

# ERYICA Newsletter

European information for youth information and counselling centres

N° 10 September 2001

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## National Co-operation between Networks: the Finnish Experience

Päivi Timonen-Verma (wearing her hat as Director of Kompassi in Helsinki) reports: At present, we have a rather good co-operation between different actors in the youth information and counselling field in Finland. This involves the 23 local youth information centres (YIC) in the country, the Centre for International Mobility (CIMO, which is the national operator of the Eurodesk service), the Finnish Youth Co-operation Alliance (Allianssi, which is the Finnish member of ERYICA, EYCA and the European Youth Forum), and more recently the Finnish Youth Hostel Association.

### European Co-operation

Each of these networks are active in their European networks. Allianssi (KaKe before) has been a member of ERYICA since 1987, the European Youth Information Charter is the basis for youth information work in Finland, and in recent years Finnish specialists have contributed in particular to the development of ERYICA's training activities. As the Finnish National Youth Council, and as the organisation managing the Euro<26 card in Finland, Allianssi is also active in the European Youth Forum and EYCA. Since the beginning of 1999, co-ordinated by CIMO, nine of the local youth information centres are local relays for the Eurodesk service.

The European dimension is generally recognised to be important in Finland, including at the local level; the Helsinki City Youth Department, for instance, with 420 full time youth workers, attaches high priority to its work being visible and known in other parts of Europe. For that reason the Youth Department supports its Youth Information and Counselling Centre "Kompassi" being active at the international and national levels.

In the youth information area, there have been some changes in the last four years, because previously Allianssi was co-ordinating youth information work at the national level, but now they have responsibility for the European co-operation in this area. This means that the local youth information centres have joined together in a loose network, and if we want to get something done for local centres, people working in the centres have to be active and organise it.

(continued on page 5)



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### Next Issue

Material for the next issue of the Newsletter should be sent **before 30 November 2001**.

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



[www.eryica.org/infomobil](http://www.eryica.org/infomobil)

[www.eryica.org](http://www.eryica.org)

# Youth Information and Counselling in Portugal



Ministério da **Juventude e do Desporto**  
**Instituto Português da Juventude**

The national Youth Information Network in Portugal (RNIJ), which is co-ordinated by the Portuguese Youth Institute (IPJ) and is spread throughout the country, is composed of 275 Youth Information Points (PIJ). The Youth Information Department of the IPJ undertakes the central co-ordination at the IPJ headquarters in Lisbon. The regional co-ordination of the network is done by the Regional IPJ Offices, located in each of the 18 regional capitals.

In terms of international connections, the IPJ has been a member of ERYICA for some years, and its election as an Vice-President in November 2000 will further encourage effective connection of RNIJ to the international youth information networks. Regarding Eurodesk, RNIJ is formally part of the international Eurodesk Association since March 2001 after several years of involvement in the Eurodesk service.

Besides making available general information, which embraces 11 thematic areas, IPJ has been giving special emphasis to the areas of personalised counselling which are priorities for young people, such as vocational counselling, employment, legal questions and creation of youth associations. Youth sexuality is a also priority area of work since 1997. First, a free telephone service for young people concerning sexual matters was created, and then 18 Youth Sexuality Support Offices, one per region.

In 2001, the International Year of Volunteers, IPJ launched on 9 May a project called Information System about Youth Voluntary Work that aims to promote voluntary service. This programme is aimed at organisations involved in social solidarity activities in general and at young people in particular. More information is available at the projects' web-site: [www.voluntariadojovem.pt](http://www.voluntariadojovem.pt).

In the area of international youth mobility, changes have been made in the existing system of work-camps, which have been integrated into a new Mobility and Exchange Programme.

In the near future, the IPJ will make available an English version of its official web site ([www.sej.pt](http://www.sej.pt)), where any young person will be able to get information about Portugal.

## YOUTH MOBILITY AND EXCHANGES

### Mobility and Exchange Programme

This Programme which was launched this year is managed by the IPJ and aims to promote the mobility and exchange of young people, both foreigners and Portuguese, through activities that facilitate:

- the exchange of experience
- knowledge of social and cultural realities of the different regions of Portugal
- contact between Portuguese young people and those coming from other countries.

Foreigners and young people from Portuguese-speaking communities, who must be between 18 and 30 years old, may participate in activities taking place in Portugal, promoted and organised by Portuguese youth organisations.

