



European youth information  
and counselling agency

## Quality and Professional Information Provision as a Precondition to Young People's Access to Mobility

Daide Capecchi  
ERYICA Director

*European Platform on Learning Mobility  
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# Forewords

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

*‘Children and young people have a right to participate in the decision making processes that are relevant to their lives and a right to influence the decisions made in their regard within the family, school, and community’.*

# Foreword



*“Access to information does not define itself only in terms of access to different technologies and media, but must take into account the nature and type of information youths need for full participation in society”.*

UNESCO – Youth and ICT

# Foreword



*“We live in a **complex society**, that offers so many possibilities and choices. In this society young people need **information** and **assistance** to understand what is available and how they can use the services which exist. Without such assistance, many will not have the **opportunity to live effective lives and contribute to their community.**”*

*We live in an **information era**. While a lot of information is available, it is usually written or presented in a way in which it is **difficult to understand**, and is not always relevant. Moreover, the available information is very **fragmented.**”*

*Willy Faché*

# Young People and YI



**Each individual is unique**

**→ F2F**

**YP are vulnerable**

**→ Professionalism**



# History of YI

Nordic First

**1952, 1954**

YIC opened in Helsinki and Turku

Based on youths needs, run by youth work boards and offices, target group youth, especially internal migrants who moved from countryside to big cities and needed help and support



# History of YI

## 1960

- Youth clubs (ECYC), youth organisations
- Often based on volunteer workers
- Or youth sections of adult organisations
- Youth protection

## 1964

First “generalist” Youth Information and Counselling Centre, created in Ghent (Flanders) by Prof. Willy Faché

## 1965-1970

- JAC (youth advice centres) in Flanders and Netherlands
- JIZ (jugendinformationzentrum) in Germany



# History of YI

## 1969

The “Centre d’Information et de Documentation Jeunesse”

Network of 25 centres throughout France

National survey of young people in 1967 that there was a need for a comprehensive information centre where youngsters “can find information on all possible areas affecting their lives”.

“Centre d’information et de dialogue jeunesse”



# History of YI - Determinants



## 1. The need for specific provisions for young people in problem situations:

- Young People's Consultation Centre in London" in 1961)
- Psychoanalyst, previous experience in work with adolescents; psychiatric social worker; a medical adviser; a psychologist; and a legal adviser
- Adolescents are very frightened
- Opportunity for adolescents simply to come in and talk with somebody → prevention of serious malaise

# History of YI - Determinants



## 2. Criticising the established, traditional assistance for youth

- 1966, Centre for Youth Information and Counseling “Info Jeugd” in Gent
- 1969 the Advice Centre for Young People (Jongerenadviescentrum) in Amsterdam
- Criticism towards the bureaucratic method (waiting lists, by appointment only), the official character of the assistance (start the counselling by asking the person’s name, address, age, daily work, etc.), the psychiatric-medical model of assistance.



# History of YI - Determinants

## 3. An innovative answers to new social problems:

Middle-class youth saw themselves as participants in a cultural revolution rejecting a sterile, excessively consuming, overly technological, and alienating social order (Holleb and Abrams, 1975)



# Some Conclusions

- Observing information is crucial to national networks and report what is changing in societies.
- Preventive actions should be taken from the side of the YIW
- Information overload → educational role of YIC
- Fragmentation of information → critical signposting to information
- Advocacy function → Social Mission of YI
- Strategies for youth information workers: enhance trust
- Networking of centres is very much needed
- Complexity Situation → Complex Solutions

# European Youth Information Charter



- **Professional principles, minimum standards and quality measures.**
- **1993:** 1st version of the European Charter for Youth Information
- **2004:** Revised version of the Charter, including new aspects of Youth Information work:
  - participation of young people
  - use of new technologies

Available in **23 languages**



## European Youth Information Charter

Adopted in Bratislava (Slovak Republic) on 19 November 2004 by the 15th General Assembly of the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA).

### PREAMBLE

In complex societies and in an integrated Europe that offers many challenges and opportunities, access to information and the ability to analyse and use information is increasingly important for young Europeans. Youth information work can help them to achieve their aspirations and can promote their participation as active members of society. Information should be provided in ways that enlarge the choices available to young people, and that promote their autonomy and empowerment.

