

ERYICA NEWSLETTER - MARCH 2006

A Newsletter for Youth Information Workers and Organisations

This is the first issue of the ERYICA Newsletter produced on-line on the ERYICA web-site. Further issues are planned for June and September this year. All comments, and suggestions for future issues, will be welcome. The issues this year will be published in English and French; by 2007, it is hoped that it will be possible to add a Spanish version.

The newsletter is aimed at people and organisations who are working in the field of youth information all over Europe. It will contain news about the activities of ERYICA and about the national partners of the Agency and their activities, and information about issues that affect youth information work, especially at the European level. By providing information about existing and new "products", initiatives and methods (local, regional, national and international), the newsletter will also contribute to the sharing of experience that is such an important element of European co-operation in this field.

Contributors: Anyone who has a project or activity in the field of youth information which may be of interest to colleagues elsewhere is invited to contribute to this newsletter. Each article should be clear and concise but can include an attached file with a longer text. Written in English or French, articles should be sent to services@eryica.org (<mailto:services@eryica.org>)

Subscribers: If you wish to receive the newsletter by e-mail automatically each time a new issue is published (3-4 times a year), you can subscribe to it (or un-subscribe) [here](#).

20 Years - Already !

20 Years - Already ! This year is the 20th Anniversary of the creation of ERYICA, by a Constitutive Meeting held in Madrid on 17 April 1986.



In that time, so much has changed: in Europe (our sphere of operations), in the implantation of "generalist" youth information services (300 centres in 15 countries in 1985; more than 8,000 centres in 30 countries now), in youth programmes with a European dimension, in the technologies of information and communication, in the place of youth information work as a part of youth work. But the core mission of ERYICA member organisations not only rests very much the same: a user-centred approach to meeting the information and counselling needs expressed by young people, but it has been strengthened by the confirmation over time of the professional principles that underlie the work of youth information workers, expressed in the European Youth Information Charter.

The Agency has a number of solid achievements to celebrate, and a larger number of as yet unfulfilled ambitions. Various ERYICA partners are planning initiatives to mark the 20th Anniversary - more about those in future issues of the Newsletter.

16th ERYICA General Assembly



Ljubljana was the venue of the 16th ERYICA General Assembly on 24-27 November 2005, organised by MISSS, the Slovenian member organisation, with support from the Youth

 Office of Slovenia.

In addition to adopting the Work Programme for 2006 and the Draft Budget for 2006, the Assembly adopted a set of Indicators for a National Youth Information Policy (see next article). It also modified the ERYICA Standing Orders, and started discussions which will lead to a Strategic Plan for the development of the Agency.

Looking forward to its next session (in 2006) that will renew a part of the Governing Board, the Assembly prolonged by one year the present mandates of the President (Ljubo Raicevic, MISSS-Slovenia) and Treasurer (Liam Curran, YCNI-Northern Ireland).

New Staffer in Secretariat



As of January 2006, Emmanuelle Rosello has joined the ERYICA secretariat as Co-ordinator of Internet Services. Previously in a similar post for a cultural association, Emmanuelle is French, speaks fluent English, has some notions of Spanish and German, and is a jazz-lover.

A big welcome to you, Emmanuelle!

Indicators for a National Youth Information Policy

As part of their work to strengthen and develop youth information work through co-operation at the European level, ERYICA and its national partners have always supported moves to organise and co-ordinate youth information policy and practice at the national level.



In recent years, important steps forward in this direction have been taken in a number of countries, and it is to be hoped that more countries will respond to the call for "... the development in Member States of comprehensive, coherent and coordinated information services which take account of the specific needs of young people and are as youth friendly and economically accessible as possible" in the European Union's "common objectives" for youth information. As a further contribution to the advocacy of a national and co-ordinated approach to youth information work, the ERYICA General Assembly adopted on 24 November 2005 a set of 12 Indicators for a National Youth Information Policy. These indicators are proposed as guidelines for people in government departments and other official bodies responsible for youth policy, as well as for other persons who are interested in the development of youth information work.

Related Documents



[6296_en_indicators_nat_policy_EN.pdf](http://eryica.org/files/6296_en_indicators_nat_policy_EN.pdf) (<http://eryica.org/files>)

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"Co-operation" is the Name of the Game - "Participation of Young People" is the Aim

ERYICA, Eurodesk and the European Youth Card Association (EYCA) are continuing their co-operation in 2006 with a further contribution to the implementation of the European Union's "common objectives" for youth information. In April, with their Austrian partners, and in the framework of the Austrian Presidency of the European Union, the 3 European organisations will organise together a European Seminar on "Participation of Young People in Youth Information Work" in Vienna.



