

NATIONAL REPORT

Slovenia

DIGITAL ADVOCACY FOR YOUTH



Who we are

1

NorSensus
MEDIAFORUM

Norsensus Mediaforum is an ideal organization that offers media and digital services and training, assists the NGO and public sector with capacity building in media and communication, and contributes to increasing media literacy in society. We are a non-profit media organization working in the field of media literacy and communication capacity building.

2

 **HIGGS**

Higher Incubator Giving Growth and Sustainability is a non-profit organization which aims to reinforce CSOs in Greece through educational and supportive programs. It offers capacity building support to small and medium CSOs mainly through training and educational initiatives. Currently it operates three capacity-building programs, the Accelerator, the Incubator and the Recharge designed for the Greek CSO ecosystem assisting them in their growth and development.

3

symplexis

Symplexis is a Greek non-for-profit organization that strives to ensure equal opportunities for all through actions and measures that build skills, empower and promote active engagement and participation focusing on the most vulnerable categories of the population and particularly those with fewer opportunities. Its mission is to elevate social cohesion through integrated actions and project-based activities.

Who we are

4



Center for Social
Innovation

Centre for Social Innovation (CSI) is a Research and Development organization, which focuses on fostering social innovation that can bring about positive change to local, national, regional, and global entities. These entities include but are not limited to governments, local administrative agencies, non-for-profit agencies, commercial entities, and educational institutions.

5



Celje Youth Center (MCC) is a nonprofit public organisation. Their vision is to successfully respond to the needs of young people and shape the place for socialising, entertainment, creating and gaining new skills and providing international non-formal learning opportunities for young people. Its activities are oriented towards providing information and encouraging participation aiming to gain non-formal competences for youth and foster social engagement and active participation among youth.

6



The Future Now Association (TFN) is a Bulgarian youth NGO that works on national and international initiatives, activities, and projects for and with young people and youth workers. TFN supports and promotes democratic values of civil society to protect freedom, dignity, and inclusion of children, young people, and vulnerable groups of society.

Table of Content

Phase

01

Executive Summary

Phase

02

Demographic Profile

Phase

03

**Current Use of Digital Tools in
Advocacy**

Phase

04

Training Needs and Skill Gaps

Phase

05

**Identified Gaps and Challenges in
Digital Advocacy**

Phase

06

Future Digital Skills Needs

Phase

07

**Additional Comments and
Suggestions**

Executive Summary

This national report for the Digital Advocacy for Youth (D.A.Y.) project summarizes the findings from a survey conducted across Greece, Cyprus, Slovenia, Norway and Bulgaria. The D.A.Y. project aims to enhance digital advocacy among youth by identifying current practices, evaluating the use of digital tools, and understanding specific training needs to improve advocacy efforts.

The findings indicate that digital tools play a crucial role in youth advocacy across all surveyed countries, with social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn being widely used to engage and mobilize audiences. However, respondents also highlighted challenges, particularly concerning limited resources, difficulties in reaching target audiences, and the rapid evolution of digital technologies. These challenges underscore a need for more accessible, tailored training and support to enhance digital advocacy effectiveness.

Key Findings:

1. **Digital Tool Usage:** Respondents generally consider digital tools essential for advocacy, yet the level of tool adoption and specific platforms used vary by country.
2. **Challenges in Advocacy:** Main challenges include resource constraints, low engagement rates, and technical barriers, which