Respect for democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms implies the right of all young people to have access to complete, objective, understandable and reliable information on all their questions and needs. This right to information has been recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and in the Recommendation N° (98) 7 of the Council of Europe concerning information and counselling for young people in Europe. This right is also the basis for youth information activities undertaken by the European Union.

### INTRODUCTION

Generalist youth information work covers all topics that interest young people, and can include a spectrum of activities: informing, counselling, advising, guiding, supporting, befriending, coaching and training, networking, and referral to specialised services. These activities may be delivered by youth information centres, or through youth information services, in other structures, or using electronic and other media. The principles of this Charter are intended to apply to all forms of generalist youth information work. They constitute a basis for minimum standards and quality measures which should be established in each country as elements of a comprehensive, coherent and co-ordinated approach to youth information work, which is a part of youth policy.

### PRINCIPLES

The following principles constitute guidelines for generalist youth information work, which seeks to guarantee the right of young people to information:

1. Youth information centres and services shall be open to all young people without exception.
2. Youth information centres and services seek to guarantee the equality of access to information for all young people, regardless of their situation, origin, gender, religion, or social category. Special attention should be paid to disadvantaged groups and to young people with specific needs.
3. Youth information centres and services should be easily accessible, without any appointment being required. They should be attractive for young people, with a friendly atmosphere. The operating hours should meet the needs of young people.
4. The information available shall be based on the requests of young people and on their perceived information needs. It should cover all topics that could interest young people, and should evolve in order to cover new topics.
5. Each user shall be respected as an individual and the response to each question shall be personalised. This shall be done in a way that empowers users, promotes the exercise of their autonomy, and develops their capacity to analyse and use information.
6. Youth information services shall be free of charge.
7. Information is given in a way that respects both the privacy of users and their right not to reveal their identity.
8. Information is provided in a professional manner by staff trained for this purpose.
9. The information offered is complete, up-to-date, accurate, practical and user-friendly.
10. Every effort is made to ensure the objectivity of the information provided through the pluralism and verification of the sources used.
11. The information offered shall be independent of any religious, political, ideological or commercial influence.
12. Youth information centres and services shall strive to reach the largest possible number of young people, in ways that are effective and appropriate to different groups and needs, and by being creative and innovative in their choice of strategies, methods and tools.
13. Young people shall have the opportunity to participate, in appropriate ways, in different stages of youth information work, at local, regional, national and international levels. These can include, among others: identifying information needs, the preparation and delivery of information, managing and evaluating information services and projects and peer group activities.
14. Youth information centres and services shall co-operate with other youth services and structures, especially in their geographical area, and shall network with intermediaries and other bodies that work with young people.
15. Youth information centres and services shall help young people both to access information provided via modern information and communication technologies, and to develop their skills in using them.
16. Each source of funding for youth information work should not act in any way that prevents a youth information centre or service from applying all the principles of this Charter.

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# EYIC



4. The information available shall be based on the requests of young people and on their perceived information needs. It should cover all topics that could interest young people, and should evolve in order to cover new topics.
5. Each user shall be respected as an individual and the response to each question shall be personalised. This shall be done in a way that empowers users, promotes the exercise of their autonomy, and develops their capacity to analyse and use information.

# Principles for Online YI



1. Online Youth Information shall be accurate, up to date and verified. The date when it was produced or updated shall be clearly mentioned.
2. The content shall be based on the needs of young people. Those needs have to be identified and evaluated in an ongoing process.
3. The content shall be a selection of relevant, free of charge information that provides an overview of different options available. The applied selection criteria must be made public and understandable.
4. Online Youth Information shall be understandable for young people and presented in an attractive way for them.
5. Online Youth Information services shall be operable for all, especially taking into account users and groups with specific needs.



# State of Art



**Youth Information Centres:** 7,422 (Youth Information and Counselling Centres, Youth Information Points and a specialised online services)

**Top Five Topics:** Education and training; youth mobility; employment; volunteering; leisure time

**Most used Methods:** Fliers; emails; Info stands; brochures, face-to-face; social media; workshops; websites; peer-to-peer



# State of Art

**Quality Standards:** 83% of YIC

**Evaluation:** Surveys among young people; feedback from stakeholders; face-to-face talks with youths; collaboration with research institutions; focus groups; specially designed Youth Advice Outcomes Toolkits; official national surveys.

