quality management in youth information and counselling

A Competency Development Framework
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Youth in Action

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The range and level of information sources and learning support tools available to young people have increased exponentially. Young people, however, are able to recognise reliable and trustworthy sources of information, particularly where the service provided is professional, user-friendly, solutions oriented, and presented in an inclusive and participative environment that recognises the integrity and value of each young person. Young people feel the need to be involved and to participate in the services supporting them, not only as users but also as active actors.

As information and counselling professional workers, our aim is and must always be to further develop and continuously improve the quality of information services and the support we provide to young people.

The youth field is in a period of transition. There are an increasing number of service providers that are continuously benchmarked in order to gain funds and visibility against a background of increasing demand and scarcity of resources. It is becoming more and more important to showcase and demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of youth services and supports and ensure value for the money invested by private and public donors. Financial constraints and education priorities mean that the non-formal education sector must demonstrate the positive impact of its work with young people, while redoubling its efforts to secure adequate funds and resources. Youth information and counselling is, in turn, precisely complementing formal and non-formal education while ensuring smooth transitions for young people.

We trust that this publication will prove to be both an inspiration and a resource tool. It helps all those involved in youth information services and particularly those providers who work with and for young people in addressing their needs and meeting their aspirations. While helping young people to make informed choices, youth information services are to involve them in youth information work and the quality process from the very starting point.

Sanja Vuković-Čović
President of ERYICA
EURYICA working group has been doing its best to make this publication accessible to all youth information workers in all over the Europe. Therefore there is a reason for a structure of this publication, which consists of main three parts.

Introductory part A sets the theoretical approach to quality management in general and its specificities in the field of youth information. Differences and terms are being clarified there too, so before starting to use the reflection tool in your service please go through this condensed information, which sets the background.

Part B is a template of reflection (assessment) tool for your youth information service. At first the European Youth Information Charter has been grouped into four key areas. Based on them there is a list of criteria and level for assessing, where you are. Afterwards we propose a short template for action planning too. We would like to emphasize, that this is only one of possible ways to assess your work and this is a basis for your adjustments. We hope that the reflection tool will inspire those assessing the youth information work for discussions on quality.

Part C provides the reader with six examples of already functioning quality management systems in Europe. Estonian, Czech, German, French, Irish and Welsh descriptions and translated assessment tools should help you to understand variety of different tools and will you give you the chance to take the best of all of them to create your own instrument. More examples will follow later and will be accessible on the ERYICA website www.eryica.org.

At the very end of this publication you can find a Glossary with main notions that are used in the text so you can easily understand it.

EURYICA is open for your proposals for improvement of this tool and is looking forward to hearing your feedback on the usage of this publication.

EURYICA working group
introduction

quality assurance and improvement – evaluation – assessment – assessment tools
Why do we need Quality?

The answer is simple: quality determines one’s decisions and choices. We want to be satisfied by certain:

- product or
- structure we are involved in or
- service provided to us.

Every day, we judge about the quality of what surrounds us. Either we do this unconsciously, because we have in our mind a (more or less) clear picture on how something should be in order to be considered as good (or best); or expectations on quality of a certain product, structure or service are fixed in a document, to serve us as a tool, which is relevant for almost every sector of our life, e.g. study, work, leisure time, research, trade market and, most certainly, youth information.

What kind of tool can we use to pursue Quality?

We need to produce and then use a document. Such a document is the result of a long-lasting and conscious process of reflection done by an individual or by a group of people. However form the process to produce it may take, such a tool gives us an orientation and helps us to make a sustained decision about the quality of a given service or object. Very often, this tool is structured like a checklist, which means that it consists of a number of certain criteria and indicators that are suitable to measure quality.

What is Quality in general?

There are lots of definitions of Quality. The following one is based on the theory of quality management and is relevant to all areas of life:

Quality is the summary on certain characteristics of a product or service which are necessary to achieve the needed expectations.¹

What does Quality mean in the field of youth information and counselling?

In information and counselling services, the question of quality work is a crucial issue. Quality assurance as part of a quality based system is even more a challenging area. Consider the following example: think of a situation in which young people’s questions are answered by several persons, be it face-to-face or online. In this hypothetical case, the persons called to answer young people’s questions do not have common quality principles for answering, or these principles exist in the practice of the organization they work for, but are not systemized. The young person will then receive different answers, with different approaches, and therefore her sense of confusion will only increase.

To understand how delicate this topic is we give you another hypothetical example: one team member at the youth information center thinks that providing a young person asking for help with an internet address, without providing any further information is an adequate answer, while another team member, instead, collects information from several sources, checks the accuracy of the sources, uses them to draw up a reliable, comprehensive answer to the question and, if necessary, refers the young person asking the question to an appropriate specialist. It is then evident that, in this case, having a tool such as the one presented here can significantly help identifying the best qualitative answer for the young person concerned.

Many youth information and counselling services are already using their own methods and tools to ensure quality in their services. As a rule, quality is not only assessed by guidelines from the organization itself (or from other local, national, European or even international authorities), but mainly by the young person asking the

¹Source: DGQ, Frankfurt/ M., DIN 55350, Teil 11
question. From a quality-analyses point of view, it is reasonable to ask whether young people are put in the
condition to receive as much information as they need and whether the youth information worker concerned
is able to provide information without being explicitly asked. One of the objectives of youth information and
counselling services is young people’s educational assistance and strengthening their social identity. Therefore
quality can also be measured by assessing how the information and counselling provided contributes to attain
these objectives.

Many factors contribute to define quality youth information and counselling, including workers’ expertise
concerning matters related to the life of young people, pedagogical skills, including capability to interacting and
commitment to empowering, as well as openness to networking and cooperating: these elements all play a key
role in youth information and counselling work. Moreover, all information and counselling, whether it takes place
online or face-to-face, should be based on educational targets set specifically from and for youth information
and counselling so that it provides support for young people and guarantees equal opportunities for all of them.

Quality in youth information and counselling services is linked, consistently to the above mentioned dimensions,
to:

- **products**, such as information on certain topics, the website as itself, flyers or brochures, etc.;
- **services** provided to young people, such as expertise and qualification of the worker, timeframe for answering
  questions to young people, etc.;
- **structure and framework** of work in this special field, consisting, e.g. of the profile, areas of work, responsibility
  of staff involved, etc.

All these elements and the many more that could be yet mentioned are relevant to establish or to continue
providing a high-quality work, in a face-to-face or web-based context.

**Who determines quality?**

We saw earlier that quality is assessed by many different stakeholders: young people, youth information
workers, volunteers, partner institutions or networks on local, national, European or international levels, funding
institutions and donors. We mustn’t forget about peers and peer groups, either! Last but not least, parents do
also have a say in youth work in general and more specifically in youth information and counselling by possibly
putting forward suggestions or raising remarks on how to improve quality in this field.

**Why is it so important to consider the quality of the services provided?**

a. Quality as an attitude towards customers, such as clients, target group of beneficiaries, and partners.

A great part of youth information and counselling services already developed in their organisation and work with
a so called “Leitbild”, which can take the form, for instance, of a code of conduct, a model of work, a statute. Such
document is normally created on the basis of an internal reflection process involving all members on how their
individual and collective work should be done, on what the aims and principles informing their work are. In other
words, this quality tool is part of a common understanding and agreement on what high-quality-work is for a
group as a community of practice. All in all, quality is an **attitude**, a **claim rising from inside** the organization, it is
an agreement between all members of the youth information and counselling centre, including staff, volunteers,
and management. In other words, quality is made by a high-motivated team with a high-level (top-down and
bottom-up) communication culture at the core of their work.

b. Compliance with legislation, strategies and guidelines

There are also external reasons, deriving from **outside** the youth information and counselling center, that lead
us to consider quality of youth information and counselling services. First of all, national legislation and strategies
strive for quality in this field.

Youth information and counselling services follow also the sector’s European guidelines, the *European Youth Information Charter* adopted by ERYICA (European Youth Information and Counselling Agency) in 2004. Moreover, in 2009, the European Principles for Online Youth Information were also adopted. In this framework, the provision of services is based on the idea of guaranteeing the equality of access to information and counselling services to all young people, regardless of their situation, ethnicity, gender or social background. Special attention should be paid to disadvantaged groups and to young people who may have specific needs. In addition, services should be easily accessible without any appointment being required, and the information available should be primarily based on young people’s information needs. Each young person should be treated and respected as an individual and the response to his or her questions should be personalized. It is also necessary that the services be free of charge and that information be given in a way that respects young people's privacy.

In addition to European principles, the foundation for youth information and counselling services lies in children’s and young people’s right to access information, stated in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and in the *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*.

Youth information and counselling services around Europe have also taken into consideration for their work the European Union’s *Youth Strategy 2010–2018*, one of whose objectives is to improve access to youth information and help disseminate information through all possible channels at a local, regional and national level. Nowadays, all youth information and counselling workers should be aware of the Lifelong Guidance Policy Development and Principles in order to have a broad overview on all aspects related to the objectives of our work.

**How can quality be managed within an organization or a specific project?**

“Quality is an ongoing and never ending process”. Dr. William Edwards Deming (1900 – 1993) developed the so-called P-D-C-A-cycle.

What is the philosophy behind of this cycle?

Every project is like a circle with four parts or phases:

1. **Planning:** A project always starts with an idea. We think about its aims and its potentialities. Then we work out a concrete concept and a work plan.
2. **Doing:** We start to transfer our plan into reality. We follow our plan as closely as possible.
3. **Checking:** While working, we observe smaller or bigger gaps between our plan and the results. We figure out what is going fine and what needs to be changed.
4. **Acting:** We take action on our critical review, e.g. changing things, correcting, adapting.

There is a chronological order to the cycle. Each part builds upon the previous. It is not possible to change the direction of the cycle or to turn the system around.

According to the P-D-C-A-cycle, quality is an issue that accompanies each of these four phases.

Therefore, pursuing quality is not only about finding a definition, but about developing a whole system. It takes into account:

- the learning process between those who deliver quality and those who receive quality;
- the process of reaching quality at the end in the form of results or products and
- all actions taken to improve the work.

The P-D-C-A-cycle in the field of Youth Information and Counselling Service

1. **Planning:**

   Ideas and thoughts for improving any youth information and counselling services should be evaluated by considering whether these ideas support the main aim of the service and the needs of the target group. What is the added value and benefit for the service if our ideas are put into practice?

   It is necessary to collect all the ideas and wishes from staff, stakeholders and especially from young people for designing the annual work plan. There are several methods and tools to collect feedback and ideas, for example workshops, interviews and online surveys. Ideas need to be prioritized, and then taken into the work plan.

2. **Doing:**

   An annual work plan for a youth information and counselling service is a good tool for an effective planning. It is an efficient way to distribute all the decided activities so that there is enough time and resources available for succeeding in each action. Resources mean also responsibilities. Remember to pay attention to the role of young people in the work plan! More specific plans for shorter time periods, for example every three months, can also be made in addition to the annual work plan.

3. **Checking:**

   Activities should be monitored and evaluated during the whole time of the implementation, and after the end of the working period as well. Youth information and counselling activities can be analyzed throughout the whole year in staff meetings, but also together with young people. Young people’s point of view and their experience can be collected, for instance, by establishing a users’ group assessing the services, by undergoing interviews or users’ surveys. It is not adequate that workers alone evaluate the success of the
service, or decide whether the service fulfils the needs of young people. To get a wide understanding of
the situation and to make the necessary improvements and changes based on the needs of young people,
young people must be involved.

4. Acting:

On the basis of the feedback received, while operating the decided changes in youth information and
counselling services, the needs and propositions for change should also be observed critically. How will
the change we planned affect the whole service and what is expected from the workers? Are additional
resources or maybe even new skills needed? Necessary changes can be planned and executed in a short or
longer period of time. They need to be well justified and based on planning, doing, checking and acting.
Change aimed for quality is a circle in which every sector is significant and needed.

How to create a quality reflection (assessment) tool in Youth information?

Regardless of what youth information or counselling service you offer, in order to establish a quality based
system, to create a reflection tool and improve it continuously you have to pass several steps.

Step I  Field analyses

First of all you (staff and volunteers) collect all information and data, which are relevant to describe the general
framework and conditions of your specific field. You can do a brainstorming session or you search for material
related to the topic.

You should ask yourselves

- What is the aim, or the vision, of our youth information centre? (E.g. to make an impact on youth work within
  the community)
- What are the objectives of our work? (E.g. to support and guide young people in a professional manner
  through their life)
- Who are the stakeholders in our working field? Who is involved in a certain function related to the field of
  work? (Young people, staff, peers, partner institutions, companies, funding institutions, decision makers
  etc.)
  - Who delivers something to us? (Other youth information centers or networks, technical equipment
    from IT-companies, offices from city hall, print shops etc.)
  - Who receives something from us? (Press, media, social networks, decision makers etc.)
  - Who else is related to our work and in what manner? (Water, electricity, trash, security company etc.)
- What are the products of our work? (Website as a whole, all relevant data and links on the website or as
  printed products, like brochures, roll-ups etc)
- What are services we offer? (Interview, survey, face-to-face meeting, telephone call, email etc.)

It is very helpful to gather all answers on a paper; draw a map or create an organogram. Make it visible for
everyone.

Why is it so important?

Quality in youth information and counselling is not only a matter of a deal between a young person and a youth
information worker. In everyday life, we forget sometimes about partners, sub-contractors etc., who co-operate
with us on an ongoing basis. These actors’ role might be more important than we assume. For instance, you
want to open a youth information center in the countryside. Suddenly, you observe that the telephone and the
internet line are not stable. What are you going to do? To whom will you address your question? How can you
provide the services that you are meant to?
Another reason for which we need to take into account the whole picture is because quality management is also a matter of considering viable, planned resources, be them personal, organizational, financial, timely, material etc., in relation to real expenses.

A field analyses goes along with sharing opinions on quality within the team. Consequently, this is the perfect phase to involve especially young people and to make them feel being part of the process.

Once you have reached a broad overview and gained the big picture of the field, which can be seen as a general matrix (general framework), you can easily break it down into smaller units to continue the discussion and to deepen the analyses on special topics. For instance, one group of youth workers is only assessing quality in relation to the office; others might assess the communication outside of the center with partners or young people etc. All kinds of discussion are possible, even within the youth information center between staff and, out there, with your beneficiaries: young people, parents, educational institutions etc.

Step II Create a common understanding of quality in Youth Information

The next step is to create a common understanding of what quality in youth information and counselling work means for all people involved, including young people. Please take into account that such a process takes time (longer than just one or two meetings), because we as human beings have different perceptions on reality and different expectations on what is useful, qualitative, and good for us. We also argue differently, subjectively on the same questions because of our socioeconomic and cultural background, our experience etc. That is why, sometimes, it might be useful to add an external expert in the process.

Nevertheless, it is very important to discuss quality issues on all levels, regardless of the hierarchy that exists in the structure, in both bottom-up and top-down directions. Creating a common understanding on quality in youth information should be seen as a democratic, participatory process involving everybody, including young people, in the service, for instance in the youth information centre.

