



# DLiS

Digital Learning  
Intervention Sociale

## Output 2: Reflective guide

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## CONTENTS

> Summary	p. 3
> Context	p. 4
> Purpose of the guide	p. 6
> Presentation of the methodology	p. 11
> Description of roles	p. 12
> Rules of the game	p. 14
> Presentation of the systems platform	p. 16
> A tool that can be adapted to suit everyone: it's up to you!	p. 21
> Problem-based situations	p. 23
> Resources	p. 47



**For information:** We have chosen to use the feminine form throughout the guide when referring to professionals in the field of social work, as this sector employs and trains a large majority of women.



The result of collaboration between six partners from five European countries, this **R**eflective guide is a pedagogical tool to help social work communities in the reflect on their professional practices in relation to the development and use of digital technology in social work.

Based on real-life situations in the field, obtained through feedback from practising professionals and social work students, the aim of this tool-guide is twofold: firstly, to enable people to take a step back from the issues and questions raised on a daily basis by the use of digital technology in social work; secondly, to encourage exchanges between peers in order to discuss each person's digital practices and work together to develop appropriate rules and strategies. Unlike a guide to best practice, Réflex'tics is intended as a tool to help social workers reflect on the situations in which they work.

To do this, it includes :

- > A methodological guide for facilitating and supporting reflection based on the codes of the game
- > A collection of problematic field situations organised around four themes
- > The provision of thematic resources to inform discussions



In Europe, the dematerialisation of public services and the digitisation of day-to-day administrative procedures, accelerated by the global pandemic of 2020 where social distancing was required, raises the question of how social workers are trained to support people who are 'remote' from the digital society.

The dematerialisation of administrative procedures, which in practical terms means the closure of physical reception counters for users of public services, poses new challenges for social action, by increasing the risks of a breakdown in access to rights (Défenseur des droits, 2019).

Against this backdrop, social workers are facing new challenges that are redefining some of their missions and practices. An increasing number of their clients, who until now have been independent in their dealings with the authorities, are turning to them with problems using the digital interfaces developed by government departments and most commercial services.

The evolution of social workers' missions towards providing support for people's online procedures has largely taken place "without a professional mandate" and "without training" (Mazet and Sorin, 2019).

This guide is part of a project entitled "Digital Learning - Training through and for digital technology in the field of social intervention" (DLIS) funded by the ERASMUS+ agency and supported by the following partners:

- > IRTS Hauts-de-France in Lille, France
- > ESAS HELMO in Liège, Belgium
- > ESS CRAMIF in Paris, France
- > ACSEA in Luxembourg
- > AUREL VLAICU UNIVERSITY in Arad, Romania
- > KEPSIPI in Athens, Greece

Overall, the Digital Learning Intervention Sociale project aims to produce concrete, royalty-free and transferable results. These are directly linked to the priorities of supporting digital capabilities and innovation in higher education and the training of social work professionals:

- > By making it possible to measure the digital agility of social workers
- > By formulating ideas on the role of social digital mediation and the tools on which professionals and students can draw.
- > By modelling a distance learning base using freely accessible themed e-learning modules. You can access training capsules on all the themes via [this link](#).



The professionals likely to be involved in this project work, or are in the process of working, in the field of social work, in the social economy, in the public sector and in the private sector. Exposed to a public in demand

In the context of digital support, social work students and professionals need to develop appropriate digital skills. But they also need to develop reflective skills specific to their field of action, social work. The project proposes a range of learning tools to help them develop these skills, based on experience in the field.



### GENERAL APPROACH

The aim of this guide is to provide social work professionals and students with questions and food for thought, as well as information on the following topics on four themes related to digital technology and social work:

- > Data protection and social work
- > Digital tools: equipment, disconnection and support
- > Netiquettes: for ethical use of digital social networks
- > Adopting an Ethical Digital Posture

Unlike existing tools, this guide is based on concrete situations in the field, obtained through feedback from practising professionals and social work students in the project's partner countries. The aim is to build on the experience of working in the field, as close as possible to the situations experienced by social workers, so as to make it easier to adopt and transfer.

The guide is designed as a tool for developing peer-to-peer learning, inviting discussion and exchange on digital-related situations that raise questions in the professional practice of social workers. The use of concrete situations, which can be adapted to the diversity and complexity of the social situations encountered, should help to develop this learning and appropriation channel. It aims to encourage the development of digital agility in both social workers and future students of social work, by providing them with a tool for reflecting on and adapting their practices in diverse and complex situations.

Finally, and this is a point that is very important to us, dealing with the issues of dematerialisation and social inequalities in the digital environment cannot be done without a technocritical analysis and an approach to the relationships of domination that operate in our societies. This approach highlights the inequalities and injustices that can be exacerbated by the poorly regulated deployment of digital technologies. The deployment of these technologies in the various spheres of daily and professional life is mainly driven by the BIG TECHS, i.e. large capital-intensive technology companies, often exercising a virtual monopoly on digital platforms.

The increasing digitisation of our societies is likely to reinforce existing relationships of domination, in particular by encouraging the concentration of power in the hands of

the collection and use of users' personal data raises crucial questions. It is now accepted that certain practices developed by BIG TECH can reinforce inequalities in terms of privacy and data protection, by giving companies greater control over the lives of individuals.

It therefore seems necessary to take into account the cultural and political dimensions of digital development, to ensure that the patterns of domination already present in society are not reproduced, leading to the over-marginalisation of socially disadvantaged groups. While we welcome the efforts made by the European Union to regulate, notably through the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation, it nevertheless seems important that public policies guaranteeing truly inclusive digital development continue to be strengthened.

To achieve this, this guide uses a number of codes from the game, and we're now going to explain how they work and the method on which they are based.

## A GAME FOR COLLECTIVE THINKING

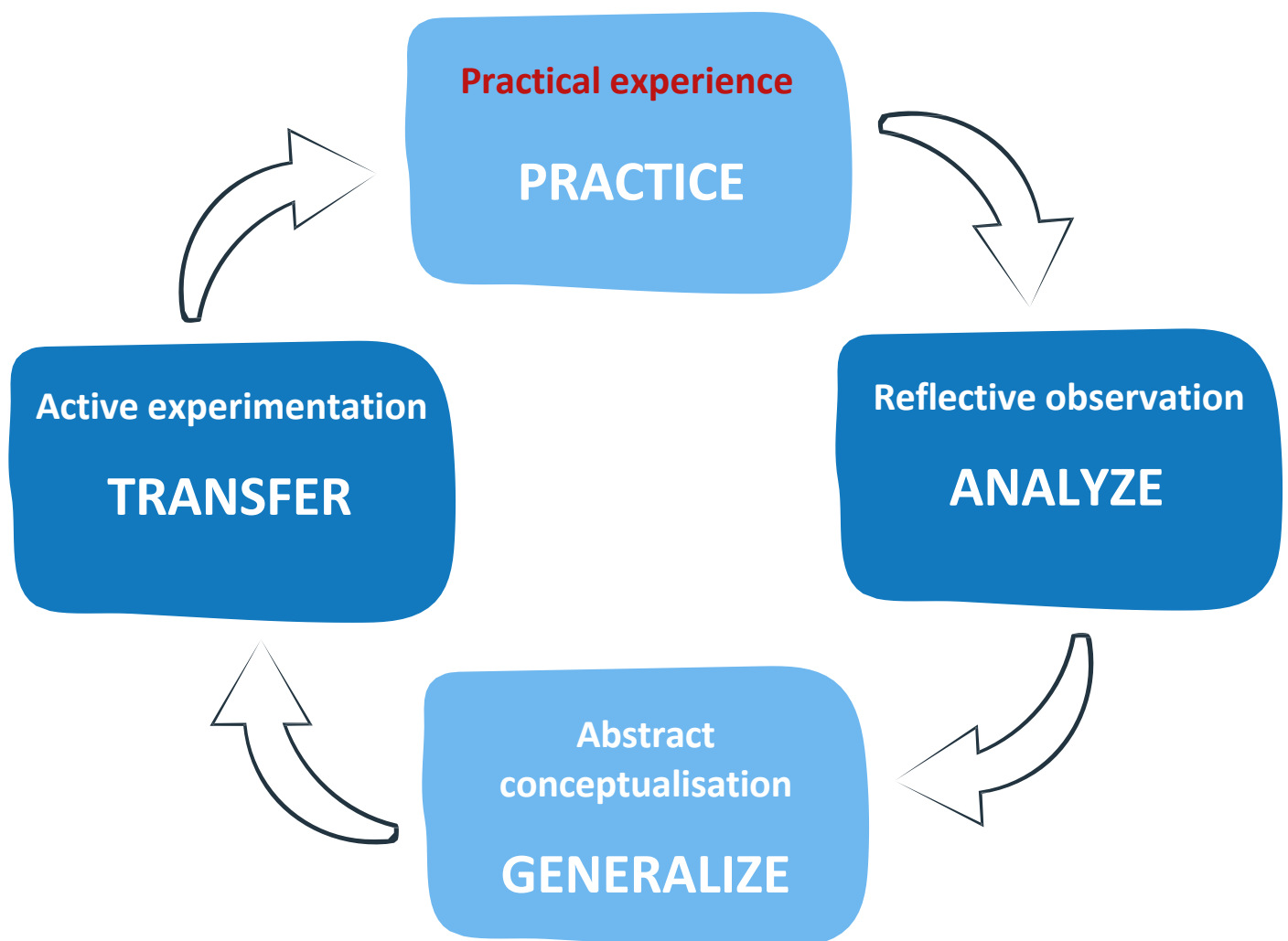
The team of partners involved in this project are aware that, at first sight, games may appear to be an unusual or offbeat way of getting a group of people to question their professional practices in situations that are often no laughing matter. Taking seriously the ethical and professional dilemmas encountered by social workers in their activities, we have chosen to use a medium which, in several respects, seems to us to be a fruitful tool for encouraging questioning and establishing a common understanding of the issues.

keys to understanding, and even strategies, for taking individual or collective action.

Starting from problematic situations linked to digital agility, and to evoke the difficulties linked to the dematerialisation of public services and the development of non-use of social rights induced by the problem of access to online administrative procedures, we thought it would be interesting to use the resources offered by the game: the latter develops and encourages, or even relies on, the bonds of conviviality inherent in teamwork and on a spirit of benevolence and respect for each other's ideas.