Mobility and exchange projects for foreigners and Portuguese descendants take place between 1 July and 30 September. These projects may last up to 15 days. For more information (participation conditions, fees and enrolment procedures), please contact:

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# Youth Information and Counselling in Portugal (continued)



## YOUNG PEOPLE AND SEXUALITY

### Sexuality Phone Line

Informing young people about sexual matters has been a top priority for the IPJ since 1997, following a perception by those who have public and political responsibilities that there was a real need for action in this field.

As a first step, IPJ created in 1998 a service called "Sexuality Phone Line", in partnership with the Family Planning Association (APF). This consists of a free phone line that can be used anywhere in the country, which guarantees anonymity and confidentiality and aims at providing a service which all young people can access without embarrassment. This service is operated by a group of qualified professionals (psychologists), and so far 16,000 calls have been answered.

### Youth Sexuality Support Offices

As a complementary measure to the Sexuality Phone Line, IPJ has established Youth Sexuality Support Offices (GASJ) in all the IPJ Regional Offices, in partnership with Regional Health Administrations. The GASJ are operated by health service professionals (doctors, nurses and psychologists), and so far 8,000 youngsters have been advised. Young people can easily access these services; no identification is required and no social control is made.



With the creation of these two projects, IPJ seeks to make information available to young people which will enable them to make informed and responsible choices from a personal and social point of view. The aim is to promote healthy life-styles and to contribute to the prevention of risky behaviour.

## INFORMATION SYSTEM ABOUT YOUTH VOLUNTARY WORK

Simultaneously with the International Year of Volunteers, the Ministry for Youth and Sport (through the IPJ) has created an Information System about Youth Voluntary Work, including a web-site: [www.voluntariadojovem.pt](http://www.voluntariadojovem.pt).

This system, as well as promoting values and citizenship among young people, is a way of knowing what is going on, and a meeting-place for those who want to work as a volunteer and those who are offering opportunities for voluntary work in socially useful projects, and even for those who, as sponsors assuming their social obligations, want to contribute technically or financially to these kind projects.

The actors in this system are also its beneficiaries: young volunteers, associations or informal groups, companies and other economic agencies. The recognition and social valorisation of the young volunteer is encouraged by a set of incentives which, in a prestigious and attractive way, help to mobilise the energy and commitment of the volunteer.

The information system works in an interactive way. It permits young people to reveal their intention to working as a volunteer, recording the data that indicates their profiles and availability, in a way that makes it easy to identify an appropriate voluntary placement. In addition, associations and bodies which are organising socially useful projects that involve young volunteers present themselves (location, projects and concrete activities). Thus, they may recruit young volunteers whose vocation, capacities and availability are relevant to the needs of a particular project.

### The system allows

#### the user to make a choice:

- by area of activity, and by association seeking the support of volunteers
- by geographical location of projects
- by types of intervention
- by groups of young people for whom an involvement in voluntary social service offers one form of prevention against socially undesirable behaviour.

The use of the [www.voluntariadojovem.pt](http://www.voluntariadojovem.pt) web-site by the different actors confirms that this service awakens an interest in volunteering and provides answers to questions that arise in the civil society. Having as its motto "Helping is in your hand", this site underlines the fact that the good-will and generosity of young people, when known and led, is a fundamental factor in the preparation of a better future.



## NEWS ... FROM FINLAND

### Project in the Rovaniemi Region

Rovaniemi is one of the most northern towns in Finland, in a region which has a population of around 50,000 people. The Education Department of the County of Rovaniemi has launched a new youth information project in the Rovaniemi region, with the co-operation of Rovalan Setlementti ry. and a youth organisation called Rovalan Nuoret ry. The Youth Office of the town of Rovaniemi will manage the project, which has the following objectives:

- a) to develop positive possibilities for young people in the region by organising information and communication services aimed at the young people, in co-operation with the organisations involved in the project and the young people themselves
- b) to offer young people and youth workers the opportunity to access a range of information in different field using a variety of tools, as well as to create new methods of working which aim to improve the opportunities available to young people, their participation in general, their access to new technologies, and their ability to manage their own lives.

#### The methods used in the project will include:

- 1) creating a model mobile workshop called "Multimedia Wagon 2001", which uses modern media to make young people more aware of their environment, and promotes a discussion about the attitudes of young people towards new technologies
- 2) opening new youth information relay-points in the County of Rovaniemi and the town of Rovaniemi, and developing the activities of all relay-points
- 3) establishment of the NUTI electronic databank in an interactive way, by offering young people answers to current questions, using the resources of expert networks, other databanks on youth issues, thematic campaigns, Internet, personal services and brochures

4) creating an "Our own part of town/village" sub-project, the implementation of which will actively involve local young people, familiarising them with their own environments as well as producing content for the web-site

5) organising training events for young people and youth workers.