Executive Summary

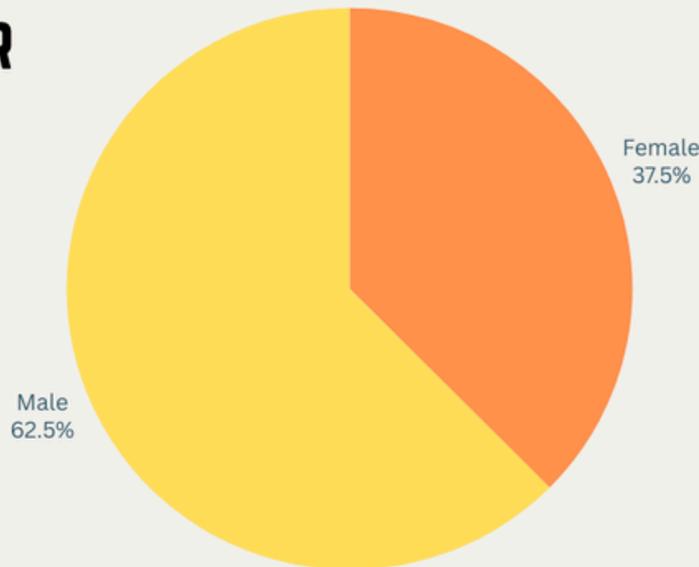
3. Respondents identified a strong need for training in social media management, content creation, and cybersecurity, with a notable interest in emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence to enhance digital advocacy efforts.

Recommendations: To address these needs, this report recommends developing an educational toolkit focused on essential digital skills and offering a practical approach to digital advocacy. This toolkit should be complemented by opportunities for cross-country collaboration, fostering shared learning and support across the D.A.Y. network. By addressing the skills and resources gaps identified, the D.A.Y. project can empower youth to engage more effectively as advocates, strengthening their ability to drive social change.

Demographic Profile

The focus group participants represented a diverse cross-section of Slovenian civil society organizations. Eight active members joined two sessions. In the first session, there were 3 male participants and one female. In the second session, there were 2 male participants and 2 female.

FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS BY GENDER



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x x x x x x
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x x x x x x

x x x x x x
x x x x x x
x x x x x x

Female
Male
N= 8

Demographic Profile

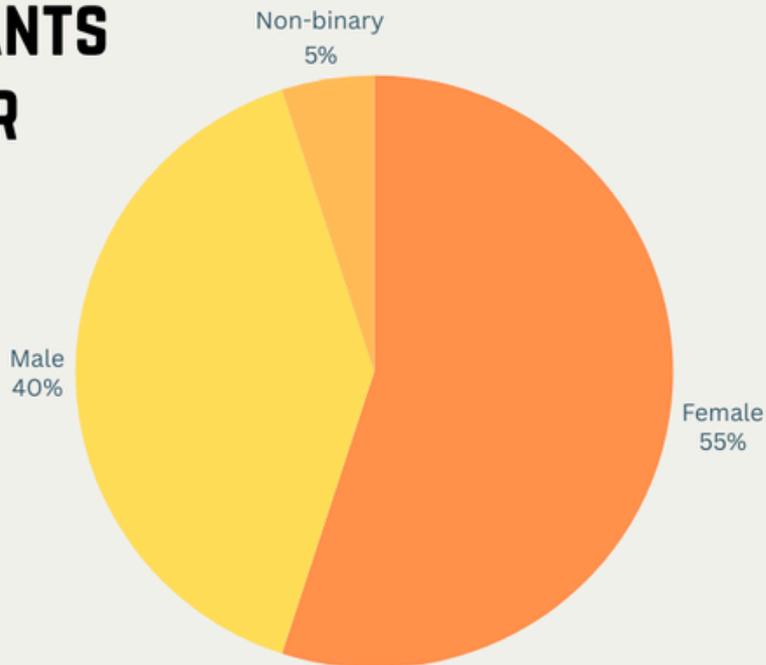
All focus group participants hold influential roles across various advocacy domains. Participants included:

- A mix of advisors, journalists, volunteers, and project managers from organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, Radio Student, IDEA (International Debate Education Association), and “Pro et Contra” - Institute for Culture of Dialogue.
- Their backgrounds span youth work, education, journalism, human development, and project management, reflecting a broad spectrum of experience in advocacy at both national and international levels.

Demographic Profile

The survey respondents, like the focus group participants, reflect a diverse group within Slovenian civil society organizations. Gender wise, the group was pretty evenly distributed, with 11 female respondents, 8 male respondents and one non-binary respondent.