In addition to the internal dimension of the quality development process, you should not forget about its external dimension: it is important to take into account other stakeholders, with their own perception (see: Step I). To involve all partners and target group(s) into the discussion is indeed a challenging process; but if you do so you will reach a higher level of identification in the process from all the persons involved, and the reached solutions can be seen as the result of a common agreement of all partners, and not, for instance, as a demand coming from the top from the management. Communication is the key to be successful!

The following questions should be tackled with all stakeholders:

- What does quality mean for us, staff and young people (quality in general)?
- What does quality mean for our target group(s)?
- What are our expectations towards a product, process or service we provide to our target groups: young people, parents etc. (quality in detail)?
- What are the expectations from our external stakeholders (partners, decision makers etc.)?
- Do we have criteria or standards to describe quality?
- How do we use these criteria and standards to improve our work?

While asking ourselves these questions, we are already in the process of creating our own quality tool (or even a quality system). It is now time to look at the difference between criterion and standard.

Definitions on Quality Criterion versus Quality Standard

Quality criterion

...is a distinguishing characteristic, which allows us to evaluate products and services in a qualitative way. A
A quality criterion can be achieved or not achieved (yes/no). The level of achievement of this characteristic can be good or bad (+/−).

**Quality standard**
...is a fixed degree of expression of quality requirements for products and services. A standard determines the
• scope,
• intensity and
• manner on how the characteristics should be designed in order to be recognized professionally.

**Indicators**
...are used to measure a quality criterion and to make it visible. Indicators are needed to make the criterion usable.

To transfer the mentioned theoretical background to the field of youth information we give you an example:

- **Criterion:** “Every enquiry gets an answer”
- **Standard:** “Every enquiry gets an answer within 24 hours”
- **Indicator:** “Mail, logbook, list or notes about the time of incoming enquiry and outgoing answer”

It is up to all involved persons to opt for quality criteria or for standards. Some organizations prefer criteria; others go for standards. In any case, this should be a decision of all persons involved in the quality process. There are plenty of practical examples within youth work. A number of them can be found in the appendix to this publication, in the form or a good practice catalogue.

**Step III  Assessment (Evaluation) of quality in the area of work**

Once you established a quality based system and you have at least one tool (e.g. criteria or standards on youth information and counselling services) keep monitoring if it works well. According to the P-D-C-A-cycle working with the tool is an ongoing process and the tool as itself has to be reviewed from time to time. This procedure is called assessment or evaluation.

**What is an evaluation? What is an assessment?**

The following definitions of “evaluation” and “assessment” are adapted from the T-Kit Nr.10 “Educational Evaluation in Youth Work”.

**Evaluation:**
An evaluation only means to make a reasoned judgment about or to give a plausible account of something. It does not imply any specific purpose (such as grading individual performance), nor does it imply any particular method of evaluation (such as a written test), and nor does its outcomes automatically suggest that something is of greater value or importance than something else (one project, product or service in comparison with another one).

**Assessment:**
An assessment takes place when evaluation has a comparative dimension that involves setting individuals, activities or institutions into a ranking order of performance or achievement. The ranking may be set in relation to criteria that are specific to the context, process or outcomes that are being assessed, such as questioning which youth information centre has the highest success rate in attracting socially disadvantaged young people.

An assessment is usually defined as to determine the importance, size or value of something (a problem, behaviour, situation etc.).

\[2 \text{http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/documents/Publications/T_kits/10/T-Kit_10.pdf, p.37} \]
In fact, especially in educational fields, the term "assessment" is often used as a synonym for "evaluation" or as part of an evaluation.

Please note: to make it as easy as possible for you we simply use the term "assessment" through the next pages.

Why is it useful in youth information to do an assessment and for whom is it needed?

There could be different reasons for doing an assessment:

- to reflect on our work and to learn about us, our strengths and weaknesses in our concrete youth information centre;
- to compare ourselves with similar organizations in the field (as a benchmark tool inside a network) on different levels;
- to motivate ourselves and our partners to improve the quality of our products or services; this might go along with changes if needed (change management);
- to plan our work better;
- to take stock of achievements;
- to consolidate results;
- to check if we met the interests of the donors and decision makers;
- to check if we met the interests of the youngsters and to cater to them in a better way;
- to give better access to those young people with less opportunities or disadvantages and
- to reach out to new target groups.

An assessment is never done by one individual, even when one person takes the main responsibility for it. Assessing quality is a group work process. As mentioned before, everybody involved in youth information practice should participate in its evaluation and, of course, everyone involved should also be informed about its results.

For whom is an assessment relevant? Who are the stakeholders?

- Professionals and volunteers: as facilitators (individuals or team members) in youth information services and responsible persons for giving services and animating activities
- Partners (network): as promoters of services and activities
- Donors and sponsors: as supporters of the services and activities, providing support with money or in-kind;
- Young people: as the main target group in youth information and counselling service, including its activities
- Decision-makers, such as political bodies: as those in charge of considering the results of the assessment in further decision making processes such as allocation of funds.

All above listed actors have different perspectives, responsibilities and tasks in the assessment. Nevertheless, it is important to involve everybody. The evaluation should be democratic, transparent and simultaneously accessible for all actors concerned.

Who is initiating an assessment?

There are different options, e.g.:

1. The initiative, the decision comes from the staff or facilitators within the service.
2. The process can start from the initiative of young people themselves.
3. The initiative, the decision is made not by organisers or facilitators but from outsiders, for instance by donors or decision makers.
4. Sometimes, it is a matter of a combination of them all.
The best results are usually delivered when the initiative for an assessment is coming from those who work directly in the service and those who are directly related to it because of their high identification and recognition in the field of work.

Nevertheless, it is important to keep all stakeholders informed about the process, including information on key questions, timetable etc. and of course about the results of the assessment, the improvements that are planned and the timetable for their implementation.

The difference between internal and external assessment

Along with the question of who is initiating an assessment we distinguish between internal and external assessment.

An internal assessment can be conducted either by an internal person or by a team, who is often referred to as “internal assessor”.

An external assessment is realized by an external person or team referred to as “external assessor”.

Depending on the topic of interests and available resources there are professional groups that review the quality and lead an assessment process. One of the tasks of the external assessor is to involve the different actors and facilitate their interaction during the assessment process. A common assumption is that the external assessor will be in a position to lead the process with more ease and with fewer compromises than would insiders. In any case, the evaluators must avoid any issues of conflict of interest to avoid any pressure exerted on them from any of the actors involved.

When and how to assess?

Quality development is an ongoing and continuous process. So is evaluation, too. Thus, it is very important to identify the best time for an assessment and how to do it:

- in accordance to the working year
- in accordance to the project phases*

*The first assessment you do is called an initial assessment. Some institutions do also a mid-term-assessment (when half of the project is done). At the end of the project you do a final assessment.

For example: You are planning to organize a training course for youth information workers which consists of six modules and will last six months. You want to get as much as possible information about the value, learning potential and effectiveness of this specific training. Then it might be useful to assess the process three times and your final conclusion is based on data which compare expectations, competencies and satisfaction of participants at the three different stages.

Before you start to create your working plan on the assessment, we highly recommend that you be very realistic regarding availability of resources in staff, finances and time. Assessment is a project within the project! Remember to allocate time and resources to the evaluation itself. For instance, reserve one-two days each year for a staff evaluation, or half a day during the staff-out weekend.

Include the assessment in your annual plan, once for sure (e.g. in spring) and possibly repeat it in autumn again, when budgets are drafted. We also recommend doing more in-depth analyses once each three years.
We are all well aware that assessments can be used as tools for selection and exclusion, risking the restriction of equal access to knowledge and having negative consequences for the nature, content and practice of non-formal education. But if we understand non-formal education as a democratic process of access to processes of self-development, any selective misuse of certification would be more than questionable, would raise ethical issues of the most fundamental nature and would put into question the legitimacy of non-formal education and its actors.

One significant emerging outcome of those debates and an alternative to the so far “black and white” nature of the debate is the concept of Self-Assessment. The idea behind is to provide actors with adequate tools and support for assessing their own learning and for documenting, showcasing and promoting its results.

In recent years some self-assessment tools for non-formal education have been developed on the European level. The Council of Europe has developed a self-evaluation matrix, which helps you to assess your language competencies.[3] In the youth sector of the Council of Europe a group of experts has developed the European Portfolio for Youth Leaders and Youth Workers.[4] This folder is bringing together all materials that prove a person’s efforts in non-formal education and their learning achievements.

The matrix below presents the most relevant aspects (which can also be interpreted as weaknesses and strengths) of both types of assessment.

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3http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/documents/Publications/T_kits/10/T-Kit_10.pdf, p.37; The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an internationally standardised assessment that was jointly developed by participating countries and administered to 15-year-olds in schools. The survey was implemented in 43 countries in the first assessment in 2000, in 41 countries in the second assessment in 2003 and at least 58 countries participated in the third assessment in 2006. More information at http://www.pisa.oecd.org
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<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Self-Assessment Internal Assessment</th>
<th>External Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who is responsible?</td>
<td>One person is responsible for organizing a certain project or activity.</td>
<td>An external person is responsible for the assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Either he has an own interest to assess</td>
<td>The person is qualified for this job (e.g. “EFQM-Assessor, QM-Auditor etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or</td>
<td>The person is not involved in any kind of work of this institution or network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the person is responsible for the evaluation (assessment) of the project or activity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The person is qualified for this job (“Quality manager” or “Internal auditor”) or has a proven track on needed competences and experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The person is not directly in charge for realizing that specific project or activity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectivity of the evaluation and the results</td>
<td>Conflict of interest (COI) is relatively high:</td>
<td>Conflict of interest is low or not existing at all (depending on the profile and field context of auditor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Either if the assessment is done by own interest of one person (subjective view on the work and the results of the evaluation)</td>
<td>Most objective view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>more distance in case of responsible person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the results?</td>
<td>Written document:</td>
<td>Written document:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Either a personal report</td>
<td>External audit (report) about the assessed topics of the project or activity (e.g. aims, results, difficulties, conclusions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>an “internal audit”/ report about the assessed topics of the project or activity (e.g. aims, results, difficulties, conclusions)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No commitment about possible action with the team or management</td>
<td>Commitment within the team or organization to take action if needed (in case the audit was not successful)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commitment within the team / institution to take action is possible</td>
<td>Time for review and correction regarding the product, service or process (in case of an audit to get a quality label / accreditation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Option 1</td>
<td>Option 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penal sanctions/ Restriction for individuals (or institutions, members of quality system)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Quality tool / – system is based on voluntary action (to follow the rules),</td>
<td>In case of failing the audit the quality label is not given or taken off.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In case of misuse of the rules exclusion of membership of the quality association. Misuse is punishable by law (if this label is supported by government / by law).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>It is also used as an orientation and common understanding on quality, but an objective proof.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand/ Quality Label</td>
<td>No Quality label</td>
<td>An accreditation and a quality label can be awarded (e.g. EFQM, TQM, …).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of the brand</td>
<td>No protection</td>
<td>Yes (if the quality label is supported by government / registered and protected by law)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>German example: RAL- Gütezeichen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-Certification (duration of keeping a brand)</td>
<td>No need</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1-3 years (depending on the kind of label.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources in time, money, person etc.)</td>
<td>Relatively small (assessment in case of personal interest).</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If not just a personal interest more time needed for internal communication.</td>
<td>Internal and external communication needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More staff (time, money) involved.</td>
<td>Additional expenses on assessment (audit) and on accredited assessors (auditor)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment Tools

To run an assessment you are free to use different methods which fit to the aims and expectations for the evaluation: either qualitative or quantitative ones. A mix of both is possible too. One option is using a criteria catalogue to proof quality of something (or someone's competencies). Other methods can be found in the chart below as an orientation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative Tools</th>
<th>Mix of qualitative and quantitative Tools</th>
<th>Quantitative Tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observation of participants</td>
<td>Observation with guidelines</td>
<td>Questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter to oneself</td>
<td>Structured interviews</td>
<td>Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus groups</td>
<td>Spot checks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film, video</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/documents/Publications/T_kits/10/T-Kit_10.pdf, p. 36. This self-evaluation matrix is part of the "European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment". This framework is a tool for setting standards in an internationally comparable manner. It facilitates a clear definition of teaching and learning objectives and methods and provides the necessary tools for assessment of proficiency. It can be accessed at http://www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Cooperation/education/Languages/Language_Policy/Common_Framework_of_Reference"
template

for a reflection (assessment) tool for youth information and counselling service
While Part A sets the theoretical background for quality work and introduces some basic concepts, this chapter shall provide a more practical approach to a possible reflection tool on quality (management) for the use of practitioners in youth information.

The aim of such a tool is the improvement of services. Several youth information centres have already developed a quality criteria catalogue: these examples will be given below.

For those who want to start this process, it is recommended to discuss it from the very beginning with young people, and to include them in the development of the tool.

The proposed assessment process has two phases:

In the first phase of an INITIAL ASSESSMENT, do an assessment along the reflection tool based on the quality criteria and fill in concrete actions for improving based on the Action Plan for Improvement.

Phase 2 is a REVIEW or FOLLOW-UP ASSESSMENT: after a certain time (half a year or year) do a review, and fill in the Quality Criteria Catalogue again, and check if the planned improvements from your initial assessment have been achieved or not, and find out, why or why not.

Create a new plan: Reviewed Action Plan of Improvement (Review Plan).
The frame of principles

The frame provided here is based on ERYICA’s European Youth information Charter (adopted in 2004), in accordance with the Lifelong Guidance Policy Development. (A European Resource Kit ELGPN Tool No.1, published 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area and relevant aspects</th>
<th>Corresponding articles from the European Youth Information Charter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Young person centred</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Independence – the youth information and counselling service provided respects the freedom of personal choice and development of young people /user.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Impartiality – the youth information and counselling service provided is in accordance with young people’s interests only, is not influenced by provider, institutional and funding interests, and does not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity, social class, qualifications, ability etc.</td>
<td>7. Information is given in a way that respects both the privacy of users and their right not to reveal their identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confidentiality – young people have a right to privacy of personal information they provide in the service process.</td>
<td>10. Every effort is made to ensure the objectivity of the information provided through the pluralism and verification of the sources used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Equal opportunities – the youth information and counselling service provided promotes equal opportunities in learning and work for all young people.</td>
<td>11. The information offered shall be independent of any religious, political, ideological or commercial influence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Holistic approach – the personal, social, cultural and economic context of a young person’s decision-making is valued in the youth information and counselling provided.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participative</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Active involvement – youth information service is a collaborative activity between the young person and the provider and other significant actors (e.g. learning providers, enterprises, family members, community interests) and builds on the active involvement of the citizen.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Empowerment – the youth information provided assists young person to become competent at planning and managing their future/life/ choices paths and the transitions therein.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Access

- **Transparency** – the nature of youth information service(s) provided is immediately apparent to young people.
- **Friendliness and empathy** – staff provide a welcoming atmosphere for young people.
- **Continuity** – the youth information provided supports young people through the range of learning, work, societal and personal transitions they undertake and/or encounter.
- **Availability** – all young people have a right to access information services at any point in their lives.
- **Accessibility** – the youth information provided is accessible in a flexible and user-friendly way such as face-to-face, telephone, e-mail, outreach, and is available at times and in places that suit young peoples’ needs.
- **Responsiveness** – information is provided through a wide range of methods to meet the diverse needs of young people.