# State of Art



Most important developments in the past 5 years:

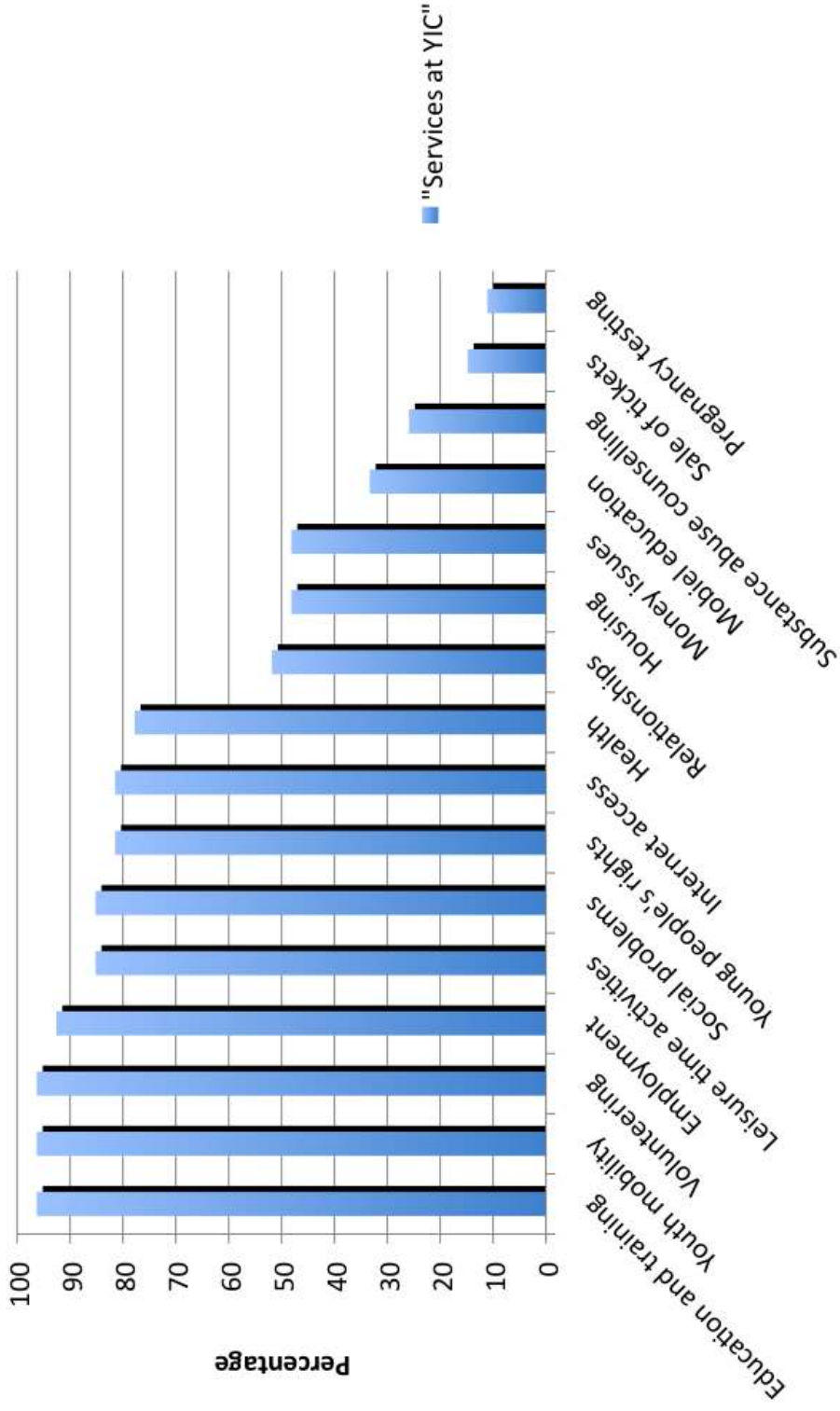
- the increasing professionalisation of Youth Information, with strong emphasis on training, implementation of networks and quality standards;
- the growing importance of Internet and new communication technologies for Youth Information provision;
- focus on quality, including sound management of resources;