SURVEY PARTICIPANTS BY GENDER



Female
Male
Non-binary N= 20

Demographic Profile

The survey respondents, like the focus group participants, reflect a diverse group within Slovenian civil society organizations. Key demographics include:

- **Education and Employment:** Respondents mostly hold postgraduate qualifications and are either employed or engaged in volunteer roles.
- **Organizational Roles:** Roles include volunteers, communicators, consultants, and managers within organizations like MCC (Celje Youth Centre), Glas Ljudstva (Voice of the people), and Socio-VGC, representing youth work, community organizing, and social services.

These demographic characteristics suggest a well-educated, dedicated workforce, though often operating under limited resources in civil society roles.

Current use of digital tools in advocacy

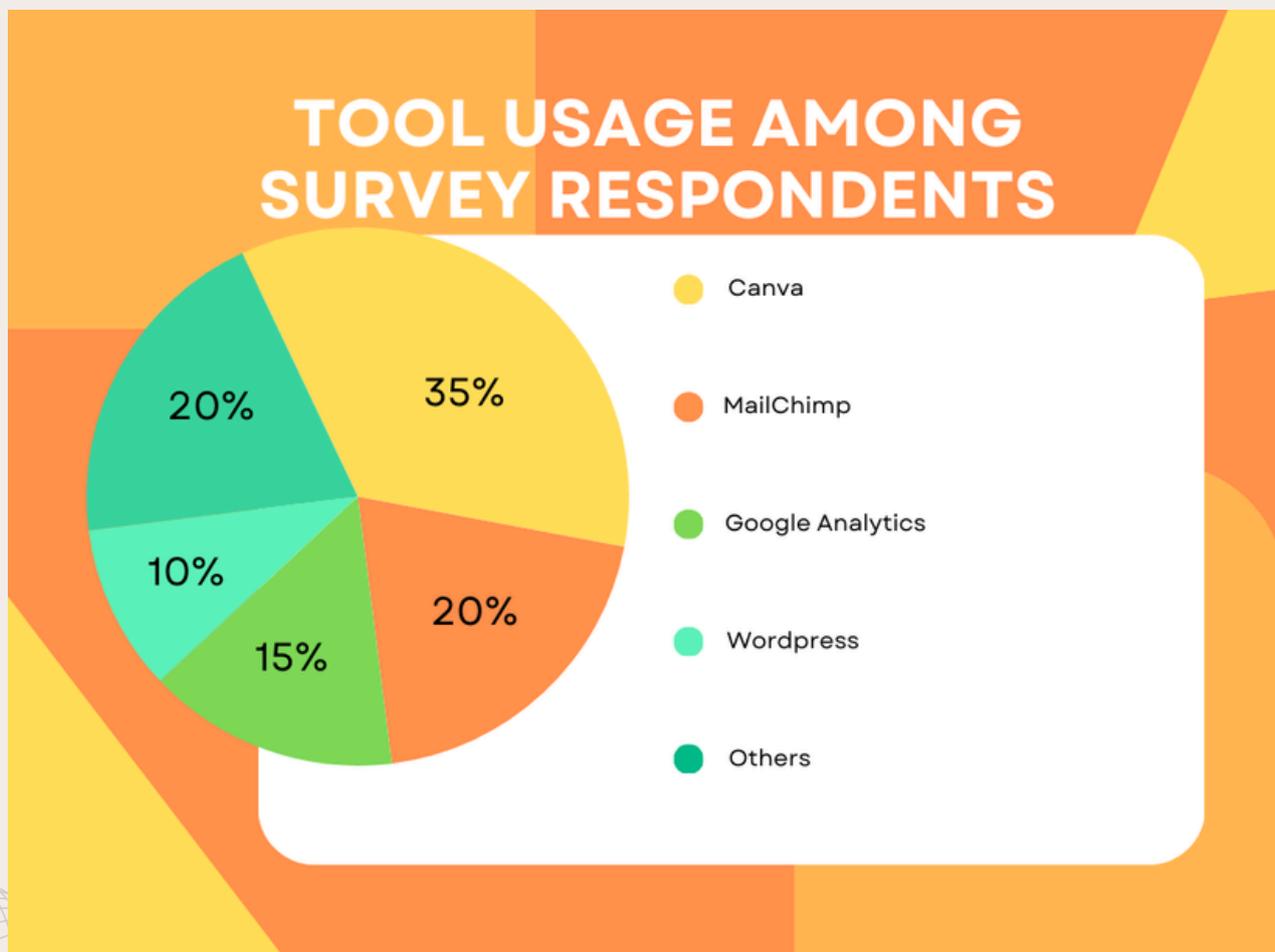
Key Findings from Focus groups:

