

## Position Paper Digital Ethics

### Ethical values of Europe

The ethical values of Europe - especially peace, democracy, responsibility, solidarity, respect, tolerance, civil courage and human dignity - are of utmost importance for overcoming for Europe's future and the current crises.

We, the consortium in this ERASMUS+ project funded by Europe, would like to suggest to all politicians involved in the Europe project to support the strengthening and promotion of the above mentioned ethical values by appropriate framework conditions. All these values as well as a resulting attitude against hatred and threat must be goals of education as well as the promotion of reflection skills, which contribute to questioning and a questioning attitude of a principle of enquiry.

In the European exchange, the following were named as current central challenges on the net:

- Fake News
- Hatred towards marginalized groups and minorities
- Nationalism, antisemitism, xenophobia, hatred of marginalized groups and minorities
- The rise of populist parties in many European countries
- Conspiracy theories, which are gaining momentum as a result of the Corona pandemic and are being spread via social networks, with right-wing extremists also playing an increasing role and exploiting the situation that has arisen.
- cybercrime
- cyberbullying
- Data protection

Mit Unterstützung durch das Programm Erasmus+ der Europäischen Union



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- Competent media education

It is important that citizens\* of Europe "use their own minds" (I. Kant) and especially young people are encouraged and enabled to think critically - one of the most important goals for shaping the future of Europe and for implementing the fundamental values of the European Union. Digital enlightenment and critical discourse about what digitization and networking really mean, socially, politically, economically and culturally are more necessary today than ever before.

Therefore, we would like to propose the following to Europe's politicians\* for implementation:

1. The above mentioned ethical values of Europe should be included in the priorities for all EU programs in the next funding period (2021 - 2027).
2. Data protection law is a fundamental right. However, there is an important aspect to be regulated: Who owns my data? Therefore, we propose a regulation to the effect that personal data belong to the relevant person in the civil law sense.
3. The framework conditions for promoting ethical competencies and values in the digital world must be improved and expanded.
4. Create conditions for young people to develop their competencies and thus be empowered to act ethically not only in the real world but also in the digital world. Online behavior also has an impact on life as a whole.
5. As an educational policy goal, ethics should be introduced as a compulsory subject for all students. Ethics education should aim to enable children and young people to engage in independent reflection and critical thinking, to

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- provide them with guidance and to lead them to a well-founded discussion of the fundamental questions of life.
6. For the implementation of Ethics education, we demand a university-based, philosophical education for Ethics teachers. Philosophy can be named as the basic science for education in Ethics. Philosophy is the only academic discipline that deals with Ethics and morality independent of religious presuppositions. Other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, religious studies, educational science, but also history, law, biology, economics or political science are additionally listed as reference sciences.
  7. Strengthen the basic principles of media competence or media literacy in the field of media education and media literacy.
  8. Set an example with their actions that guides ethical action and acts as a role model. We call for policies that follow virtuous ethical principles.
  9. Values form the basis for our coexistence in society. Especially on the Internet, we need a stable framework of values for orientation, since a generally accepted code of conduct has not yet emerged. It is the responsibility of politicians to promote Digital Ethics and to support local projects in order to create digitally mature citizens who act in accordance with European values.
  10. Strengthening civil courage online and offline, because it is concrete, ethical action.



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