



european youth information
and counselling agency

ERYICA

A European network and its opportunities

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*International Forum «From Initiative to Action»
Chernigiv, May 2017*



About ERYICA

ERYICA is an international **non-governmental, non-profit making** association based in Luxembourg.

Members: national and regional youth information coordination bodies and networks.

Network: 32 Members in 26 countries



Our vision



ERYICA aims to uphold the right of young people to **full and reliable information**, which helps them make the choices they face in their lives, and which promotes their **autonomy and active participation** in a democratic society.

Right to information

Recognised in key legal and political documents:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990)
- European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950)
- European Commission White Paper, A new impetus for European youth (2001).
- Recommendation No. (90) 7 of the Council of Europe concerning information and counselling for young people in Europe and in CM/Rec(2010)8 on youth information

European Youth Information Charter



- **Professional principles**, minimum standards and quality measures.
- **1993**: 1st version of the European Charter for Youth Information
- **2004**: Revised version of the Charter, including new aspects of Youth Information work:
 - participation of young people
 - use of new technologies

Available in **23 languages**



European Youth Information Charter

Adopted in Bratislava (Slovak Republic) on 19 November 2004 by the 15th General Assembly of the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA).

PREAMBLE

In complex societies and in an integrated Europe that offers many challenges and opportunities, access to information and the ability to analyse and use information is increasingly important for young Europeans. Youth information work can help them to achieve their aspirations and can promote their participation as active members of society. Information should be provided in ways that enlarge the choices available to young people, and that promote their autonomy and empowerment.

Respect for democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms implies the right of all young people to have access to complete, objective, understandable and reliable information on all their questions and needs. This right to information has been recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and in the Recommendation N° (90) 7 of the Council of Europe concerning information and counselling for young people in Europe. This right is also the basis for youth information activities undertaken by the European Union.

INTRODUCTION

Generalist youth information work covers all topics that interest young people, and can include a spectrum of activities: informing, counselling, advising, guiding, supporting, befriending, coaching and training, networking, and referral to specialised services. These activities may be delivered by youth information centres, or through youth information services, in other structures, or using electronic and other media. The principles of this Charter are intended to apply to all forms of generalist youth information work. They constitute a basis for minimum standards and quality measures which should be established in each country as elements of a comprehensive, coherent and co-ordinated approach to youth information work, which is a part of youth policy.

PRINCIPLES

The following principles constitute guidelines for generalist youth information work, which seeks to guarantee the right of young people to information:

1. Youth information centres and services shall be open to all young people without exception.
2. Youth information centres and services seek to guarantee the equality of access to information for all young people, regardless of their situation, origin, gender, religion, or social category. Special attention should be paid to disadvantaged groups and to young people with specific needs.
3. Youth information centres and services should be easily accessible, without any appointment being required. They should be attractive for young people, with a friendly atmosphere. The operating hours should meet the needs of young people.
4. The information available shall be based on the requests of young people and on their perceived information needs. It should cover all topics that could interest young people, and should evolve in order to cover new topics.
5. Each user shall be respected as an individual and the response to each question shall be personalised. This shall be done in a way that empowers users, promotes the exercise of their autonomy, and develops their capacity to analyse and use information.
6. Youth information services shall be free of charge.
7. Information is given in a way that respects both the privacy of users and their right not to reveal their identity.
8. Information is provided in a professional manner by staff trained for this purpose.
9. The information offered is complete, up-to-date, accurate, practical and user-friendly.
10. Every effort is made to ensure the objectivity of the information provided through the pluralism and verification of the sources used.
11. The information offered shall be independent of any religious, political, ideological or commercial influence.
12. Youth information centres and services shall strive to reach the largest possible number of young people, in ways that are effective and appropriate to different groups and needs, and by being creative and innovative in their choice of strategies, methods and tools.
13. Young people shall have the opportunity to participate, in appropriate ways, in different stages of youth information work, at local, regional, national and international levels. These can include, among others: identifying information needs, the preparation and delivery of information, managing and evaluating information services and projects and peer group activities.
14. Youth information centres and services shall co-operate with other youth services and structures, especially in their geographical area, and shall network with intermediaries and other bodies that work with young people.
15. Youth information centres and services shall help young people both to access information provided via modern information and communication technologies, and to develop their skills in using them.
16. Each source of funding for youth information work should not act in any way that prevents a youth information centre or service from applying all the principles of this Charter.