1. Youth information centres and services shall be open to all young people without exception.
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.
6. Youth information services shall be free of charge.
9. The information offered is complete, up-to-date, accurate, practical and user-friendly.
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.

### Management/organisation

**Appropriateness of information methods** – information methods used have a theoretical and/ or scientific basis, relevant to the purpose for which they are used.

- **Continuous improvement** – youth information services have a culture of continuous improvement involving regular customer feedback and provide opportunities for staff for continuous training.
- **Right of redress** – young people have an entitlement to complain through a formal procedure if they deem the information they have received to be unsatisfactory.
- **Competent staff** – staff providing youth information have nationally accredited competences to identify and address the young peoples' needs, and where appropriate, to refer the young people to more suitable provision/service.

8. Information is provided in a professional manner by staff trained for this purpose.
10. Every effort is made to ensure the objectivity of the information provided through the pluralism and verification of the sources used.
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.
Reflection tool based on quality criteria

Based on four key areas, which have been identified in the frame of principles, a template for reflecting the quality of youth information service has been developed. Every of the abovementioned areas has a quality criteria and four levels of assessed quality. It is however left for those assessing to make the decisions, which level is reached in the service. This should be followed by some concrete evidence from the practice of youth information work, which can be put in the last column.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Quality criteria</th>
<th>Level of assessed quality</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young person centred</td>
<td>Relevant and diverse information provision according to the young people's needs.</td>
<td>Excellent: Services are proactive, responsive and continuously developing.</td>
<td>Excellent: Services are proactive, responsive and continuously developing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Good: Services mostly respond to the needs of young people.</td>
<td>Good: Services mostly respond to the needs of young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfactory: Services are responsive to some but not all the needs of young people.</td>
<td>Satisfactory: Services are responsive to some but not all the needs of young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Poor/inadequate: Services do not respond to the needs of young people.</td>
<td>Poor/inadequate: Services do not respond to the needs of young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up-to-date, accurate and objective information.</td>
<td>Information is up-to-date, accurate and objective and reviewed on an ongoing basis.</td>
<td>Information is up-to-date, accurate and objective and reviewed on an ongoing basis.</td>
<td>Information is up-to-date, accurate and objective at this point in time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidentiality and privacy policy and procedures.</td>
<td>Policies and procedures are documented, followed and reviewed on a regular basis.</td>
<td>Policies and procedures are always documented and followed.</td>
<td>Policies and procedures are mostly documented and followed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting equality of opportunity through information.</td>
<td>Equality of opportunity is promoted through the information provision.</td>
<td>Equality of opportunity is included in information provision.</td>
<td>In providing information, equality of opportunity is considered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting services that are appropriate to relevant target groups.</td>
<td>There is an existing service promotion plan, which meets the needs of different target groups using different communication.</td>
<td>There is an existing service promotion plan, communication is mostly provided according to the needs of different target groups.</td>
<td>There is no existing service promotion plan, but staff is aware of different target groups in their work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Poor/inadequate: Promotion is not targeted to relevant target groups.</td>
<td>Poor/inadequate: Promotion is not targeted to relevant target groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Quality criteria</td>
<td>Level of assessed quality and their indicators</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Poor/ inadequate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participative</td>
<td>Utilizing information in planning of activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>User feedback key figures, researches are systematically collected and used in planning and developing the services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Empowering young people through youth information to manage their future</td>
<td>The issue of empowerment is monitored by the team and young persons on a regular basis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developing young people's competencies on how to seek information and use technologies</td>
<td>Capacity building for young people in the field of media and information literacy is actively implemented.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Young people involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of information services</td>
<td>Young people are always involved on a partnership basis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>User feedback and key figures are collected frequently and taken into account in the implementation of the services.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The issue of empowerment is monitored by the team on a regular basis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Media and information literacy is an important action field of information provision.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Young people are involved on a regular basis.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Media and information literacy is taken into account in the youth information work.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Young people are involved in certain processes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Young people are not involved.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Quality criteria</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Accessible and inclusive youth information services for all young people</td>
<td>A high level of face-to-face and on-line accessibility exists and is regularly verified.</td>
<td>An adequate level of face-to-face and on-line accessibility exists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of effective youth information methodologies and technologies</td>
<td>A wide range of methodologies and technologies are in place and regularly reviewed.</td>
<td>A wide range of methodologies and technologies are in place.</td>
<td>A reasonable range of methodologies and technologies are in place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services are user-friendly, transparent and responsive to the needs of young people</td>
<td>Services are regularly assessed, in partnership with young people and improvements are made.</td>
<td>Services are regularly assessed and improvements are made.</td>
<td>Services are occasionally assessed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>Quality criteria</td>
<td>Level of assessed quality and their indicators</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management/organisation</td>
<td>Services are delivered by a suitably skilled staff</td>
<td>Excellent: Staff members are clear regarding their functions and have their respective required skills developed on an ongoing basis.</td>
<td>Poor/inadequate: Staff members are not clear regarding their functions and lack the skills for the job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Good: Staff members are mostly clear regarding their functions and are developing their respective skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Satisfactory: Staff members are mostly clear regarding their functions and are developing their respective skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Poor/inadequate: Staff members are not clear regarding their functions and lack the skills for the job.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Services are planned and designed according to young people's needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Services are planned and designed in partnership with young people and regularly</td>
<td>Services are planned and designed in partnership with young people.</td>
<td>Young people's needs are not taken into consideration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Services are planned and designed in partnership with young people.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Services are directed by strategic goals towards outcomes.</td>
<td>Services are outcomes-focused.</td>
<td>Services are not linked to outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Services achieve all identified outcomes.</td>
<td>Some services are focused on the outcomes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services are monitored and</td>
<td>Services are monitored and evaluated and the results feed into policy implementation and practice.</td>
<td>Services are occasionally monitored and evaluated.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>evaluated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All services are developed and delivered in partnership with relevant local, regional, national and international organisations.</td>
<td>Most services are developed and delivered in partnership with relevant local, regional and national organisations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multilevel and cross-sectorial partnerships and networking</td>
<td></td>
<td>Some services are developed and delivered in partnership with relevant local and regional organisations.</td>
<td>No services are developed in partnership with other organisations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Action planning and reviewing**

After reflection (assessment) is finished, it is obvious, which criteria is being already met and where improvement is needed. Therefore based on the results now the planning for improvement can be prepared. Since quality process is never-ending one, after planning actions and implementing them periodically you need to review, what has been done and still needs to be improved. Afterwards you need to go through the reflection (assessment) process periodically. Here you can find couple of possible templates for action planning and reviewing which can be adjusted to your own reality and needs.

**Action Plan for Improvement – Year 1 – example summer 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Area of action</th>
<th>Current situation</th>
<th>List of actions to be taken</th>
<th>Person/s responsible for actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young person centred</td>
<td>Relevant and diverse information provision according to the young people’s needs.</td>
<td>Services mostly respond to the needs of young people</td>
<td>Make services more proactive and responsive</td>
<td>Marc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Services are user-friendly, transparent and responsive to the needs of young people</td>
<td>Services are regularly reviewed and assessed</td>
<td>Involve young people to identify possible improvements</td>
<td>Anne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Young people involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of information service.</td>
<td>Young people are involved on a fairly regular basis</td>
<td>Make it a standard to involve young people in the design of information.</td>
<td>Zsolt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management/organisation</td>
<td>Services are monitored and evaluated.</td>
<td>Services are monitored and evaluated.</td>
<td>Resume and work on the results.</td>
<td>Magda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reviewed Action Plan Year 2 – example summer 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Criteria</th>
<th>Improvements achieved</th>
<th>List of actions to be taken in new action plan for improvement</th>
<th>Person/s responsible for actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young person centred</td>
<td>1. more young visitors</td>
<td>Involves more young people in the production of information</td>
<td>Marc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. get information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>targeted to their need</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>1. involvement-based</td>
<td>--- follow the established line</td>
<td>Anne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>development of services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. young people can</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>transmit their ideas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and views</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Young people are always</td>
<td>Foster their involvement in decision making processes.</td>
<td>Franck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>involved in the design of information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management/organisation</td>
<td>Services are monitored</td>
<td>Focus on transposing the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation into information reality.</td>
<td>Magda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and evaluated regularly, the results are condensed in an information policy paper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
national examples
The reflection (assessment) tool for Youth Information and Counselling Services is meant to assist and inspire youth information service providers within ERYICA network and beyond in providing quality services to young people. The tool is unique as it uses the ground principles of ERYICA Youth Information Charter and combines them with P-D-C-A-cycle concept implemented in elaborate quality management systems. We have tried to create a practical and “living” tool that could be used by youth information workers at all levels and help them to make an impact in the lives of young people.

In many countries the quality management tools are already in place and functioning. In some of them the quality of youth information services is assessed as part of general youth work. Many others, however, have introduced quality assessment frameworks targeting specifically youth information and counselling structures. The national practices also differ in terms of direction of measuring scope – the tools are either used and developed as bottom up initiatives based on the needs of local community/ group of cooperating organisations/ networks or as top down national quality assessment frameworks in youth (information) work.

The examples listed below are meant to illustrate different existing national practices. They are also intended to provide further inspiration and ideas in implementing the present tool as well as developing it further based on national realities and needs.

Each example is structured in 3 parts, explaining the background of the tool, who is it targeted for and how to use it. Where applicable, we have also included an example of the assessment tool itself.

The main difference between national examples is the intervention logic. In some countries the national youth work coordination bodies have developed quality assessment tools that approach youth work generally. These are often done with the help of professional quality management consultants and are usually connected to strategic development of youth work on the national level. They are complex systems, coordinated vertically top-down, have clearly defined beginning and end, can involve different phases of internal and external assessment and spin through the cycle of 1-3 years. From the examples listed below, the Estonian and Irish systems illustrate these tools best. Youth information services are assessed as part of general youth work.

Other annexed examples are focusing only on the quality of youth information services. The Welsh example is a national framework setting a standard and a quality assurance system for providing youth information services. It is similar to previous examples by its national dimension. It is however, created differently by involving young people and a wide circle of organisations involved in youth information provision. It is therefore a horizontally developed tool used on a national level. The German example has similarly started from a governmentally funded project for NGO’s working with providing youth information services. The project results were then collected and transformed into a “Catalogue on Services and Quality Management for institutions working in the field of Youth Information”

The French and Czech examples form a third category that are also assessing only the quality of youth information services but have started from a bottom-up local initiative and then developed into complex tools acknowledged on the national level.

For further information on national examples contacts for additional questions please consult ERYICA website at www.eryica.org
Introducing the Estonian Youth Work Quality Assessment Model

What is the Estonian Youth Work Quality Assessment Model (YWQAM)?

Youth work in Estonia has undergone a significant development in last 20 years with establishing youth work structures and youth work as a profession. In order to ensure continuous sustainable development of the field, youth work quality has become a state priority. In 2007 Estonian Ministry of Education and Research launched a governmental programme „Developing Youth Work Quality 2008-2013“. The programme is 85% funded by European Social Fund and is implemented by Estonian Youth Work Centre.

Youth work is a local competence, that mainstreamed into national youth work legislation and strategies, is implemented on a municipal level. As of 01.01.2013 there are 226 municipalities in Estonia. In 2010 Estonian Youth Work Centre initiated the youth work quality assessment process and developed national Youth Work Quality Assessment model in cooperation with Ernst & Young Baltic AS and youth field partners.

Who is it for?

YWQAM is a practical tool for municipal governments that helps to assess the quality of opportunities created by youth work for young people, but also map:

- local youth work strengths and areas of development,
- areas for improvement and development plan,
- performance and success.

In terms of YWQAM, municipalities are the first immediate beneficiaries as quality assessment provides concrete evidence on youth work outcomes and competence of youth workers. YWQAM therefore helps to improve the visibility and profile of youth work, making it more accessible for funding and good reputation. The benefits are:

› Mapping current situation and raising awareness of possibilities for improvement

YWQAM process gathers systematic data about the quality state of current activities which provides comprehensive overview of present practice to youth work practitioners. This enables to discover and plan areas for development and is therefore essential as a first step to for setting future priorities.

› Feedback to youth work practitioners

YWQAM process has an important role in providing critical feedback to municipal youth workers. The external assessment is especially valuable in terms of expert recommendations as constructive critics helps to improve the overall professionalism in the youth field.

› Raising awareness of the importance of youth work

Assessment of the quality of youth work enables to draw attention to youth field activities and raise awareness of the importance of the field. This should be achieved by promoting the evaluation process and its results among all major stakeholders all relevant parties involved in the assessment.

Quality assessment of can be seen as a potential news item, which allows spread awareness of youth field activities. Positive results in quality assessment can support the implementation of youth field strategic development plans (including funding and additional resources).
Setting a common standard for the quality of youth work

YWQAM process helps ensure the consistency of the common understanding of the content and vision of youth work quality. In reality this often varies inside and between municipalities.

Recognition of Youth Work

Good performance should be recognised and set as an example. Quality management and assessment provides municipalities with excellent opportunity to assess themselves by set criteria and get recognition for good performance. Recognition also involves introducing and disseminating best practices, which on its own helps to improve the quality of youth work.

Exchange and transfer of knowledge and experience among municipalities

In addition to the direct benefits for the municipality, involvement in external assessment of other municipalities gives a good overview of youth field activities also in other regions. That supports networking, exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Providing information and feedback to the government

Data gathered through YWQAM process provides valuable feedback for the government and helps to direct national and European resources more accurately.

How does it work?

Quality management is a cycle, which means that the quality improvement and quality assessment activities take place alternately. The idea is best described Deming circle or PDCA cycle (Plan, Do, Check, Act)

Quality assessment can be carried out both, as self and as external assessment. In self-evaluation the work and performance is assessed by the practitioners themselves. External evaluation is conducted by an independent external expert or a group. Either method of assessment has strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, to obtain a reliable valuation, self-and external assessment should be combined. Convergence in the results of both assessments confirms their accuracy. Differences, however, may provide good information about the issues that should also be analysed.

