Research project "IJA.digital"
Development and testing of a set of questions

In light of the digital transformation taking place in international youth work, a rising number of digital projects have been implemented in recent years. To ensure that these, too, meet the quality criteria applicable in this field, it appears expedient to observe and analyse this transformation systematically, for instance by incorporating evaluation processes in digital formats. In the case of analogue (offline) formats, there are already platforms that help team leaders to do so. One example is www.i-eval.eu, which enables participants and project staff to self-evaluate international youth exchanges using questionnaires. The anonymised data from the questionnaires is also fed into a panel study on youth exchanges and camps. However, at the present time this platform does not contain any questions that are designed specifically to evaluate digital projects in international youth work.

The research project "IJA.digital" developed and tested such a set of questions, bearing in mind the following considerations:

- What should a quantitative set of questions for evaluating digital international youth work activities ideally look like in terms of length and integration in the activity?
- What questions should be asked?

To obtain key contextual information on the use of such a set of questions, team leaders working in international youth work were invited to attend structured one-on-one interviews online and asked to share their thoughts on the above aspects. The interviewees had previously run digital projects that were observed during the IJA.digital project. According to them, the following aspects should be considered when developing a set of questions for evaluation purposes:

- In terms of length, the set of questions should be as compact as possible.
- The questions should focus above all on the following themes:
  - Suitability of the technical equipment and online tools used
  - Maximising the level of participation among young people in online settings
  - Atmosphere in the group.
- Generally speaking, the interviewees felt there was no need to make a major difference between questions for digital projects and questions for in-person projects.
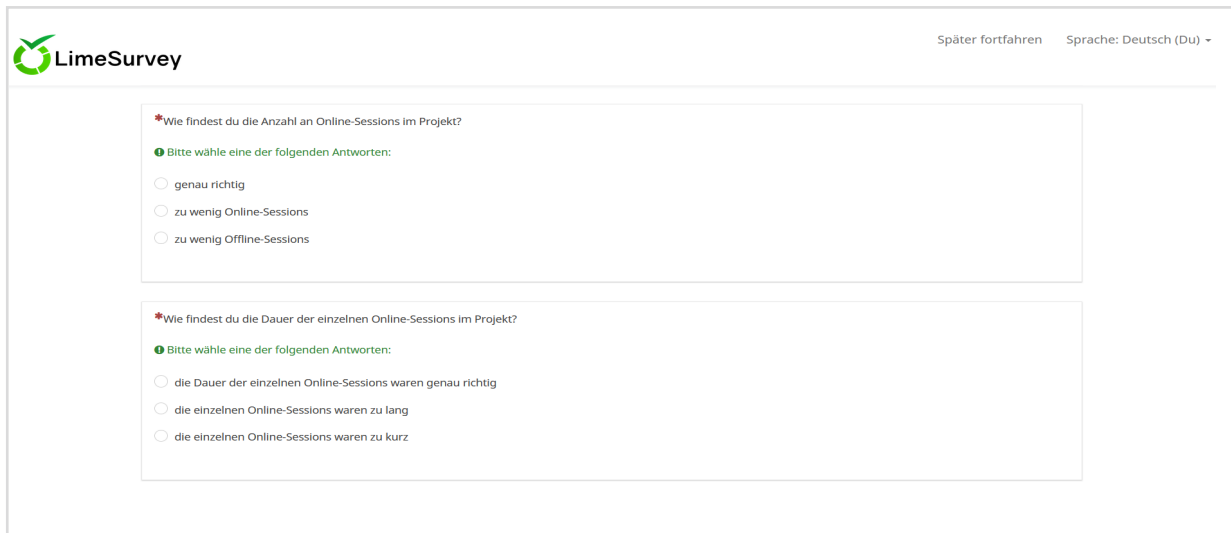
When developing the set of questions, besides considering the feedback from the team leaders the researchers also built on the outcomes of a previous project. For instance, they considered an existing tool for evaluating digital activities in the cultural education field. The tool gathers feedback from each participant in an online activity individually, but also provides that feedback online to all members of the group via the tool itself. This approach allows for the data to be recorded but also integrates the tool in the feedback phase towards the end of an activity. It is available at www.kubi-digital.jff.de. The IJA.digital research team used this as a basis to develop the questions for use in the international youth work context.