The integration of gamification into education, or gamification-education, is based on the idea that games, far more than mere entertainment, can be a powerful vehicle for learning.

Edutainment combines playful elements with educational objectives, enabling learners to become actively involved in their training process. By offering a space for freedom and creativity, play encourages experimentation, problem-solving and experiential learning. According to Kolb's model, learning is structured in a cycle in which concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation follow one another, reinforcing the assimilation of knowledge. In this way, gamification not only stimulates attention and participation, but also creates a learning environment where mistakes become an opportunity for reflection and improvement. What's more, by incorporating realistic scenarios and ethical dilemmas, the game enables social workers to develop critical thinking skills and to learn to make informed decisions. the ability to adapt to complex situations encountered in their professional practice. Gamification therefore seems particularly well-suited to dealing with the challenges of dematerialisation and digital agility in social work, by transforming theoretical concepts into concrete, interactive experiences.



Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Learning from experience: development beyond process. d'apprentissage*. Paris: Les Éditions d'Organisation.



In this context, the use of games as a tool for reflecting on and questioning the professional practices of social workers involves first and foremost role-playing: the game immerses the individual and the group in the simulation of real-life situations linked to the digital divide and the effects of the dematerialisation of public services. This has the effect of distance themselves from situations that players/social workers actually experience on a daily basis.

Drawn up on the basis of observations in the field, these typical situations can echo real support situations experienced by the players, while at the same time providing a sense of distance. They are less emotional than if they were talking about

The game allows social workers to immerse themselves in these issues, to 'pretend', while accepting that situations resonate within them in order to better understand them. The game enables social workers to immerse themselves in these issues, to "pretend", while accepting that situations resonate within them to help them understand them better.

Secondly, the game relies on **collaboration between peers** and can encourage cooperation between social workers in the same team. Aware that working groups in the field of social action have been put to the test for many years and that links between professionals are sometimes weakened, we want to develop a space for dialogue and exchange on a crucial issue for social intervention, which is often a cause for concern. Helping people to think together about possible solutions and to share their experiences and knowledge is a powerful tool for building action strategies and revealing capacities for action that are often imagined for the people we support, but little deployed and rather unexplored by the social workers themselves.

Lastly, the game aims to place ethical issues at the centre of reflection. Using **problem-based situations as** a starting point, the game confronts the participants with **ethical dilemmas** and difficult choices to resolve; a simple question does not necessarily call for a simple answer. It's also a way of taking a step back from some of the automatic responses we might be tempted to make, such as referring people to a public letter-writer or a digital mediator without thinking, out of habit or in a hurry.

The game invites groups of people to rethink the way they help, think and act in relation to problems of access to social rights online, by inviting them to think critically about the consequences of their actions, with the possibility of questioning or highlighting their own practices in a different way.

The game also stimulates the social workers' creativity by drawing on the ideas of other team members and, once again, the ways in which colleagues think and act in the same problem situation.

Through this guide and game, we are encouraging women working in the field to think critically about their use of digital technologies, their role and their degree of responsibility. In doing so, we will be bridging the gap between problem-based situations that participants in the game will have to discuss and information resources to help them put things into perspective (media resources, links to training videos, etc.).

From a technocritical perspective, we must take into account the value system and specific needs of socially vulnerable populations, whose rights, uniqueness and dignity must be respected at all costs.

But do the implementation and deployment of new technologies and digital tools, which seem to allow the systematic dematerialisation of links between citizens and institutions providing public services, necessarily take account of people in vulnerable social situations? It is vital for us to be more vigilant about the possible biases present in digital technologies, as the algorithms used in automated decision-making systems, for example, do not always guarantee the principles of equity and social justice. They sometimes even run counter to these principles by controlling certain populations that are deemed to be more disadvantaged. Being able to identify possible negative representations aimed at a particular category of population means that the digital tools developed can be corrected; confidence in these tools can be strengthened. It's what we depend on to create a safer, more respectful and more efficient online environment for all users.

We'd now like to take you on a journey to discover the method for putting all these principles and objectives into practice.



### Public

Social workers or social work students

### Number of players

Minimum 2 players, recommended maximum 10 players

### Aim of the game

- > Initiate a collective reflection on digital practices in social work. The game is designed to guide reflection on the four themes outlined above and on four levels: individual, team, organisation and policy. Players are free to choose the level(s) they wish, as well as the theme(s) among those proposed.
- > Discover information and training resources

### How to

By proposing a methodology, using the codes of a game, to encourage discussion and reflection on professional practices in relation to digital technology.

By providing resources to support the discussion, think about ways of improving and devise actions to be taken.

### Hardware

- > Situation cards
- > Guide, see "Resources" chapter (with information and links to resources) and "Systems" chapter (with presentation of intervention levels)



## ROLE DESCRIPTION

The players appoint a narrator who does not play the game. The narrator ensures that the various stages of the game run smoothly, moderates the discussions and provides additional information from the following sources of the guide's resources.

### ROLE OF THE NARRATOR

The atmosphere of the game will depend on her involvement. Thanks to her, the players will be able to express themselves and share their points of view and experiences on one of the four themes. The narrator is in charge of time, distributes the floor, ensures that the rules of the game are followed and makes it easier for the players to express themselves. the transition from one stage to another. It leads the discussion, summarises the exchanges and directs people to resources.



**Recommendations:** read the guide beforehand.  
Additional teaching resources are available online via [this link](#).



## ROLE OF THE PLAYERS

Based on a problem-based situation, the players discuss their professional practices and points of view on concrete dilemmas linked to the use of digital technology in social work. The spirit of each player is necessarily constructive and benevolent. From there, they will be able to glimpse and experience useful and peaceful debates between themselves.

At the end of the discussions, the players can reflect on possible courses of action at different levels (individual, team, structure, policy). These include to collectively define ways of acting, and even to draw up frameworks for action, that seem acceptable to all.



### STEP 1

The narrator picks one of the "SITUATION CARDS", reads out the situation and invites the players to react to it. To facilitate reflection, and for the comfort of the players, the narrator can make it easier for the players to speak by encouraging them to say what surprised them or what particularly interested them in the story.

If you want to make your own "SITUATION CARDS": see the template and recommendations [on pages 21-22](#)).

### STEP 2

During this initial discussion, the players take it in turns to explain how they interpret the situation reported, what they see as its main aspects, what the situation evokes in them and what questions they have individually. The narrator can make it easier for the players to speak by encouraging them to say what surprised them or what particularly interested them in the story.

The narrator ensures that all the participants who wish to do so have the opportunity to speak and express themselves without interruption or judgement.

#### Note to the narrator

Don't hesitate to ask the players directly if the debates get too heated and to rephrase their thoughts:

- > "What do you think?"
- > "What questions does the social worker ask herself?"
- > "What problem(s) does the situation raise?"
- > "How do you view the problem identified?"
- > "What are the issues in this situation?"

### STEP 3

The aim of this stage is to enable the players to deepen their knowledge and thoughts on the subject in question by providing resources to fuel and enlighten the discussion.

The resources are available in this guide. The narrator shares the information aloud with all the players, providing food for thought and discussion.

After reading the resources provided by the narrator, the players decide whether they wish to continue the game and discuss possible courses of action.

### STEP 4


The aim of this stage is to enable the players to discuss areas of work and courses of action in their professional practice.

The narrator shows the systems tray, explaining the different levels: individual, team, organisation/institution, national policy (this tray is presented after this stage).

The players brainstorm ideas for action, using the systems to identify the level affected by each proposal.



**Fin de la partie !**



At the end of the game, a volunteer can write up a summary of the possible courses of action.

The tray describes and explains the four levels of decision-making:

- C > Individual
- > Team
- > Organisation/institution
- > National and/or international policy

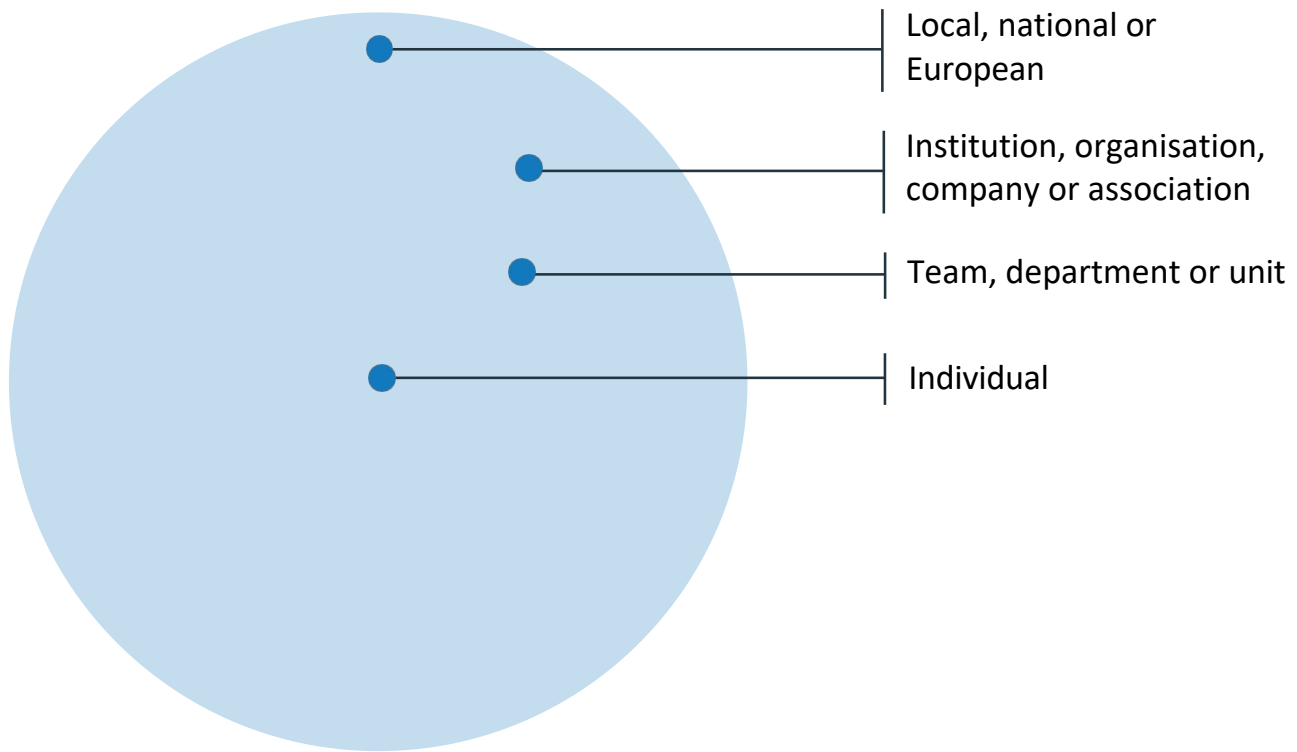
It provides an opportunity to reflect on the strategies that need to be put in place to support socially vulnerable people.