To conduct the assessment, “youth work quality measurement and assessment” teams formed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-assessment teams</th>
<th>External assessment teams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As the self-assessment in itself is an evaluation of self-performance, it is reasonable to include persons who have been associated with youth work in a particular municipality. As an example, a self-assessment team could involve:</td>
<td>External assessors are experts outside of a particular municipality who independently evaluate youth work in the assessed region. As an example, an external assessment team could involve:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- municipal youth work coordinator (head of the team)</td>
<td>- youth worker from another municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- youth worker from a local youth centre</td>
<td>- manager of a youth centre from another municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- deputy mayor</td>
<td>- representative of ENTK¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- school representative</td>
<td>- representative of Estonian Youth Worker’s Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- president of the local youth council</td>
<td>- representative of a youth organisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹For further information on ENTK – Estonia Youth Work Centre – pleas see http://www.entk.ee/eng/estonian-youth-work-centre
The quality is assessed against the vision and main objectives of youth work in Estonia, each described in the Assessment Model of Youth Work Quality (see annex 1):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision</th>
<th>Every young person has access to diverse personal development opportunities in youth work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Objectives | 1. non-formal learning opportunities are provided for young people  
2. young people have opportunities to experience participation and belonging  
3. Youth information, prevention activities and counselling services have been made available for young people  
4. creating an environment favourable to high-quality youth work |

The quality assessment is carried out in the following steps:

1. Forming an assessment plan  
2. Forming assessment teams  
3. Gathering data (surveys, statistics, studies)  
4. Implementing self-assessment  
5. Implementing external assessment  
6. Assessment summary, planning improvements and action plan

The full YWQAM process cycle will take 3 years to complete and is a platform for on-going quality improvement. The quality assessment will start a quality management process according to PDCA model – analysing the results of quality assessment results, planning of improvements and action plan, implementation and planning a new assessment process.
### Table 1. The indicators of objective 1 and their explanations: “non-formal learning opportunities are provided for young people”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td><strong>There are diverse opportunities for young people to participate in youth work.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1.1.1 | Young people have an opportunity to participate in hobby education.  
*The indicator is fulfilled if youth centres and music, art, sports or private hobby schools that offer young people opportunities to participate in hobby education are situated in the administrative territory of the local government (hereinafter KOV) or there are relevant agreements made with other KOVs.* |
| 1.1.2 | Young people have an opportunity to participate in youth work (hobby education) in general education and vocational education schools.  
*The indicator is fulfilled if every general education and vocational education school of the KOV offers hobby education opportunities at all levels (grades 1-3, grades 4-6, grades 7-9, high school, vocational training).* |
| 1.1.3 | Young people have an opportunity to participate in open youth work.  
*The indicator is fulfilled if at least 1 institution providing open youth work for every 300 young people (open youth centre, youth room) is situated in the administrative territory of the KOV or there are relevant agreements made with other KOVs.* |
| 1.1.4 | Young people have an opportunity to participate in other youth work-related activities/services supported by the KOV (camps, events, projects, etc.).  
*The indicator is fulfilled if young people living in the administrative territory of the KOV have an opportunity to participate in other youth work-related activities/services supported by the KOV (camps, events, projects, etc.) that are not mentioned in indicators 1.1.1-1.1.3.* |
| 1.1.5 | Youth work opportunities are created in various areas (e.g. music, art, nature and environment, technology, sports, general culture, civic education, international cooperation).  
*The indicator is completely fulfilled if the youth work opportunities exist in all the aforementioned areas.* |
| 1.1.6 | There are opportunities for young people to test and show their knowledge and skills (e.g. competitions, concerts, exhibitions, performances, festivals).  
*The indicator is completely fulfilled if the KOV supports the events (competitions, concerts, exhibitions, performances, festivals) that offer young people an opportunity to test and show their knowledge and skills (incl. on the national level). Support can include providing information, financial or organisational aid, etc.* |
| 1.1.7 | Young people are provided with equal opportunities to participate in youth work (incl. young people with fewer opportunities).  
*The indicator is fulfilled if the actions that give young people with fewer opportunities a chance to participate in youth work are implemented in order to create equal opportunities for all. There are support possibilities or additional benefits for young people with fewer opportunities to participate in youth work (e.g. transportation allowance to go hobby school) and access to appropriate hobby education for young people with special needs.* |
| 1.1.8 | The number of young people participating in hobby education and recreational activities is high (at least 15% of all young people).  
*The indicator is fulfilled if a study on how young people spend their free time has been conducted and the number (%) of young people participating in hobby education and recreational activities (in hobby centres, music schools, art schools, private hobby schools, extracurricular activities in general education schools and in open youth centres) is at least 15% of all young people aged 7-26 living in the administrative territory of the KOV.* |
1.1.9 The number of young people participating in youth work is generally high (at least 65%).

The indicator is fulfilled if a study on how young people spend their free time has been conducted and the number (%) of young people participating in youth work (hobby education, open youth work (visiting open youth work centres ANK), youth organisations, youth councils, camps) is at least 65% of all young people living in the administrative territory of the KOV.

1.2 Young people are guaranteed diverse opportunities to increase entrepreneurship.

1.2.1 Young people have an opportunity to participate in activities that foster entrepreneurship.

The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV supports (providing rooms, provisions) carrying out the programs, projects or activities enhancing entrepreneurship in its administrative territory or if there are relevant agreements made with other KOVs (e.g. SME week, student companies, entrepreneurship as a class at school, projects related to youth entrepreneurship, seminars about entrepreneurship, etc.).

1.2.2 The number of young people participating in work and leisure camp is high (at least 10%).

The indicator is fulfilled if the number of young people participating in work and leisure camp is 10% of all young people aged 13-19 living in the administrative territory of the KOV.

1.3 Support is given to the enhancement of active citizenship, civic education and valuation of multiculturalism.

1.3.1 Support is given to activities related to the civic education of young people (programs, training events, seminars, learning materials, etc.).

The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV consistently supports the implementation of civic education programs or projects for young people (at least one event per year; e.g. different activities for young people during the citizen's week, citizen's year, etc.).

1.3.2 Young people have an opportunity to participate in international youth seminars, youth projects, training events, conferences, youth exchange programs and/or camps that promote the values and principles of youth work and are based on a framework designed to get young people to become active citizens and/or embrace multiculturalism.

The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV supports young people to take part in the aforementioned seminars, meetings, training events, conferences, programs or camps (e.g. European Youth, student exchange, GLEN, AMICUS, etc.). Support can include help in writing a project and implementing it, co-funding, any other kind of organisational aid, etc.

1.3.3 Young people can do voluntary work on the local level.

The indicator is fulfilled if young people of the KOV have opportunities to do voluntary work in one of the KOV's institutions or in one of its partner institutions (if cooperation is available).

1.3.4 Young people can do voluntary work on the international level.

The indicator is fulfilled if the opportunities to do voluntary work on the international level (e.g. through European Voluntary Service, EVS) have been created for young people (e.g. spreading information, counselling, financial aid and cooperation with partners).

1.3.5 There are opportunities for young people from other countries to do voluntary work in the institutions of the KOV (e.g. through EVS).

The indicator is fulfilled if the institutions of the KOV (or their partner institutions, if cooperation is available) offer an opportunity for young people from other countries to do voluntary work.

1.4 Recognition of learning experience and results.

1.4.1 There is an organised system to acknowledge young people's experience and results obtained from non-formal learning (incl. voluntary work).

The indicator is fulfilled if there is an organised and continuous acknowledgment (rewards, titles, thank-you letters, etc.) of experience and results obtained from non-formal learning (incl. voluntary work).

1.4.2 There is cooperation between formal education and non-formal education, including that formal education takes into account the learning experience obtained from non-formal education.

The indicator is fulfilled if there is cooperation between formal education and non-formal education, for example, in certain areas (P.E., music, art), general education schools take into account the lessons learnt in hobby schools (music, sports and art schools).
**Objective 2: young people have opportunities to experience participation and belonging**

Table 2. The indicators and their explanations of objective 2: “young people have opportunities to experience participation and belonging”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.1</th>
<th><strong>Promoting youth participation.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2.1.1 | There are youth assemblies that are based on the principles of youth participation (elected by young people, members belong to different age groups, participates in the decision-making process of the KOV, represents the interests of young people).  
*The indicator is fulfilled if there is a youth assembly that is in accordance with the principles of youth participation (elected by young people, members belong to different age groups, participates in the decision-making process of the KOV, represents the interests of young people).* |
| 2.1.2 | There are student councils in general education and vocational education schools.  
*The indicator is fulfilled if there is a student council in all general education and vocational education schools (except elementary schools).* |
| 2.1.3 | There is an intended financial support for student councils and youth assemblies.  
*The indicator is fulfilled if the financial support is given annually to student councils and youth assemblies.* |
| 2.1.4 | There is an intended non-monetary support for student councils and youth assemblies.  
*The indicator is fulfilled if the non-monetary support (e.g. permission to use the rooms, counselling, and practical training (e.g. how unions are created and how they work)) is given annually to student councils and youth assemblies.* |
| 2.1.5 | The KOV supports the participation of its young people in youth assemblies on the county and national levels.  
*The KOV also enhances the participation (e.g. spreading information, financial support) of its young people in youth assemblies on the county and national levels. The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV has intentionally promoted with specific activities the participation on the county and national levels.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.2</th>
<th><strong>Promoting young people’s civic initiative.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2.2.1 | There is a working system to financially support young people’s civic initiative.  
*The indicator includes civic initiatives on the local level – different youth associations, youth organisations, youth initiatives (excl. youth assembly).* |
| 2.2.2 | Young people’s civic initiatives are supported using non-monetary means.  
*The indicator includes civic initiatives on the local level – different youth associations, youth organisations, youth initiatives (excl. youth assembly). Non-monetary support is, for example, a permission to use the rooms for free, counselling and practical training (e.g. how unions are created and how they work).* |
| 2.2.3 | The participation of young people in youth associations, youth organisations and student council is at least 5%.  
*The indicator is fulfilled if the number (%) of young people participating in youth associations, youth organisations, student council and youth assembly of the KOV is at least 5% of all young people living in the administrative territory of the KOV.* |
| 2.2.4 | Young people’s awareness of youth associations and youth organisations is high (at least 15% of young people are aware).  
*The indicator is fulfilled if the number (%) of young people who can name at least one youth association or organisation (excl. student council, county youth assembly, open youth centre) and describe its activities is at least 15%.* |
| 2.2.5 | Youth associations’ feedback on their cooperation with the KOV is good (at least 80% of youth associations consider cooperation to be good).  
*The indicator is fulfilled if youth associations’ feedback on their cooperation with the KOV is good (at least 80% of youth associations consider cooperation to be good).* |
Objective 3: youth information, prevention activities and counselling services have been made available for young people

Table 3. The indicators and their explanations of objective 3: “youth information, prevention activities and counselling services have been made available for young people”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.1</th>
<th>Young people have access to high-quality counselling service.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1</td>
<td>Young people are provided with different counselling services (incl. study advising, career advising, career service programs, etc.). If it is not possible, then the KOV has made clear agreements and established cooperation with the other KOVs and with public, private or non-profit sectors that guarantee young people in the municipality access to high-quality counselling services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if the counselling service is provided for young people or there are relevant agreements made that guarantee all young people of the municipality access to high-quality counselling service.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.2</td>
<td>Counselling service provided for young people is in compliance with service standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if the counselling service provided for young people is in compliance with service standards (career advising standard).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.3</td>
<td>Young people’s satisfaction with counselling service’s quality is high (at least 90% are content).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if at least 90% of young people who have used the counselling service consider its quality to be “very good” or “fairly good”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.4</td>
<td>Young people’s satisfaction with the counselling service’s accessibility is high (at least 90% are content).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if at least 90% of young people who have used the counselling service consider its accessibility to be “very good” or “fairly good”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.2</th>
<th>The information for young people is available.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2.1</td>
<td>Various channels of communication are employed to disseminate youth information, incl. those in the online environment (e.g. information lists, information network (incl. those where student representatives belong to), information fairs, information days, etc.) through which it is guaranteed that the information reaches all target groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if the information for young people is disseminated by employing various channels of communication (incl. in the online environment) that guarantee access to information to all target groups (in case of younger children to their parents).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.2</td>
<td>Young people are provided with youth information services. If the KOV itself lacks possibilities (organisations/sub-organisations/units) to carry out the dissemination of information, then the KOV has made clear agreements and established cooperation with the other KOVs and with public, private or non-profit sectors that guarantee all young people living in the administrative territory of the KOV a high-quality access to youth information services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if the youth information service in compliance with youth information standard is provided or there are relevant agreements made that guarantee all young people of the municipality access to high-quality youth information service.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.3</td>
<td>Young people are informed about the nature and availability of information, supervising and counselling services (e.g. training courses for young people, visits of schools and open youth centres, mobile youth work, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV organises or regularly supports the activities that inform young people about the nature and availability of information, supervising and counselling services and motivate them to use it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.4</td>
<td>Young people are informed about the non-formal learning recognition instruments (e.g. ‘stardiplats’, self-evaluation, certificate, volunteer passport, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV guides its young people to take an advantage of non-formal learning recognition instruments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2.5</td>
<td>Young people’s satisfaction with youth information’s availability is high (at least 90% are content).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if at least 90% of all (questioned) young people living in the administrative territory of the KOV consider access to necessary youth-related high-quality information to be “very good” or “fairly good”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3 Help coping with problems and preventive actions are diverse and supported by a broad cooperation network.

3.3.1 The KOV coordinates or participates actively in the cooperation network created to prevent the youth risk behaviour (e.g. juvenile committee, T.O.R.E program, youth information specialist, career adviser, social pedagogue, special education teacher, school psychologist, child protection specialist, youth work specialist, etc.).

The indicator is fulfilled if there is a functioning cooperation network to prevent the youth risk behaviour run by the KOV or where the KOV is an active member (e.g. juvenile committee, T.O.R.E program, youth information specialist, career adviser, social pedagogue, special education teacher, school psychologist, child protection specialist, youth work specialist, etc.).

3.3.2 The KOV supports the youth work institutions, projects, programs or joint actions of the cooperation network either in cash or in kind.

The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV supports either in cash or in kind the various actions aimed at preventing primary problems, incl. the actions of the cooperation network (e.g. traffic safety, addiction disorder, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, computer, energy drinks, bullying, online dangers, healthy lifestyle, incl. healthy eating, sex education, relationships, values education).

3.3.3 The KOV supports either in cash or in kind diverse youth work activities meant for young people at risk.

The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV supports either in cash or in kind diverse activities meant for young people at risk (early school leavers, pregnant teenagers, substance users, socially and economically marginalised, and those who have a proclivity for risk behaviour).

3.3.4 There is a possibility to do community service (sanction applied to adolescents) in the institutions of the KOV or its partners who are service providers.

The indicator is fulfilled if there is a community service possibility as a sanction applied to adolescents. The indicator is valid only if the adolescents have been sent before the juvenile committee.

Objective 4: creating an environment favourable to high-quality youth work

Table 4. The indicators and their explanations of objective 4: “creating an environment favourable to high quality youth work”.

4.1 Youth work is set as a priority in the official documentation of the KOV.

4.1.1 In the official documentation of the KOV, the priorities of youth work are: non-formal education, youth participation and sense of belonging (incl. the establishment of youth council), dissemination of information, counselling, prevention of problems and efficient reaction to juvenile delinquency, consistency, safety and suitability for activities of youth work places, providing equal opportunities, recognition of youth work.

The indicator is fulfilled if the aforementioned priorities are reflected in the official documentation of the KOV (e.g. KOV's development plan, youth work development plan, other document or act).

4.1.2 Youth work priorities are set on the basis of needs and situation of young people in the KOV, taking into account the specificities of each region.

The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV has an overview of the situation, needs and specificities of young people in a certain region and has taken it into account when setting priorities in the youth field.

4.1.3 The KOV's youth policy reflects an integrated youth policy.

The indicator is fulfilled if the youth policy planned by the KOV is horizontal and reflects various areas of life (e.g. labour market, education, culture, etc.) connected to young person's living conditions.

