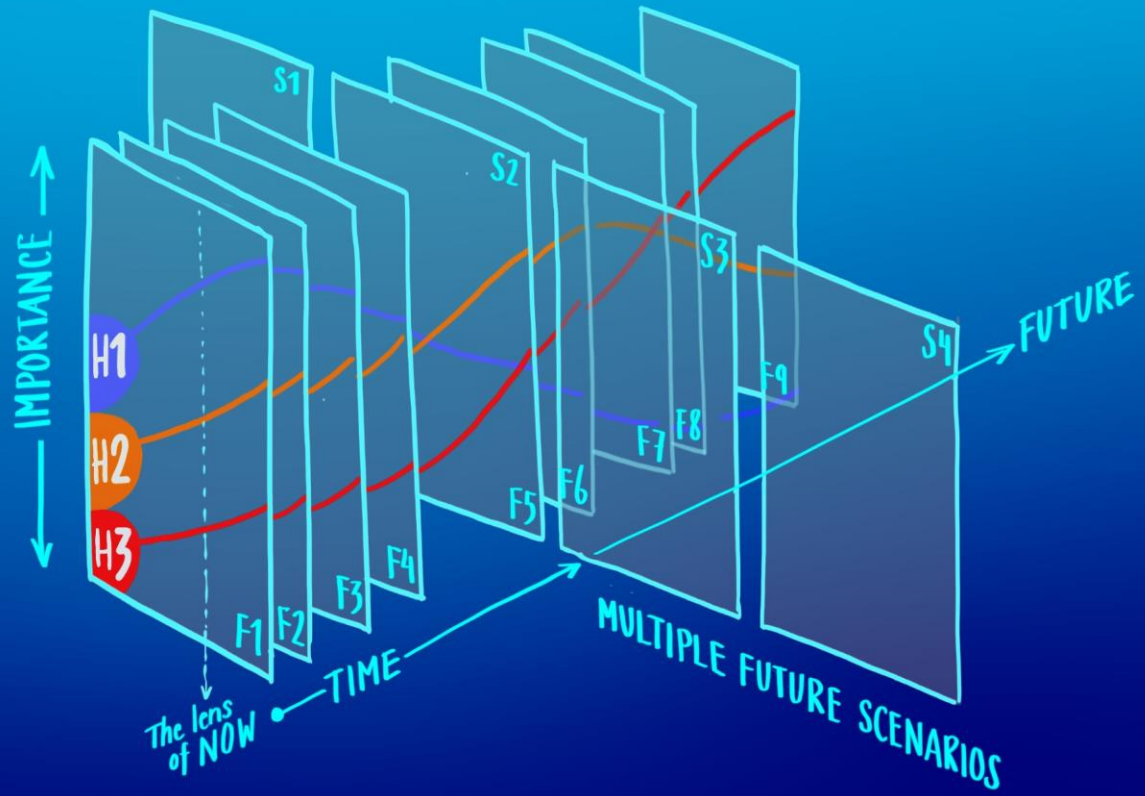
The Futures of Youth Work

Emerging messages, key questions and insights

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.

EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS



Visual by Mireille van Bremen | thevisualmediator.com

The only constant in life is change

(Heraclitus)

