve real world problems, they need creativity and motivation which art can introduce. This is why art came into STEM.*
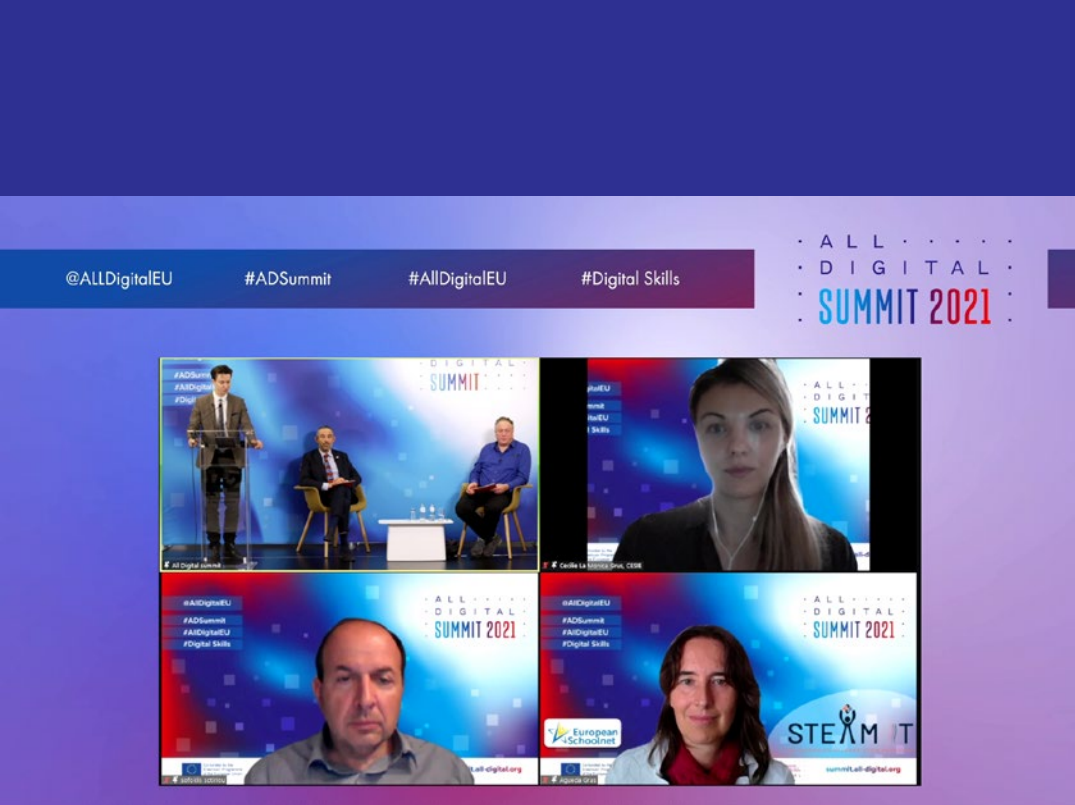
The brief presentation of projects on STE(A)M-related topics led to a very interesting panel with the participation of experts each representing a different stakeholder's perspective. The panel was moderated by Prof. Achilles Kameas, who engaged the panelists in discussions about reaching a common understanding of STE(A)M education, designing the policies to achieve its widespread adoption and identifying the means and resources to reach it.

The panelists were:

- **Erik Ballhausen**, E+ Call Manager, European Education, and Culture Executive Agency

- **Dr. Agueda Gras-Velazquez**, Science Programme Manager / Head of the Science Education Department, European Schoolnet

- **Cecilie La Monica Grus**, Project Manager, CESIE

- **Dr. Sofoklis Sotiriou**, Head of R&D Department, Ellinogermaniki Agogi

Educators feel the need to tune into a STE(A)M mindset where integrate approaches, blend skills and knowledge into a more dynamic and flexible way of teaching and supporting learners in developing skills. During the panel discussion it has been stressed the strategic understanding of the field to **avoid educating only some generations**. At the opposite, **STE(A)M education should refer to all generations**.

STEAMonEdu project appears as a significant project thanks to the tools and outputs developed to contribute to adopting STE(A)M approaches and methodologies within education and also because it placed educators (teachers and trainers) at the heart of its activities and focused on their professional development.

DAY 3
THE SOCIAL HACKADEMY

The day reaffirmed our conviction that investing in young people's digital skills and meaningfully including them in the creation of the future is the right approach to the digital transition in Europe.

Co-creation, digital skills development and innovation were the core topics discussed on the third day of ALL DIGITAL Summit which hosted Social Hackademy International Conference. The Social Hackademy project fosters digital skills and competencies of young people from the disadvantaged background by implementing collaborative educational activities based on the Social Hackademy co-creation methodology. The methodology positions young people in the centre of the co-creation process aimed at developing digital solutions for societal challenges.

External speakers offered inspiration and reflection on the key concepts embedded in the project's methodology.

