



YouthPartnership

QUESTIONNAIRE

“INFORMATION”

THE NETHERLANDS



YouthPartnership
Council of Europe
European Commission



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1 Information services

1.1 Legal framework of the youth information service

Youth policy, including youth information, is mostly decentralized to the local level. Each municipality is responsible to set up its own youth policy. There is no legislation or binding rule concerning local youth information. There is no formal national structure being stimulated or supported by government as well.

The legal framework of the youth information service is the Social Support Act (which has come into effect since 1 January 2007), as the objective of the Act is to enable everyone in the Netherlands to take part in society, i.e. each citizen has the right to information. Under its provisions, local authorities are required to assist those who require additional support in their day-to-day lives. This is because local authorities are more acquainted with information relating to their own environment. Within this context, the information function to youth has been related to the support of upbringing children and youth.

Furthermore, each municipality in the Netherlands will be obliged to set up its own Centre for Youth and Families. By the end of 2011, the government would like each municipality to operate its own centre. Some bigger municipalities may have more than one centre. There are different operational models possible, but the overall objective is to provide citizens one entry point to different facilities. Parents and young people themselves can get answers to their questions in the field of health, growing up and upbringing. As youth information is decentralized to the local level, municipalities will therefore be able to make youth information part of its Centre for Youth and Families as well. However, they are not obliged to do so.

Recently, the Association of Youth Information Points has carried out a little research concerning 'the future of youth information'. The Association recommends each municipality to engage at least one youth information worker and keep up the youth information service. According to the association, the lack of a national structure and support is a bottleneck within this context.

1.2 Youth information points at national and regional level

There are about 152 Youth Information Points in the Netherlands but there are a lot of internal differences between those information points. Each information point has a local function and all of them are initiated or supported by local authorities, although there is no direct governmental obligation as described in 1.1.

However, about 100 Youth Information Points are a member of the (national) Association of Youth Information Points. The Association looks after the interests of its members within the Netherlands and supports the cooperation and exchange between the information points.

Each information point conforming to the a set of established criteria related to the functioning of an information point may become a member.

The National Youth Council also can be regarded as a youth information point at national level, as the council is operating at national level in the field of youth participation and delivers online information to young people about various issues related to their daily lives.

The specific youth information portal of the Youth Council is www.youknow.nl

Two regional (digital) youth information points are developed. Within the province of South Holland, the regional youth information point www.blixum.nl is active, which provides information for youngsters within the province of South Holland. Jong in Fryslân (JIF) offers digital and face-to-face information and counseling to young people in eight local communities. It also offers guidance to parents and professionals about issues concerning young people and children between 0 and 25 years. A provincial website supports this information service: www.jonginfriesland.nl and www.jonginfryslan.nl

Another important development at regional level is the implementation of digital youth information formats or input tools developed by real estate developers in cooperation with social support organizations like jongin.nl. Jongin (Young In) is a tool that can be implemented by e.g. Centers for Youth and Families in different municipalities. Jongin offers municipalities the possibility to launch their own Jongin website, for instance www.jongin.nijmegen.nl or www.jongin.almere.nl. In 2008, 12 municipalities and the province of Gelderland run their own Jongin website. Jongin provides youth an entry point to information and offers organisations the possibility to reach youngsters interactive. At the Jongin websites, young people get the answers to their questions and they can find addresses from organisations which are offering local support and help. Also, the website provides 'fun', photographs, polls, movies etc. Municipalities can decide themselves how they would like to manage its content – by the Jongin content managers, with a local youth group or otherwise.

Meanwhile, Jongin has won an award (in the field of information and communication technology), with which the organisation can partly finance the new Jongin websites. This award has been given by the Ministry of Youth and Families. Jongin would like to become a local site with youth information, while each municipality having its own Jongin website, with specific subjects relating to their own environment.

www.Tiszo-emmen.nl is kind of the same web tool specifically aimed at young people within the city of Emmen and therefore a local initiative. The Center of Youth and Families in Emmen has launched this new portal. The portal has an entry point for young people (tiszozong.nl), an entry point for educators (tiszogezin.nl) and an entry point for professionals (tiszoprofs.nl). The entry point for professionals is an intranet, at which professionals can exchange information. The content is being provided by the editors of G!DS, a database of

the national association for public libraries. There is no direct involvement of young people themselves in the management of the content.

Some criticism in these web tool developments is that young people do not receive any guidance in their search for information while they are e.g. seeking for support for care. Next to that there is no clear youth participation, although municipalities may choose for young people to manage the content.

1.3 Specialized areas covered by youth information in your country (going beyond the general youth information, such as career guidance).

The information delivered in the general youth information services mostly consists of 9 central themes: sex, work, drugs, law, money, living, school, free time and information on for instance youth exchanges, studying or working abroad etc.