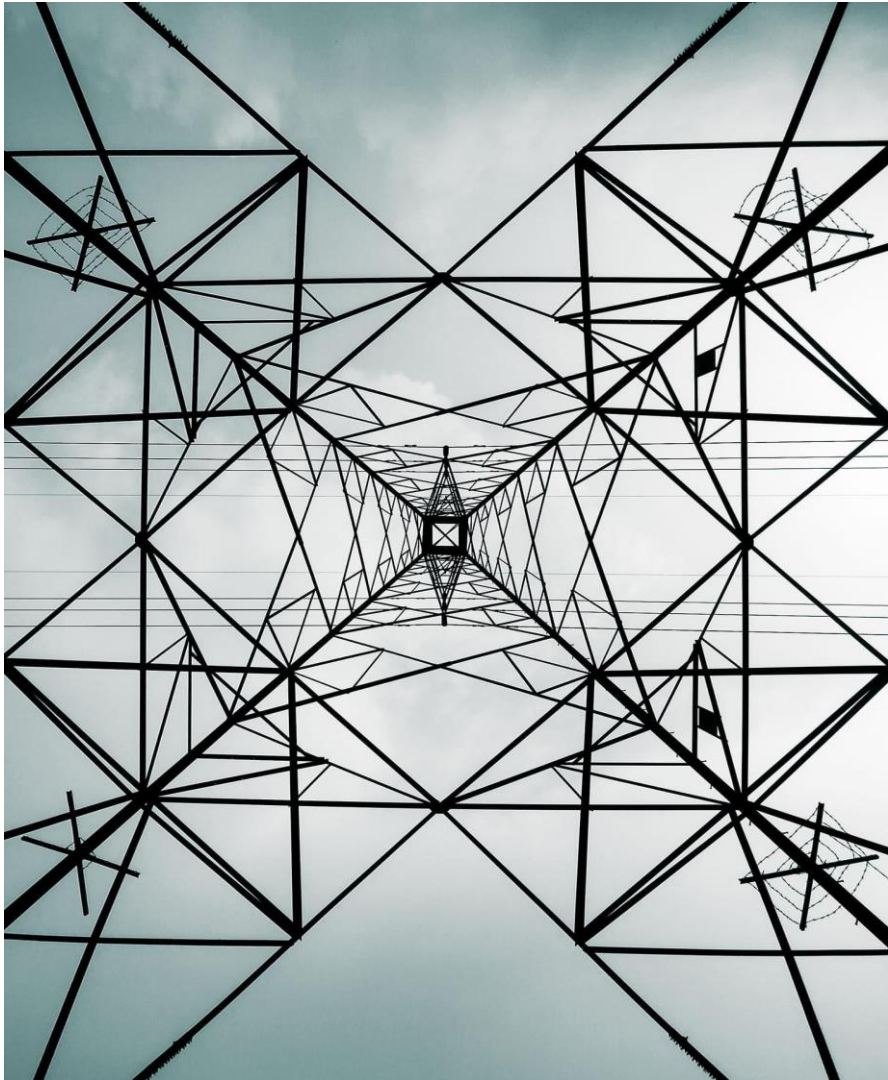
European Academy on Youth Work

There are so many ways to look at that picture and to approach it.

What is yours? What does it tell you?