4.2 The KOV's youth work is based on a written action plan.

4.2.1 The KOV has a written youth work action plan that among other things defines the objectives of youth work, the activities to be carried out, instruments of action, people responsible for activities and criteria for evaluating results.

The indicator is fulfilled if at KOV level there is a valid written action plan for youth work (e.g. KOV's development plan, youth action plan, etc.). The plan needs to be sufficiently precise, indicating at least KOV's youth work objectives, the activities to be carried out, instruments of action, people responsible for activities and criteria for evaluating results.
4.2.2 The implementation of youth work action plan is closely monitored.

The indicator is fulfilled if there is a regularly used system for monitoring the implementation of youth work action plan.

4.3 Young people are included in the decision-making process.

4.3.1 The KOV includes young people in the process of planning and designing the activities and financing of youth work.

The indicator is fulfilled if young people are given annually an opportunity to play a role in the process of youth work budgeting (e.g. participating in council, town or parish board meetings, involving through assemblies, youth councils).

4.3.2 The KOV’s officials (with powers and competence in youth policy) know which methods to use and how to involve young people and youth workers.

The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV’s officials (with powers and competence in youth policy) know how to involve young people and use suitable methods. The indicator is based on the evaluation of people who executed the quality assessment.

4.3.3 Young people are regularly consulted on all matters of youth policy (youth work, employment, health, culture, social policy, family policy, crime prevention policy, environment, etc.).

The indicator is fulfilled if it has become a norm that young people are included in the policy-making, performance and assessment of youth work (e.g. through youth council or in some other way).

4.3.4 There is an organised system to acknowledge participants and recruiters (e.g. rewards, titles, thank-you letters, events, media reports, etc.).

The indicator is fulfilled if the acknowledgment of participants and recruiters takes place regularly on the basis of an organised system, for example, giving out rewards, titles and thank-you letters.

4.3.5 There are suitable participation opportunities for different target and age groups (incl. young people with fewer opportunities, employed young people, unemployed young people, young parents, etc.).

The indicator is fulfilled if different target and age groups have been taken into account when creating the participation opportunities and everyone has a possibility to take part in the inclusion process.

4.4 There are professional and motivated youth workers.

4.4.1 Youth workers (incl. volunteers working with young people) comply with legal requirements.

The indicator is fulfilled if there are youth workers and volunteers who comply with Youth Work Act § 5 and other legal requirements.

4.4.2 Youth workers (including volunteers) comply with safety requirements defined in professional standard and practice (e.g. qualification standards of youth and project camp’s presidents and supervisors, first aid and safety equipment regulations for activities with higher risk factor, regulations of the European youth information and counselling agency ERYICA, counsellor’s professional standard regulations).

The indicator is fulfilled if youth workers comply with safety requirements defined in professional standard and practice.

4.4.3 Youth workers (incl. volunteers) regularly improve their skills by participating in professional training and further training courses. The KOV has a well-planned training system.

The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV has a well-planned training system for youth workers who regularly participate in professional training and further training courses.

4.4.4 The KOV regularly recognises youth workers for their good performance (rewards, titles, thank-you letters, events, media report).

The indicator is fulfilled if youth workers are regularly recognised (at least once a year). The recognition is usually given for outstanding deeds or results in the field of youth work.

4.4.5 Youth workers understand the learning outcome of their work.

The indicator is fulfilled if 90% of youth workers are able to explain to young people the learning outcome of all their youth-oriented activities.

4.4.6 Recognition is motivational for youth workers.

The indicator is fulfilled if at least 80% of youth workers consider recognition to be “very motivational” or “fairly motivational”.

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### 4.5 Youth work institutions are well equipped and accessible to young people.

| 4.5.1 | Institutions providing youth work are situated within a reasonable distance of young people’s place of living.  
The indicator is fulfilled if the institutions providing youth work (i.e. youth work institutions) are situated close enough to young people, meaning that it is possible for young people to get to the youth work institution in less than 30 minutes (can also include using the means of transportation). |
| 4.5.2 | The access to the institutions providing youth work is also guaranteed to young people with special needs.  
The indicator is fulfilled if the access to the institutions providing youth work is also guaranteed to young people with special needs (incl. young people with physical disability). |
| 4.5.3 | Institutions providing youth work are open at the appropriate times for young people.  
The indicator shows whether the needs and wishes of young people in terms of opening hours have been taken into consideration. This means that young people were asked to give their feedback on suitable opening hours of the institutions providing youth work. The indicator is fulfilled if 90% of all young people who were questioned find that the opening hours of the institutions providing youth work are “suitable” or “fairly suitable”. |
| 4.5.4 | Young people’s feedback on youth work institutions’ location suitability is high (at least 80% are content).  
The indicator is fulfilled if at least 80% of all young respondents living in the administrative territory of the KOV find that the locations of the youth work institutions are “suitable” or “fairly suitable”. |
| 4.5.5 | Young people’s feedback on youth work institutions’ equipment supply is high (hobby schools, extracurricular activities at schools, open youth centres, information and counselling centres; at least 90%).  
The indicator is fulfilled if at least 90% of young people who have used youth work institutions find that their equipment supply is “very good” or “fairly good”. This is evaluated in hobby education schools, in general education schools with extracurricular activities, in open youth centres, in information and counselling centres. |

### 4.6 Up-to-date and innovative methods and environments are used in youth work.

| 4.6.1 | The KOV organises mobile youth work.  
The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV regularly organises youth work at meeting points of young people (e.g. beaches, department stores, etc.). |
| 4.6.2 | The KOV develops up-to-date and innovative environments for youth work.  
The indicator is fulfilled if the KOV regularly uses innovative approaches in its youth work (e.g. in urban planning, there are designated places to enhance the interaction between different generations and young people). |

### 4.7 Young people’s needs, interests and satisfaction with youth work’s quality are regularly investigated; feedback collected and given.

| 4.7.1 | Data on young people and youth work (e.g. youth participation, employers, volunteers, results of activities, guiding materials, etc.) are collected on a regular basis.  
The indicator is fulfilled if there is regular data collection in the youth area (there is a database of youth work-related information). |
| 4.7.2 | Regular studies are carried out to collect information about the needs and interest of young people.  
The indicator is fulfilled if the regular studies are carried out to collect information about the needs and interest of young people (at least once a year). |
| 4.7.3 | Regular studies are carried out to investigate young people’s satisfaction with youth work-related activities/services.  
The indicator is fulfilled if the regular studies are carried out to investigate young people’s satisfaction with youth work-related activities/services (at least once a year). |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4.7.4</th>
<th>Collected data on the needs, interests and satisfaction of young people are analysed and on their basis the improvements made.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if the collected data on needs, interests and satisfaction of young people is regularly analysed, on its basis youth work evaluated and if necessary, the improvements made (e.g. access to the information is improved, more young people are included in certain areas, training youth workers, etc.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7.5</td>
<td>Young people receive feedback on their proposals (if these were considered or not) within a reasonable time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if, after presenting proposals to the KOV, young people always receive feedback (if their proposals were considered and to what extent, which decisions based on it were made, which will be the further actions, which were the reasons behind rejection) within a reasonable time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7.6</td>
<td>Young people's satisfaction with consideration of their interests and needs is high (at least 80% are content).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The indicator is fulfilled if at least 80% of all young respondents living in the administrative territory of the KOV find that the needs and interest of young people have been taken into account (always or most of the time) when deciding on youth-related questions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introducing Youth Information Quality Standards in Czech Republic

What are the Youth Information Quality Standards?

Youth information work in Czech Republic has undergone a quality standardization process in order to develop a common understanding on how youth information services should be provided. Youth information work in Czech Republic was done by two types of organisations – NGOs and municipality funded leisure time centres. Both provided different services depending on which structure they belonged to. Quality standardization was also needed to establish a common pathway into improving performance within the network and secure public funding specifically for youth information services.

Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport asked The National Youth Information Centre (NICM) to prepare the Youth Information Quality Standards and a document focusing youth information policy in order to increase the importance of youth information services and unify the services in Czech Republic. So it was done in cooperation with regional youth information centres (ICM) and other organisations, which are involved in youth information and counselling services. Both documents – quality standards and policy paper are revised and improved regularly according to requirements from Ministry and proposals and comments from ICMs.

Who is it for?

The Youth Information Quality Standards are for all youth information providers in Czech Republic who wish to improve their services for young people. From 2009 all Youth Information Centres wishing to apply for governmental funding are obliged to enter the quality improvement process and undergo certification procedure.

How does it work?

To ensure the best practice for Youth Information Services throughout Czech Republic, quality assessment and performance improvement are in the centre of developing and delivering the services. Through the Youth Information Quality Standards Framework the organisations and professionals concerned with youth information are in the possession of a practical tool that helps them to respond to the changing needs of young people.

The standard itself is divided into 7 main topics:

1. Structure of governing of ICM
2. Working conditions
3. Information and counselling services
4. Information handover
5. Staff
6. Funding
7. Publicity

Every standard is then divided into further subtopics by describing the criteria that has to be met. Meeting the criteria is translated into award points. Total maximum number of awarding points is 100. The standard is accompanied by various support documents for the auditor (Codex of Auditors, practical tools such as checklists, etc.)

Youth Information Centre has to get minimum 80 points to be certified. They have to fulfil all priority standards (70 points) and also get minimum 10 points from non-priority standards (see annex 1).

Special control commission was established to monitor the compliance with the standards. It consists from
employees of NICM. Based on their monitoring report, the special coordination body of youth information system in the Czech Republic, called Coordination council of youth information providers (KRPIM) then decided whether the quality sign is awarded or not. KRPIM consists from employees of Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport (youth department), head of NICM, heads of 3 umbrella NGOs, to which most of youth information centres belong to.

At present (2013) there are 17 certified youth information centers in the Czech Republic. Only certified ICM can apply for national funding for certified youth information centers. This is the biggest advantage for ICM why to enter into certification process.

The Concept sets also the unitary classification of information that every single ICM has to provide. There are 11 main topics (elaborated into concrete topics)

1. Education in the Czech Republic
2. Education Abroad
3. Work in the Czech Republic
4. Work abroad
5. Travelling in the Czech Republic
6. Travelling abroad
7. Leisure time
8. Socio-pathological phenomena
9. Citizen and state
10. Youth in the EU
11. Regional information
## The evaluation questionnaire

### 1. Structure of YIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Evaluation of commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1.</td>
<td>YIC observe National codex of quality standards and the principles of European youth information charter. The structure of organisation management is clearly set with clear responsibilities for staff, planning, financing, development, operation. Founder of YIC has created the necessary documents and is proceeding according to them. In particular it is, the foundation deed, annual action plan, budget, organizational setup and the annual report. YIC has a clearly defined content and scope of their activities, what information, what the scope, form and under what conditions it provides. Adapt its services to young people, using methods and resources close to young people.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In YIC are displayed: National codex of quality standards and Czech version of European youth information charter, and employees are aware of them.
- Foundation deed
- Annual action plan
- Budget of founder with aim on YIC
- Organizational setup
- Annual report of founder.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Working conditions</th>
<th>Evaluation of commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1.</td>
<td>YIC is located in a convenient and accessible place for young people (in terms of transport accessibility and in terms of concentrations of other facilities for young people – schools, NGOs, sports, cinema, etc.).</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is selected location in which youth naturally meets or often resides.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ICM occurs at the place where at least one primary and one secondary school is, and with which YIC cooperates</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.</td>
<td>Barrier free access is provided, by YIC, it means free access of young people into YIC without changing shoes, registration, ordering in advance, etc., and if possible without physical barriers.</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• YICM is accessible without distortion of the anonymity of the client, available free of mental barriers.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• YIC has no physical access barriers.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.</td>
<td>YIC uses common name: Information centre for youth“ and unified logo of YIC and the center is visible indicated with this logo.</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Unified logo is used</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• YIC use common name: Information centre for youth</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• YIC is visible indicated from the street with unified logo and common name.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.</td>
<td>YIC environment is clearly structured and enables easy delivery of information services. In the premises of the YIC are displayed operating rules and price list, the classification of areas of information YIC. The information is appropriately signed and freely accessible to clients.</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• YIC has displayed operating rules.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• YIC has displayed price list.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It has visibly displayed uniform classification of the areas of information for YICs.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Information materials in written or electronic form are clearly arranged on open shelves, supporting an independent search.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.</td>
<td>YIC premises are adequate for providing information services, YIC have basic equipment (chairs, tables, shelves with information materials in written or electronic form, access to the Internet at least 2 PCs, printer, telephone, office supplies etc.).</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• There are separated spaces for the public and staff.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minimum equipment: tables, chairs, shelves with information materials in written or electronic form, computer equipment (PC, printer, telephone), office supplies.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.</td>
<td>Time availability of services is fixed, with opening hours on weekdays, a total of 25 hours per week, especially in the afternoon.</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It is open every weekday especially in the afternoon, a total of 25 hours per week.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Opening hours are fixed and clearly displayed.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3 Information and counselling services

#### 3.1. The YIC provides at least basic services: information and counselling services, assistance with finding information, Internet access and use of computers.

- Information Service.
- Counselling service.
- Assistance with searching for information.
- Internet access.
- Use of PC, printing…

#### 3.2. YIC follows a uniform classification of fields of information for YICs. Information is categorized under this classification on the web and in printed materials. YIC provides national and regional information, especially in the areas:

**Information materials in written and electronic form:**
- Education
- Work
- Travel
- Leisure time
- Socially pathological phenomena
- Citizen and Society
- Youth and the EU
- Regional information (may be included in each area)

**Web:**
- Education
- Work
- Travel
- Leisure time
- Socially pathological phenomena
- Citizen and Society
- Youth in the EU
- Regional information iKatalogy (may be included in each area)

#### 3.3. Information needs of young people are regularly (at least 1x per year) monitored and analysis (for example by client evaluation questionnaire, questionnaire on the web, etc.) and survey results are used to improve services YIC. Supports youth participation in the activities of the YIC and supports their activities and initiatives.

- Outcomes from surveys.
- Involvement of volunteers in the YIC or its activities and events.

#### 3.4. The information is verified and available. YIC makes sure that they are provided promptly, accurately, completely, timely and that information is relevant. YIC shall ensure the independence, impartiality, free of charge, anonymity. Regional information is regularly sent to the joint web www.icm.cz.

