



Partnership between ERYICA and the Council of Europe Grant Agreement between the Council of Europe and ERYICA for 2026 Concept Note

Introduction

The 28 years of Partnership between ERYICA and the Council of Europe has led to several established practices and tools. The European Youth Information Quality Label has become a recognised concept and praxis; trainings and publications have been on the agenda for several years. In this understanding, the proposed work programme for 2026 builds on these solid foundations:

- Continuing to advance and strategically support the promotion and the implementation of the European Youth Information Quality Label;
- Providing eLearning opportunities, enabling youth (information) workers and youth sector professionals to enhance their skills and expertise by completing the Advanced YIntro translation and delivering the eLearning course;
- Promoting and developing youth information and counselling services in recognition of their 40 years of networked presence in Europe;
- Promoting recognised ERYICA-CoE Partnership resources and CoE youth policy tools and documents.

These initiatives underscore our commitment to promoting excellence in youth information and strengthening the network of dedicated professionals who support young people throughout Europe.

Besides, ERYICA also commits to support the Council of Europe priorities and enhance the visibility of the Council of Europe Youth Sector activities, through raising awareness about CoE youth policy and promoting such documents and initiatives.

In view of the existential threat to the democratic fabric in Europe posed by (state) propaganda, targeted disinformation campaigns and the exponential spread of the AI-generated misinformation, ERYICA and the Council of Europe should declare their firm intention to strategically strengthen the resilience of young people. The claim 'Information you can trust' is more urgent today than ever before and forms the basis for all joint measures. ERYICA has already committed itself to prioritising media and information literacy as a critical key competence, thereby ensuring that young people have access to reliable, quality-assured sources of information even in a rapidly changing information ecosystem.



The proposed deliverables for 2026 support these ambitions in the following ways:

Quality standardisation: The urgency of action is addressed by the continuation and dissemination of the European Youth Information Quality Label, as this represents a recognised standard in youth information and builds trust.

Competence development: The threat of disinformation makes the training of professionals imperative. This will be supported by the completion and implementation of the Advanced YIntro eLearning course in 2026 to deepen expertise at a more abstract level.

Future strategy: The threat posed by the changing information ecosystem (information overload, digital media, literacy gaps) will be addressed through planned seminars and events aimed at developing future-oriented strategies and actionable recommendations.

The practical proposals are detailed below.

European Youth Information Quality Label

The [Quality Label](#) is probably the most visible and recognised achievement in the long history of the CoE-ERYICA Partnership. The Label has been developed in this framework over two years, and the first applications were open in 2021. By today, the Label has not only become an established quality tool in youth information and counselling across Europe but also a recognised standard that serves as a point of reference outside the ERYICA network as well. It has been mentioned in the Final Declaration of the 10th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth as one of the tools that “should remain priorities for the Council of Europe youth policy and action in the coming years.”

With 15 organisations in 12 countries carrying the sign, the Quality Label has become a well-established convention. Its Task Force, comprising 10 people, is guiding the process stably, under the coordination of the ERYICA Secretariat. Two countries (Ireland and Lithuania) are disseminating the Label on national level too, resulting in a wider outreach and increased recognition. The Walloon region in Belgium is to follow suit in 2026. Besides assessing applications for the Label, the Task Force is also conducting 3-year reviews of the Label holders.

In this context, continuing the operation of the European Youth Information Quality Label will proceed with the following actions:

- Organise two application periods per year and two info-sessions per year to inform potential applicants and answer possible questions;
- Allow the European Quality Label Task Force to meet twice a year, once face-to-face and once online;



- Support the Quality Label administration by establishing Labelling Agreements, certification, organising an awarding ceremony, producing visuals and prizes for awarded applicants (design and printing/promotion), and maintaining a database of the Label holders;

- Follow the communication and dissemination strategy of the Quality Label; and at the end of the year, launch the call for the next 3-year mandate of the Task Force.

Providing eLearning opportunities – Advanced YIntro

Started in 2025 but only half finished due to budgetary constraints, the translation of the [Advanced YIntro](#) eLearning course shall be finalised in 2026. The translation shall be followed by a delivery of the course within the same year, which will be open to youth information workers from all the Council of Europe member States.

Training does not only provide continuous professional development and gives the opportunity to improve youth information and counselling services but also serves as a highly important quality assurance tool. It ensures that a young person receives the same level of service by trained professionals, no matter in which country young people live or enter a youth information centre. The course also brings an added value towards digital transformation and media and information literacy, therefore contributing to the implementation of the Council of Europe's Digital Citizenship Education framework.

The Advanced YIntro course is targeted at experienced Youth Information Workers who aim at further developing their skills and competences, as well as to broadening their youth information expertise on a more abstract level. The course will be delivered on ERYICA's DOYIT eLearning platform.