As explained in phase 1 of the project, and as will be reiterated in some of the training videos (corresponding to phase 3 of the DLIS project), we wanted to adapt Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic model, developed in 1979, to digital uses insofar as it provides a better understanding of the multiple levels of influence of individuals and social work organisations. This analysis enables us to situate the different levels of interaction and identify where we can act effectively. It also helps us to determine who holds the power to act at each level and how that power can be mobilised.

With this understanding, the socio-technical framework can be negotiated in consultation with the parties concerned. Whether at the individual, relational, group or institutional level, it is essential to involve all the players concerned in order to develop efficient strategies at each level to support people in precarious situations. The next stage will involve ensuring coordination and collaboration between the various players involved.

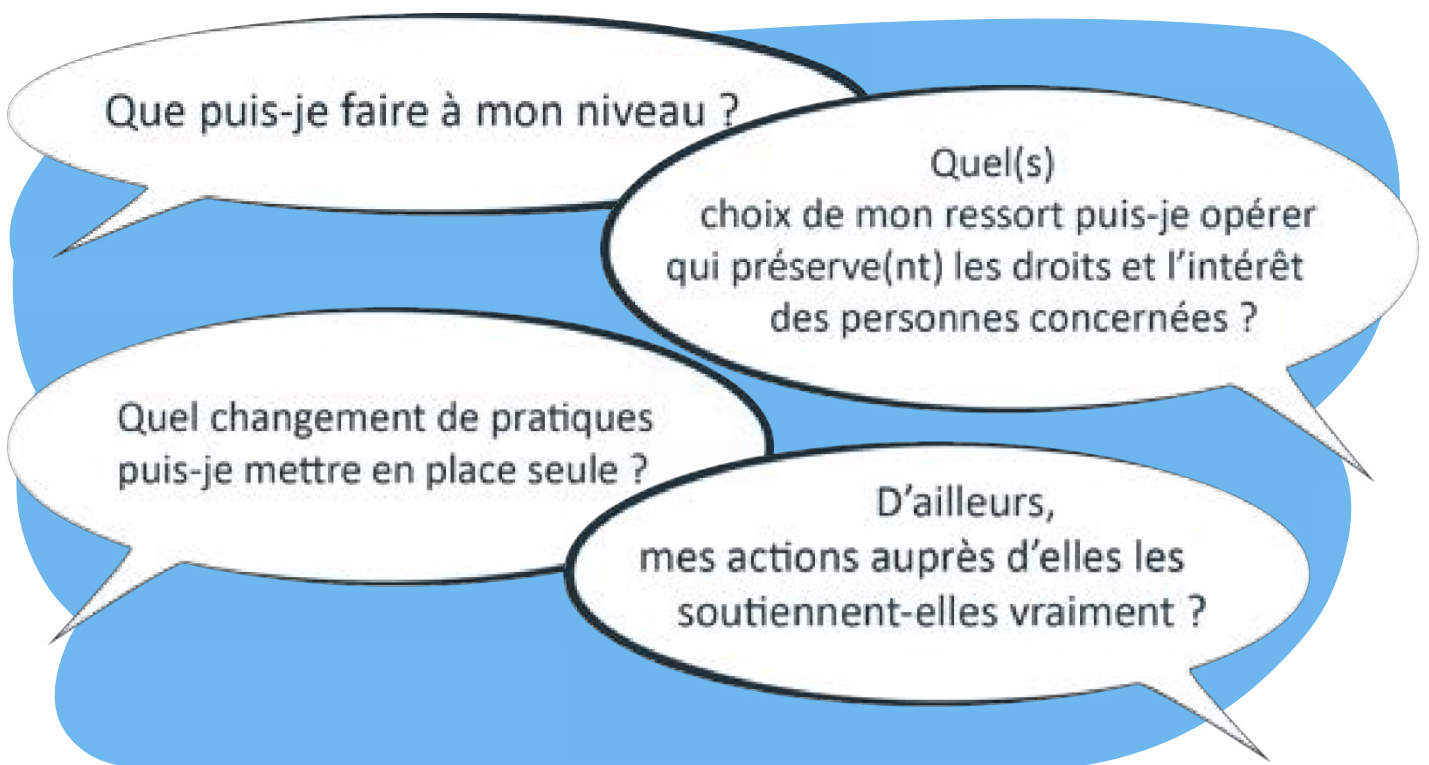
Below, we show the systems board to give a better idea of the four levels. It is suggested that the narrator and the participants in the game use this board as a basis for imagining possibilities and perspectives for action.