- Regular (at least 1x a week) sending upcoming regional information to the National youth information centre (NYIC).
- Regular (at least 1 month) sending auctorial articles to the journal Remix.
- Both written and electronic documents and information on the YIC website are marked with the date, source, and on behalf of a worker who prepared the document.
- The information is up-to-date.
- Information is given anonymously and free of charge.
- Provided information is (in written or electronic form and on the web) independent and neutral.
- Regularly update the information in their region in iKatalog according instructions from NYIC
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Provision of information</th>
<th>Evaluation of commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Information is provided personally, by phone, or e-mail.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Management of statistics (physical visits in the YIC, at the YIC events, queries via phone, e-mail).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Creation of and complying of the principles of communication YIC (e.g., in what timeframe and how to answer the question).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>YIC is organizing activities with involvement of young people on their preparation and implementation.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Educational activities promoting youth information: programs, invitations, photos and messages sent to the web.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Actions that promote youth participation and cooperation towards the development of civil society: programs, invitations and final reports, photos and messages sent to the web.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Evaluation of commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5 | **5.1.** All YIC workers have written workload and contracts under applicable law.  
   | • The relevant documents.                                               | P                        |
| 5 | **5.2.** Head of the YIC has completed and graduated at least on secondary school.  
   | • Evidence of highest educational attainment.                           | P                        |
| 5 | **5.3.** Employees are alumni at least a basic course for YIC workers or have more than three years working experience in the YIC.  
   | • A certificate of completed ERYICA training – Minimum Basic Training Course  
   | • YINTRO – Stepping into Youth Information, or evidence of practice.     | P                        |
| 5 | **5.4.** Employees are continuously trained in accordance with the minimum competency profile. Undergo further training and courses to improve their professional level required for a specialist YIC worker.  
   | • Certificate of completion of 1 training.  
   | • Certificate of completion of 2 trainings.  
   | • Certificate of completion of 3 trainings.  
   | • Certificate of completion of 4 trainings.  
<p>| • Certificate of completion of 5 or more trainings.                     | 0 1 2 3 4 5               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Publicity</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>YIC operates its up-to-date website with a visible membership of the Youth Information System, content is up-to-date, website provide information from the uniform classification of the areas of information for YICs.</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Clearly identifiable YIC website, on its main page must be a common name Information Centre for Youth, unified logo and unified fields of information (as in standard 3.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Redirect the page address in the form <a href="http://www.icm.cz">www.icm.cz</a> / city.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Up-to-date information about operating conditions and activities of the YIC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Statistics of web site visits (unique approaches).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transparency, clarity and easy orientation on the website.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>ICM raises awareness about its activities in the media, at trade fairs, exhibitions, schools, etc.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Photo documentation.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The press releases.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Promotional materials.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Articles and invitations on common site <a href="http://www.icm.cz">www.icm.cz</a>.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>YIC compiles the final report on the activities and statistics on the activities of the YIC during the past year. This report must be sent no later than 31st January to the NYIC.</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Final report sent to NYIC on time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 7 Cooperation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Evaluation of commission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.1.</strong></td>
<td>YIC cooperate with other bodies active in field of children and youth (e.g. NGOs, leisure time centers, schools, or other bodies). YIC provides information and other services to these organizations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Evidence of cooperation: agreements, photographs, press releases, messages sent to the web icm.cz, database of contacts, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.2.</strong></td>
<td>YIC works with relevant regional public and governmental bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expression of the regional public authority – attached to the certification application form,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Note:</strong></td>
<td>“P” – mandatory standards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introducing German good practise example on Quality Management in YI

What is the German good practise example on Quality Management in Youth Information about?

In according to the plans of the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth to establish a so called National Action Plan on Youth Information in Germany IJAB – International Youth Service of the Federal Republic of Germany started in 2004 in cooperation with the Youth Information Network (“Jugendinfonetz”) a quality based project.

The “Youth info net” is a federal and informal network of Non-Governmental-Organizations and institutions in Germany working on a local, regional or national level in the field of youth information. Members are e. g. youth information centres, institutes for youth work and others.

The quality based project as itself lasted from 2004 to 2008. It was funded partially by the German Federal Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ).

Aims of the project:

- To describe the working field of youth information as part of the youth welfare system in Germany, including aims and objectives, structure, content, target groups and outcome/ products of work,
- To have a common understanding on quality in the field,
- To create a system which allows employees in the youth information sector
  - to measure their quality,
  - to compare the level of quality with others in the field and
  - to give an orientation framework to those who wish to become a member in this network
  - to avoid misuse in the field
- To come up with relevant ideas for further qualification of staff and volunteers in the field and with plans on how to increase participation of youngsters in the field.

Who is it for and how does it work?

The German Quality Management in Youth Information process involves German NGO-s and other institutions that work with youth information on a local, regional or national level and co-operate under the umbrella of Youth Info Net. With involvement of the network the project has developed through different steps described below:

› **Step 1:** Survey monkey on quality related issues in the field among the network, done by IJAB; report on the results of the survey monkey to the General Assembly of the network (2005)

› **Step 2:** Establishment of a Quality working group (2005 – 2007), consisting of 10 field workers among the network and meeting sessions approx. 5 times a year

› **Step 3:** Ongoing consultation process to the “Youthinfonet” and to the Quality working group, done by an expert on Quality management in social and educational institutions and EFQM-Auditor (IJAB, Kerstin Giebel)

› **Step 4:** Establishment of two more working groups:
  a. on further qualification within the network
  b. on participation of youngsters

› **Step 5:** Final report and conclusions on the Quality project; Public relation work on the products; Working plan for the future of the network and recommendations to the Federal Ministry (2008).
Outcome and products of the project:

The Quality developmental process among the network very soon led directly to some relevant questions which were discussed in parallel and became crucial for the above mentioned two more working groups:

- How does the network support staff and volunteers to raise their competencies in the youth information field?
- What kind of further qualification the network offers to their members to improve quality within the youth information field?
- How does the network increase the number and the amount of participation of youngsters in the field?

Finally the network came up with several products:

- A booklet „Catalogue on Services and Quality Management for institutions working in the field of Youth Information“ ("Leistungs- und Qualitätskatalog für Dienste und Einrichtungen im Arbeitsfeld Jugendinformation")
- A design for a further qualification package for employees and volunteers in youth information field consisting of five modules (two basics plus three additional modules). One of the five modules was dedicated to the topic “Quality management and – development in youth information”.
- A booklet on good practise examples in participation of youngsters in youth information.

Structure of the “Catalogue on Services and Quality Management for institutions working in the field of Youth Information”:

1. Introduction
2. Variety in services counts!
3. Historical view
4. Actors and funders
5. What is youth information?
6. Juridical basics of youth information in Germany
7. Main principles on youth information
8. Objectives and aims of youth information
9. Topic fields of youth information
10. Target groups of youth information services and y. i. institutions
11. Participation in youth information
12. Further qualification
13. Quality catalogue*
14. Checklist

The “Quality catalogue” consists of the following chapters:

1. Introduction
2. Main principles on Youth Information
3. Individual related services on information and counselling
4. Virtual related services on information and counselling
5. Youth information through print media and online services
6. Youth information through events and projects
7. Public relation work
8. Frame work / Field conditions
9. Glossary

*The Quality catalogue as itself is a tool to measure quality, to compare yourself with other institutions in the working field and to take action on relevant issues which are important to guarantee quality but are missed so far or not well performed yet.
**Benefit of the project:**

*Inside the network:*

- It tremendously raised the awareness on quality related issues among the network and was implemented in daily work by the members of the network.
- Through the project the network started a strong discussion on the common philosophy (Leitbild), the Corporate Identity and Corporate Design of the network.
- Further qualification package: The package was given very successful (2 series) to members of the German Youthinfonet, but also to a number of high motivated field workers from abroad (German speaking countries) up to 2010.

*Outside the network:*

- The catalogue was recognised by the Federal Ministry as a fundamental step of the working field to establish a common understanding on quality on a national level and as part of the Youth Welfare system in Germany. It became a “door opener” for a continuously dialogue between civil society (youth information services) in Germany at national level and with local bodies from 2008.
- The Quality process and the Quality tool themselves became a role model for more institutions and networks of youth (information) work in other countries.

Further information: www.jugendinfonetz.de or www.ijab.de
Introducing an example of Quality Information Services to Young People in France

Information is a significant contributor to our daily lives, and our information needs are varied and always changing. Professionals have a duty to ensure that the information provided to young people is accurate, up-to-date and what they want and need. High quality information helps young people make informed decisions, get the services they need and play a full role as active citizens. Ensuring young people are receiving the best information available helps them access future opportunities, facilitates their autonomy and empowerment and raises aspirations. Access to comprehensive, objective, understandable and reliable information on all their questions and needs is a vital part of a democratic society.

The youth information services in France – Youth Information and Documentation Centre (CIDJ), Regional Youth Information Centre (CRIJ), Youth Information Bureau (BIJ) and Youth Information Point (PIJ) – must evolve to correspond to changing behaviours and needs of young people, developments in info – communication technologies, and to meet the expectations of institutional partners in implementing policy aims.

These services must also evolve in compliance with the ethical principles underlying the Youth Information label (based on national documents and European Youth Information Charter) issued by the Ministry of Youth.

Concerned about the quality of services offered to young users, the network of youth information services and the Ministry of Youth felt the need to identify good practices in youth information. The initiative in this document is to describes all elements of youth information services offered to young people and develop their unity in France.

Who is it for?

- For youth information centres, access points and online youth information services that wish to enhance their activities, to improve the visibility of their activities and impact, evaluate their service provision, continuous improvement, training new personnel;
- Project based youth initiatives to help them to define and implement the youth information services within the project;
- For the staff of the Ministry of Youth, in their efforts to labelling and evaluation of youth information services.

How does it work?

The central part of youth information services are the ethical principles underlying the foundation of how youth information should be provided. The principles are coherent with the French and European Youth Information Charters and include the following:

› Freedom of Access to Information

  Services are available to all young people without discrimination.
  The information is easily accessible and free.

› Welcoming young people

  Each user is treated respecting individuality, privacy and the right to anonymity.
  The service is organized to empower young people, develop their ability to analyse and use information.

› A youth-friendly information

  The information meets the needs and demands of young people and adapts to their development and
those of society.

› **An objective and independent information**

The services are implemented to provide an objective and accurate information, independent of any religious, political, ideological or commercial influence.

In order to evaluate the compliance with those principles, the performance of youth information service providers is assessed in following categories:

- welcoming users in a friendly way
- informing and counselling services
- means contributing to the quality of services
- continuous improvement of services

For more detailed overview on how these categories are assessed please see it below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. WELCOMING USERS IN A FRIENDLY WAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Information area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Easily accessible information area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b) An information area which is easy to identify and to find</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The hosting organisation must:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• provide a specific area for Yi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• clearly identify the Yi area by using the “Youth Information” logo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• if the Yi area holds the cyber point label, identify it with the logo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• clearly display the Yi charter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is recommended that the YIC area be mentioned on the municipality's communication tools (examples: city map, practical guides, newsletter, website, road signs...)

It is recommended that the Yi area creates and disseminates leaflets which promote its own services.
### c) Opening hours which are relevant for the target group

Opening hours must address young people's behaviours and lifestyles.

The number of weekly opening hours for the YI area must be minimum:
- 40 hours for CIDJ
- 35 hours for a regional centre (CRIJ or CIJ)
- 30 hours for a YI Bureau (BIJ)
- 15 hours for a YI Point (PIJ)

It must be open on Wednesdays and/or Saturdays
It is recommended to be open in the evening after 6pm, according to habits of young people at local level
In order to guarantee continuity in the service, it is recommended to open during school holidays
It is recommended for cyber points to open at least 30 hours per week, including two evenings and at least a half-day on Saturdays or Sundays

### d) A welcome area which is specifically arranged

The minimum surface for a YI area is:
- 100 square meters for YICs
- 30 square meters for BJJs
- 15 square meters for PIJs

the YI area should include:
- an information desk
- a self-information part which is organised in a thematic way
- an area which guarantees confidentiality for some of the conversations with young people
- an access to the Internet or to a cyber point area, if the YIC has this label

In the YI area, users should have access to:
- display furniture, shelves
- tables and chairs for visitors
- a display area for posters and information notices
- clear signs for services and material, in order to make self-information easier
- a computer (or more) with a connection to the Internet, at least:
  - For a YI Point: 1 computer
  - or a YI Bureau: 2 computers
  - For a YI Centre: 5 computers

YICs which hold the Cyber point label should avail of at least 5 computers connected to the Internet, in order to guarantee:
- access to the Internet
- creating texts which contain images
- using images and sound
- getting videos
- creating multimedia content
- creating web pages, websites and blogs
- printing documents
- writing CDs and/or DVDs

The YI area should offer printing and copying services
It should be clean and tidy
The use of space should be ergonomic and adapted to young people: comfort, atmosphere, friendliness
### 1.2. Welcoming users in the YI area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Service details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prerequisites</strong></td>
<td>Services should be provided in an anonymous way. Information is delivered in a way which respects users' private life and right not to give their name. If users agree, and if need be for the quality of the service expected, users may give their name (applying for a grant, preparing a application form for a competition, follow-up form used by different organisations…) If YI workers need the name and status of a user for providing a service (access to the Internet, in some cases), then they should explain why Personal data which YI workers collect should not be transferred or used for an other purpose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) <strong>Give attention to visitors who enter the YIC</strong></td>
<td>No appointment should be required for a user to meet a YI worker YI workers should be available and first address users who came in first An adapted process should be organised in order to address flow of visitors, waiting time and unexpected situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) <strong>Be available and friendly</strong></td>
<td>YI workers should be: • easy to identify as YI workers • polite and friendly • respectful of users • patient and able to keep calm • Fully available • engaging conversation • taking the user and his/her situation into consideration • showing interest • attentive, and not impose • explain how the YIC is organised and show the user where to find information material (both on paper and online) which is relevant to him/her There should be enough YI workers in the YI area At least one YI worker should be present during opening hours Priority must be given to users, even when YI workers are also in charge of other tasks If the YI area has the Cyber point label, it is recommended that two youth workers be working in the Cyber point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) <strong>All users are welcome</strong></td>
<td>YI workers should welcome all users in the same fair way, without discriminating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.3 YI services in different premises (events, forums)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Service details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) <strong>Identify the YI service</strong></td>
<td>The YI stand should be clearly identified by relevant signs which comply to the YI visual identity and logo Information on the YI service should be published in the communication material of the event The YI stand should be well integrated to the event and be coherent for the themes of other stands or activities It is recommended that the YIC participates to the organisation of the event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) <strong>Answer enquiries</strong></td>
<td>YI workers should welcome users in the same way as in the YIC (see 4.1.2.b). Contact details of local YICs should be communicated to users</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## 2. INFORMING AND COUNSELLING USERS

### 2.2.1. Disseminating information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Service details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>a) Provide free of charge and easy to access information</strong></td>
<td>Information is provided free of charge and is easy to access. Locking documents should be avoided, except for some books. It should be easy for users to understand in which conditions they may access to certain types of documents (books, CD). Users may write down notes on information they need. Paper and pens should be available free of charge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b) Organise the display of information</strong></td>
<td>Information should be displayed in an organised way. It should be easy to find: signs, stickers, colour codes, classification system. An index or users’ instructions for this classification should be available Information on the YIC’s website should be displayed in an organised way and be easy to use.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **c) Offer information which matches users’ needs** | The YIC offers national, regional and local information:  
  - “Actuel CIDJ”, the national YI material  
  - a local information supplement  
  - thematic documents created by the YIC or the YI network, i.e. guides on European mobility, youth initiatives, summer jobs, professions, youth camps, etc.  
  - It is recommended to offer other documents, such as directories, catalogues, documents on specific topics published by YI workers or other specialised publishers. |
| **d) Offer up-to-date and reliable information** | “Actuel CIDJ” and “Actuel régional” files are updated on a regular basis and following their publication. YI workers carry out a regular check on leaflets and all documents which contain a date What should be checked:  
  - information which documents published by the YIC contain  
  - reliability of sources (publication, websites..)  
  - contact details and activities of organisations  
  - whether organisations mentioned are not members of sects  
  - Checking documents on paper should take place at least once a year. Updating should be also done this way. It is recommended to check information provided on the YIC’s website in real time |
| **e) Highlight information related to news** | Well displayed information helps users identify easily events, fairs, shows, forums, exhibitions, open days, and deadlines for registrations… At least one local newspaper should be available for young people. It is recommended to make press available (daily newspapers, magazines of interest to users). |
| **f) Offer local information** | The YIC disseminates information on local life and services:  
  - activities, services and timetables for cultural and social centres…  
  - sports activities and events  
  - open days, forums, fairs  
  - youth councils at municipal, district or regional level |
g) Facilitate access to information in different ways