Future strategy: Mainstreaming youth information and counselling services on the occasion of their 40 years of networked presence in Europe

In 1986, five youth information enthusiasts joined forces and founded a European Youth Information and Counselling Agency, which has grown to today's 42-member ERYICA network. Since then, the information landscape has changed enormously, just like the information consumption habits of young people. It's the age of information overload, when media and information literacy skills are more important than ever. The year 2026 will provide an opportunity for looking back on this legacy and thinking forward to the future: how will youth information services be altered by new challenges and how can they provide the stability that young people expect from them?

An event/seminar could examine youth information and counselling as a profession and as a service, draw conclusions from its past and prepare its advocates and practitioners for the future, in order to remain responsive to young people's needs. One of the topics to discuss would be the maintaining of physical spaces for young people, parallel to the online presence of youth information and counselling services.



The programme would include youth participation elements, e.g. a Youth Advisory Panel or a co-creation session with young professionals. On the other hand, we also intend to invite the “founding fathers” of the network in the frame of a joint event. Besides the CoE-ERYICA Partnership Agreement, it would be co-financed jointly by ERYICA, the eventual host organisation and the Erasmus+ Programme. The event would also serve as a precursor to the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Partnership Agreement between the Council of Europe and ERYICA, in 2027. Sustainability principles will also be considered in the organisation and implementation phases.

In this context, the Joint Co-ordination Committee (19 November 2025) would see this seminar linked (as a separate event or as an integrated part) to the “**Journalists Matter**” CoE Campaign for the Safety of Journalists. This initiative started in 2023 aimed at **promoting media freedom and protect journalists from violence, threats, and harassment** while performing their duties. An event “**Youth Facing Disinformation - Why Journalists Matter**” would be held on 9-10 November 2026 in the EYCS.

Aims and objectives:

- Drawing lessons from history to prepare for the future of youth information and counselling in Europe;
- Examining how the evolving information landscape (information overload, digital media, literacy gaps) affects the profession, and the services young people need;
- Professionalising and mainstreaming youth information and counselling as a recognised, essential public service supported by evidence, standards and advocacy;
- Co-creating forward-looking strategies that address future challenges and opportunities, keeping physical spaces, ensuring stability, accessibility, and relevance for young people;
- Strengthening youth information providers through enhanced collaboration, knowledge exchange, and partnerships with practitioners, policymakers and stakeholders;
- Producing actionable recommendations to advance mainstreaming of youth information services across Europe in 2026 and beyond.



Promotion of CoE-ERYICA partnership resources and CoE youth policy documents

The CoE-ERYICA Partnership has been particularly fruitful for the European youth information and counselling sector. Throughout its duration, valuable resources, including tools, kits and publications, have been developed. Those were translated into several European languages and distributed in different European countries. In 2026, the distribution of already existing resources shall continue. This includes the Liaisons manual, the Youth Information in 2020 booklet, the brochure Ensuring Quality in Youth Information and Counselling, the Compendium on national youth information and counselling structures, the Info-rights Kit, and the Youth Information Starter Kit.

As a new element to this initiative since 2025, ERYICA will raise awareness of tools and resources that promote the Council of Europe youth policy among youth information workers, such as the Youth Perspective process, the Co-management system, the Conference of Ministers of Youth and the CoE instruments including the Recommendation CM/Rec(2024)6 on young people and climate action, and other youth policy documents.

Potentially, the above-mentioned publications may be distributed in the following events:

- Youth information events and working groups;
- ERYICA General Assembly and Network Meeting;
- ERYICA events and ERYICA Members' events;
- European Youth Card Association (EYCA) General Assembly;
- Eurodesk General Assembly;
- Events organised at local, regional and national level organised by youth information and counselling providers;
- Relevant events organised by Ministries at national or regional level;
- Relevant events organised by the Council of Europe;
- Relevant events organised by the European Youth Forum;
- Relevant events organised by National Youth Councils;
- Events organised by the European Commission and/or the EU-CoE youth partnership;
- 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 UNESCO;
- The UNESCO Global Week on Media and Information Literacy;
- Relevant events organised by National Agencies of EU programmes; and
- Any other relevant events that come up over the course of the year.

To ensure the broadest possible dissemination of the above resources and publications, we plan a series of meetings between ERYICA staff, ERYICA members, governmental representatives from the Council of Europe member States, youth organisations, and organisations interested in youth information, youth work and other relevant stakeholders. The aim always remains the efficient support of the ERYICA network for it to continue providing the best possible youth information and counselling services.



Furthermore, ERYICA maintains a dynamic presence on social media (such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn) and the Internet (emails, the ERYICA website and newsletters) as a communication channel. Through it, ERYICA can directly promote youth information publications and reach a large audience of stakeholders from all over Europe.

Conclusion

The Council of Europe and ERYICA have joined forces almost 3 decades ago to commit to empowering young people through quality information, participation, and democratic values. This collaboration is set out to continue in this spirit in the above concept note. The proposed activities and deliverables ensure that these ambitions continue being realised, and no young person is left without access to reliable and empowering information, which is the basis of their active citizenship and informed decision making.