Next to that there are a lot of thematic e-help websites for youngsters, which are mostly focusing at five specific subjects which are important for youth: sexuality, narcotic drugs, depression, health and ragging. Due to a research by Peter Nikken, Netherlands Youth Institute, the most e-help websites got questions from youngsters relating to sexuality. The second one is narcotic drugs, and the third one depression. All the e-help websites offer some background information and the provision of help.

The 'Kindertelefoon' (children's helpline) also offers information to youngsters. Young people can call a special number at which they can talk about problems and get information about each subject they consider important. The Kindertelefoon is operated by volunteers, who receive trainings to handle questions and problems adequately. The Kindertelefoon has been settled in each province, relating to the youth welfare work in each province. Currently, the Kindertelefoon also operates a national youth portal: www.kindertelefoon.nl with a new chat option, where children can receive counseling by professionals anonymously. This feature is highly successful.

There are also some television programs and magazines specifically aimed at young people, but they don't cover any specialized area but offer different kinds of information. Besides those portals, there are some websites providing information for specific target groups, e.g. Moroccan youngsters, www.maroc.nl, or for young people from Turkey, e.g. www.lokum.nl. The commercial portal for young people, jongeren.startpagina.nl, gives an overview of the different subjects which all have a number of websites offering specialized information, i.e. music, alcohol, love, religion, politics, studying and so on.

Besides all the digital information, some municipalities offer young people their own office window, offering information about career guidance. Schools and schoolteachers also provide their students information about career possibilities.

1.4 Youth portals

Youth portals are youth information systems on the internet. Please list those youth portals that are either conform to the [ERYICA charter](#) or are recognised as youth information services by the national authorities. Please provide a picture that fits the national situation. If you are in doubt, you should confirm your data with the person in charge for these services on the national level.

The national Association of Youth Information Points (Vereniging van JIPs) operates the national website www.jip.org, which provides information for young people with some scope for interaction. This network is a non-governmental initiative. The website is a site on national level, and the ERYICA charter has been signed by the Association of Youth Information Points. There are no other specific national youth portals which do conform to the Eryica charter.

Eurodesk, the European Information Desk for young people and organisations working with young people also conforms to the Eryica charter, but this is specific information relating to mobility, i.e. information concerning studying etc. in Europe for Dutch young people.

Eurodesk is supported by the European Commission and the Dutch government.

The National Youth Council receives a subsidy in order to provide information concerning youth participation. The National Youth Council therefore runs a special telephone number and a national website, www.youknow.nl. This website also provides information about all the subjects youth consider important.

www.Blixum.nl is specifically aimed at youngsters in the province of South Holland and can therefore be characterized as a regional youth portal, although it doesn't conform to the Eryica charter. Blixum is supported by the Provincial Government and some private foundations. Also in Friesland the www.jonginfriesland.nl is supported by the Provincial Government.

2 Access for young people

2.1 Number of young people using the information services

Young people in the Netherlands have a lot of access to the internet. Research in 2006 by SCP (Social and Cultural Planning Office from The Netherlands - Jaarboek ICT en samenleving: De digitale generatie, uitgeverij Boom, 2006) shows that 91% of the young people with the Dutch nationality have access to the internet at home. Young people from ethnic minorities have less access. 80% of the young people from Surinam and from the Dutch Antilles have access at home, while 68% of young people from Turkish origin and 64% of the young people from Moroccan origin have access to the internet at home. This research also shows that appr.50% of these young people behave themselves differently on the internet than in real life. Between 5 and 10% of the teenagers show signs of internet

addiction. Young people tend to be more and more producers rather than consumers on the Internet by blogging and podcasting and by placing pictures, clippings etc on the Internet. Young people meet each other equally often in real life as by chatting on MSN (4 times a week)

The website www.jip.org of the National Association of Youth information points had 6,000,000 visitors in 2007. The local Youth Information Points in the Netherlands had a total of 37,500 visitors in 2005. There are no more recent figures available.

2.2 Is there any mobile information service?

In case there is at least one mobile information service, please describe the service and what type of information is provided by the service as well as the target group of the mobile information service.

Example: Information bus, information tour

The Youth Information Point in the city of Rotterdam has a youth information bus and the city of Waddinxveen operates the 'JIP/Job' information bus. Occasionally, some information points have a stand at some big events, like Parkpop, Metropolis etc. Some information points are active within office hours on location, for instance schools.

3 Ensuring quality of information

3.1 Please list the places (training centres, universities, etc.) where you can get training and knowledge on youth information

Universities and comparable institutes that offer courses at degree level (BA, MA) concerning youth information.