# State of Art

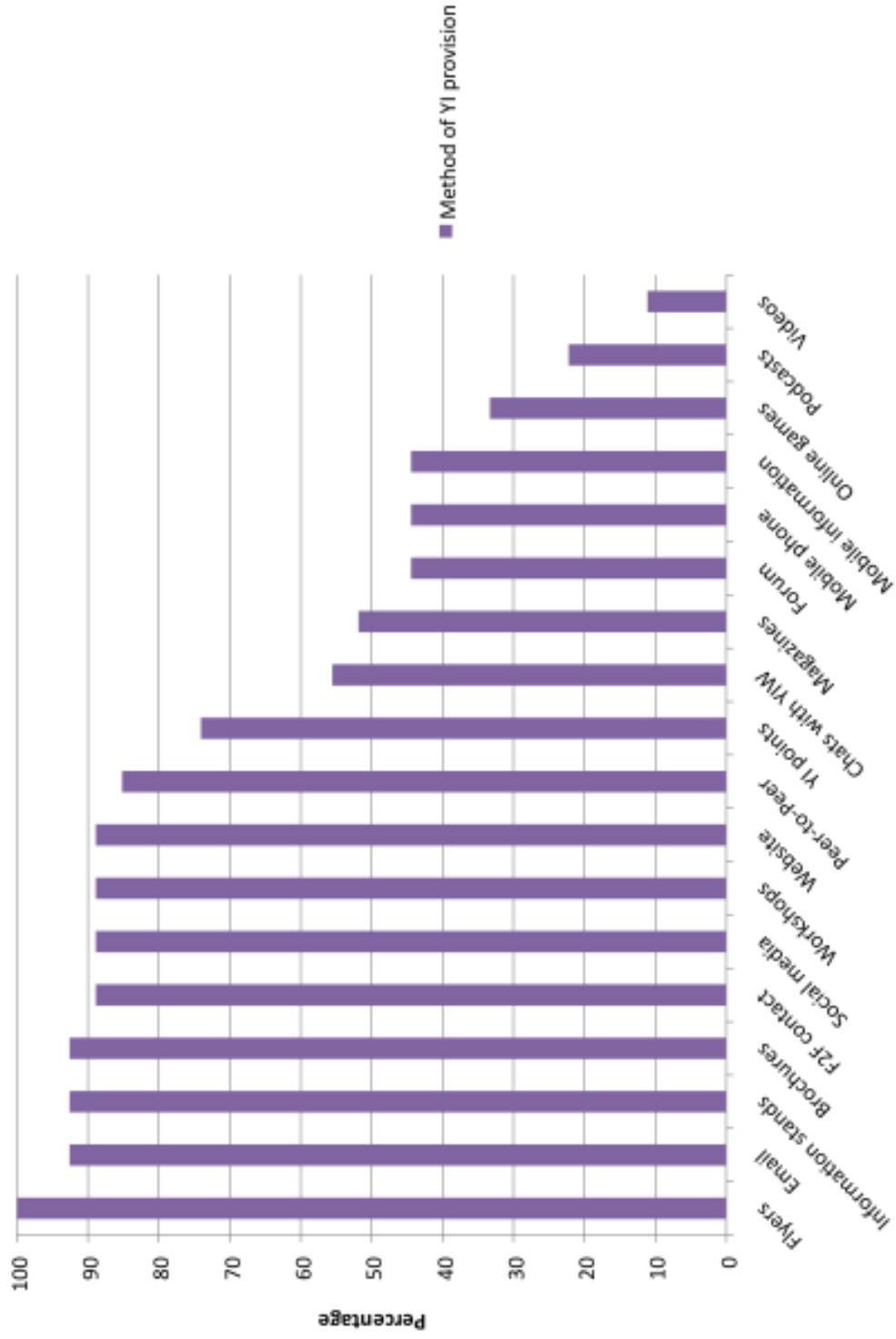


- enhancement of outreach, especially by using new media, interactive tools and running activities where the youths are;
- set up of and following quality standards;
- establishment of umbrella bodies/networks unifying regional partners on a national basis;
- developing peer-to-peer activities, involving young people that are supported, coached and tutored step by step by professional youth information workers.