- **Role of Digital Tools:** All participants agreed that digital tools are vital for advocacy. They enable effective dissemination of information, wider outreach, and mobilization of supporters—particularly essential for NGOs with limited budgets.
- **Social Media Platforms:** Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn were widely used. Instagram proved particularly effective in reaching younger demographics, while LinkedIn facilitated professional engagement.
- **Digital Tools in Use:** Participants frequently used Canva for graphics, Mailchimp for email marketing, Buffer for social media management, and podcasting platforms for auditory content.
- **Effectiveness:** Participants generally found digital tools effective, though success was noted to depend on strategic use. For instance, targeted advertising on social media was seen as highly effective in audience engagement, though translating awareness into action remained challenging.

Current use of digital tools in advocacy

Survey responses align closely with focus group insights, confirming that digital tools are central to advocacy efforts in Slovenia:

- **Popular Tools:** Widely used tools include Canva, Mailchimp, Figma, Google Analytics, and WordPress. Canva emerged as a particularly common tool across both datasets, valued for ease in creating visual content.



Current use of digital tools in advocacy

- **Usage Trends:** Tools like Google Analytics are employed for data analysis and video production, indicating an increasing trend toward content creation and audience tracking. Email marketing and content scheduling tools (e.g., Mailchimp) are used to maintain consistent engagement.
- These tools are instrumental for communication, campaign management, and visual storytelling, especially in settings where budgets are constrained.



Training needs and skill gaps

The participants identified specific areas where further training would be valuable to enhance their digital advocacy efforts:

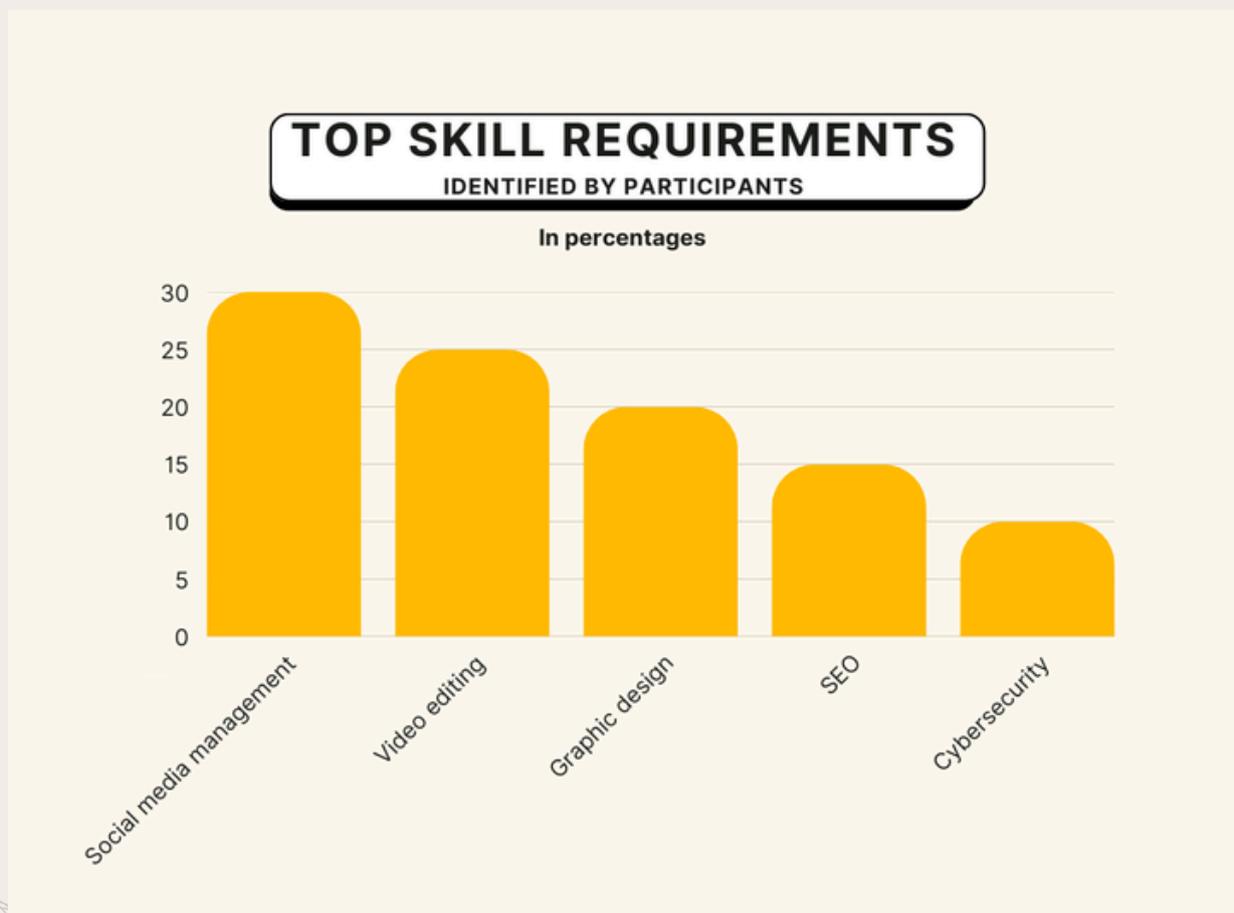
- **Data Analysis:** Understanding audience insights through data analytics emerged as a high-priority need.
- **Video and Graphic Design:** Skills in creating visual content (video editing, graphic design) were seen as essential for effective digital storytelling.
- **SEO and Content Optimization:** Participants expressed interest in improving SEO to enhance online visibility, especially important for smaller NGOs with limited resources.

The skills identified reflect a need for a strong understanding of data-driven strategies, creative content production, and effective audience targeting.

Training needs and skill gaps

Both the survey and focus groups highlighted significant training needs in digital skills that can enhance advocacy effectiveness. Survey-specific skills needs are listed below.

- Content management, digital marketing, and cybersecurity were commonly mentioned in the survey. Respondents cited social media strategy and content creation as top priorities, matching the focus group's emphasis on skills for storytelling and digital engagement.



Training needs and skill gaps

- **Barriers to Learning:** Lack of time and expert guidance were notable barriers. Survey respondents indicated a need for structured learning opportunities, such as seminars or expert-led workshops, with some suggesting organizational support through hiring experts or reallocating time for skill development. These insights underline a need for both practical training and supportive structures within organizations to foster digital literacy and skill growth.

BARRIERS TO LEARNING



Identified gaps and challenges in digital advocacy

The focus groups highlighted several challenges in implementing and utilizing digital tools effectively:

- **Resource Constraints:** Many organizations face financial and human resource limitations that hinder the effective adoption of digital tools.
- **Algorithmic Barriers:** Algorithm-driven prioritization on social media was identified as a barrier, as it often favors commercial content over non-profit advocacy, affecting visibility.
- **Misinformation and Content Competition:** Tackling misinformation on platforms like Facebook poses a significant challenge for advocacy campaigns, which often compete with high-volume corporate content.
- **Internal Skill Gaps:** A lack of internal digital skills and training opportunities further complicates the consistent and strategic use of digital tools across teams.

These challenges underscore the need for structured digital skill-building initiatives within organizations to bridge gaps in both knowledge and resources.