The keynote speeches by EU Youth Coordinator Biliana Sirakova and Michela Magas, Chair of the Industry Commons Foundation and innovation advisor to the European Commission and the G7 leaders opened the event with insightful and inspiring inputs that set the tone of the conference.

We learnt from the newly created European Coordinator of Youth Activities within the European Commission **Biliana Sivakova** about EU's plans and support for upskilling young people and including them in the shaping of the future of the EU, announcing the **European Year of Youth 2022**, and stressed that ''When supporting young people in their personal and professional development we have to focus on the **development of different sets of skills and competencies as done in the EU Code Week and your Social Hackathon**. Both initiatives combine the development of digital skills and soft skills like creative thinking, teamwork, problem-solving, etc.''
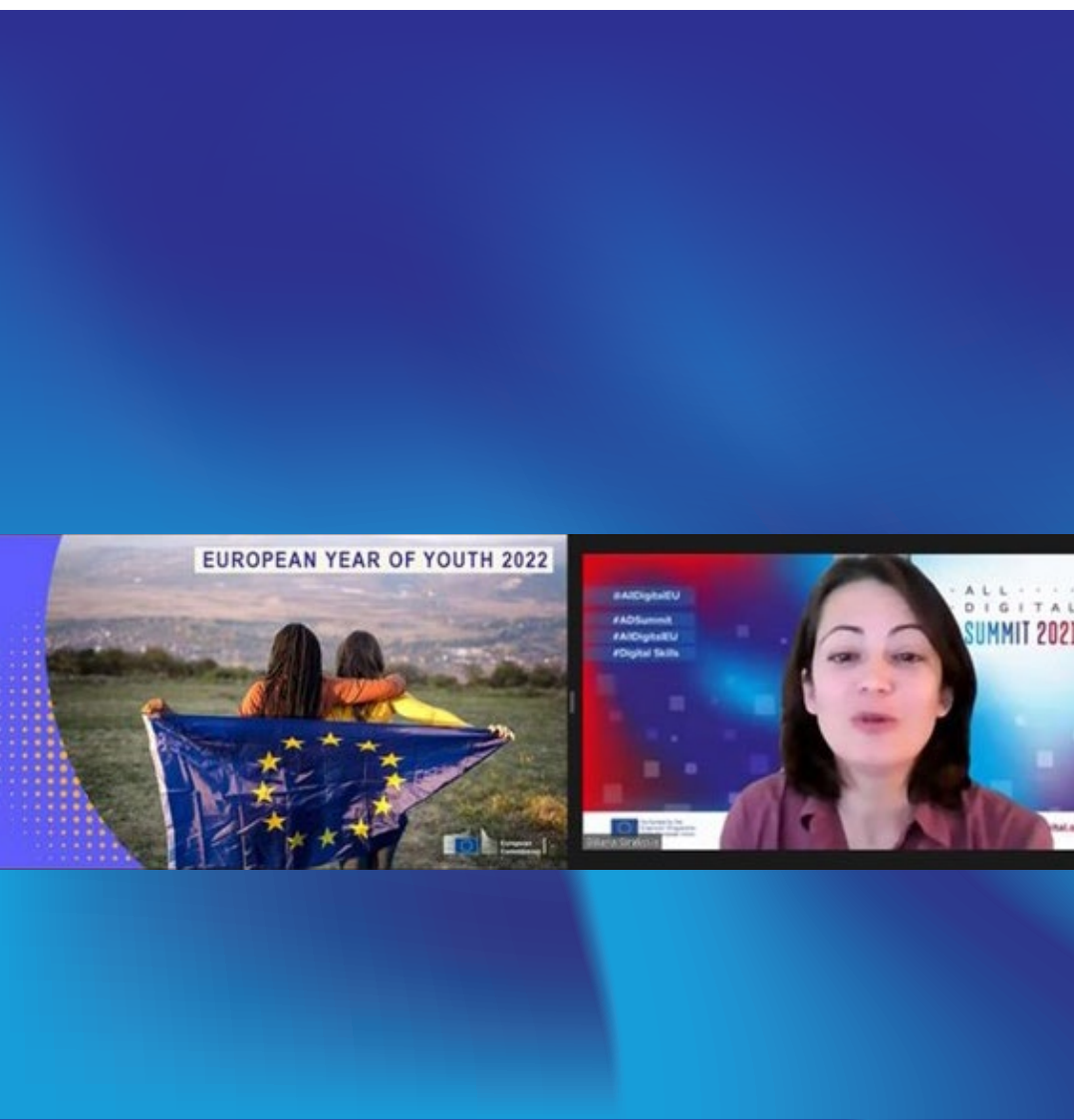
Michela Magas, Chair of the Industry Commons Foundation and innovation advisor to the European Commission and the G7 leaders explained and showcased how innovation impacts and changes our societies. We understood how effective digital skills can be to create and innovate. mentioned: **''The idea of co-creation has now entered high-level policy**. All disciplines need to join forces in order for us to stimulate and facilitate societal transformation. One of the ways on how to do that is to transfer best practices developed in the grass-root community through innovation, hands-on sessions and learning to a high policy level.

