

ERYICA Newsletter

European information for youth information and counselling centres

N° 9 March 2001

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ERYICA

101 quai Branly
F - 75740 Paris cedex 15
France
Tel: +33 144 49 13 26
Fax: +33 140 56 36 14
E-mail: sgeryica@aol.com
Internet: www.eryica.org

Next Issue

Material for the next issue of the Newsletter should be sent **before 15 May 2001**.

Preferably as a file attached to an E-mail message, to the ERYICA Secretariat (sgeryica@aol.com) or to the President (timoska@lasipalatsi.fi)

Youth Information in Europe

7,000 Centres 12,000 Workers

At the beginning of 2001, the number of "generalist" youth information centres and points in Europe exceeded 7,000, and the number of people working as youth information workers in the networks and organisations affiliated to ERYICA was estimated to be more than 12,000.

These are the principle findings of a survey of its national partners undertaken by ERYICA in January 2001. The number of centres and points has increased by more than 1,000 since June 1999 when the last survey was made; it should be recalled that there were around 300 centres in 1985.

This is the first time that data on the number of youth information workers has been collected, and the figure of 12,000 may be a conservative estimate because some of the larger networks do not yet have precise figures in this area. The total of 12,000 includes around 600 voluntary workers, who play an important role in some countries.

2001 = 15

This year is the 15th anniversary of the creation of ERYICA at its Constitutive Meeting in Madrid on 17 April 1986. Since that time, the Agency has grown in size, from 12 member organisations in 8 countries at the end of 1986 to 31 member organisations and 19 co-operating organisations in 36 countries today.

Over the years ERYICA has developed a range of activities and services both for its member organisations and directly for young people, and has contributed to the greater recognition of this sector of youth work by national and European policy-makers. It is also playing a significant role in increasing the professional quality of the services provided by youth information centres to millions of young people every year.



www.eryica.org/infomobil

The Agency is now widely recognised as a really representative platform of "generalist" youth information in Europe, by the professionals working in this field as well as by governments and European institutions.

During this year, to mark the anniversary, ERYICA partners will be invited to stress the European dimension of their work, as part of their regular activities promoting youth information.

www.eryica.org



Technology Grants in Ireland

In December 2000, the Irish Ministry of Education and Science provided special information technology grants totalling £IR.250,000 to the network of Youth Information Centres. The grants are intended for the upgrading and purchase of new computer equipment for the Centres to allow them to exploit to the fullest the most recent technological advances and to assist in making an effective contribution to the delivery of public information services. The extra funding will facilitate the provision of public Internet access for young people throughout the national youth information network.

Technical Assistance in Cyprus

ERYICA's work in providing training and technical assistance to member organisations took another step forward in Cyprus at the beginning of March. The Youth Board of Cyprus, which is in the process of creating the first youth information centre in the country in Nicosia, requested advice on the organisation of the information and documentation side of the centre. With the Youth Board covering the necessary travel and accommodation costs, ERYICA was able to arrange that Jaana Fedotoff, Director of the Nappi youth information centre in Oulu (Finland), undertake this 4-day technical assistance mission.

Hearing for White Paper on Youth Policy

On 20 February, the European Economic and Social Committee, in collaboration with the European Commission and European Youth Forum, organised in Brussels a Hearing of Civil Society Organisations so that they might contribute to the debate on the White Paper on Youth Policy in Europe, which is being prepared by the European Commission. ERYICA was represented at the Hearing by the President and Secretary-General. In her intervention, Päivi Timonen-Verma called for the White Paper to "include a clear information strategy towards young people", in order to end the "information deficit" which meant that at present only the initiated few had enough information about E.U. youth programmes to benefit from them.

IJAB in, SJN out!

The good news is that Germany is now a full member of ERYICA, in the form of IJAB (International Youth Exchange and Visitor's Service), which will also involve the German Federal Youth Council (DBJR) in relevant ERYICA activities. The IJAB application for membership, accepted by the ERYICA Bureau at its January 2001 meeting, follows a long period of informal co-operation between the two organisations.

