ERYICA
Strategy 2018-2023

Approved by 29th General Assembly
Reviewed by 31st 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.**

OUR 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.
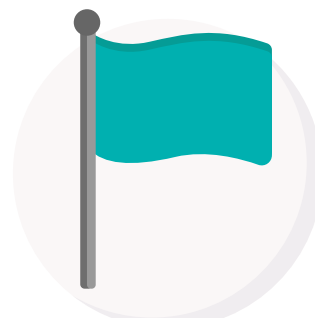
OUR MISSION

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

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

Capacity-Building | Research, Trends & Innovation | Quality & Youth Info Ethics | Policy Advocacy & Cooperation

PR & Communication

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.

1. Capacity building

Youth information workers and others working directly with young people shall be **adequately skilled and resourced** 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 and trainers;
> 1.2   Facilitate collaboration among members based on shared interests and frameworks, such as **peer learning activities**, exchange of **best practices, working groups**, and **joint projects**;
> 1.3   Promote **media and information literacy** among young people and their effective involvement in youth information activities; and
> 1.4   Provide **innovative online and offline tools and resources** for youth information workers.
> 1.5 Offer capacity-building opportunities and resources to promote **greener youth information services** and the **UN Sustainable Development Goals**.

Expected impact:

> · The ERYICA capacity-building and training system successfully meets the needs of youth information workers and strengthens youth information work at different levels;
> · Youth information workers are continuously trained and upskilled through online, offline, and blended learning methods;
> · 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;
> · Members are equipped to establish environmental sustainability objectifs and work towards the Sustainable Development Goals; and
> · Members are proactive in enhancing young people's attitudes and skills that enable them to consciously and critically assess information.

2. 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 applying user-centered service design methods and seizing **digital transformation opportunites, emerging trends** and **new media**.

Youth information services need to be up-to-date and knowledgeable about progressive and innovative practices, trends, research outcomes and communication technologies in order to ensure their **quality and effective outreach and engagement of** 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, as well as on capacity-building needs of youth information providers;

2.2 Raise awareness on **trends and opportunities** of emerging communication technologies and media to make youth information more visible, accessible and attractive;

2.3 Support youth information services as **proactive players** in the constantly changing digital media and information landscape;

2.4 Stimulate the provision of **innovative services based on user-centered methods** to meet the changing needs of young people and to reach them where they are, and to rapidly adapt to challenging circumstances; and

2.5 Promote the **effective involvement of young people** in the development and provision of youth information services.

Expected impact:

· Members are aware of the latest issues impacting young people and use this information to better meet their current and future information and support needs;

· Members are innovative and creative in their choice of strategies, methods and tools to design their services and to reach, engage and inform young people; and

· Members provide youth information and counselling in ways that are accessible, visible and appropriate ways to different groups and needs.

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 and the main societal challenges;

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 promote the recognition of youth information workers;

3.5 Develop a communication strategy to promote the **European youth information quality label**;

3.6 Promote accessibility principles in the provision of youth information, both in physical spaces and online.

3.7 Promote **environmental sustainability** and the **UN Sustainable Development Goals** in the youth information field and recognise member organisations who have committed to sustainability targets; and

3.8. Establish Green Policy for ERYICA.

· 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 developed and implemented;

· The European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) classification includes the definition of "Youth information worker" in different languages;

· Members increase their use of quality assessment tools and resources;

· ERYICA will increasingly take into account the EU accessibility directive and promote it among our Members;

· The ERYICA core documents and policies refer to environmental sustainability, green practices, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals;

· The ERYICA Green Policy is implemented and its targets are achieved; and

· Members' strategies establish environmental sustainability objectives and work towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

4. Co-operation and Policy Advocacy

This strategic direction aims to reinforce and deepen our cooperation with different international, national, regional and local institutions and partner organisations, while improving the coordination across sectors and at different levels. Our collaboration will be based on the endorsement of shared policy goals and the development of concrete projects and activities common 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 local, regional, national and international level;

4.2. Reinforce strategic collaboration with European and international **governmental** and **non-governmental** organisations on youth-related issues and other 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 youth information is not at the core of youth policies and where ERYICA has no representation; and

4.6. Advocate for greener European youth programmes and policies.

Expected impact:

· Policy makers recognise youth information services as a tool 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 youth-related sectors of activity;
· The expertise of ERYICA and its members is acknowledged and involved in strategic policy-making and development processes;
· Youth information and counselling services are recognised and established in countries where they previously were not supported, and the ERYICA network is expanded; and
· European youth programmes and policies include environmental sustainability.

5. 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.