Future-readiness in youth work implies…

- Mindset
- Future literacy
- Rethinking youth work's social role



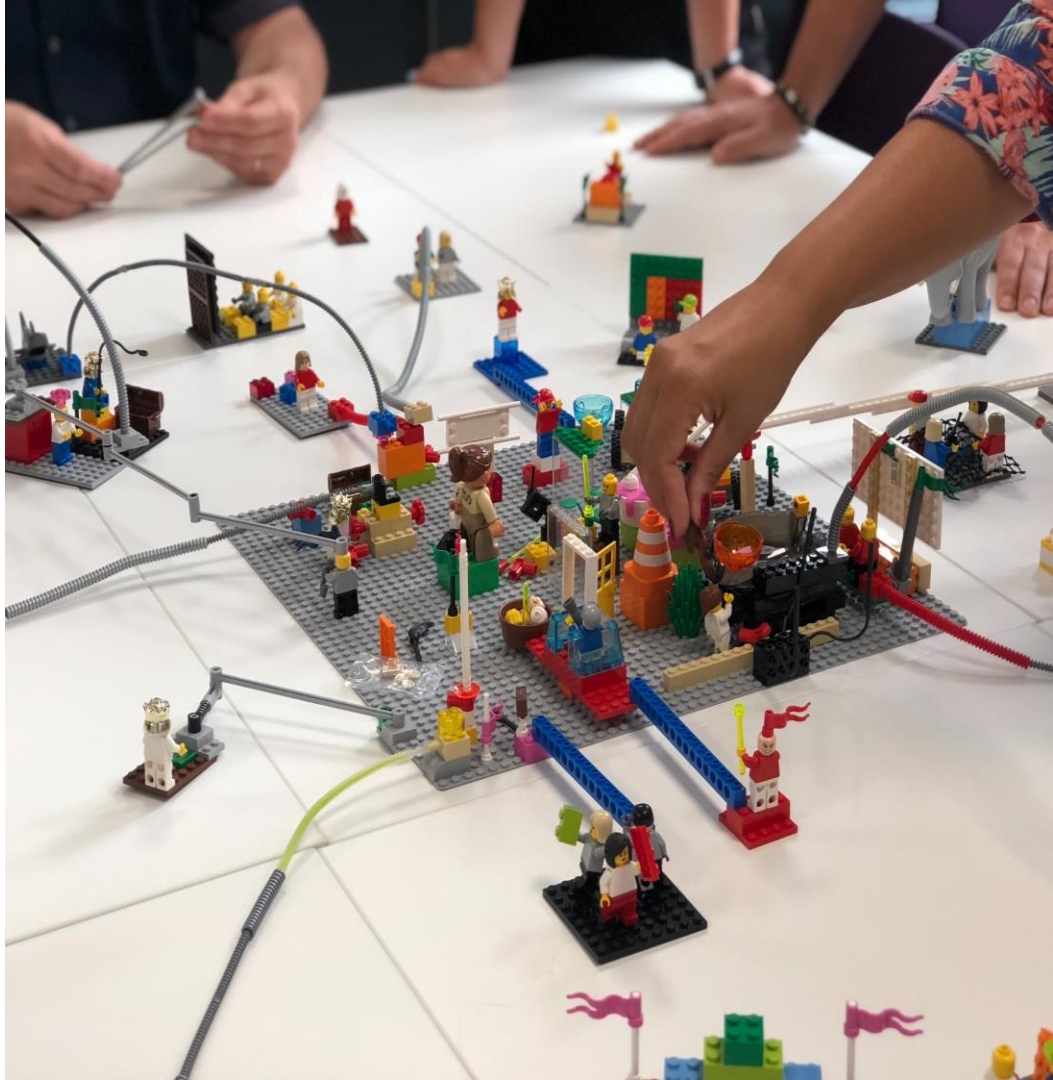
Sense-making: systemic reflections on the signals