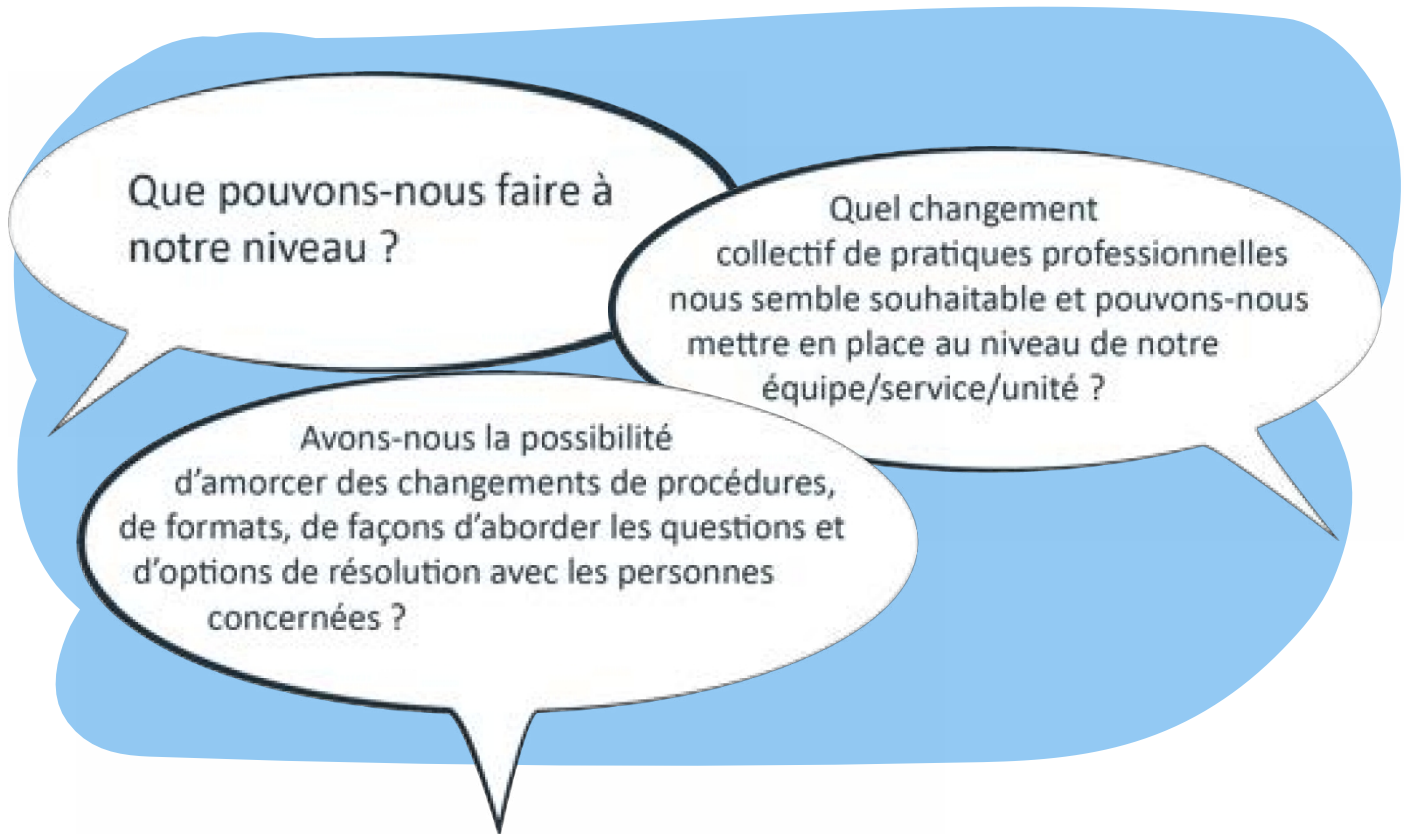
## DETAILS OF EACH LEVEL

### At individual level

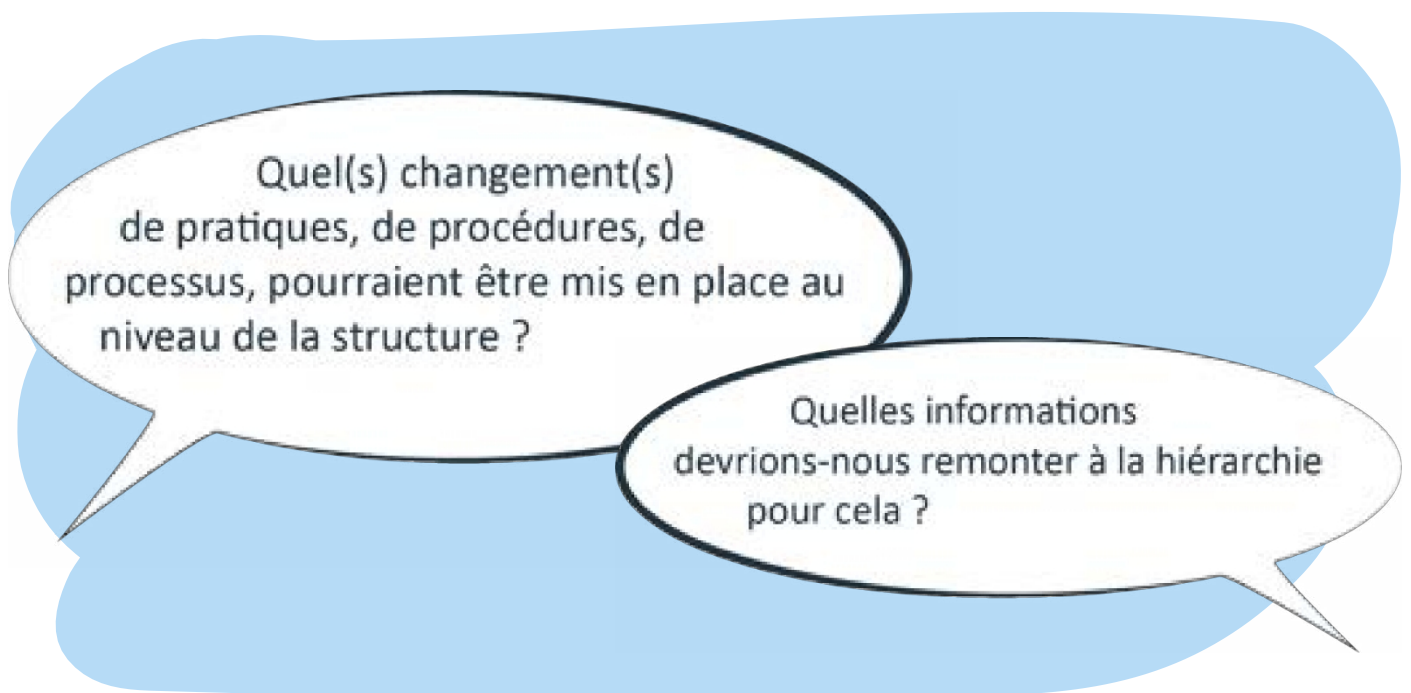


At an individual level, the aim is to put in place personalised support strategies for each socially vulnerable person, taking into account the specific needs of each individual to enable them to improve their living conditions and their opportunities for social emancipation.

### At team/department/unit level

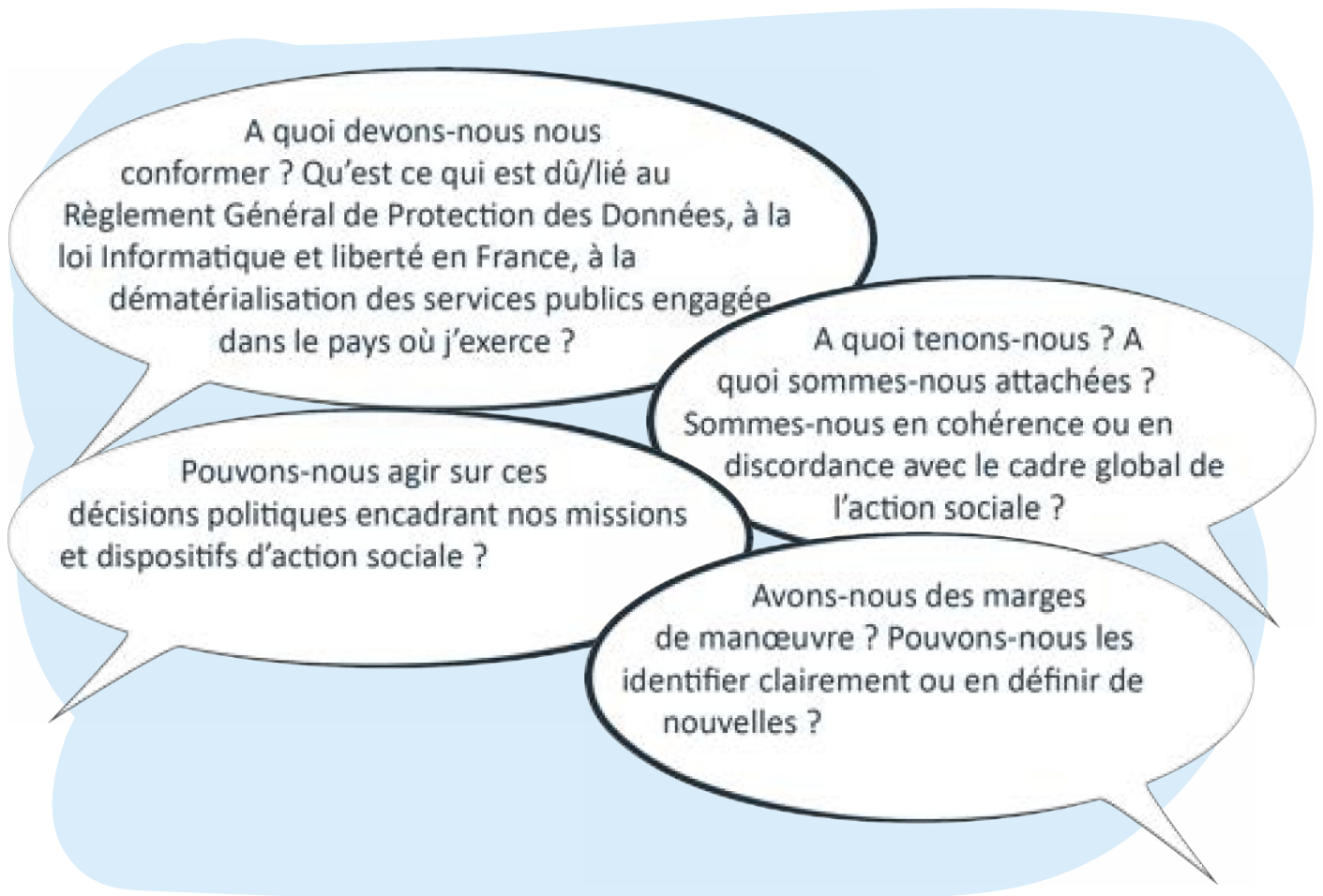


Here, we need to think about ways of working together and coordinating the various players involved in addressing the interests and needs of the public concerned. This may include regular meetings, information sharing, individual or joint training. It is important that every member of the team is involved and mobilised to ensure that people living on the margins of society are cared for effectively.



This can be the starting point for questioning the policies, principles of action, institutional logic and practices that hinder or promote support for the people concerned. The keys to solving the problem or taking action may be to put in place specific measures, strengthen partnership relations with a particular organisation, raise public awareness of a particular aspect, while keeping an eye on the commitment of the organisation or institution to the approach and to the implementation of concrete measures.

## At local/national/European political level



This involves keeping a watchful eye on social measures and policies closely or remotely related to digital technology that favour or have a negative impact on people affected by the digital divide. Bringing to light the realities on the ground and identifying possible relays for challenging the legislator can have a decisive impact on certain decisions taken to ensure that they guarantee the interests and needs of the most vulnerable people in our societies.



## A TOOL THAT CAN BE ADAPTED TO SUIT EVERYONE: IT'S UP TO YOU!

This guide belongs to you. It is designed to be open-ended, so that everyone can make it their own and adapt it. Feel free to add to it with your own situations and resources on the digital social work.



### Recommendations for drawing up "SITUATION MAPS" :

1

Favour short, simple situations Briefly summarise the

2

situation:

> People involved :

*Example: a social worker at a hostel sees Mathilde B.*

Avoid giving too many details about the people involved (age, family situation, etc.) that are not strictly relevant to the situation. This risks drowning the reader.

> The concrete situation: focus on one aspect, there's no need to describe the entire support package.

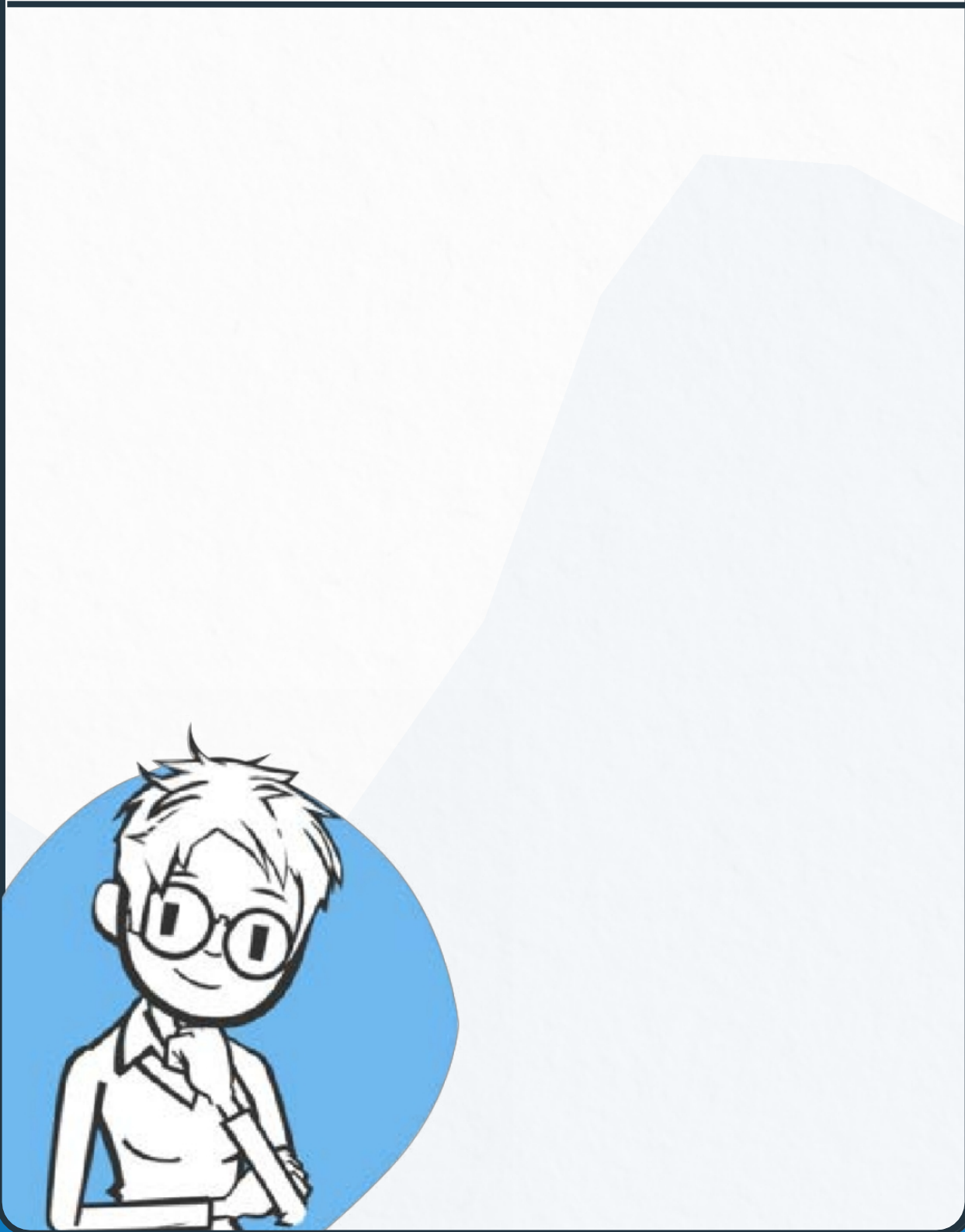
*For example: at the end of the day, the educator sends her colleague on the night shift a summary of the day's work on WhatsApp.*

> End with a few questions: the aim is to point out to the participants what could be debated in relation to the practices described in the situation. The aim is to launch a discussion between the participants.