The not-so-bad-as-it-sounds news is that SJN (Stichting Jeugdinformatie Nederland, Netherlands) terminated its membership of ERYICA at the end of 2000, following restructuring in the youth information field in the Netherlands. The SEC (Stichting Europa Centrum, Netherlands) is still a member of the Agency, and ERYICA has already started informal co-operation with the Dutch Foundation for the Improvement of Quality in Youth Information, which has a mandate to develop a national association of youth information centres and points.

The call for civil society organisations (international youth organisations, national youth councils, youth-serving organisations) to make written contributions to the White Paper resulted in a document of nearly 400 pages, which was the basis for most of the 3-minute statements made at the Hearing. The ERYICA submission, in English or French, is available from the ERYICA Secretariat.

In her intervention at the end of the Hearing, Viviane Reding, the Commissioner for Education and Culture, committed herself to working for the publication of the White Paper to be the beginning of a series of initiatives in the youth policy field rather than the end of a process, and encouraged civil society organisations to exert pressure on governments in the same sense.

Infrequent Question

Question sent to Unginfo-Oslo:

"Hello, I am seeking information regarding some romantic places in Oslo. I am coming to Oslo next month to propose to my girlfriend. I was wondering if you can suggest any romantic places or restaurants. We are actually planning on going skiing when I get there. It will probably be outdoors. Thank you, Martin (USA)."

Answer: "You can ski in any direction but south from Oslo, but take the Subway to Frognerstøen, conceal a bottle of Champagne in your backpack, and put the question on top of a hill or something. Or in front of the Skjennungstua (sign-posted), a really nice cabin that my boss recommends. Good luck!"

City Guides for Young People?

A number of municipalities / youth information centres in Europe publish a guide to their city aimed at young people, describing the local facilities, services and programmes designed for young people.

ERYICA would like to publicise these guides, in a specific section of its Web-site and as part of the INFOmobil service.

If you know about such a guide in your country, please inform the ERYICA Secretariat, giving the name of the guide, its price (if it is not free of charge), the name and address of the body publishing it, and the languages in which it is available.

National Youth Information Day in Norway

The Norwegian youth information network (Forum UIK) arranged a national Youth Information Day on 12 February this year. Most of the centres focused on international mobility as a theme, and invited young people to a wide variety of events that included theatre, dance, jugglers and movies from youth exchanges. The youth information centre in Nordland launched their new Lapp language Sami information project. All of which led to good press coverage on national television and radio, and in local newspapers.

National Day in France

In France the second national Youth Information Day was organised on 25 October 2000 with Europe as its theme. The aim of this second day was to facilitate young people's access to information about Europe by enabling them to discover the resources of the French youth information network which receives more than 5 million young people a year.

Organised by the Ministry for Youth and Sport and the entire youth infor-

mation network, the day was supported by the Ministry for Youth and Sport, by the French Agency for the Youth Programme and by the European Commission via the Eurodesk network. It constituted one of the actions taking place in the framework of the French Presidency of the European Union. This "Europe" day corresponded also - and maybe above all - to the importance which Europe is having in the future of young people who are experiencing the creation of a new geographical, political et economic area that offers a new form of citizenship.

The 25 October provided young people with an opportunity to visit their "youth info" centre and participate in discussions, exhibitions, and meetings about Europe. Documentation had been specifically prepared for the occasion and distributed via the 1,600 structures of the network. This included a "Europe kit" with 9 files of information dealing with practical questions about Europe (studying, working, country information...), as well as a "Europe portal" on the Web-sites

www.information-jeunesse.tm.fr
and www.droitsdesjeunes.gouv.fr

Training Kits

The Council of Europe and European Commission have made available on Internet some training kits (T-Kits) on Project Management and Intercultural Learning. The training kits are thematic publications written by experienced teams of youth trainers and writers, who have put together their knowledge to provide practical tools to be used in training and youth work. See: www.training-youth.net, or <http://www.coe.fr/youth/english/partnership/t-kits/frametkits.htm>.