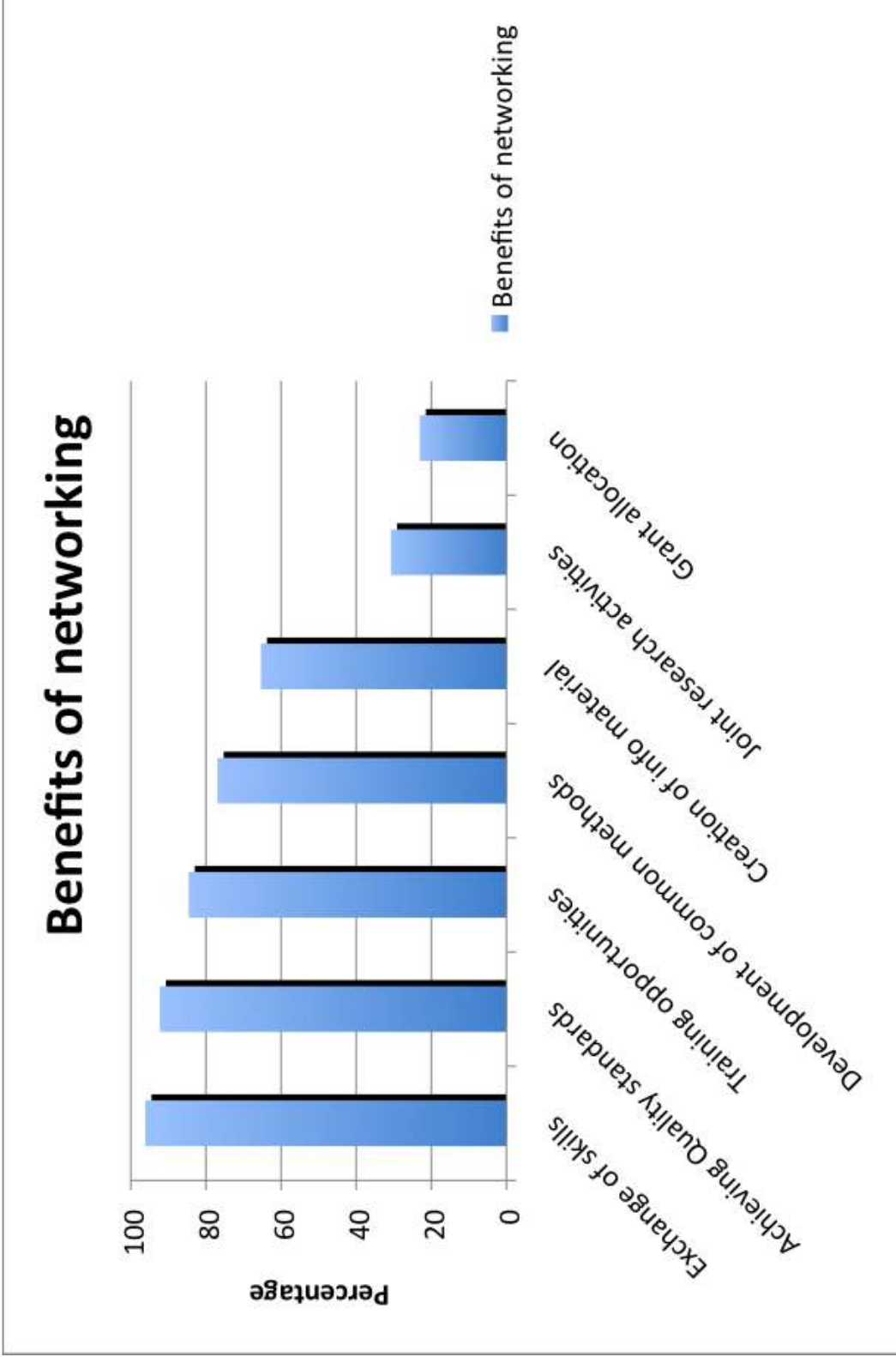
## "Services offered at YIC"



## Method of YI provision











# Reference Documents

## **Recommendation (90)7: “Concerning Information and Counselling for Young People in Europe”**

*The Committee of Ministers... recommends that the governments of member states [...] foster and support the creation and/or development of appropriate information and counselling services [and] support the development of a European network of information and counselling services for young people;*



# Reference Documents

**White Paper:** “A new Impetus for European Youth”  
2001:

*“Information is indispensable to developing active citizenship, and it continues to be an area from which young people expect a great deal: they are aware that the areas to be covered are very broad (employment, working conditions, housing, studies, health, etc.) and go further than information on Community programmes, so their expectations firstly concern recognition that there is a need to be met”.*