On the following page, you will find a sample "SITUATION CARD". You can also open it on your own [by clicking here](#) to download and/or print it.



# SITUATION MAP



## PROBLEM SITUATIONS

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These situations, written by several hands, are the fruit of the experiences of social workers in the countries taking part in the DLIS project: Belgium, France, Greece and Italy.

Romania. Although they emanate from different national contexts, questions relating to digital technology, professional posture, responsibility and ethics cut across all social contexts and support. You can also download and/or print these cards [in this file](#).



## SITUATION 1



### DATA COLLECTION, PURPOSE OF PROCESSING AND DATA MINIMISATION

A social worker meets Camille P. to help her complete an application for social housing.

During the interview, she gathered information that was not strictly related to the housing application, but which gave a broader view of the social situation of Camille P. and her family (chronic illness, violence). She is thinking in particular about applying for benefit, and some of this information will be useful for completing the application in the future.

- > Does she have the right?
- > Should it collect only the data necessary for the procedure agreed between the professional and the data subject?
- > How can we reconcile the overall assessment of the person's situation, their request and compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (RGPD)?
  - > What should be done with information that is not necessary but that the data subject provides voluntarily?





## SITUATION 2



### DATA COLLECTION, CONSENT

A multi-skilled social worker sees Matthieu to apply for financial assistance. He is unemployed and has difficulty paying his rent. The social worker helps him with his application and enters all the information relating to Matthieu's social situation in the social services software (contact details, address, age, marital status, income, employment status). A few months later, Matthieu received a text message from the social services department inviting him to a workshop on "remobilisation and self-confidence". The same text message was sent to all the people who had attended the social service, who had been both isolated and unemployed for 6 months.

Matthieu was very surprised, as he hadn't asked for anything, and contacted the social worker to express his dissatisfaction.

**> Should the social services assistant have told Matthieu that he could be contacted again by the social services department? At the risk of frightening the user?**

**> Should she have told him how the data collected is stored? (where? duration? deletion? use?)**







## SITUATION 3



### DATA RETENTION

The holidays are almost here! Anne, a social worker, is taking advantage of her last day to sort through her files and tidy up her desk. She's wondering what to do with the personal information of service users whose support has come to an end.

- > **Archive them? If so: how, where and for how long?**
- > **Delete them from the computer?**
- > **Throw paper documents in your office wastebasket?**
- > **Destroy them before throwing them away?**





## SITUATION 4

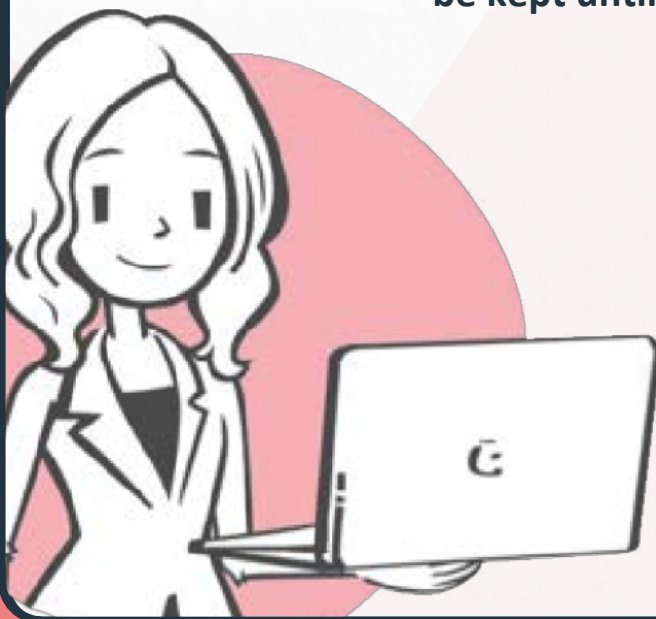


### DATA RETENTION

A social worker who works in an assessment centre for children and adolescents with developmental and behavioural disorders uses the client file stored on her department's main computer. In this centre, assessment and reassessment visits often take place after a few years, as the child or adolescent's development progresses.

Under current regulations, beneficiary data must be destroyed after 5 years. When she searched the beneficiary's electronic file, she was unable to find the information.

- > **Where can the social services assistant go for information?**
- > **Is it possible to keep a copy of the paper file? Is it possible to delete the electronic file?**
- > **Does the centre have procedures in place? Does the centre have a system in place for handling the files of beneficiaries that are no longer active but must be kept until they are destroyed?**





## SITUATION 5



### DATA SECURITY

Valérie, a social worker, keeps files in her cupboard (which doesn't lock) containing personal notes on certain social issues. families reported to social services for child abuse. She wondered whether she should take additional measures to make this type of case more secure.

- > **Are there any safety standards for the storage of data?**
- > **Where can she find the information? Who can she ask? advice?**
- > **What kind of measures could Valérie put in place to ensure that files containing personal data are not accessible to as many people as possible?**





## SITUATION 6

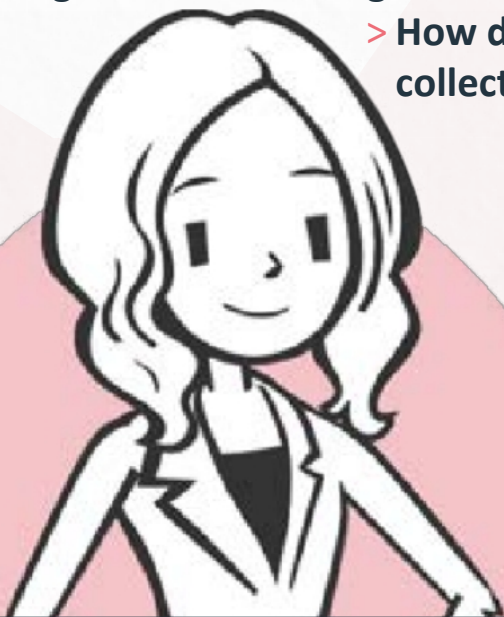


### SENSITIVE DATA

A youth worker at a community centre organises activities with local families to foster social ties with the residents. During one of these activities, a woman told her about her migration. She had fled her country of origin because she was afraid of being arrested, like several of her fellow immigrants.

members of her union. This is the first time she has confided in us; until now she has attended activities but kept to herself. The host thinks that she could perhaps benefit from asylum protection, which would enable her to stabilise her situation. As the data was sensitive, the professional wondered what precautions to take.

- > **What procedures does your organisation have in place?**
- > **What information should be included in the file?**
- > **Can it collect the necessary information?**
- > **Should it refer him to an appropriate structure, at the risk that the young woman doesn't go?**
- > **How do you pass on the information collected to the association?**





## SITUATION 7



### SENSITIVE DATA

A social worker interviewed Karine to help her complete a housing application. During the interview, Karine mentioned her state of health and the fact that she suffers from a chronic pathology that requires regular care and makes her rather tired. This is an important factor to take into account when considering access to housing adapted to her condition. As this is sensitive data, the social worker asked what precautions should be taken.

- > **What procedures does your organisation have in place?**
- > **What information should you record in your digital file?**
- > **Who has access to the digital file?**
- > **Can it specify the pathology? Or just the consequences that are relevant and useful for the case?**
- > **What information can it pass on to its partners, and under what conditions and/or in what form?**







## SITUATION 8



### SENSITIVE DATA

A social worker receives a written request from Maria to continue the special protection measure after she has reached the age of 18 (request for a young adult contract in France).

In order to remind her of the framework of this measure and how it works, Maria is informed of her rights and responsibilities, with a description in particular of the social support framework that would be attached to it (planning and provision of residential-type services). An individualised protection plan was drawn up, indicating the type and frequency of monitoring.

as well as a periodic reassessment of the progress made, the decisions and specialist interventions proposed, and the duration of Maria's contract with the service concerned.

> Does the social worker have the right to know the personal details of the person being supported and to enter them in a dematerialised social file?

> Is the social worker entitled to check the accuracy of the information received from the beneficiary?

> Is it able to use data anonymised for the purpose of developing statistics to maintain the data with a view to developing social services tailored to the needs identified?

> What personal information are social services authorised to collect?

> What type and level of information is best suited to the beneficiary, informing him or her about the professionals who will have the most influence on his or her life?



access to his personal file?



## SITUATION 9



### SENSITIVE DATA

Andrea, a social worker in a residential centre for minors, was approached by the representative of a multinational company who wanted to support the young people in the centre by giving them gifts in the form of hygiene articles and clothing. As part of this sponsorship activity, the company would like the social worker to agree to the publication in the press of photos of the activities carried out at the centre, as well as information about the children's ages.

- > **Are sponsorship-type activities by private commercial companies possible in the context of an educational centre for minors?**
- > **What questions does this raise about the circulation of personal data, particularly in terms of image rights?**





## SITUATION 10



### SENSITIVE DATA

Miruna, a socially vulnerable person, wanted to apply for heating assistance for the winter. The social worker helping her to complete the application informed her that, as part of the request, she also had to complete an agreement for data processing. This document must be signed before the application can be processed.

- > **What are the consequences of refusing to complete this document?**
- > **Should and can the social worker systematically set aside time to explain how the data is processed and used? What risks does she run if she fails to do so through omission or lack of time?**





# SITUATION 1

## RIGHT TO DISCONNECT



Ms D. is a social worker working in a social action centre. She has a heavy workload and often has to deal with emergency situations, such as cases of domestic violence, imminent evictions and urgent accommodation needs. At 7pm on a Friday evening, Mrs D. had finished her day's work, she returns home. At 8pm, she received a call on her work phone from a family in distress because they had just received an eviction notice with immediate effect for Monday morning (voice message).