Essence of YI & Counselling



- **Guiding** young people in all aspects of their lives and in their autonomous decision-making by showing what are their options and alternatives
- **Acting as interpreter** - facilitating access to abstract information (i.e. legal issues)
- **Evaluating** all the options, putting them into a broader context and relating them to one's own abilities, skills and wishes.

Organisations

- user-centred approach
- holistic approach to different topics (generalist youth information service)
- open to all young people without exception, without an appointment
- respects confidences and anonymity, provides a maximum of choice
- referring to specialized services (specialist youth information service)

Methods

- Informing
- Signposting
- Orientation/coaching
- Advising/Guiding
- Counselling
- Peer-to-peer
- Networking
- Training
- Referral to specialised services...



Strategic Directions of ERYICA 2015-2017





1. Quality and Training

- Training **activities** and **courses**
- Innovative training and learning **methods** and **quality standards**
- Training **material**
- Network of ERYICA **trainers**
- **Support** countries willing to establish youth information services
- Links with the **formal education** sector

Training System

- **YIntro** – Stepping into Youth Information
- **Digital YIntro** Additional Module
- **Jimmy** – Youth Information Mediator
- **YIntro Advanced** Module
- **Webbie Workshop** – Guide to safety and quality online
- **YoMIM** – Youth on the Move InfoMobility



2. Research and Innovation



- **Innovative services** and use of **new ICT**;
- **Pool of European Youth Researchers** (CoE-EC Partnership);
- Identification of **researchers** on youth policy;
- Dissemination of **research findings**; and
- Participation in **research projects**.

3. Participation & Empowerment



- **Participation of young people** in decisions that affect their lives;
- **Culture of inclusiveness** and **equal opportunities**;
- **E-participation** tools and methods;
- **Media** and **information literacy**;
- **Young people's access to rights** through youth information and counselling; and
- **Young people** in the **governance of the Agency**.



4. Policy & International Relations

Council of Europe

Partnership agreement 2015 (since 1997)

- **Youth Information Training** in Georgia, 1-3 December 2015

Participation in:

- CDEJ meetings
- JCC meetings
- 2nd European Youth Work Convention 2015 and Steering Group Meetings
- No Hate Speech Campaign follow-up group meetings
- Groups for drafting recommendations
- EPLM meetings and conference
- Policy reviews
- Dissemination activities of CoE initiatives and publications



4. Policy & International Relations

European Union

- Partnership agreement with the European Commission
- Erasmus+
- Horizon 2020
- EuropeAid
- Structured Dialogue
- EU Youth Conferences
- European Parliament relevant Committees
- EU policy consultations

4. Policy & International Relations



Stakeholders

- Eurodesk
- EYCA
- YFJ



International Organisations

- **UN bodies** dealing with youth policy: **UNESCO** and **UNICEF**
- **African Union**
- **North-South Centre**
- **Union for the Mediterranean**
- **League of Arab States**

Benefits of Membership

- Sharing good practices and accessing information
- Training and capacity building
- Quality assessment tools and standards
- Networking with peers
- Reliable project partners
- Participation in European projects
- Promotion on national and European level
- Increased visibility of services
- political support in establishing, maintaining, strengthening YI in cooperation with local and governmental bodies
- Country Development Service

Communication channels

- Website
- Newsletter
- Social media groups
- Sheryca and Intranet
- Mailing lists
- Annual Activity Reports
- General Assembly
- Meetings, trainings and other encounters
- Publications: i.e. Good practices booklet
- Annual EYID Campaign

SHERYICA



*SHERYICA is the online platform for youth information workers. It provides space **to spread information about youth information work**, to get in touch with each other, **share competences and exchange good practices** and ideas. SHERYICA also promotes the posted content through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn!*





THANK YOU

For more information please visit us at:

www.eryica.org

www.sheryica.org



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