# Reference Documents

Congress of Local and Reg. Authorities of Europe:

“Revised **European Charter** on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life”, 21 May 2003:

*“Local and regional authorities should **support and improve existing information and counselling centres for young people**, in order to ensure that they provide services of quality that meet the needs expressed by young people. Where such centres do not exist, local and regional authorities and other relevant actors should promote and assist the creation of adequate information services for young people”;*



# Reference Documents

## **2010 Council of Europe Recommendation (8) “On Youth Information”:**

- *consolidate and develop existing youth information and counselling services on the basis of Recommendation No. R (90) 7;*
- *foster and strengthen the generalist and multi-agency character of youth information and counselling services, as being complementary to specialised services for young people;*
- *ensure that young people have access to and benefit from information by adapting the many forms and channels of youth information to the needs of all young people;*

# Reference Documents



**EU Council Res. 27/11/2009: “On a renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)”:**

*The following general initiatives should be considered in all the fields of action identified: [...] Providing quality guidance and counselling services; Improving access to quality youth information and disseminating information through all possible channels at local, regional, national level, as well as through Europe-wide organisations such as Eurodesk, EYCA and ERYICA.*

# Referrals



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# Training Activities

ERYICA considers the **training** of staff working in youth information centres as part of its **core mission**. In this way ERYICA seeks to establish a **network of certified trainers** to **establish quality standards** in youth information work and to continuously enhance them.

- **YIntro** – Stepping into Youth Information
- **Digital YIntro** Additional Module
- **Jimmy** – Youth Information Mediator
- **YIntro Advanced** Module (under preparation)
- **Webbie** Workshop

## ERYICA training system

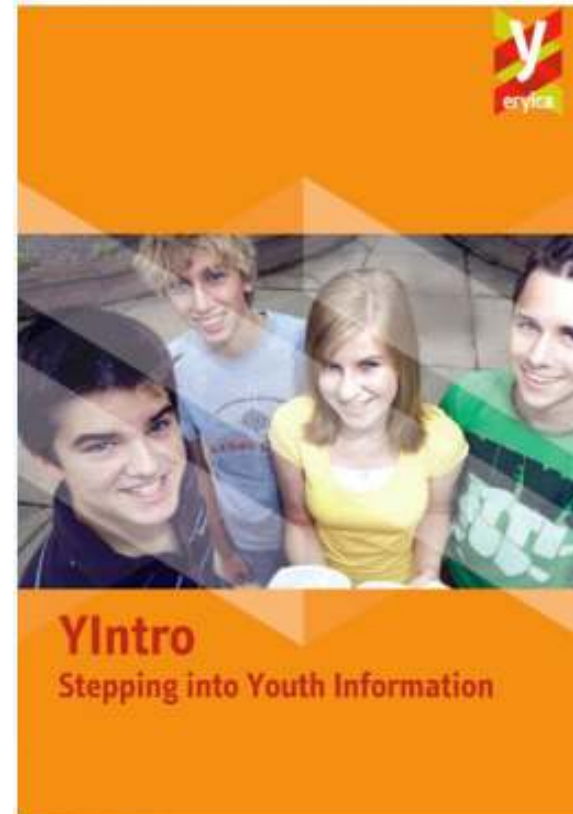


# YIntro



## General learning outcomes

- an awareness of the basic key principles and background of youth information work
- an understanding of the basic methods used to deliver youth information work in practice
- an awareness of the skills, values, responsibilities and individual role of the youth information worker
- a clear action plan for future implementation based on the reflective self-evaluation exercises undertaken





## **Area 1: Background and Principles of Youth Information**

- Session 1.1: Defining the Key Terms in Youth Information
- Session 1.2: Principles of Youth Information
- Session 1.3: Development of Youth Information
- Session 1.4: Presentation of the present Youth Information structures

## **Area 2: Youth Information in Practice**

- Session 2.5: Identifying information needs of young people
- Session 2.6.: Searching for information and sources of information
- Session 2.7: Selecting quality information
- Session 2.8: Organising your Youth Information
- Session 2.9: Creating and designing Youth Information products
- Session 2.10: Getting information to young people