There are no universities or comparable institutes that offer courses concerning youth information. Within the higher education, some (indirect) attention might be paid to youth information, for instance in courses like Cultural and Social Education (Culturele en Maatschappelijke Vorming) and Social Pedagogical Assistance (Sociaal Pedagogische Hulpverlening).

Recently, the Association of Youth Information Points has launched the 'Jimmy' project, i.e. the 'Youth Information Employee' project. Jimmy is training for professionals who are working with young people. By this training, professionals will be able to answer questions from youth within different fields. In 2008, the training will be given to trainers, while in 2009 the training will be offered to professionals. A 'Jimmy' will get basic training on youth information and a package with reference books. Each professional worker with young people will get the possibility to follow the 'Jimmy training', e.g. tutors, supervisors, project managers etc.

The Kindertelefoon also offers trainings for their volunteers.

3.2 What are the quality standards applied in youth information in your country (e.g. ISO 9000 Series, [ERYICA charter](#), national standards etc.)

There are no national quality standards set by law or any other governmental acts or ISO 9000 series applying to youth information in the Netherlands.

There are quality standards for Youth Information Points, set up by the Association of Youth Information Points to follow the general principles as laid down in the Eryica charter. Each information point which would like to become an association member should meet these criteria. For more information about monitoring them see point 3.3.

The Association has got different subdivisions, i.e. criteria for becoming a Youth Information Point A, B or C. Youth Information Point C is the minimum. This information point could settle in e.g. a school, library or community centre. There is a broad supply of up-to-date information and the information point is accessible for each young person. A few hours per week, a professional information and advice employee is present. Information is freely available by brochure shelves during the remaining hours. The minimum functions for a Youth Information Point C are providing information, education, advice and referring.

Youth Information Point subdivision B can be in either in a library or community centre, or be an independent information point and sometimes part of an umbrella organization. An information point B should have a separate information space, with a broad supply of information by different media. The information point should be open at least 2 daily periods a week, and should have a professional information and advice employee during these times. The minimum functions are the same as subdivision C, and moreover functions like services, consultation and promotion of expertise.

Youth Information Point subdivision A has a broader function with respect to forming a network and the support of exchange. The information point is open 5 daily periods a week. The minimum functions are the same as an information point B.

Eurodesk Netherlands, the European information desk for young people and organisations working with young people, also applies to the Eryica charter. Eurodesk Netherlands is part of the Netherlands Youth institute and partly supported by the Dutch government (ministry for Youth and Families) and partly by the European Commission. In the Netherlands Eurodesk is not part of the youth information field, but makes use of its expertise and infrastructure.

3.3 What existing monitoring systems are there on quality of information dissemination?

Information policy in the Netherlands is a decentralised responsibility. There are no monitoring systems put in place from a governmental origin.

At national level, the Association of Youth Information Points has developed quality criteria for the dissemination of high-quality information and for its youth information services. These are derived from the European Charter of Youth Information. The association will carry out tests in order to see if a certain information point does meet these criteria. Some information points have been tested already, but not all of them. For the time being, this is not obliged. The association's working group 'Quality' tests each Youth Information Point on 12 quality criteria, concerning for instance information free of charge, opening hours, sufficient and suitable information etc. In 2008, 9 Youth Information Points had an official endorsement, although some other information points had been tested but not officially approved. In future, the Association of Youth Information Points would like to develop and oblige this more, although this is by any means no governmental obligation. Information materials and services are regularly tested at the reliability and accessibility by youth themselves, who received trainings to do so. This is organized by the members of the Association themselves. They also have regular on-site visits between each other during which they 'supervise' each other on the basis of the quality criteria for access and professionalization of its services.

4 Participation of young people in information:

- **How are young people participating in the provision and dissemination of information? (list examples)**
- **List the existing legal provisions and structures to enable participation of young people in the provision and dissemination of youth information**

This section focuses on the involvement of young people in information creation and dissemination by the above mentioned information services.

The participation of young people in youth information is important. The same counts for the policy formulation level within central government. The National Youth Council (Nationale Jeugdraad), the main representative body of young people, is an important partner in this respect. The Council is being subsidized, and therefore knowledge from youth to youth is been supported. The network on local level, been maintained by the Youth Council, can use the Council's expertise and peer-to-peer support. The Council is involved in the dissemination of information for and by youth as well.

On different levels, municipalities are active in developing websites (e.g. Jongin websites), at which they involve youngsters by cooperation in the development of those websites. They ask for instance a local youth council for advice.

Some general examples are peer-to-peer information on schools and by trainings. By posters, internet youth is invited to participate in youth information (e.g. Eryica and Eurodesk)

There are no existing legal provisions and structures to enable participation of young people in the provision and dissemination of youth information.