As with the similar seminar in Paris last year on quality in youth information work, the seminar will focus on presentations of projects and methods by organisations from different countries that have experience of directly involving young people in various aspects of youth information work. It is expected that around 60 persons from 20-25 countries will participate in the seminar.

Study Visit to Saint Petersburg



In April 2006, a group of youth information workers representing ERYICA member organisations in 9 countries and existing or potential partner organisations in 6 non-E.U. countries, will make a study visit to Saint Petersburg. The aim of the visit is to promote contacts and dialogue between youth work organisations in Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Ukraine and youth information bodies in European Union countries, with a particular focus on youth information work, and with a view to developing co-operation in the future.

Funded by the European Union's Youth Programme, this project is being co-ordinated by In Petto (Flanders / Belgium). The hosting organisation is the NGO Youth Information Centre of Saint Petersburg.

Youth Information Centre in Malta

The first youth information centre in Malta opened its doors in April 2005. Called the National Youth Information Centre (NYIC), it is located on the campus of the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) in Paola, and is co-ordinated by Robert Cassar. The centre is a joint project of the Ministry of Youth, Education and Employment (Youth Section) and MCAST. With governmental and NGO partners, the centre has developed a national youth information portal (www.youthinfo.gov.mt (<http://www.youthinfo.gov.mt>)), which will be launched on 21 March.



Robert has contributed the attached "credo" to this issue of the Newsletter.

Related Documents



7670 en NYIC article feb06(rev)EN.pdf (<http://eryica.org/files>)

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INDICATORS FOR A NATIONAL YOUTH INFORMATION POLICY

(as adopted in Ljubljana on 24 November 2005 by the 16th ERYICA General Assembly)

Introduction

Youth information has become a key area of national and European youth policies. It is one of the four priority areas of work of the Common Objectives adopted in November 2003 by the European Union Member States, and it is the subject of the Council of Europe's 1990 Recommendation (90) 7 on Youth Information and Counselling, and of the European Youth Information Charter, which was updated and adopted on 19 November 2004 in Bratislava (Slovakia) by the 15th ERYICA General Assembly.

In addition to the involvement of young Europeans in youth initiatives and projects, in youth clubs, and in youth organisations, youth information can play an important role in the development of their autonomy and in their non-formal education.

*As part of the Agency's work that aims to assist governments to develop quality youth information services, ERYICA member organisations have formulated the following indicators for a national youth information policy. **These indicators, now adopted as an ERYICA policy statement by the ERYICA General Assembly, are proposed as guidelines for people in government departments and other official bodies responsible for youth policy, as well as for other persons who are interested in the development of youth information work.***

* * *

Set of 12 Indicators

INDICATOR 1: Governmental Role

Youth information should be considered by Governments to be an important task that is an integral part of its overall youth policy, for which it needs to develop a national policy (or strategy) that seeks to develop a comprehensive, coherent and co-ordinated approach to the provision of youth information services throughout its country, as recommended in the European Union's Common Objectives for Youth Information. Such an approach should include a recognition of the independence of youth information services in the accomplishment of their objectives, as well as the establishment of an appropriate national co-ordination or support unit.

INDICATOR 2: Youth Information Legislation

According to which level of government has the legal competence for youth policy in a country, the provision of youth information services should have a legal basis in the relevant youth legislation.

INDICATOR 3: Stable Funding and Staffing

In order to be able to provide their services on a professional and sustained basis, youth information services should be adequately funded and staffed, on the basis of an annual (or pluri-annual) work-plan and budget.

INDICATOR 4: Equal Access for All

Youth Information services, whether provided through youth information centres, through youth-related services in other structures, or via Internet or other media, should be accessible to all young people. This implies a policy concerning the implantation of youth information centres, as well as measures to ensure physical access to services, and the use of various methods to reach groups or persons with special needs.

INDICATOR 5: Regional and Local Dimension

According to which level of government has the legal competence for youth policy in a country, the national youth information policy (or strategy) should have a regional and local dimension in order for youth information services to reach a maximum number of young people. Regional and local authorities should be actively involved in supporting the provision of youth information.