The first series includes:

T-kit 1 - "Organisational Management" (pdf format) for trainers, staff and committee members of international youth organisations

T-kit 2 - "Methodology in Language Learning" (pdf format) for trainers and language teachers

T-kit 3 - "Project Management" (pdf format) for trainers and youth workers running projects

T-kit 4 - "Intercultural Learning" (pdf format) for trainers and youth workers dealing with intercultural issues.

You can download or print the Web versions. To obtain hard copies, you should contact an international youth organisation, national agency for the E.U. Youth Programme or your national youth council (a charge for printing costs might be asked).

Innovations

Youth-to-Youth Phone Service in Slovenia

At MISSS, we have been involving young people in our activities since 1993. The Youth-to-Youth Phone service is only one of our programmes, but a very successful one. It is carried out by young people between 14 and 18 years of age, and its purpose is to link young people in need (users) with their peers in a common attempt to solve the troubles confided by the user. One of the characteristics of the programme is that young people are specially trained to be able to advise, and therefore to help their peers in solving their problems. The other special characteristic is that young people are involved in the planning of the service, not just in its execution.

The group of young people working on this service is trained in order to give them the necessary social and communication skills. Thus, the knowledge obtained in the training sessions already influences their own development process, helping them to handle their own problems and socialisation, while at the same time being able to help their peers calling on the phone. The young people working with the service are also able to help their peers (friends) outside the programme. The programme is therefore useful for young people at least at three levels: on the level of self-help for those working with the service, on the level of helping their peers on the phone, as well as on the level of helping the peers by personal contact (friendship).

In the process of growing up, young people are most frequently influenced by the views and the judgements of their peers. It is very important to bear this fact in mind, particularly when training young people as volunteer workers for the phone service, developing their sense of humanity, of tolerance, and of help for deprived people, as well as when teaching them how to recognise people in need. In this process, intercultural education, along with socialisation, are increasingly important. On the other hand, communication between young people may lead to the formation of networks of young people, created on the basis of common interests, rather than on a hierarchical basis.

Youngsters can communicate via Internet on the basis of their common interests. In this way, MISSS has linked up two youth centres in Slovenia (Ljubljana and Krško), that both operate a youth-to-youth phone service. In addition, almost by coincidence, we have established contacts with a group of young people in Vienna operating a similar service. Currently, the communication between the centres is limited to e-mail, but in the future, we could consider technical solutions that would enable an even easier communication. We hope that similar projects could be developed in other countries, so that young volunteers can exchange knowledge and experience, with technical support and help from national networks.

For further information, contact:

1) MISSS:

misss@guest.arnes.si

2) Društvo Izvir, Krško:

izvir@car.si

3) DSA, Cornelia Stangl,

Kinder- und Jugendanwaltschaft, Wien:
con@kja.magwien.gv.at

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101 quai Branly

F - 75740 Paris cedex 15

France

Tel: +33 144 49 13 26

Fax: +33 140 56 36 14

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KEY ELEMENTS OF ERYICA'S FIRST 15 YEARS

Creation

17 April 1986:

ERYICA created at Constitutive Meeting in Madrid, following recommendation of first European Seminar organised by CIDJ-Paris in April 1985

Growth of

ERYICA Partnership

Dec. 1986:

12 organisations from 8 countries constitute ERYICA membership

April 1991:

HAYICO (Hungary) becomes first ERYICA member organisation in a former "socialist" country

Dec. 1996:

ERYICA partnership counts 45 organisations in 30 countries

Jan. 2001:

ERYICA partnership counts 50 organisations in 36 countries, of which 31 (in 22 countries) are members and the rest "co-operating organisations"

Recognition of Youth Information as Part of Youth Work

Jan. 1985:

Around 300 youth information centres in Europe (17 countries) when first survey made before April 1985 seminar

Feb. 1990:

Recommendation R (90) 7 on "Information and Counselling to be Provided to Young People", which ERYICA helped to draft, adopted by Committee of Ministers (Council of Europe)

3 Dec. 1993:

ERYICA members adopt European Youth Information Charter (during 4th General Assembly), after 2-year consultation process

April 1996:

More than 4,700 youth information centres and points in Europe

2 April 1997:

Council of Europe signs Partnership Agreement with ERYICA, primarily to develop youth information training activities

February 1999:

ERYICA is appointed member of the non-governmental Advisory Council on Youth Questions (Council of Europe)

Jan. 2001:

More than 7,000 youth information centres and points in Europe, and more than 12,000 persons working as youth information workers in 36 countries.