Identified gaps and challenges in digital advocacy

Survey findings add depth to the identified challenges, focusing on resource limitations, platform dynamics, and evolving digital landscapes:

- **Resource Shortages:** As noted in the focus groups, the lack of resources remains a primary challenge. Many respondents also highlighted the need for specialized digital teams to manage tools effectively.
- **Technical Complexity and Change:** Rapid technological changes were seen as a significant obstacle. Participants mentioned the constant evolution of digital tools and platforms, which makes it difficult to maintain up-to-date skills without continual learning.
- **Audience Engagement:** Low engagement rates and difficulty converting awareness into action were frequently mentioned challenges. Respondents expressed that despite using popular platforms, reaching and activating audiences effectively remains an ongoing struggle.

Identified gaps and challenges in digital advocacy

EFFECTIVE USE
OF DIGITAL
TOOLS IN
ADVOCACY



Together, these challenges reinforce the importance of targeted resources, dedicated training, focused specifically on building internal skills of the staff, and a more strategic approach to using digital tools effectively in the advocacy process.

Future digital skills needs

Looking forward, participants identified several emerging needs that will shape the future of digital advocacy:

- **AI and Automation:** There was interest in exploring AI-driven tools for message customization, suggesting a trend toward automated, personalized advocacy.
- **Data-Driven Campaigning:** Using data insights for targeted, efficient campaign strategies is expected to become a central aspect of future digital advocacy efforts.
- **Immersive Media:** Virtual reality (VR) and other immersive tools were highlighted as potential future assets to create impactful, engaging advocacy experiences.

The anticipated trends point to an evolving landscape where civil society organizations will need advanced technical capabilities to remain relevant and effective.

Future digital skills needs

Survey insights, alongside focus group discussions, illustrate how future digital advocacy will require more sophisticated skills:

- **Data Analytics:** Advanced data management and analysis skills were frequently highlighted as essential for refining campaigns and audience engagement.
- **Cybersecurity:** Survey respondents uniquely identified cybersecurity as an emerging need, essential for protecting organizational data and maintaining trust in digital communications.
- **Content Marketing:** With increased competition for attention, content marketing skills are anticipated to become vital, especially for creating memorable, high-impact advocacy campaigns.

These insights underscore a forward-looking need for robust digital skill sets, particularly in data security, analytics, and marketing to keep pace with digital advancements.

Additional comments and suggestions

Participants offered several additional suggestions aimed at strengthening digital advocacy in the sector.



Additional comments and suggestions

- **Collaborative Learning Opportunities:** Emphasis was placed on the benefits of sharing digital tools knowledge across organizations through workshops and cross-training initiatives.
- **Focus on Storytelling:** Many participants stressed the importance of enhancing storytelling skills, especially for creating impactful visual content that resonates with target audiences.
- **Regular Digital Literacy Training:** Given the rapid evolution of digital platforms, ongoing training to stay up-to-date with new tools and techniques was recommended.
- **Accommodating Learning:** Respondents suggested solutions like allocating dedicated time for digital learning or hiring experts to lead training initiatives. Workshops, seminars, and partnerships with educational programs were seen as potential avenues to support digital skill development.
- **Building Collaboration:** Many highlighted the benefit of collaborative digital training within and between organizations to maximize learning and resource sharing. Some proposed that civil society networks establish collective learning initiatives to tackle common digital advocacy challenges.

Conclusion

The insights from Slovenian civil society focus group participants underscore the critical role of digital tools in advocacy today. However, significant skill gaps, resource limitations, and emerging challenges like misinformation and platform algorithms limit their full potential. Building capacity in data-driven strategies, creative digital production, and future-oriented tools such as AI and VR will be crucial for enhancing advocacy impact. Addressing these needs through structured training and cross-organizational collaboration would enable Slovenian civil society organizations to better leverage digital tools for social impact in the years ahead.

The integration of survey data affirms and expands upon the findings from the focus groups, providing a comprehensive view of digital advocacy in Slovenia's civil society sector. Participants and respondents underscore the effectiveness of digital tools in advocacy but identify certain skill gaps, resource challenges, and emerging cybersecurity needs. A coordinated approach to building digital literacy through training, structured organizational support, and collaborative learning opportunities could prove transformative for Slovenian civil society organizations seeking to leverage digital tools for impactful advocacy in the years ahead.