INDICATOR 6: Scientific Research and Expertise

A youth information policy (or strategy) should be based on a sound knowledge of the information needs and expectations of young people. This knowledge can be acquired by consulting young people (including by having them conduct the consultation), by consulting those who work with young people in the locality concerned, and by conducting scientific research on issues relating to youth information.

INDICATOR 7: Innovation

Youth information services must aim to improve constantly the quality of the information and counselling services that they provide to young people. This requires that a youth information policy (or strategy) should promote innovation, and should encourage reflection by youth information workers and by young people about how to develop creative ways of meeting established and new needs and challenges.

INDICATOR 8: Participation of Young People

Promoting the active participation of young people in youth information work should be an important element of a youth information policy (or strategy). Possibilities should be created for young people to participate directly and in a meaningful way at all levels of the youth information process, including in the management and evaluation of projects and services.

INDICATOR 9: Cross-Sectoral Co-operation

A comprehensive and coherent youth information policy will require consultations and co-operation between a wide range of actors, including governmental departments, official youth services, voluntary youth organisations and young people. A possible way to guarantee the necessary cross-sectoral co-operation is the establishment of a cross-sectoral committee or working-group, which has the tasks of developing, supporting, supervising and monitoring the implementation of the national youth information policy (or strategy).

INDICATOR 10: Quality of Services

A youth information policy (or strategy) should include measures to maintain and develop the quality of the youth information and counselling services provided to young people. These measures may be based on the European Youth Information Charter (2004) that is widely accepted as a set of guidelines in many European countries, or on a similar national Charter. Such a charter serves as a basis for the definition of minimum standards and for developing methods of assessing the application of quality factors, which can lead to a recognised quality label for youth information services.

INDICATOR 11: Training

A priority component of a national youth information policy is support for the basic and continued training of youth information workers, since the presence of trained staff is a pre-condition for installing and maintaining a high level of quality in the youth information services offered to young people.

INDICATOR 12: Diversity in the Delivery of Information

Over the course of time, youth information work has undergone many evolutions. In recent years, it has integrated the use of modern information and communication technologies in the management of data, and in the delivery of information. In particular, Internet offers new possibilities to facilitate the access of young people to information and counselling, and can be used to increase the media competence and social skills of young people.

In spite of these developments, face-to-face contact remains an essential component of the information and counselling process that is requested by users and that can only be supplemented by modern technologies. In the future, youth information centres, information points and mobile services will continue to be an integral part of youth information work.

In order to reach the largest possible public, and to meet the needs of specific groups, a youth information policy (or strategy) should enable youth information services to use a wide range of communication media and methods, including peer-involvement, outreach work, and co-operation with other structures (e.g. schools) and events which are frequented by young people.

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Malta's National Youth Information Centre (NYIC)

The proof of the pudding is in the eating

An informed decision is often better. Still the young person often finds it difficult to obtain information about his or her life choices. In the increasingly complex demands of the 21st Century society, youth information is splintered and scattered. This discourages active participation in society, and young citizens tend to distance themselves from a too-often hostile adult environment. The Youth Section within the Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment and MCAST (Malta College of Art, Science and Technology) understood this need and are collaborating in the establishment of the National Youth Information Centre.

A young Project

Anyone involved in youth work would quickly realize that it is an overwhelming task. Yet one does not need to take the Big Bang approach. A more practical approach would be to think big and act small. Being young, the project requires time and effort to mature into a fully formed service. This creates a good opportunity to think big.

Think Big

The centre will be specifically designed to respond to the needs of young people and the information provided is practical, pluralistic and accurate. The NYIC's main objective is to provide a free and confidential information service for young people on any subject of interest to them. The Centre plans to act as a "one stop shop" where all information is available under one roof.

Act small

The Centre is currently working hard on an Internet portal. The on-line service will consist of most of the information that will be readily available at the centre. One can sum it up as "anything youth". The portal will allow young persons to obtain quality information on numerous themes and subjects that might interest them. Furthermore, it will be a valuable tool for youth-related organisations or professionals.

One can see this as a big but essential challenge. How are we going to achieve it? By bringing together a wide range of existing agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors to contribute to this portal. These same agencies are already doing valuable work in bringing about a more informed youth.

Join our webs

A useful metaphor would be to liken the youth-related organisations and agencies to spiders, each with his or her small web. However large and complex the web may be, only those who pass through that space can be “caught” in it. The NYIC helps to join the existing nets. In this manner one can truly start to contribute to a holistic service for young people. So, in its final stages of development, the portal is encouraging the webs to join.

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