

Generalist Youth Information Services in Portugal in 1997

The attached pages constitute the chapter concerning **Portugal** which is part of a 17-country study completed in 1997. Each chapter provides a summary of the situation in the country at the end of 1997 concerning generalist youth information and counselling, and the methods and structures involved in its organisation and distribution.

This study was conducted by the **European Youth Information and Counselling Agency** (ERYICA), to which all the author organisations belong as “Member Organisations” or as “Co-operating Organisations”. Accordingly, the study is limited to those countries where in 1996-97 there existed functioning networks of generalist youth information centres and services which were co-operating with ERYICA.

The 17 chapters of this study, in separate English and French versions, can be consulted on the ERYICA Internet site (“www.eryica.org” - see the section “Documents”, then “1997 Study”). Each file, which is in Word 2.0 for Windows / PC (varying between 4 and 20 pages in length), can also be downloaded from the site.

More recent information about each ERYICA national partner, its activities and its network can also be found on the ERYICA Internet site:

- a) **current addresses of national partners**: under “Discover ERYICA”, then “Members”, then “Country”
- b) **links to Internet sites of national partners**: under “Discover SERVICES”, then “Web-sites of ERYICA Partners”
- c) (when the organisation co-ordinates a network) **links to a list of addresses of regional or local centres**: under “Discover ERYICA”, then “Members”, then “Country”.

Acknowledgement

ERYICA wishes to acknowledge the financial assistance which was provided for the study by the European Commission, in the framework of its “Information for Young People” programme.

© ERYICA, 1999

Published by **ERYICA** (non-profit association)
101 quai Branly, F-75740 Paris Cedex 15, France
E-mail: SGeryica@aol.com

PORTUGAL

INTRODUCTION

In 1981, a structure called the Youth Information and Documentation Centre was created as part of the Fundo de Apoio aos Organismos Juvenis (FAOJ).

In November 1982, a seminar about youth information was organised with the help of a documentalist working in the “*Centre d’information et de documentation jeunesse*” in Paris. This seminar examined ways in which information could be used as a means of encouraging youth participation, as intended by the group working in the Lisbon Centre from the start of its work.

Between 1984 and 1988 a research study was carried out in order to identify the interests and concerns of young people. Following the results of this study a total of 18 Youth information Centres (YICs) were established, one in the capital city of each region.

In 1988 the National Youth Information Centre was created by law in order to respond to the very diverse requests being made by young Portuguese and to guarantee equality of opportunity for everybody.

Today there exists a **Youth Information Department** (DIJ) in Lisbon at the central level, as well as 18 **Regional Offices** (each in the capital city of a region), and 281 **Youth Information Points** (PIJ) in various parts of the country.

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

The aims of the YICs are to research, analyse and organise the regional, national and international information and documentation needed to inform young people. It is also their task to distribute a maximum of information of use to young people, in co-operation with regional and local partners, and working together with young people. In this way, they provide technical support for the development of an organised information system.

Portugal has a **National Youth Information Charter**, and is a signatory of the European Youth Information Charter.

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON YOUTH INFORMATION

Until 1988, the department (FAOJ) which was responsible for youth information depended on the Ministry of Education.

The information for this text has been provided by the Youth Information Department of the Portuguese Youth Institute (IPJ), which co-ordinates the Portuguese youth information network:

IPJ

(Departamento de Informação aos Jovens)

Avenida da Liberdade, 194

P-1250 Lisboa

☎ (351+1) 317.92.41

Fax: (351+1) 317.92.19

Text updated: December 1997

In the same year, when the law creating the Youth Institute was adopted, youth policy became the responsibility of a Secretary of State (attached to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers) and began to have a certain autonomy.

In 1993 the **Portuguese Youth Institute** (IPJ) was created; it was restructured in 1996 but continued to answer to the Secretary of State for Youth

Today the governmental body responsible for youth policy continues to be the **Secretary of State for Youth**, who is part of the combined Ministry for Youth, Sport and Drug Addiction.

CREATION AND AIMS OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH INFORMATION NETWORK

The **National Youth Information Network** (RNIJ - *Rede Nacional de Informação Juvenil*) was established in 1996, with the aim of promoting and distributing information of interest to young people, in such a way as to ensure greater equality of opportunity for all, wherever one lived and whatever one's economic possibilities.

The network operates at three main levels:

- RNIJ Central Unit
- RNIJ Regional Units
- Postos de Informação Juvenil (PIJ).

The **RNIJ Central Unit**, which is part of the Youth Information Department of the IPJ, has the following functions:

- to collect and classify all national and foreign information of interest to young people
- to update existing information in all the forms used by the national network
- to manage the various fields of information (such as studies, youth programmes, careers and vocational training, youth organisations, rights and responsibilities of young people, leisure activities, travel

abroad, environment, social issues, health, offers and facilities for young people)

- to prepare and circulate to all Regional Units the network's information tools (files on specific topics, "IPJ News", "Youth" magazine)
- to administer a telephone line for young scholarship-holders
- to train those who work in the network
- to respond to users who contact it by e-mail.

The **Regional Units**, operating inside the 18 Regional Offices of the IPJ, have the following functions:

- to collect and transmit regional information to the RNIJ Central Unit
- to distribute all kinds of information that interest young people
- to supervise and assist IPJ activities.

The **Youth Information Points** (PIJ), which are located inside associations or Town Halls, are physical spaces dedicated to the distribution of information (supplied by the Regional Units) which interests young people.

The RNIJ information materials and tools supplied to all structures participating in the national network include:

- files on specific topics
- "Folhas Tematicas" files
- files of regional information
- informational leaflets
- files from the "Europe Corner"
- Internet station
- Infocid station
- European data-bases, such as Eurodesk and INFomobil.

HOW PLURALISM AND QUALITY ARE GUARANTEED

YICs are open to all young people without exception, and the information supplied to them is comprehensive, impartial, exact,

up-to-date and practical. The user may serve her/himself, or will receive personal attention when s/he requests it.

Training is guaranteed for the staff (civil servants, and trainees) who have an information function in the IPJ; this can take the form of an intensive basic training, or subsequent on-going training.