- > **Should she call the family back to save them from eviction on Monday morning?**
- > **Should she contact associations and legal services to find a solution?**
- > **Do we have the right to disconnect in this case?**







## SITUATION 2



### DISCOVER THE PRINCIPLES OF THE RIGHT TO DIGITAL EQUIPMENT

On an isolated island with a population of 2,500, Nicole, a social worker at a community centre, has to renew an application for medical care, enabling a user to access resources. The communications network and internet regularly malfunction, and the distance from the urban infrastructure complicates the administrative procedures for the island's inhabitants.

- > **How can Nicole overcome this obstacle?  
geographic?**
- > **What could be done to improve access to essential  
services for the island's inhabitants?**
- > **How can the communication network be improved?  
Who could the social worker alert to her difficulties?**







## SITUATION 3



### DIGITAL HANDLING SUPPORT

A social worker working in a community centre often sends emails to the people she accompanies to make appointments or to inform them of the progress of an application. Some of them do not sort or empty their email inboxes, preventing new emails from reaching them.

The social worker receives no response from the beneficiaries concerned, resulting in a backlog of cases.

- > **How to identify and prevent beneficiaries who are concerned?**
- > **What technical support could be put in place to help the social worker and users with their digital problems?**
- > **Does the social worker have any other means of contacting you? alternative means of communication go unread or unanswered?**
  - > **How are users kept informed? the importance of maintaining their box mail with sufficient storage space?**
  - > **What other communication platforms could be used to reduce reliance on email?**



Netiquettes: for ethical use of networks  
digital social



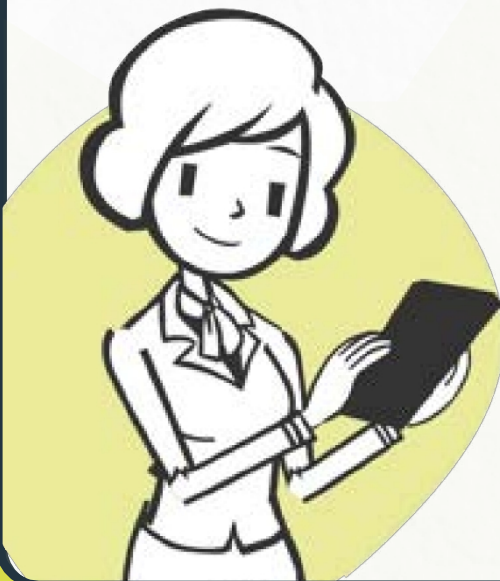
## SITUATION 1



### ACTORS AND ROLES IN SOCIAL WORK COMMUNICATION ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

A social worker at a general assistance centre for the State (public service) communicates with beneficiaries via the WhatsApp application. They regularly send official documents to pass on their information. This practice is almost encouraged by their superiors, as email does not work with a whole category of the population, being too complicated to use. On a day-to-day basis, Whatsapp is proving more effective.

- > Do the various players have the same level of expertise?  
responsibility?
- > Who made the decisions regarding the use of this social network?
- > What are the advantages and disadvantages of this type of network?  
for this type of communication?



Netiquettes: for ethical use of networks  
digital social



## SITUATION 2



### PLAYERS AND ROLES IN SOCIAL WORK COMMUNICATION ON SOCIAL NETWORKS

At a centre open to 12-18 year-olds, the educator and the young people communicate by private message via the Instagram application.

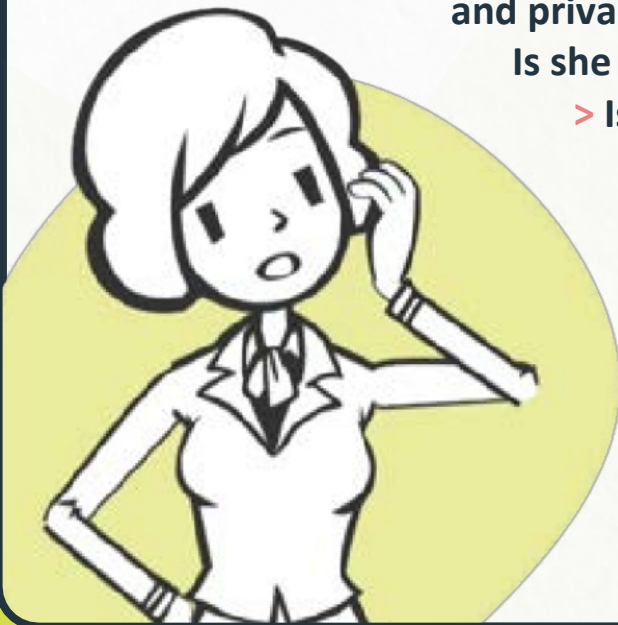
Using this means of communication, young people send messages directly to the teacher's private account for a whole range of things (requests for information, information about activities, what to do about certain issues).

One day, while the educator was on holiday, she received a message from a young person saying that she couldn't take it any more, that she was thinking of defenestrating herself. She really wanted to end it all.

> **Is the educator's professional responsibility committed?**

> **A separation between professional life and privacy on social networks is-  
Is she thinking?**

- > **Is there a reference framework within the institution and across the organisation that ensures the distinction between the two spheres?**
- > **What could the educator have put in place beforehand?**



Netiquettes: for ethical use of networks  
digital social



## SITUATION 3



### NETIQUETTE

In a residential institution for people with disabilities, a multitude of communication channels have been set up. A Facebook account, a web page, an Instagram page and several separate messenger groups for exchanges between professionals, with partners and with beneficiaries (who are very keen to communicate using social networks). These tools enable colleagues to communicate with each other and send each other daily updates on life at the centre.

They can also be used with families to send photos of activities with residents, with the general public to raise awareness of the Centre's dynamism, and with residents for a group to spread jokes and anecdotes. However, the professionals (social workers and educators) are somewhat at a loss when it comes to managing these diverse tools and their uses.

> **Is it a good idea to increase the number of channels?**

> **How can this communication be regulated?**

> **What types of communication are best suited to each social network, and between which players?**

**these communications should they be?**

> **What can be put in place to optimise communications and networks (concrete avenues)?**





Netiquettes: for ethical use of networks  
digital social



## SITUATION 4



### PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

At a homeless shelter, a team of social workers is using Facebook to disseminate information about available services, share community resources and raise awareness of the issue.

the public about the problems of homeless people. The team regularly uses the centre's Facebook page to post updates, upcoming events and success stories of people helped by the centre.

- > **What are the legal benchmarks to which social workers should refer in this type of communication?**
- > **Is Facebook an appropriate communication channel for disseminating information about the centre's services and raising public awareness of homelessness issues?**
- > **What implications can the use of Facebook have for your business? in terms of professional ethics for social workers?**





Netiquettes: for ethical use of networks  
digital social



## SITUATION 5



### THE LIMITS OF A PROFESSIONAL ONLINE PRESENCE ON TIKTOK

In an association that supports young people in difficulty, social workers are encouraged to have a presence on social networks to raise their profile and raise public awareness of youth-related issues. One of the youth workers has started creating videos on TikTok, in which she shares anecdotes from her day-to-day work, including anonymised descriptions of certain situations she encounters with the young people she supports. Although the videos do not mention names or precise details, some of her colleagues are concerned that these publications could make it possible to guess the identity of the young people or reveal sensitive information about their lives.

> **How do you determine the boundary between professional sharing and the confidentiality of beneficiaries on a platform as public as TikTok?**

> **Is it appropriate to share work anecdotes on TikTok, even in a casual way? anonymised?**

> **What protocols should be put in place to ensure that publications on social networks respect the confidentiality of users?**





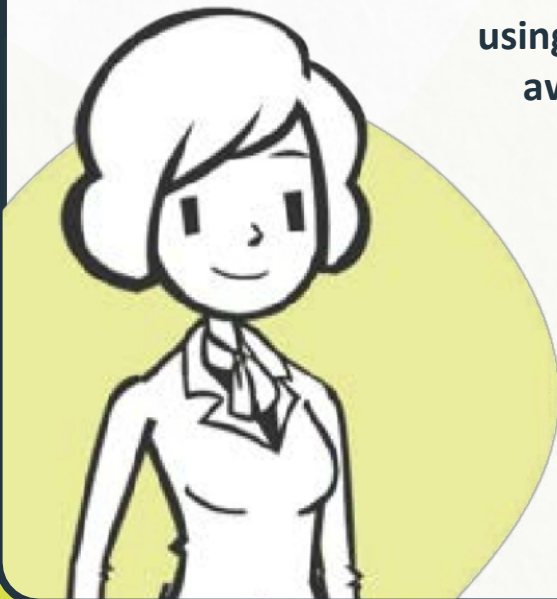
## SITUATION 6



### USING SOCIAL NETWORKS FOR BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

A social worker in an association that supports women who are victims of domestic violence follows closed groups on Facebook and LinkedIn to keep abreast of best practice and new approaches to support. However, she began to share extracts from these discussions on her personal profile to raise awareness among her network. Some of the information she shares may be interpreted as specific advice, albeit taken out of its original context.

- > **Is it appropriate to use personal social networks to share professional information?**
- > **How can we distinguish between sharing for the purpose of professional intelligence and communications that could be perceived as non-professional advice?**
  - > **What are the associated ethical risks using social networks to raise awareness?**
  - > **What guidelines or recommendations could be put in place to clarify the use of social networks in this context?**



## Adopting an ethical digital posture



# SITUATION 1



## PERSONAL DATA

Marie, a social worker, is working with Sylvie, a 25-year-old woman who has recently lost her job and is facing financial difficulties. During a meeting, Sylvie confides in Marie that she has mental health problems and regularly takes antidepressants. She asks Marie not to mention this information in her file, as she fears it will harm her chances of finding a job.

### Ethical dilemma

On the one hand, Marie has a duty to respect Sylvie's privacy and confidentiality. On the other hand, by omitting this important information about Sylvie's health, Marie may not be able to offer her the best services and support she needs.

> What would be your approach to resolving this dilemma while respecting Sylvie's rights and needs?