The resulting set of questions was turned into an online questionnaire using the online survey application LimeSurvey; this in turn was tested in three online sessions by young people who had taken part in three separate digital projects that were observed by the IJA.digital research team. A written record was produced of the outcomes.

The links below lead to the online test questionnaire and to the responses as exported by the tool. The test questionnaire and the responses are older versions that were used to test the new questions. The final version is reproduced on page 4 and 5 of this document. During the test, the team briefly interrupted the process twice in order to discuss the responses so far and to make a qualitative assessment of the participants' quantitative answers.

The first link leads to the first part of the set of questions, the second to the second.

- Part 1: https://befragung.jff.de/index.php/726815
- Part 2: https://befragung.jff.de/index.php/195383
- Responses: https://feedback.jff.de/

Fig. 1: Screenshot of the LimeSurvey test tool

Set of questions

Application

This section outlines the developed set of questions and explains how it can be used.

- The set consists of twelve items and can be used for both purely online projects as well as for hybrid and blended activities.

- The questions centre around themes that are particularly relevant to digital projects. Questions on aspects that are equally relevant to physical/in-person settings (improving one's language skills, getting to know the partner country, developing social skills, etc.) are deliberately not included. For this, reference is made to the above-mentioned i-EVAL platform, which contains questions on these topics. If the aim is to evaluate a digital project, the i-EVAL questions could be added to the questions from the set described here .

- The questions can also be used as an ice-breaker to start a discussion with the participants about the results of the survey. In this case the results should be made available directly afterwards to all team leaders and participants. The results should be clearly identifiable as belonging to a specific project. This can be done by using a dedicated project ID, for instance.

- Naturally, any discussion with the participants should be voluntary; also, participants should be able to opt to remain anonymous.

The questions

The following table contains the questions in the set and lists the aspects they focus on.

Aspect	Questions
Online sessions: General assessment	1. How much do you enjoy working with digital media (smartphone, tablet, etc.) in this project? • A lot • Somewhat • I have mixed feelings • Not a lot • I really don't like it 2. Have the online sessions encouraged you to take part in other international activities? • Yes, if they are only online • Yes, if they are offline/on-site • Yes, if there's a mix of digital and offline • No
Number and duration of online sessions	3. How do you feel about the number of online sessions in this project? • Just right • Not enough • Too many 4. How do you feel about the duration of the online sessions in the project? • The sessions had just the right length • The sessions were too long • The sessions were too short
Group atmosphere during the online sessions	5. During the online sessions, there was a feeling of belonging within the group of people I already knew from before. • Completely agree • Somewhat agree • Neither agree nor disagree • Somewhat disagree • Totally disagree • I didn't know anyone 6. During the online sessions, there was a feeling of belonging within the group of people I did **not** know from before. • Completely agree • Somewhat agree • Neither agree nor disagree • Somewhat disagree • Totally disagree • I already knew everyone

Informal interaction during the online sessions	7. During the online sessions I could interact with the other participants outside of the schedule and away from the tasks we were given. • Completely agree • Somewhat agree • Neither agree nor disagree • Somewhat disagree • Totally disagree
Technical equipment and online tools	8. I had difficulties taking part in the online sessions because the equipment (camera, microphone, etc.) didn't work. • Completely agree • Somewhat agree • Neither agree nor disagree • Somewhat disagree • Totally disagree 9. I think the online tools (software, apps, etc.) were used appropriately. • Completely agree • Somewhat agree • Neither agree nor disagree • Somewhat disagree • Totally disagree
Participants' media skills and experience	10. I was able to suggest certain online tools (e.g., Discord, Instagram, TikTok) that were then used during the online sessions. • Completely agree • Somewhat agree • Neither agree nor disagree • Somewhat disagree • Totally disagree 11. I was able to contribute my skills and experience with digital media (e.g., social media, hardware, software) during the online sessions. • Completely agree • Somewhat agree • Neither agree nor disagree • Somewhat disagree • Totally disagree
Suggested improvements	12. I would like to suggest the following improvements to future online sessions: [open answer]