## **Area 3: The Art of Working with Young People in a Youth Information Setting**

- Session 3.11: Forms of Intervention
- Session 3.12: Skills of a Youth Information Worker
- Session 3.13: Attitudes and values of a Youth Information Worker

## **Area 4: Continuous Professional Development in Youth Information Work**

- Session 4.14: Monitoring and evaluation
- Session 4.15: Networking
- Session 4.16: Promotion of Youth Information services and products
- Session 4.17: Self-evaluation and action plan

# Digital YIntro



## **Aims of Digital Youth Information – additional module to the YIntro:**

- to introduce relevant areas, competences and skills within Digital Youth Information;
- to offer a basic course on specific skills and tasks when working with young people in digital environments;
- to enhance a common quality framework within the ERYICA network;
- to promote the ERYICA Webbies Workshop and the booklet on “Safety and Quality in Online Youth Information” and motivate Youth Information Workers to actively use it.



# Advanced YIntro



## Aims of the Advanced YIntro:

- to further develop the professional skills of Youth Information Workers;
- to introduce diverse and participatory youth information delivery methods;
- to introduce the managerial aspect and strategic planning behind youth information services;
- to provide continuous professional development for experienced Youth Information Workers;
- to enhance a common quality framework within the ERYICA-Network.



# Jimmy



## **Learning outcomes**

By the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- understand what youth information is;
- see the importance of youth information for the development and empowerment of young people;
- understand the link between youth information and youth work;
- understand how to use practical youth information skills and qualities in their role as a youth worker;
- be aware of resources and networks that can support their work;
- establish partnership with their closest youth information centre, leading to potential links with regional, national and international networks;
- gain basic knowledge on the key issues and current information needs of young people.

## Overarching goal

- to innovate and to enhance youth work whilst fostering synergies between and maximisation of impact of the main actors in the field of youth information and counselling, paying special regard to cross-border European mobility
- **Duration: 1 February 2013 – 30 May 2014**



# Specific objectives 1

- to define quality standards for youth information on cross-border European mobility;
- to analyse the information needs of young people prospectively or currently on mobility and innovate the content of provision on the basis of such analysis;
- to design and implement innovative methods for the practice of youth information and counselling on cross-border mobility;
- to encourage the involvement of young mobile people in the host community and to connect them with local peers;
- to provide information and guidance on opportunities of social and professional engagement in the host country;



## Specific objectives 2

- to seek synergy and streamline the work of different actors in the field;
- to increase and maximise the impact of existing youth support structures in the field of youth information;
- to support young mobile people focussing on their real and perceived needs, and help them analyse those needs along with their expectations, in order to optimise their stay abroad;
- to increase employability and spirit of enterprise of all young people;
- to test the feasibility, effectiveness and impact of a permanent network of information and counselling services supporting young people



# Activities



## 3 pillars:

- Establishment of **Youth on the Move – InfoMobility** (YoMIM) network;
- Elaboration of quality standards and guidelines for youth information practice in the field of youth mobility: **EURYICA**;
- Design and provision of **training** for the YoMIM officers and enhancement of the existing training offer.

# Youth Information Starter's Kit



**A project jointly realised with the Council of Europe**

The Youth Information Starter's Kit is an **essential tool** that is meant for newcomers to the field of Youth Information.

It contains the following information:

- **How to create a Youth Information Centre**
- **Guidelines & Principles**
- **Practical information**
- **Contacts, networks...**

Available in English, French, German

# Information Right Now! Campaign



## **Preparatory Meeting**

- EYC, Strasbourg 2-5.10.2011
- 20 participants from Austria, Scotland, The Netherlands, France, FYROM, Greece, Croatia, Montenegro, Hungary, Sweden, Switzerland, Belarus, Sweden, Belgium, Malta, Slovenia, Turkey, Luxembourg, Spain.

# Information Right Now! Competition Winners Trip



- Over 100 pictures were entered
- Facebook photo competition between 17th May and 31st August 2012
- All under the theme and slogan of the campaign: young people are asking.



# Information Right Now! Competition Winners Trip



The winners were Bojan Mirceski Prilep and Marta

They were awarded with a two-day trip to one of the European Youth Centres.

The winning pictures:





# THANK YOU

For more information please visit  
us at:

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