Information is available in the YIC:
- on paper (folders, posters) which users may read on the premises, take away or buy
- digitally: Facebook, Twitter, Netvibes, Internet…

Information is also provided:
- by phone, letter and email
- on the website or webpages of the YIC

Conditions to access information should be made clear to users: hours, cost of some services (if relevant), user charter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.2 Answering enquiries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prerequisite</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Identify the user's needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Offer information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Have a face to face discussion with the user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Make sure that the information is appropriate for the user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Counselling, supporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help to carry out an individual or collective project</strong></td>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>
|                                                                        | Extra support may be offered for the implementation of the project:  
|                                                                        | • Contact resource organisations and persons                                           |
|                                                                        | • Support in formalising and writing the project                                       |
|                                                                        | • Follow-up at different stages                                                       |
|                                                                        | • Organise meetings at each step, etc.                                                 |
|                                                                        | • Organise meetings at each step, etc.                                                 |
| **2.5 Making information alive**                                        | YICs should set up a programme of collective information sessions (ex: forum on health, conference-debate on professions, day events on apprenticeship, exchange of experience on European mobility) |
| **a) Organise events in the YI area**                                   | It is recommended that YICs participate to national or regional thematic events  
|                                                                        | It is recommended that YICs participate to national or regional thematic events  
|                                                                        | It is recommended to invite partner organisations which are expert of the theme of the event                                                |
|                                                                        | It is recommended to involve young people in preparing the programme, to showcase or to present their works or their projects: photos, films, artistic projects, etc. |
|                                                                        | In order to reach out more audiences, it is recommended to organise events in places where they are:                                      |
| **b) Organise events near places where users are or participate to events** | • Secondary schools and universities                                                   |
|                                                                        | • Local youth clubs and social centres                                                 |
|                                                                        | • Rural areas                                                                         |
|                                                                        | • At different events.                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                        | During events, the information is delivered to young people using different material (paper, multimedia), depending on objectives: exhibitions, posters, press corner, videos, multimedia, ads, learning games, quizzes, online forums, etc. |
| **c) Deliver information using different tools**                        | During events, the information is delivered to young people using different material (paper, multimedia), depending on objectives: exhibitions, posters, press corner, videos, multimedia, ads, learning games, quizzes, online forums, etc. |
| **2.6 Foster interactions, create links**                              | Foster interaction between partners: The YIC fosters interactions between its users and partner organisations (Agency for the Unemployed, Regional student services, centres for the inclusion of young people, social services, cultural organisations, youth councils, etc.) |
| **Create links**                                                       | These organisations may deliver information in the YIC on a regular basis or less frequently  
|                                                                        | Encourage interaction between individuals: Depending on local needs, YICs may offer:  
|                                                                        | • Job ads                                                                            |
|                                                                        | • Accommodation ads                                                                   |
|                                                                        | • Car sharing ads                                                                     |
|                                                                        | • Volunteering offers                                                                  |
|                                                                        | • Creating music bands                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                        | • Meeting sessions, debates for young people, etc.                                      |
## 3. MEANS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO THE QUALITY OF SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Service details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.1 Create and produce information and learning resources</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>a) Produce information tools which are adapted to the needs of young people and professionals</strong></td>
<td>CIDJ should produce national information tools (Actuel CIDJ, thematic kits, websites) Regional YICs should produce regional information tools (websites, fact files) Local YICs may produce local information tools (websites or pages, information folders, extracts, local resources directories) All publications must include the YI logo and comply with the rules indicated in the “Methodological guide for Ile-de-France” Depending on the local context, it is recommended that some documents be translated into different languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>b) Disseminate information which is adapted to the needs of young people and professionals</strong></td>
<td>Regional YICs and local YICs must subscribe to receive regional and national information material published by CIDJ.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.2 Be active in the network</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.2.1 Coproducing information</strong></td>
<td>The national database of the YI network is fed by both CIDJ and the regional YICs CIDJ and regional YICs should contribute to collecting information and checking it in order to produce quality information (feeding the national database, indicating necessary updates on regional information files, sharing guide contents).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.2.2 Network life and development</strong></td>
<td>Local YICs are active members of the YI network. They make suggestions and are partners for activities launched by CIDJ, regional YIC, local YI associations or other local YICs. They take part to joint activities and reflection activities. They share experience and information in order to improve the quantity, the quality and the visibility of YI:  - Active and regular participation to local and regional meetings and basic or continuous trainings  - Support, promotion and joint organisation of activities launched at national, regional or local level by the YI network.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.3. Work with partners</strong></td>
<td>Lively and up-to-date information should be created with competent partners The YIC identifies relevant partners according to the needs of the target area and to the YI development project Cooperation may be formalised by a written agreement or not. Cooperation must define the objectives and means to implement in order to develop national, regional or local activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.4. Guarantee and keep skills</strong></td>
<td>Skills may be gained and/or kept during basic training sessions or continuous trainings for YI workers at regional level The skills of a YI worker are at a certain level of education (IV)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# 4. Continuous Improvement of the Quality of Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Service details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.1 Increase awareness and train YI workers to be attentive to users</strong></td>
<td>YI workers are aware and know how to listen to users and identify their needs. Management should encourage YI workers to communicate what are the needs of the target group and the quality level of the service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.2 Measure users’ level of satisfaction</strong></td>
<td>A tool which measures the level of satisfaction of users is set up and based on:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Number of visitors (including variations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Users’ characteristics: typology and changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b/ Measure actual user satisfaction by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collecting information provided by the YI workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Carrying out satisfaction surveys aimed at user groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.3 Address users’ complaints</strong></td>
<td>The YIC gives user the possibility to make suggestions and complain. The YI workers should take complaints into consideration. They keep track of them, be they verbal or written (letters, suggestion book,…). There should be an answer to all suggestions and complaints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.4 Analyse collected data and improve the service</strong></td>
<td>The person in charge of the YIC checks suggestions and complaints on a weekly basis and takes into consideration the information provided by YI workers and satisfaction surveys. The person in charge of the YIC reads and analyses the outcomes of surveys and works with the team on how to improve the quality of the service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.5 Evaluate the YIC</strong></td>
<td>The YIC carries out a complete self assessment every three years using the grid. Each year, an intermediate report on progress should be produced.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introducing the Irish National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) for Youth Work


What is the National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF)?

The National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) is a support and development tool for the youth work sector. It provides organisations with an opportunity to articulate, through a common language, their youth work practice. It also provides a structured framework for organisations to assess, indicate and enhance their work.

The standards outlined in the framework are intended to be reflective of the work being carried out in youth work organisations. Therefore, there should be both a commonality and compatibility between the current youth work provision of an organisation and its services, and the core principles and standards outlined in the NQSF.

It is important that there is one common framework to accommodate the wide range of provision within the youth work sector. The rationale for the development of the NQSF initiative is:

- to provide a support and development tool to organisations and projects;
- to establish standards in the practice and provision of youth work;
- to provide an enhanced evidence base for youth work;
- to ensure resources are used effectively in the youth work sector;
- to provide a basis for ‘whole organisational assessment’.

The net effect of the NQSF will be to identify and improve the effectiveness of youth work service provision. This should result in an advancement of good practice and in allowing organisations to address the needs of young people to an even greater extent.

Central to the NQSF are 5 core principles, which are viewed as the essential elements of youth work and are fundamental to the application of the NQSF. They are:

1. Young person-centred: Recognising the rights of young people and holding as central their active and voluntary participation.
2. Committed to ensuring and promoting the safety and well-being of young people.
3. Educational and developmental.
4. Committed to ensuring and promoting equality and inclusiveness in all its dealings with young people and adults.
5. Dedicated to the provision of quality youth work and committed to continuous improvement.

Who is it for?

The NQSF is meant for all staff-led youth work organisations, services, projects and programmes funded under the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA), including Youth Service Grant Schemes, Special Projects for Youth, Young People’s Facilities and Services Funds and Youth Information Centres. The NQSF represents a mechanism through which youth work can better demonstrate its effectiveness and continue to improve both provision and practice.

All counterparts engaged in the NQSF should follow the criteria below to ensure the transparancy and uniformity of implementing the NQSF:
› **Young person-centred** – that the process is concerned with delivering the best standard of youth work for young people. Young people are central to our work and their needs are paramount.

› **Based on partnership and cooperation** – that the process will be implemented in a spirit of partnership and cooperation, with clearly defined roles and boundaries and a shared commitment to contributing to a process of on-going learning.

› **Solution-focused** – that the manner in which we work will be open, honest and supportive. We will work with integrity towards finding shared solutions to any emerging impediments to the work.

› **Challenging and developmental** – that we recognise the challenges in implementing the NQSF and are committed to working developmentally.

› **Realistic and clear** – that we recognise that the expectations and capacity of the various stakeholders are many and varied. We will seek to communicate effectively the purpose, process and outcomes to all concerned in a clear and constructive manner.

› **Focused on the benefits** – that we are convinced that the process will bring considerable benefits to all stakeholders, including young people, management, staff, volunteers and funding providers.

**How does it work?**

The starting point to the effective application of the NQSF is the process of self-assessment. It allows for the organisation itself to determine its current status and to assess future progress against this. Self–assessment is then **validated by external assessment process**, which will confirm the place and position of the standards in practice. This will be done through a review of documentary evidence, observations on practice and focus groups with stakeholders. Young people must be included among these stakeholders so as to ensure that their views, attitudes and experiences are recognised and are regarded as central to the process (see Figure 1).

Ensuring quality service provision takes time to achieve. It is difficult to definitively state the time commitment that will be involved in the implementation of the NQSF. This depends on a number of factors, such as:

› the stage of organisational development of the organisation;
› the existence of quality assurance processes within the organisation;
› the level of organisational support within the organisation and the culture of monitoring, review and evaluation in place.

The NQSF will be implemented on a 3-yearly cycle within each youth organisation (see Figure 2). In **Year 1 of implementation**, the full self-assessment and external assessment processes will take place. In **Years 2 and 3**, organisations will be required to continue to self-assess, to progress the actions outlined in their **Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)** and to **complete their Progress Report** in consultation with the VEC Officer/NQSF Standards Officer. Following Year 3, the cycle of implementation of the NQSF will come full circle and the organisation will be required to recommence the NQSF process, as in Year 1.

As a guideline, in Year 1 of implementation, the NQSF will involve a commitment of approximately one day per month. Central to this will be the work involved in the NQSF Implementation Team. It is recommended that each organisation establish a NQSF Implementation Team, the function of which is to lead the implementation of the NQSF and to ensure that progress is made in the ongoing process of continuous development. It should also be noted that outside of the structured meetings of the Implementation Team, work will also need to be progressed at an individual level. This parallel process will ensure that progress is being made in addressing the identified areas for development.
Ideally, the NQSF should be used to support what is currently happening in organisations and their services. It can be used as a framework and reference point for team meetings, service reviews, operational and strategic planning events and, where appropriate, to inform reporting requirements. If there are existing structures within the organisation that are deemed effective, these could be tasked with implementing the NQSF. Therefore, rather than the creation of new structures and tasks, what may be required is a restructuring and refocusing of the work that is already being carried out.
Figure 1: Overview of National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF)

STATEMENT OF YOUTH WORK PRACTICE

What you do: ethos; mission; service provision; defining features/functions.

Why you do it: rationale; vision; aim and objectives; outcomes.

Who is it for and with: target group; partnerships; linkages; exchanges.

How you do it: models of provision; methodologies.

Where you do it: geographical area; settings; levels; locations.

5 CORE PRINCIPLES

All youth work practice and provision is:

1. Young person-centred: Recognising the rights of young people and holding as central their active and voluntary participation.
   - Prescribed indicators:
     1.1 Systematic needs assessment.
     1.2 Services responsive to the requirements of young people.
     1.3 Services promote the strengths of young people.
     1.4 Young people involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of services.
     1.5 Clear examples of voluntary participation.

2. Committed to ensuring and promoting the safety and well-being of young people.
   - Prescribed indicators:
     2.1 Provision of supportive environments and programmes.
     2.2 Child protection policy and procedures.
     2.3 Health and safety policy and procedures.
     2.4 Appropriate insurance cover.
     2.5 Compliant with relevant legislation.

3. Educational and developmental.
   - Prescribed indicators:
     3.1 Theoretical and practical foundation.
     3.2 Range of effective youth work methodologies.
     3.3 Relevant and diverse programme/curriculum provision.
     3.4 Evidence of planned and unplanned learning.
     3.5 Developing personal and social capacities and competences.

4. Committed to ensuring and promoting equality and inclusiveness in all its dealings with young people and adults.
   - Prescribed indicators:
     4.1 Accessible, inclusive and integrated services.
     4.2 Policies, programmes and practices comply with equality legislation.
     4.3 Policies, programmes and practices promote diversity, equality and inclusiveness.

5. Dedicated to the provision of quality youth work and committed to continuous improvement.
   - Prescribed indicators:
     5.1 Culture and practice of innovation and critical reflection.
     5.2 Service provision underpinned by principles of good practice.
     5.3 Commitment to continuous development and quality assurance.
     5.4 Commitment to resource effectiveness.

Please identify one achieved outcome in relation to each of the core principles.

STANDARDS SECTION 1: Youth Work Practice and Provision
1. Planning
2. Practice
3. Progression
4. Monitoring and Assessment
5. Policies and Procedures

Self-Assessment and External Assessment
Continuous Improvement Plan
Progress Report

STANDARDS SECTION 2: Organisational Management and Development
1. Governance and Operational Management
2. Strategy
3. Volunteers
5. Collaboration and Integration
**Figure 2: Timeline for implementation of the NQSF**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPROX. TIMELINE</th>
<th>ACTIONS (by organisation except where stated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **YEAR 1**  
Months 1 – 4 | **STEP 1:** Meet with VEC Officer/NQSF Standards Officer to begin NQSF  
  - VEC Officer/NQSF Standards Officer will brief the organisation on the process and documentation, and schedule a series of meetings to provide support and guidance throughout the NQSF.  
  - Establish NQSF Implementation Team.  
  
