

**DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION OF THE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT
BETWEEN ERYICA AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE
IN 2019**

1. European Youth Information Quality Label

The ever-growing array of information that young people have access to today through different media, might become misleading and harmful for those who are not skilled enough to sift through the deluge of information available, or do not have access to reliable sources of information in the first place. In a post-truth era where modern propaganda and complot theories are fed by disinformation, populism, fake news, hate speech and “alternative facts”; identifying reliable, complete and unbiased information has become a real challenge for many. In this context, any mechanism designed to help citizens, and especially young citizens, to easily recognise trustworthy sources and to critically scrutinize the information that reaches them in mass are essential.

According to the study published by Abo Akademi University and ERYICA in May 2018, “Future Youth Information and Counselling: Building on information needs and trends”, around 50% of the users and non-users of youth information services believe a lot of information they access is unnecessary and irrelevant. Additionally, over half of the respondents underlined that the information they use is not always complete and reliable. Almost half of the respondents voiced difficulties in evaluating the reliability of the information they access. Moreover, 55% expressed they would like sources where information does not require a further verification.

The questionable legitimacy of information leads young people into a dilemma in selecting reliable sources of information that could be used to make positive decisions (Koltay 2011; Schellenbarger 2016). Youth information builds on the fact that it is not possible to make a sound decision or to participate in society without being informed about one’s options, opportunities, and rights. In the absence of reliable information, young people can be easily misled and negatively influenced in their life choices, opinion formulation, and the ability to exercise their active citizenship and rights. Visibility and access to youth information and counselling services must be ensured in the era of mass information, especially for young people who are currently outside the boundary of the service.

In April 2018, the General Assembly of ERYICA approved in Cascais a new European Youth Information Charter and ERYICA Strategic Plan for 2018-2023. Both documents highlight the challenges faced by young people when it comes to addressing the overload of information and the need of ensuring the quality and visibility of youth information and counselling services. The Strategy goes further and underlines the necessity of creating a European Youth Information Quality Label easy to recognise by young people, based on their needs and on the principles of the European Youth Information Charter.

In this context and in the framework of its partnership with the Council of Europe, ERYICA would proposes to work on the development of a European Youth Information Quality Label designed for and with young people and linked to a set of quality assessment criteria, mechanisms and tools. ERYICA believes that such an initiative cannot be undertaken unilaterally; it must rather be part of a broader development process involving young people and key actors in the European youth sector. The support of the Council of Europe is indeed essential for its success and its European dimension. Furthermore, the Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres is a

good practice example when it comes to establishing a quality label at the European level based on quality criteria, principles, indicators and assessment methods. Thus, it is wise to build on this experience and to explore the possibility of linking both labels.

Milestones of the action

- **Kick-off meeting:** Setting up of a Working Group on the European Youth Information Quality Label
- **Data collection** and desk research: Report
- **Mapping of YI** services in Europe
- **Open dialogue** with youth information providers across Europe and involving different stakeholders: 2 days up to 40 representatives from youth sector
- **Working Group Meeting:**
 - o Criteria for acquiring the label
 - Eligibility criteria
 - Additional criteria
 - o Application procedure and label award
 - Quality assessment methods and tools
 - Link with the Council of Europe Quality Label for Youth Centres
 - o Maintenance and renewal of the label
- **Label design**
 - o Use and display of the label

References

Koltay, T. (2011). *The media and the literacies: media literacy, information literacy, digital literacy*. *Media, Culture & Society*, 33(2), 211-221.

Schellenbarger, S. (2016). *Most students don't know when news is fake, Stanford study finds*. *Wall Street Journal*, Nov. 21, 2016. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/most-students-dont-know-when-news-is-fake-stanford-study-finds-1479752576>

2. Dissemination activities for Liaisons and other publications

The proposed activities under the partnership between ERYICA and the Council of Europe in 2019 also involved the promotion and dissemination of the manual LIAISONS throughout Europe.

Some examples of events where the manual was promoted:

- o ERYICA General Assembly and other events of ERYICA;
- o European Youth Card Association (EYCA) General Assembly;
- o Eurodesk General Assemblies;
- o Multiplier events of the 3 networks listed above;
- o Events organised at local, regional and national level organised by ERYICA members and stakeholders;

- ERYICA youth ambassador events;
- Relevant events organised by the European Youth Forum;
- Relevant events organised by National Youth Councils;
- The European Youth Event (EYE);
- Relevant events organised by the Council of Europe;
- The University on Youth and Development (UYD) of the North-South Centre;
- Mediterranean University on Youth and Global Citizenship (North-South Centre);
- Events organised by the European Commission and/or the EU-CoE youth partnership;
- Events organised by UNESCO;
- The Global Week on Media and Information Literacy and GAPMIL events;
- Relevant events organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat in the field of youth;
- Related events organised by the European Association of Youth Clubs;
- Relevant events organised by Ministries at national or regional level;
- Relevant events organised by National Agencies;
- Relevant events organised by other stakeholders, such as the European Forum for Urban Security or the European Social Network.

In order to achieve a wider promotion of LIAISONS, a number of meetings took place between the ERYICA staff, ERYICA representatives, governmental representatives from the Council of Europe member states, youth organisations, and organisations interested in youth information and youth radicalisation issues.

ERYICA used its wide-reaching online presence to disseminate the manual, through social media channels (such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram), emails, the ERYICA website and newsletter, as well as publications such as the ERYICA annual report, which is also diffused online. Such a wide array of channels permitted to reach a large audience of stakeholders from all over Europe.