## Adopting an ethical digital posture



# SITUATION 2



## DIGITAL EQUIPMENT

Léa, a social worker, accompanies Mathieu, a 20-year-old man living in a home for young people in social difficulty. During a  
In his interview, Mathieu explained to Léa that he was finding it difficult to follow his online training and keep in touch with his friends and family because the hostel did not provide him with access to a computer or the Internet. Mathieu feels very isolated and frustrated at not being able to benefit from the same digital tools as his peers.

### Ethical dilemma

On the one hand, the hostel's mission is to provide accommodation, guidance and support for young people in difficulty, but it does not necessarily have the budget to equip each resident with IT equipment. On the other hand, depriving Mathieu of digital access could prove to be a form of social exclusion and harm his well-being, education and integration.

> What solutions could you suggest that would give Mathieu access to the equipment and digital connection he needs, while respecting the constraints of the household?



## Adopting an ethical digital posture



# SITUATION 3



## NETIQUETTE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

Lucie, a young social worker, is working with Léa, a 35-year-old woman looking for a new job. During a job interview preparation session, Léa asks Lucie for advice on how to make the best use of professional social networks. Léa explains that she has deleted her personal Facebook account for reasons of confidentiality, but is reluctant to create a LinkedIn profile to promote herself to recruiters.

### Ethical dilemma

The use of social networks can be an invaluable tool for promoting the professional integration of people receiving support. However, it raises ethical questions about privacy, the protection of personal data and the image that users want to portray of themselves. Lucie must ensure that she advises Léa in an ethical and responsible manner.

> How could you help Léa create and manage her LinkedIn profile, while preserving her right to privacy and her image?







## SITUATION 4



### DEONTOLOGY

Fatima, an experienced social worker, is accompanying Kévin, a 22-year-old who has recently joined a work integration programme. During an interview, Kévin tells Fatima that he has been offered an interesting job with a local company, but that he is reluctant to accept it because he is afraid that his criminal record, due to offences committed in the past, will affect his chances of being hired.

#### Ethical dilemma

On the one hand, Fatima has a duty to support Kévin in his search for a stable and fulfilling job, by promoting his skills and helping him to overcome the obstacles associated with his past. On the other hand, she wonders whether it's ethical to advise Kévin to hide his criminal record from the police recruiters, which could be considered a form of deception.

> What ethical stance would you adopt to best support Kévin in this delicate situation, while respecting the ethical principles of social work?



### DATA PROTECTION - RGPD

#### What is the General Data Protection Regulation?

The General Data Protection Regulation, more commonly known as the GDPR, is a European law that governs the processing of data within the European Union. European, on an equal basis for all member countries. This regulation came into force on 25 May 2018. It applies to all data processing, whether digital or not, and provides a framework for the collection, use and storage of personal data by any private or public body, thanks to 8 golden rules:

- > The purpose of the processing
- > Lawfulness of processing
- > Data minimisation
- > Special protection for sensitive data
- > Limited data retention
- > The safety obligation
- > Transparency
- > Personal law

#### Good practice in data collection

- > Sort it out! To do this, ask questions about the nature of the data collected, its quantity and quality.  
precision
- > Ask yourself whether there is a less intrusive alternative solution to a project to collect personal data.
- > Ban all data collection as a preventive measure
- > Ask for the consent of the people concerned and document it
- > Pseudonymise data whenever it is not necessary to keep it in a directly identifiable form
- > Limit the number of free comment areas and use drop-down menus wherever possible.
- > Avoid collecting sensitive data

## Sensitive data

High-stakes data should not be confused with sensitive data, the limitative list of which is defined in Article 9-1 of the RGPD . These are :

- > Racial or ethnic origins
- > Political opinions
- > Philosophical or religious convictions
- > Union membership
- > Health (physical or mental)
- > Sex life or sexual orientation
- > Genetic data
- > Biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person

Special care and measures must be taken when processing sensitive data.

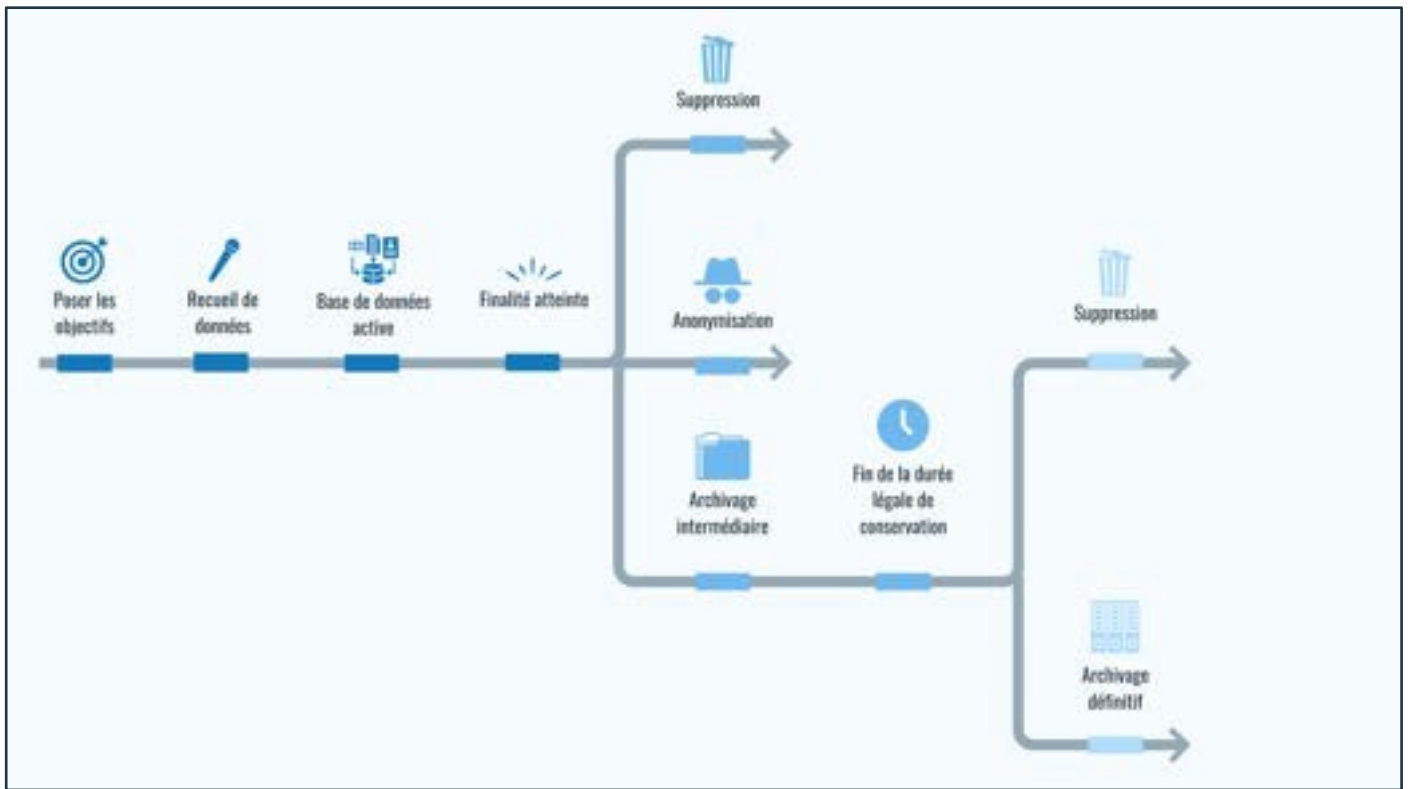
## Data retention and deletion

The data must be kept in a controlled manner by the collecting bodies. They must not be kept for longer than is necessary to meet the purposes for which they were collected, or to comply with any legal obligations or special requirements.

The right questions to ask when determining how long to keep personal data are :

- > How long do I really need the data to achieve my objective?
- > Do I have any legal obligations to keep data for a certain period of time?
- > Do I need to keep certain data in order to protect myself in the event of a dispute? Which data?
- > Until when can I take legal action?
- > What information needs to be archived? For how long?
- > What are the data deletion rules?
- > What are the rules for archiving data?

The retention period may comprise 2 or even 3 phases (see diagram on next page). Organisations must be able to justify the life cycle of the data they hold.



## DIGITAL TOOLS: EQUIPMENT, DISCONNECTION AND SUPPORT

### Digital equipment



#### Definitions of basic equipment :

- > **Computers and tablets:** essential for most professional and educational tasks, laptops and tablets offer great flexibility and mobility.
- > **Smartphones:** used for communication, email management and rapid access to information
- > **Peripherals:** keyboards, mice, additional monitors and printers improve efficiency and comfort
- > **Internet connection:** a stable, fast connection is essential for online meetings, collaborative working and access to digital resources.



### Definitions of specialised equipment :

- > **Servers and Cloud:** for secure data storage and online collaboration
- > **Videoconferencing systems:** high-quality cameras, microphones and speakers for effective virtual meetings
- > **Software and applications:** office suites (such as Microsoft Office), project management tools (such as Trello or Asana), and communication platforms (such as Slack or Teams).

## Digital disconnection



### The importance of disconnection

Disconnection allows :

- > **Preventing burnout:** over-connection can lead to stress and burnout. Periods of disconnection allow you to recharge your batteries.
- > **A better work/life balance:** disconnection promotes a better balance and helps to separate work from leisure activities



### Strategies for disconnection

A few good practices for arranging disconnection time :

- > **Defined working hours:** establish clear times for the start and end of the working day
- > **Screen-free periods:** introducing screen-free times, especially outside working hours
- > **Notifications:** deactivate email and business application notifications outside working hours
- > **Dedicated spaces:** having a separate workspace at home to better separate work from personal life

## Digital support: training and support

- > **Training:** training sessions to familiarise you with new tools and software
- > **Technical support:** access to technical assistance to resolve problems quickly
- > **Webinars and workshops:** continuing to train social workers in best practice and new technologies



## Principles of the right to digital equipment

The right to digital equipment aims to ensure that everyone has access to the digital tools and infrastructures they need to participate fully in the modern digital society. This right encompasses several key principles that ensure digital inclusion and reduce the digital divide.