European Seminars for Youth Information Workers

April 1985:

(Marly-le-Roi, France)
1st European Seminar
(led to creation of ERYICA)

May 1988:

(Pomezia, Italy)
2nd European Seminar

May 1991:

(Rotterdam) 3rd European Seminar, with participation of partners from former "socialist" countries

Sept. 1995:

(Mollina, Spain)
International Summer University

Thematic Seminars

Dec. 1986:

(Edinburgh) "European Co-operation in the field of Youth Cards"

Dec. 1993:

(Bratislava) "Youth and Information in Central and Eastern Europe"

May 1994:

(Budapest) "Youth and Information in Central and Eastern Europe"

Oct. 1994:

(Prague) "Youth Information Systems in Europe"

Feb. 1995:

(Luxembourg) "Training for Youth Information Workers"

May 1997:

(Marly-le-Roi) "Information Services about Europe for Young People"

April 1998:

(Helsinki) "How to Use Internet to Inform Young People"

April 2000:

(Marly-le-Roi) "Tools to Promote Youth Mobility in Europe"

INFOmobil - information service promoting youth mobility in Europe

June 1987:

First "Guides for Young Visitors" (6 countries) published as booklets

June 1992:

Series of "Guides for Young Visitors" extended to cover 13 countries

June 1995:

ERYICA co-operates with European Youth Card Association in publication of "Travellin' Light", a calendar of cultural events in Europe aimed at young people

Dec. 1996:

"Guides for Young Visitors" (6 countries) first published in Internet format as a CD-ROM, becomes the INFOmobil service

Dec. 1998:

INFOmobil service extended to cover 13 countries, available on Internet

Dec. 2000:

INFOmobil service on Internet extended to cover 20 countries

Studies

1987 & 1989:

“European Co-operation in the field of Youth Cards”

1991:

Directory of Youth Information Centres in Europe

1993:

Directory of Computer-assisted Youth Information Services (13 countries)

1996:

Feasibility Study on “European Telephone Information Service on European Opportunities for Young People” (joint project involving ERYICA, EYCA, EUFED and Eurodesk)

1999:

Publication of Study on “Generalist Youth Information in Europe in 1997” (17 countries)

2000:

Youth Information Training Activities and Training Needs in Selected European Countries

Training Activities

1996, 1997 & 1998:

Three European Training Seminars on “Different Approaches to Youth Information in Europe” for beginners, organised in co-operation with the Council of Europe

1998 / 1999:

Four European Training Seminars for Local Eurodesk Relays (joint ERYICA-Eurodesk project)

1999:

4th European Training Seminar on “Different Approaches to Youth Information in Europe” for beginners, organised in co-operation with the Council of Europe and the European Union

Oct. 2000:

Study Session on “Training of Youth Information Workers”

ERYICA Presidents

March 1987 > April 1992:

• Brigitte CAHEN
(CIDJ, France)

May 1992 > April 1994:

• José MUNOZ RIPOLL
(INJUVE, Spain)

May 1994 > Oct. 1997:

• Maité BENAVIDES CASTRO
(INJUVE, Spain)

Nov. 1997 > Oct. 2000:

• Nico MEISCH
(CNIEJ, Luxembourg)

Nov. 2000 > present:

• Päivi TIMONEN-VERMA
(Allianssi, Finland)

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F - 75740 Paris cedex 15

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Tel: +33 144 49 13 26

Fax: +33 140 56 36 14

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Helsinki City Youth Department
Marita Haukema

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