The agenda of the conference featured presentations of the methodology and tools developed in the project that supports its implementation. Project partners also shared results and findings from methodology piloting that took place in Croatia, France, Greece and Italy.

Very interesting example of young digital experts who developed their digital innovative projects have been presented during the Social Hackademy Award ceremony and the first winner was announced at the event: **Team Alimenta #Zerohunger 2** from Italy was the most convincing in terms of local community impact, social relevance and innovation, transferability and openness and adherence to the SDGs.
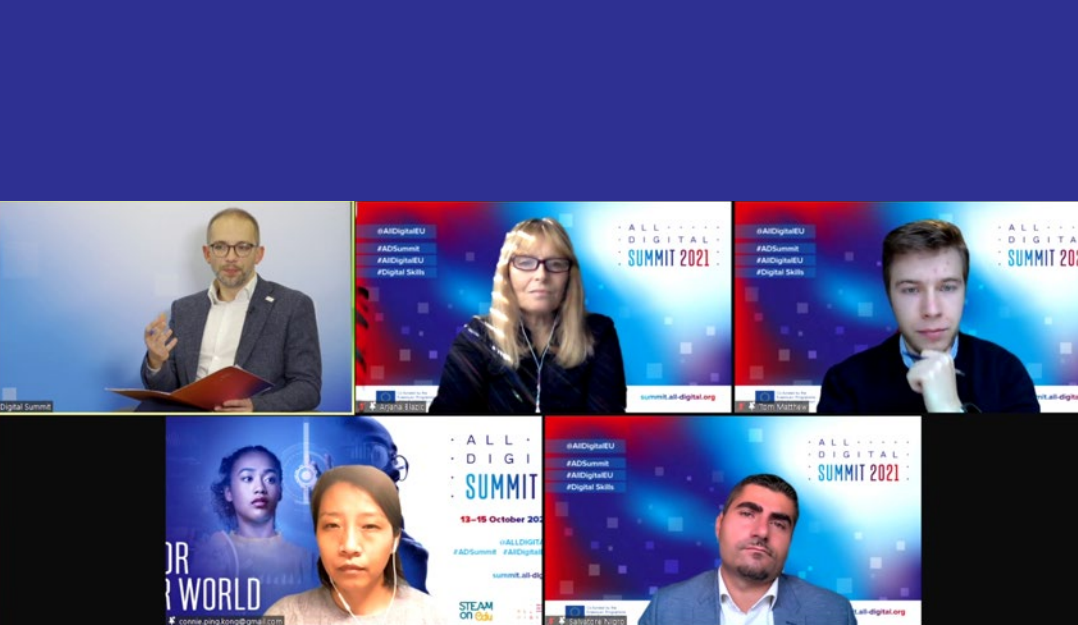
The event was rounded up with panel debate on the potential and critical elements of co-creation methodologies for solving various societal challenges and empowering young people with **Arjana Blazic** (DigiEduHack), **Dr Ping Kong** (Heritage & Education), **Salvatore Nigro** (JA Europe) and **Thomas Matthew** (European Youth Forum).

We had the chance to experience how a HackAd workshop might work to unite and put together people from remote and achieve significative results, delivering solutions to real world issues. Altheo Valentini, ALL DIGITAL Chair, highlighted that ''In social hacking, the focus is not on the event and the contest but rather on **educational progress**. That is why we [Social Hackademy consortium] positioned hackathon as a part of training and learning experience.''

To conclude with the words of **Ivan Mušanović,** trainer from CTK Rijeka, who lead the upscaling of the methodology:

> **"** *The Social Hackademy methodology stands out because it enables young people to* **create something concrete while learning skills that are beneficial for them**. *Together this gives them a sense of accomplishment."*

We hope you enjoyed the experience and we look forward to meeting you again next year (hopefully in person) to continue building constructive dialogue and achieving results to reduce the #digitalskills gap!

Our vision is that *every* European should be able to exploit the benefits and opportunities created by digital transformation. We are ALL DIGITAL!

See you in 2022!

Thank you!

USEFUL MATERIAL AND INFORMATION
ON THE ALL DIGITAL SUMMIT 2021

- If you missed any interesting session or you want to **rewatch** the event, the livestreamed sessions and recordings are available on our Youtube channel.

- You can read the **press release** ''Mind the digital skills gap: Europe's priorities and digital projects to foster social inclusion presented at the ALL DIGITAL Summit 2021''.

- You can find the **pictures** of the event here.

- The speakers' **presentations** are available on the ALL DIGITAL Summit Programme, next to the respective speaker.

- If you want to continue following our activities, register to the ALL DIGITAL Newsletter or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.