#### The expected results are:

- 1) a model for the implementation of a mobile workshop
- 2) improved youth information for the Rovaniemi region, which utilises electronic communications as a tool and develops the activities of relay-points (five new relay-points)
- 3) new activities and opportunities for young people (both boys and girls) in the region, and an increased interest on their part in applying for training
- 4) improved skills of the young people and the youth workers participating in the project in the use of information technologies
- 5) apprenticeship placements offered to students employed on the project
- 6) a regional network of those interested in the development of youth information, which also has international connections
- 7) an improved supply of information on a range of subjects relating to the urban areas and villages of the Rovaniemi region, on the Internet
- 8) a project that has objectives, methods and a way of working together which may easily be copied or adapted in other places.

The project co-ordinator and the multimedia worker started work in June 2001. The project is looking for new partners

not only here in Lapland and in Finland but also in other parts of Europe.

If you find the theme and the activities of the project interesting, please contact Merja Tervo

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### Nappi and Neppi

Nappi, in the city of Oulu, is one of the larger local youth information centres in Finland, serving a local youth population of some 23,200 young people (13-24 years). It was opened in 1993, is run by the Oulu Youth Affairs Centre (city youth office), and offers a wide range of information and services to local young people. It is also one of the nine local relay-points for the Eurodesk service in Finland. In February 2000, a special room was opened with five computers which young people can use free of charge to access Internet-based services.

With substantial funding from the Oulu Provincial Administrative Board and the European Social Fund, from 1 August 2001 Nappi will be the operational unit for a new project to develop new information services in the region. These will include:

- a) the creation of two relay-points (called Neppi) to bring the services to Oulu suburbs
- b) development of inter-active services using Internet
- c) information offered in different languages in order to reach an international public
- d) training in the field of youth information and counselling, and in the use of information technologies.

## NEWS ... FROM CYPRUS

### First YIC in Nicosia

On 4 July, the Youth Board of Cyprus organised a Press Conference at which the Minister of Justice, responsible for youth policy, announced the opening of the first Youth Information Centre on the island in September. Located on one of the main streets of Nicosia, the Centre has received sponsorship from the Cyprus Telecommunications Authority, including ten computers with Internet connections for the use of the public. The development phase of the Centre has been co-ordinated by Mr. Charalampos Theopemptou of the Higher Technical Institute. The Youth Board has plans to open two further centres in Larnaca and Limassol next year.

## ... FROM ESTONIA

Youth information work is being developed in Estonia, often in co-operation with colleagues from the youth information field in Finland. Most of the local services are part of other structures, such as youth centres or youth culture houses. Already the beginnings of a national network exist, supported by the Estonian Youth Work Centre (ENTK).

## USEFUL RESOURCES

In Petto (Flanders, Belgium) has released a digital version of its "JongerenGids" (small booklet full of information for young people, in Flemish only). A website version is planned for later this year. You can download it from: <http://www.inpetto-jeugdendienst.be/jg2000/jgsetup.exe>. You need Internet Explorer 5.5 (Java script enabled) and Macromedia Flash 5 player.

### National Co-operation

#### between Networks:

#### the Finnish Experience (continued from page 1)

### Training Activities

One of the main areas of co-operation between the different youth information networks in Finland is training, both in the sense of organising the training activities, and in having people from the different networks benefit from the training.

Each year there are two large training seminars for youth information workers in Finland. These are organised by the local YICs with help from Kompassi, CIMO and Allianssi. The main work (content, practical organisation, publicity) is done by persons working in local YICs. CIMO (Eurodesk) has been a good partner for these activities, not only because it supports the seminars financially, but also because the national co-ordinator sees them as one tool in her work of helping Eurodesk local relays and promoting Eurodesk more widely. Allianssi publicises these seminars and uses them as a means of informing about the youth card and other Allianssi activities and services.

In the 1999-2001 period, the training seminars have covered the following topics:

- young people participating in youth information work
- co-operation between networks
- information about the E.U. Youth Programme
- organising national co-ordination in the field of youth information and counselling
- self-informing method in an open environment in a youth information centre
- counselling methods in youth information work
- information and counselling about studying abroad
- information and documentation management in youth information centre
- ERYICA and European principles of youth information work
- the quality aspects of youth information work
- Eurodesk service as a tool for local centres
- sources of youth information on Internet.

### Promotion

Another product, prepared together by the different networks, is a poster encouraging young people to go abroad, and indicating the different places in Finland where they can find useful mobility-related information.



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