



ERYICA Strategy 2018-2023 (Approved by 29th General Assembly)

What is ERYICA?

The **European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA)** is an independent European organisation, composed of national and regional youth information coordination bodies and networks. It works to intensify European and international cooperation in the field of youth information work and services.

ERYICA makes youth information work visible on local, national and international levels, and provides its members with opportunities for **professional development, exchange and innovation**.

Vision:

ERYICA believes in a society where all young people have access to **youth friendly, reliable and comprehensive information**, which promotes their autonomy, wellbeing and active citizenship in a global and digitalised world.

Mission:

To **inspire, support and develop** youth information and counselling in Europe and beyond.

Strategic Directions:

As part of its Strategic Plan 2018-2023, we identify four **Strategic Directions**, which aim to support young people's access to quality youth information and counselling services.

This Strategic Plan will also ensure a clear definition of each **annual Work Programme**, a more structured implementation and monitoring of activities and services, as well as measurable and comparable **Activity Reports**. This Strategy is supported by a Communication Plan.

Values:

The values promoted by ERYICA and our principles for generalist youth information work are described in the European Youth Information Charter.

Strategic Directions:

1. Research, Trends and Innovation

This strategic direction aims to encourage **evidence-based policy-making and practice**. Youth information and counselling services need to explore innovative ways to empower young people by seizing the opportunities offered by **emerging trends and new media**.

Youth information services need to be up-to-date and familiar with progressive and innovative practices, research outcomes and communication technologies in order to ensure their quality and effective outreach to young people. It is in this context that ERYICA seeks to:

- 2.1 **Disseminate and endorse research and studies** on how young people communicate, participate, inform themselves and use digital tools and environments;
- 2.2 Raise awareness on **trends and opportunities** of emerging communication technologies and media to make youth information visible and accessible;
- 2.3 Support youth information services as **proactive players** in the media and information landscape; and
- 2.4 Stimulate the provision of **innovative services** in order to meet the information needs of young people and to reach them where they are.

Expected impact:

- > Members are aware of the latest issues impacting young people and use this information to better meet their information needs;
- > Members are innovative and creative in their choice of strategies, methods and tools to reach, engage and inform young people; and
- > Members provide youth information and counselling in ways that are accessible, visible and appropriate to different groups and needs.

2. Capacity building

Youth information workers and others working directly with young people shall be **adequately skilled and resourced** in order to support young people in a professional manner. The exchange of good practices and the participation in training activities are milestones in the provision of quality youth information services. Youth information work shall likewise support young people in **their own search for accurate and reliable information**. It must provide them with the necessary skills to act as responsible and active citizens. This strategic direction aims to:

- 1.1 Strengthen opportunities for **training and upgrading skills** of new and experienced youth information workers;
- 1.2 Facilitate collaboration among members based on shared interests and frameworks, such as **peer learning activities**, exchange of **best practices**, **working groups**, and common projects;
- 1.3 Promote **media and information literacy** among young people and their effective involvement in youth information activities; and
- 1.4 Provide **innovative tools and resources** for youth information workers.

Expected impact:

- The ERYICA capacity-building and training system successfully meets the needs of youth information workers;
- Youth information workers are continuously trained and upskilled;
- Youth information workers use innovative tools and resources to address the current and future challenges and opportunities encountered by young people;
- Members are equipped to reach out to young people from disadvantaged groups and those at risk of social exclusion; and
- Members are proactive in enhancing young people's attitudes and skills that enable them to consciously and critically assess information.

3. Quality and youth information ethics

Quality and ethics are fundamental aspects of youth work in general, and of youth information and counselling in particular. Youth information services operate on a human rights-based approach in their daily work. At the same time, quality youth information work enhances **young people's autonomy** by supporting their critical assessment of information and media outlets. This strategic direction seeks to frame youth information practices within a set of **ethical principles and guidelines** and to provide **quality assessment mechanisms** in a complex and changing environment. Based on this approach, it is our strategy to:

- 3.1 Promote ethical and quality practices aiming to guarantee **young people's accessing their rights** through reliable, comprehensive and clear information;
- 3.2 Provide a **European Youth Information Charter** adapted to the needs of today's youth;
- 3.3 Strengthen existing **quality tools** and encourage our members to further develop and apply **quality management mechanisms** and resources;
- 3.4 Design a **competency development framework** for youth information workers; and
- 3.5 Devise a **European quality label** for youth information.

Expected impact:

- The European Youth Information Charter is fit for purpose;
- A European quality label ensures confidence in youth information and supports young people accessing youth information;
- A competencies and skills framework for youth information workers is (further) implemented; and
- Members increase their use of quality assessment tools and resources.

4. Co-operation and Policy Advocacy

This strategic direction aims to reinforce and deepen our cooperation with different international, national and regional institutions and partner organisations, while improving the coordination across sectors and at different levels. Our collaboration will be based on the endorsement of common policy goals, as well as the development of concrete projects and activities in priority areas. We will also seek to establish new strategic synergies, that aim to mainstream youth information and to reach out to more young people. Bearing this in mind, ERYICA shall strive to:

- 4.1. Ensure **policy advocacy** and the **visibility of youth information** at regional, national and international level;
- 4.2. Reinforce strategic collaboration with European and international **governmental** and **non-governmental organisations** in areas of common interest;
- 4.3. Explore new prospects for collaboration with **other sectors and policy areas** affecting young people in view of mainstreaming youth information;
- 4.4. Develop into an efficient and effective European **network of experts**, trainers, practitioners, political representatives, and other key players; and
- 4.5. Support the development of youth information and counselling services in **countries** where we have no members.

Expected impact:

- Policy makers recognise youth information services as a channel to support young people accessing their rights and as a key channel for them to realise their policy goals;
- Members are aware and involved in key policy-making processes and consultations at the European and international level;
- Policies affecting young people at different levels incorporate youth information and counselling;
- Existing cooperation with European governmental organisations, stakeholders in the youth field, and partner youth information networks is strengthened;
- New strategic partnerships are established with international governmental organisations and other sectors of activity;

- The expertise of ERYICA and its members is acknowledged and involved in key policy-making processes; and
- Youth information and counselling services are established in countries where they previously did not exist and the ERYICA network is expanded.

PR & Communication Goals

Efficient communication is key for the ERYICA members to stay updated and informed about the network's activities and opportunities. It is also a requisite for promoting youth information and counselling vis-à-vis our stakeholders. Raising visibility of ERYICA also means contributing to the visibility of our members.

In the framework our communication strategy, ERYICA will continue to explore new ways to smooth the path of the information flow between the Secretariat, the Governing Board and our members and with our stakeholders at different levels. In order to increase the effectiveness and relevance of our communication activities, our communication strategy will seek to:

1. Use our **communication tools and channels** to make the network more visible to our members and stakeholders;
2. Ensure that our **members are well informed** about the resources and opportunities made available to them by ERYICA;
3. Establish a more **effective and targeted communication** with our members;
4. Professionalise the communication by better **resourcing and training the staff**;
5. Expand the network by **attracting new members**.

Expected impact:

- The communication tools and mechanisms developed under the communication strategy are implemented;
- ERYICA and its members are more visible to external stakeholders;
- Members are aware and see the added value of the opportunities and services offered to them;
- The information and services provided are targeted and adapted to the needs and interests of individual members;
- The Secretariat is well staffed and equipped to ensure efficient communication and services;
- The work of the Governing Board is visible and reaches out to the network;
- Structures are put in place to collect information from the network on different areas of work and expertise; and
- The network membership is satisfied with the services provided and expanded.