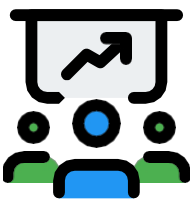
### Universal accessibility

- > Equal access to digital equipment (computers, tablets, smartphones, etc.) regardless of geographical, economic or social situation
- > Availability of access to quality infrastructure (such as high-speed Internet) throughout the country, including in rural and isolated areas



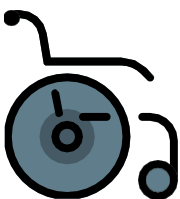
### Accessibility

- > Financial access for all to digital equipment and Internet services
- > Implementation of public initiatives (governments and institutions) to reduce costs



### Training and digital skills

- > Provision of training programmes for social workers to acquire the skills they need to make good use of digital technologies
- > Availability of ongoing training and skills updating programmes to enable users to adapt to technological developments



### Inclusion and accessibility

- > Design of equipment and software to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities (visual, hearing, motor, etc.)
- > Taking account of multilingualism and the cultural diversity of users in digital interfaces and content



### **Ethics and regulation**

- > Encouraging responsible and ethical use of technology digital
- > Introduction of regulations to ensure the protection of digital rights and prevent abuses (such as illegal surveillance or

the use of personal data)

## **Principles of digital handling support**



### **Needs assessment**

Identifying users' digital skills levels to adapt communication resources to their specific needs. Take into account the professional, educational and personal contexts in order to propose appropriate, personalised solutions.



### **Training and education**

Focus on training in essential skills such as using computers, surfing the Internet, managing email and using office software.



### **Accessibility and inclusiveness**

Ensure that digital tools are accessible to all, including the elderly, people with disabilities, and those living in rural and peri-urban areas. Use digital tools adapted to different types of audience, including tutorials.

video, written guides and practical workshops.



### **Technical support and assistance**

Providing technical assistance via telephone hotlines and chat services to help social workers and users quickly resolve their technical problems.

Ensuring that social workers and users maintain and update their equipment and technical skills.

software for optimum performance.



### Good safety practice

- > Password management
- > Protection of personal data
- > Recognition of online threats

Promote ethical and responsible use of digital technologies, including respect for privacy and the fight against disinformation.

To find out more, consult the information module by [clicking on this link](#).

## SOCIAL NETWORKS AND NETIQUETTE

### Contemporary social networks

#### Definition2



### Social network

"Digital social networks are online platforms for creating profiles, connecting with friends, sharing content, and interacting with communities." (Boyd, D.M., & Ellison, N.B. (2007).

Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship). The article mentions the giant Facebook, but we can also think of X, Instagram and TikTok today. Each of these social networks offers opportunities, from raising awareness to coordinating action between professionals and supporting communities.



### Messaging

Social networks are often confused with messaging systems. Sometimes there's not much difference. Examples of messaging: Signal, Telegram, Whastapp, Viber etc. In social work, messaging can be used to create discussion groups that enable coordination between

social workers. It can also be used to communicate with the various players involved in social work in a private discussion, sending photos, documents and videos. These uses must be governed by a negotiated socio-technical framework.

## Diversity and uses of social networks :

The platforms used in social work are very diverse and the networks are evolving day by day. It's essential to keep abreast of new practices on a regular basis. Choosing a social network for social work communication purposes is crucial. It is important to have an informed opinion when making a choice.

Here are 5 questions to ask yourself when choosing your communication tools:

- > What is the objective: what are we aiming for?
- > What's on? News, events, activities, outings, new opening times?
- > For whom? Define the target audience
- > Is this network really the most appropriate (compared with another network or messaging system or other tools)?
- > Who could be responsible for it? Who will be responsible for bringing the tool to life?

## Ways of using social networks sensibly



### Avenues for accessibility and inclusiveness in communication on social networks :

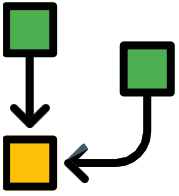
- > Use simple terms
  - > Using alternative texts on images
  - > Encrusting video subtitles
- > Use intuitive user interfaces

The idea is to make it easy and enjoyable for everyone to access. The clearer and simpler the content, the better!



### Tips for securing our online transactions :

- > Use strong passwords (at least 12 characters with a combination of upper and lower case letters, numbers and symbols)
  - > Do not use the same password every time
  - > Use mechanisms such as two-factor authentication
- > Keep your passwords (digital safe or physical notebook)



### Capturing personal data online: a challenge for social work :

Most platforms are based on a business model of the "data economy". The use of applications or access to different websites often requires that we give our consent to the use of our personal data.

of some of our personal data, captured during our browsing. Knowing the policies and uses of our online data allows us to be more vigilant and to think critically about the use of these platforms.

> As social workers, we have a responsibility to shed light on these mechanisms for the younger generations, making them aware of the implications of their online presence and the possible alternatives.

> Communication with colleagues and beneficiaries must comply with the RGPD and professional secrecy. It is crucial to secure the information shared, to monitor the use of messages out of context, and to draft each message with the necessary caution, as if it could be read by the hierarchy. Establishing clear communication rules and using independent tools guarantee the security and confidentiality of exchanges.



### Minimising digital traces :

There are several ways of limiting the traces we leave of our time on the web. For example:

> By minimising the information you give when creating a profile or an account, by filling in only the mandatory fields, by using

pseudonyms  
, etc.

> By increasing the number of login and account recovery email addresses, and increasing the number of connection points

> By using tools that are more ethical than others. Free and independent tools should be promoted in social work. For example, use Signal rather than WhatsApp, Framadate rather than Doodle, etc.

> By creating e-mail addresses using personal domain names, hosted in structures that guarantee transparency and independence

> By putting a post-it on your computer camera, installing anti-tracking plug-ins, a VPN, etc.

> By not installing a social network application on your phone or by limiting access to your "manufacturer" applications

> By limiting geolocation

> By configuring the phone's default applications, while taking care to diversify the operators who hold the rights.

> By avoiding logging in to your Google or Facebook account to subscribe to a new application. In fact, information and data are then transmitted "in cascade" from one company to another.



> By "coding" the messages you send to a colleague, without naming the people you are talking about (initials, aliases, abbreviations, one word for another, etc.).

## Understanding and building a netiquette



### Definition:

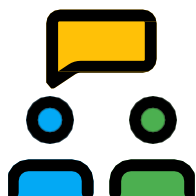
Netiquette is the set of rules for good conduct on the Internet (a contraction of etiquette and the Internet).

The drafting and application of labels must be the subject of negotiation between the players involved, whether at relational, group, organisational or institutional level.

By co-constructing these rules, taking into account the uses and positions of each of the players involved, we can build effective and ethical strategies for using social networks, and create a safer, more respectful online environment for all users.

In social work, netiquette is particularly important because it protects the dignity and confidentiality of the people we assist. By respecting these rules, we ensure that our online exchanges do not compromise the security and privacy of our beneficiaries.

Within a structure or institution, it is sometimes necessary to create several netiquettes, depending on the level of the organisation and the stakeholders involved.



**A few tips for building a social work netiquette:** The National Association of Social Workers in the United States has established professional and ethical standards to guide social workers in their practice:

- > Social networks can offer many advantages if they are used responsibly, but it is crucial to remember that your publications can be seen by a wide audience.
- > When you communicate online, it is essential to **reflect the values, ethics and values of your company.**

### mission of the social work profession

- > **It is advisable to respect the confidentiality and privacy of the people you support:** it is important to establish strict protocols to protect them and avoid sharing information that can be traced back to them on social networks.
- > It is essential **to establish and maintain professional boundaries** when interacting with people on social networks.

The same ethical standards that guide face-to-face interactions should apply online. Make sure your posts remain respectful and appropriate and avoid developing overly friendly relationships online, as this could damage your professional relationship.

- > **Avoid prejudice:** although it's natural to want to express your personal opinions, you need to be careful, as this can have negative repercussions on your professional practice.
- > Use professional resources such as supervision or peer counselling to manage difficult clinical situations.
- > **Develop a social networking policy** to clarify the professional use of the various forms of electronic communication with the people you support. This policy can be discussed during the initial social interview and updated if necessary.

To find out more, consult the information module by [clicking on this link](#).

## ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

### Definition2

**Ethics** refer to the moral principles and values that guide our actions and decisions. In practical terms, it means thinking critically about the consequences of our choices. It also ensures that our actions respect the rights and dignity of all those involved.

As the International Federation of Social Workers points out in its work, it is not just up to social workers to ensure ethical practices: organisations must also fulfil their obligations by supporting ethical practices.

Five fundamental ethical principles guide social work practice:

- > Respect for human dignity
- > Confidentiality and privacy
- > Social justice
- > Self-determination and empowerment
- > Professionalism and integrity

And the ethical use of technology and social media.

**Ethics** is the study of professional duties and obligations. It is a set of rules and standards governing the conduct of professionals.

In the case of social work, ethics define the specific rules and standards that social workers must follow in the exercise of their profession.

**Digital citizenship** refers to the way in which individuals interact, communicate and behave responsibly and ethically in the digital environment. It is a concept that focuses on the rights, responsibilities and behaviours of individuals online, while recognising that online actions have an impact on society as a whole.

As digital citizens, we have a responsibility to respect the rights of others, to behave ethically and to promote a safe, inclusive and respectful online environment.

Under its umbrella, digital citizenship has several facets:

- > Skills
- > Online liability
- > Protection of privacy
- > Active participation
- > Respect for intellectual property

In short, digital citizenship is as if our online actions were an extension of our offline behaviour. As social workers, mobilising the notion of digital citizenship is particularly relevant: we work with individuals and groups who may be vulnerable or in difficulty, while at the same time being present on digital platforms.

## Courses of action

If you are faced with an ethical dilemma, don't remain alone, consult your colleagues and management. When devising a response to a dilemma :

- > Question your own values and principles and those of your profession
- > Ask yourself whether there are any codes of conduct, professional standards or internal procedures that apply in this situation.
- > Question the organisation and procedures if a need for adaptation arises
- > Clarify the framework for the professional liability of social workers
- > Consider the fundamental ethical principles of social work, such as autonomy and respect for individual rights
- > Maintain confidentiality and professional neutrality
- > Keep your professional and personal life separate and maintain a healthy balance
- > Respect intellectual property rights
- > Guarantee the confidentiality and security of personal data (those of users and professionals) exchanged via non-professional communication tools

As a digital mediator, the social worker plays an essential role in promoting digital inclusion and helping people to make civic use of information and communication technologies.

When it comes to building a digital ethical position in social work, it is essential to think about the posture of the digital mediator: it is the cornerstone.

There are alternatives to GAFAM - think about it!

To find out more, consult the information module by [clicking on this link](#).





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