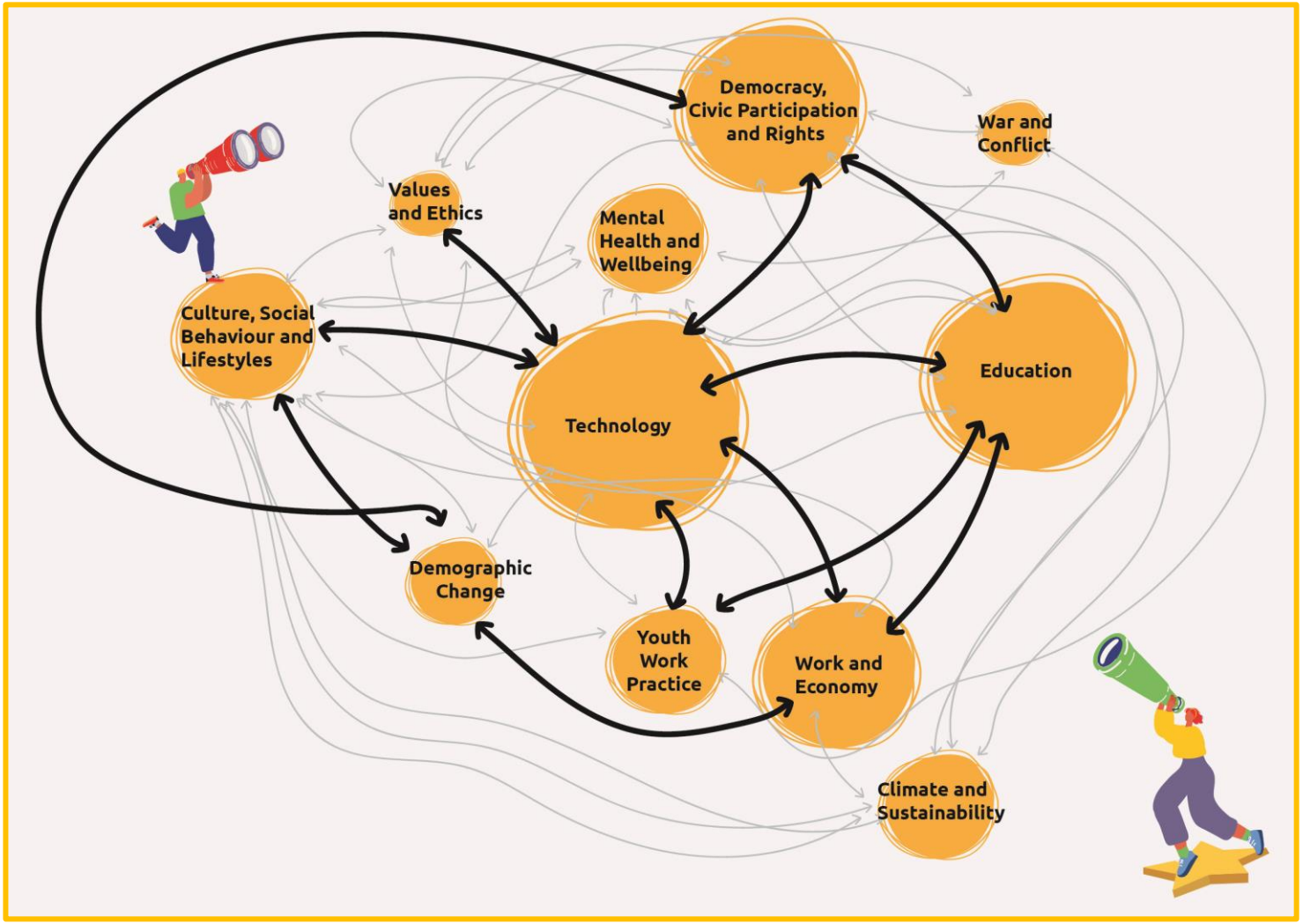
- **Technology noise creates blind spots in future-oriented thinking - ** What are we excluding (from our awareness) when focusing too much on technology?
- **Too painful to look at -** What is too painful to look at in the present (that will significantly shape our futures)?
- **Chasing our own tail – mental health issues as wake-up calls** – zooming out**:** where do mental health issues direct our attention?

- **Youth work's place and size -** What would the 'right' place and size of youth work be? What would be the societal role of youth work that is aware of its limits and own agency?

- **Mother of all crises is the Crisis of perception** (F. Capra) - How do the illusions of separateness and infinite growth impact the approach of youth work to global crises, and what changes can the field make to address these effectively?

- ***IT*'s all connected. *WE* are all connected -** Can youth work become a place where we can re-learn the sense of interconnectedness?
- **Learning *and* Unlearning -** How can youth work support both processes – learning and unlearning when considering its future readiness?




Democracy, Civic Participation and Rights
War and Conflict
Values and Ethics
Mental Health and Wellbeing
Culture, Social Behaviour and Lifestyles
Technology
Education
Demographic Change
Youth Work Practice
Work and Economy
Climate and Sustainability