**STEP 2:** Complete Statement of Youth Work Practice.  
**STEP 3:** Examine 5 Core Principles – identify outcomes and actions.  
**STEP 4:** Consider the 10 Standards – identify position on scale of attainment and actions.  
**STEP 5:** External assessment by VEC Officer/NQSF Standards Officer:  
  - review of documentary evidence;  
  - observations on practice;  
  - focus groups with stakeholders.  
**STEP 6:** Complete Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) in consultation with VEC Officer/NQSF Standards Officer. |
| Months 5 – 10 | Progress actions in CIP |
| Months 11 – 12 | **STEP 7:** Complete NQSF Progress Report based on implementation of CIP:  
  - Organisation completes Section 6.1;  
  - VEC Officer/NQSF Standards Officer completes Section 6.2. |
| **YEAR 2** | **STEP 8:** Continue to update and progress actions in CIP in conjunction with VEC Officer/NQSF Standards Officer.  
**STEP 9:** Complete NQSF Progress Report for Year 2. |
| **YEAR 3** | **STEP 10:** As Year 2 (and review of and plan for NQSF cycle). |

*The term ‘levels’ should be taken to mean the levels at which your organisation operates, e.g. local, regional, national and international.

**Equality and inclusiveness:** The Equal Status Act 2000 prohibits discrimination on the following grounds: gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age (not including people under 18), disability, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origin) and membership of the Traveller community.
Introducing the Welsh National Standards for Information Services for Young People

This document is summarised from the Welsh National Standards and Quality Assurance Framework. For more information please see: http://www.promo-cymru.org/resources-2/national-standards-quality-assurance-framework

What are the Welsh National Standards for Information Services for Young People?

The need for the development of National Standards for Information in Wales arose from Welsh Government and their partners sharing a commitment to the provision of high quality information for young people; and identifying a lack of national standards and accompanying Quality Assurance Framework that would enable the assessment of the quality of information services for young people provided locally and nationally.

A number of existing standards, policy documents and strategies have been reviewed to inform the development of the standards and Quality Assurance Framework. These include the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work, the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales, Youth Access Information, Advice and Counselling Quality Standards (2005), the European Youth Information Charter (2004), the Estyn Common Inspection Framework (2010) and National Children and Young People's Participation Standards for Wales.

The standard is nationally recognised for Wales in the delivery of information services for young people. It is intended to provide young people aged 11-25 and those who provide information services to them with quality standards against which information services can be assessed. Service providers can use the standards as a development/improvement tool for services themselves. Young people can use them as a clear indication of what to expect from a service and where they can have confidence in the quality of services.

Who is it for?

The National Standards and Quality Assurance Framework is meant for Youth Information Service Providers to ensure that:

› providers are delivering high quality, accurate, up-to-date, relevant, accessible and responsive information services to young people
› young people are involved in developing their understanding, skills and abilities in relation to sourcing information

The Quality Assurance Framework uses the experience and expertise of key information providers, professionals and young people in a collective endeavour to assess the delivery of services and ensure a well-informed youth population in Wales.

The outcome of the Quality Assurance Framework is for young people in Wales to be well-informed by being competent and confident users of information services.

This is achieved through the provision of services that are:

› High quality – providers develop and maintain quality standards in delivery of their services
› Up-to-date – providers keep abreast of current developments and approaches in the delivery of youth information services
› Continuously improving – Providers work to continuously improve service provision by reviewing their own policies and practices and ensuring continuing professional development of staff
› Young people led – Providers engage young people in the development and delivery of their service
How does it work?

In working to establish best practice for Youth Information Services throughout Wales, quality processes and performance management must be at the centre of development and delivery. The Quality Assurance Framework process:

› Ensures services, organisations, and professionals concerned with youth information are adaptable in order to respond to the changing needs of service users and external developments
› Involves setting and working towards achieving quality standards that should be practiced in line with the development and progression of core services, initiatives, policies, and action plans
› Is an iterative and evolving process involving staff, partners and users

The standards are accompanied by a self-assessment tool. Self-assessment should be an ongoing, rigorous process involving assessment against the indicators to identify quality, areas for development and continuous improvement. The assessment is intended to actively involve young people in a range of roles, including as young-inspectors. Young people are the consumers and beneficiaries of these services and are best placed to measure many of the elements of the standards.

The self-assessment and young people's inspection should result in the production of an action plan setting out the scores, key strengths and weaknesses, action required, timescale, resources required and lead responsibility. The Action Plan should be developed collaboratively with relevant partners, including young people. It should be accessible to staff, young people and other relevant partners to enable them to track progress and contribute support and resources. The Action Plan should be a living document, regularly updated as progress is made.

A youth inspectorate system (I-Spect) is being developed alongside these standards and Quality Assurance Framework. This will focus on the development of a toolkit to enable young people, with appropriate support, to fully engage in helping assess and inspect the information services that are provided for them.

Once developed, I-Spect will be piloted and the findings from the pilot will be used to inform – and amend if necessary – the standards, Quality Assurance Framework and I-Spect process and Kitemark. It is particularly important that inspection and self-assessment processes are manageable and sustainable at a local level.

Monitoring and evaluation are essential in establishing productivity and key to reflection and continuing professional development. Monitoring and evaluation should seek to engage partner organisations, professionals, and young people in monitoring progress. This process should incorporate the use by organisations themselves, of quantitative and qualitative information including: satisfaction surveys, questionnaires, statistics on numbers of young people accessing and data provided and report progress on activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Due to the requirements of ESF funding, piloting will take place only in areas eligible for ESF funding support.
### Welsh National Quality Standards for Youth Information

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<th>National Quality Standards for Youth Information</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quality Areas &amp; Standards:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Workforce &amp; Continuing Professional Development</td>
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<td>1a) All staff responsible for providing information:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Know &amp; understand their roles &amp; responsibilities</td>
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<td>• Are aware of &amp; have received training in regard to safeguarding &amp; child protection</td>
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<td>• Are aware of new developments, relevant law &amp; policy &amp; procedures relating to their role &amp; responsibilities</td>
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<td>• Keep themselves informed about information-based trends &amp; new practices among users</td>
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<td>1b) Staff training needs are identified &amp; addressed via support, supervision and/or appraisal</td>
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<td>• Staff supervision and/or appraisal systems in place</td>
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<td>2. The Provision of Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>2a) Services promote equality of access to information for all young people, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Where information services are identified as not being sufficiently inclusive, the reasons why are identified &amp; issues raised are addressed in the Action Plan, &amp; progress monitored</td>
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<td>• Information service providers have asked a wide range of different groups of young people to find out how different groups with different needs can best access information services. This information is used to inform delivery</td>
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<td>• Mechanisms are in place to enable information services to be directly informed by both the needs &amp; requests of young people</td>
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<td>• Young people from a range of backgrounds, that reflect the local population as well as hard to reach groups, are involved in identifying whether information services are accessible &amp; ways of improving accessibility</td>
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<td>• Young people are involved in informing the provision of Youth Information Services, for example through a Youth Editorial Board</td>
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### 2f) Referral, signposting & direct transfer routes on to other services are effectively managed, verified & quality assured

- Referral processes are in place to track & monitor young people's progression from & onto other services to ensure they receive appropriate & timely services in a way that meets their individual needs
- Staff receive regular supervision which includes monitoring of referral, signposting & transfer routes to ensure young people's needs are being met
- Mystery shoppers, satisfaction survey or other young person led inspection tool to be developed as appropriate, to check whether young people are being appropriately signposted and/or referred in a way that meets their needs. Any issues identified inform the Action Plan which addresses issues raised & provides timely feedback to young people

### 3. User Involvement & Satisfaction

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<tr>
<th>Measured Through Policy/Procedure</th>
<th>Young People's Measurement</th>
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<tr>
<td>3a) Feedback is encouraged at every opportunity, so that young people are able to reflect on the information service they have received. The feedback process:</td>
<td>A range of young people led measures are included within Children &amp; Young People's National Participation Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Is quick &amp; easy to complete &amp; understand</td>
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<td>• Is used to inform service development</td>
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<td>• Provides information on how feedback has been used</td>
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<td>3b) Young people are included in the development of information services at a strategic level</td>
<td>The information Service Provider is compliant with Children &amp; Young People’s National Participation Standards on Feedback</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Young people inform the provision of Youth Information Services, for example through Youth Editorial Boards</td>
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<td>Any issues identified, inform the Action Plan which addresses issues raised &amp; provides timely feedback to young people</td>
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### 4. Partnerships & Communication

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<td>4a) The range of partners is comprehensive to ensure that young people can be referred appropriately &amp; provide young people with their information needs</td>
<td>Formal &amp; informal feedback is sought from young people as a check on the needs assessment</td>
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<td>• The Information Service Provider uses up-to-date information from local needs assessments in order to identify the needs of young people. These are matched with expertise from a range of suitable providers. Where there are gaps, the Information Service Provider addresses this in the Action Plan &amp; actively seeks to expand its range of partners to address the gaps</td>
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<tr>
<td>4b) Systems are in place to share good practice in relation to information services &amp; service delivery – locally, regionally &amp; nationally</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mechanisms are in place to identify &amp; share good practice</td>
<td>Young people are involved in informing the provision of Youth Information Services, including the identification of good practice, for example through a Youth Editorial Board/youth forum</td>
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<td>• Good practice is used to inform &amp; improve services locally</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Operational &amp; strategic leads participate in conferences, meetings &amp; networks (such as the YIWN, PYOG, CWVYS, Learning Networks, etc) as appropriate</td>
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### 5. Monitoring & Evaluation

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<th>5a) Evaluation &amp; monitoring of information services for young people shall be a continuous process that informs service needs &amp; developments via clear activities, outputs &amp; outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td>- The Children &amp; Young People’s National Participation Standards on ‘improving how we work’ is met in relation to Information Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Young people friendly complaints procedures are in place &amp; easily accessible to young people</td>
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<tr>
<td>- A range of young people led measures are included within the Children &amp; Young People’s National Participation Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Complaints Procedures are developed &amp; reviewed in collaboration with young people to ensure usability/accessibility</td>
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<td>- Customer survey used to measure awareness of complaints procedures</td>
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<th>5b) Users &amp; staff have a clear involvement in the evaluation process</th>
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<td>- The Participation Standard on ‘improving how we work’ is met in relation to Information Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>- A range of young people led measures are included within the Children &amp; Young People’s National Participation Standards</td>
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This glossary was created in terms of ERYICA prepared quality tool – Framework for Competency Development in Youth Information Work. Glossary should help to understand working terms used in the prepared document, it’s A and B parts, as just most important words are explained further.
**Assessment:** A systematic evaluation process of collecting and analyzing data to determine the current, historical or projected compliance of an organization to a standard. An Assessment takes place when evaluation has a comparative dimension that involves setting individuals, activities or institutions into a ranking order of performance or achievement. The ranking may be set in relation to criteria that are specific to the context, process or outcomes that are being assessed (such as: which youth information center has the highest success rate in attracting socially disadvantaged young people within ERYICA). Alternatively, relative performance may be assessed against an external standard (such as in the case of the PISA attainment tests for 15-year-olds in different countries).

**Baseline measurement:** The beginning point, based on an evaluation of output over a period of time, used to determine the process parameters prior to any improvement effort; the basis against which change is measured.

**Benchmarking:** A technique in which an organization measures its performance against that of others, determines how those organizations achieved their performance levels and uses the information to improve its own performance. Subjects that can be benchmarked include strategies, operations and processes.

**Bottleneck:** Any resource whose capacity is equal to or less than the demand placed on it.

**Bottom line:** The essential or salient point; the primary or most important consideration. Also, the line at the bottom of a financial report that shows the net profit or loss.

**Characteristic:** The factors, elements or measures that define and differentiate a process, function, product, service or other entity.

**Criteria:** A rule or principle for evaluating or testing something.

**Empowerment** is helping people to help themselves. A concept used in many contexts: management (“The process of sharing information, training and allowing employees to manage their jobs in order to obtain optimum results”), community development (“action-oriented management training aimed at community members and their leaders, poverty reduction, gender strategy, facilitation, income generation, capacity development, community participation, social animation”), mobilisation (“Leading people to learn to lead themselves”) virtual advocacy (Citizens Internet Empowerment Coalition, www.ciec.org) as well as helping women, sick people, minorities and the youth to better manage their life.

**Evaluation** means to make a reasoned judgment about or to give a plausible account of something. It does not imply any specific purpose (such as grading individual performance), nor does it imply any particular method of evaluation (such as a written test), and nor does its outcomes automatically suggest that something is of greater value or importance than something else (one project, product or service in comparison with another one).

**Equality of opportunity or equal opportunity** means that in terms of youth information services, all people should be treated similarly, unhampered by artificial barriers or prejudices or preferences.

**Feedback:** Communication from customers (in case of youth information services – youth and other stakeholders) about how delivered products or services compare with their expectations.

**Indicators:** Established measures to determine how well an organization is meeting its customers’ needs and other operational and financial performance expectations. Indicator(s): are used to measure a quality criterion and to make it visible. Indicators are needed to operationalize the criterion.

**Information and media literacy** enables people to interpret and make informed judgments as users of information and media, as well as to become skillful creators and producers of information and media messages in their own right (also: Information literacy: the ability to interpret and make informed judgments as users of information and media, as well as to
become skillful creators and producers of information and media messages in their own right).

**Internal reflection**: observation of internal work and situation by main players and service or product providers; fixing of the thoughts on something; careful consideration of internal situation.

**Media literacy** – the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages in a variety of forms – from print to video to the Internet. Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy.

**Quality** is the degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfills requirements.

**Quality assurance** is an organization's guarantee that the product or service it offers meets the accepted quality standards. It is achieved by identifying what “quality” means in context; specifying methods by which its presence can be ensured; and specifying ways in which it can be measured to ensure conformance.

**Quality audit** is a systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining quality audit evidence (records, statements of fact or other information, which are relevant to the quality audit criteria and verifiable) and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the quality audit criteria (set of policies, procedures or requirements) are fulfilled.

**Quality criterion** is a distinguishing characteristic, which allows us to evaluate products and services in a qualitative way. A quality criterion can be achieved or not achieved (yes / no).

The level of achievement of this characteristic can be good or bad (+ / -).

**Quality standard** is a fixed degree of expression of quality requirements for products and services. A standard determines:
the scope,
the intensity and
the manner on how the characteristics should be designed in order to be recognized professionally.

**Reflection**: remark or observation; fixing of the thoughts on something, in this case youth information services and the work of youth information centres and youth information workers; careful consideration of provided services.

**Specification**: A document that states the requirements to which a given product or service provided by youth information center or youth information workers must confirm.

**Stakeholder**: Any individual, group or organization that will have a significant impact on or will be significantly impacted by the quality of a specific product or service provided by youth information center or youth information workers.

**Standard**: The specification, statement, category, segment, grouping, behaviour or physical product sample against which the outputs of a process are compared and declared acceptable or unacceptable.

**Young people** are persons 13 – 30 years old (for the purposes of European youth policies this age is used both by the European Commission and Council of Europe).

**Youth-centered** is focused on the youth's needs and wants and is responsive to the young person's identity and developmental stage (pre-adolescence, early adolescence, mid-adolescence, late adolescence, youth). Young persons are conceptualized from a developmental perspective seeing adolescence and youth as a normal developmental stage in life with its problems, opportunities and possibilities.
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