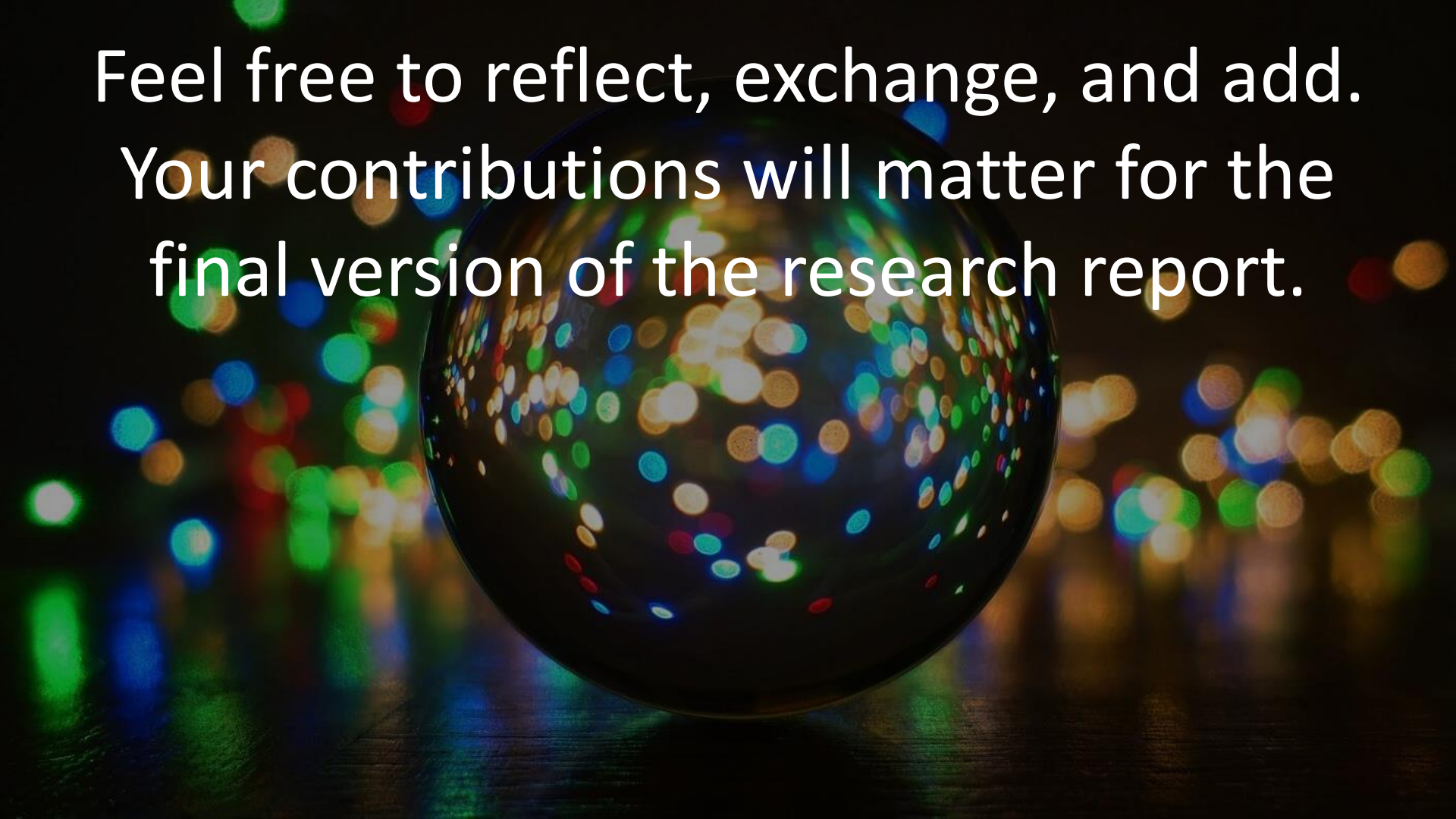
Strategies for adapting to the future challenges

Strategy #1 - Adopt a reflected sense of agency: adopt the position of co-creators, engaged in a continuous ‘dance’ between ‘what is coming to an end’ and ‘what is emerging’.

Strategy #2 – Provide more structured conversation spaces about futures: the need for more focused and structured discussions about the futures of youth work

Strategy #3 – Embrace the whole-system change approach: systemic change requires a holistic approach that fosters individual development and creates supportive systemic conditions at the policy level.

Strategy #4 – Stay alert for ‘transformation calls’: remain vigilant to pinpoint the moment when mere innovation will no longer be sufficient for youth work to survive and remain future-proof.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Your contributions will matter for the final version of the research report.