Report of the 2014 Summer University on Youth Information and Counselling

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Some words from the General Rapporteur

Task of the General Rapporteur during this unique event that was the SUYIC (Summer University on Youth Information and Counselling) is to summarise the conclusions of 5 intense days of thoughts, experiences, recommendations and work of:

- 24 speakers and 2 guests
- 6 facilitators
- 12 trainers
- 15 workshops
- 24 discussion groups
- 4 evening events
- 120 participants.

But that’s not all. It is also to give a special flavour to it and that flavour is energy of them all. Just as the organisation of this multi-layered event was challenging, it was even more challenging to sum up vertical and horizontal dynamics that took place during this Summer University. With this report we want to succeeded not only in describing what happened during the event but also to shape it into a valuable tool to be used for further development of our field – youth information and counselling work (YIC) – continuing to contribute to the aims of the SUYIC even after its closing ceremony when we are all back to our homes.

This very unique event gathered relevant stakeholders coming from different levels, but all important for our work. In the morning we had the chance to hear about YIC work from the point of view of decision makers, researchers and experts delivering examples, best practices, new trends, conclusions and recommendations related to our field. In the second part of the morning we reflected in smaller discussion groups on their insights and made the connections to our own realities, expressing our “practitioner point of view”. During the afternoon workshops, we had a chance to go deeper into the topics, gaining new knowledge and exchanging good practices, projects and initiatives which emerged to be among the most valuable moments of the event. I also have to mention the very interactive (and fun!) evening events facilitated by an energetic facilitation team. Last but not least, the irreplaceable young media team that has been following us, taking pictures, making videos to catch and report the daily highlights of our event.
All this together served to enable us to map current status, trends and achievements in YIC work, to allow us to see where we are, what we have done, where we want to go and how we can influence the growth and development of YIC services for the benefit of the hundreds of young people we meet every day in our youth information centres across Europe and Africa.

This unique chance to meet, exchange, work and socialise with colleagues from Europe and Africa was very valuable for me, personally and professionally, realizing that no matter their geographical, demographical or social background, young people are in need of quality information and counselling according to their needs everywhere and now more than ever. Therefore if we want to empower young people, help them take informed decisions to become active citizens of our society, it is even more important that we make sure they are provided with quality services, constantly adapting to their realities and needs. The examples presented during the SUYIC witnessed how powerful we can be in influencing youth policies and how our work to provide quality information is more important than ever, because we are in contact with young people and their need on daily basis.

Bringing together 120 experts in one place was an outstanding opportunity to contribute to improve knowledge and competences of each of us, but it was also a chance to grow together as a dedicated community, weaving stronger bonds and synching our actions to work towards the same aims.

With this report I will do my best for everybody who reads it, to feel this communality of intents and realize the great energy stirred during the Summer University.

So, dear reader, I wish you a pleasant time, reading our discussions, the key points and the highlights of the importance and the power of quality youth information and counselling work. I hope it will inspire you to take them into consideration during your work or, even better, to join us and take part of this great community.

Diana Kovačić
Regional Youth Info Centre Rijeka – UMKI, Association of Youth Information Centres in Croatia
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Dear Reader

I am happy to present you the report of the 2014 University on Youth Information and Counselling, the event that for the first time brought together youth information and counselling (YIC) workers from Africa and Europe, amplifying the voices of 120 professionals from 35 countries to make space to the current state of YIC, the needs for its development and overall: the needs of young people.

Already from the beginning, the so-called “SUYIC” proved to be a unique meeting, as a sharing and networking point for YIC providers. But it was much more than that. It started taking shape within the ERYICA network, many years back, and it slowly became a reality of ideas, methods and people, as the result of the will of the European network to explore new ideas and methodologies, and of the interest of many African partners to share practices and explore the various model of YIC structures that have been developing in Europe for the past 40 years. Finally this June, it all went together: the SUYIC managed to bring together professionals from Europe and Africa to analyse and redefine their way of working, to comply with the constantly changing needs of young people and the (slower changing) youth policies, to initiate a partnership building process that could go further than a national or regional dimension.

Indeed, regardless of the various geographical proveniences, the crosscutting feature of the SUYIC was proven crucial: the importance of quality youth information and counselling services emerged in every single discussion, the urge of quality information for youth and on youth policies was clear in the words of every speaker as a fundamental way to influence youth policies for the wellbeing of young people, as well as avoiding tokenistic solutions for young people. Participants agreed on the growing importance of youth policies as a more and more global matter, since young people are faced with global challenges, live in a more and more globally interconnected society and, even more importantly, have plenty of opportunities on a global scale.

As you can understand, this event started out immediately with numerous aims and expectations. Seen outcomes and feedbacks, I believe each participant and each organisation found his way to make the best of this opportunity, sharing and learning, but also bringing back to their local reality. This opportunity was a crucial effort to develop new regional and international partnerships, to pool competences and experiences from different actors, to develop professionalism and to further improve competences and skills of youth information workers. Moreover, it express a call for more adequate youth policies and for a greater emphasis on their implementation, as a way to take a concrete commitment on youth empowerment, to shake the dust off from the good practices that are out there and turn them into common practices, for increased recognition and visibility of the crucial role and impact YIC plays in supporting young people, and therefore the society they live in as a whole.

This said, the text in our hands (or on your screens) aims at reporting what happened during the SUYIC, but also at presenting trends among youth information workers from the two continents.

In Braga, in June 2014, it was up to the participants to make the Summer University a concrete push to move forward and bring a global perspective to youth information. Now, we hope that this report will be also for you a first step of a new cooperation with YIC professionals in an attempt to continue fostering the development of youth information and to always go a step further in the support to young people world-wide. Now it will also be up to you: read this report, use its ideas, share it as a YIC tool, disseminate it and then be creative, be innovative and contribute to the development, visibility and recognition of youth information and counselling in your own local, national and regional context.

I hope you will enjoy this reading, see you soon at our next event together.

Sanja Vuković-Čović
ERYICA President
About ERYICA

The European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA) is an international non-profit association. It is an umbrella organisation for generalist youth information and counselling providers. The network was established on 17 April 1986 in Madrid, in accordance with a recommendation adopted by the first European Colloquium of Youth Information Centres organised in April 1985 in Marly-le-Roi (France).

ERYICA is composed of national bodies (non-governmental or governmental) which seek to guarantee the right of young people to full and reliable information, which helps them make the choices they face in their lives, and which promotes their autonomy and their active participation in a democratic society. As of 2013, the ERYICA network consists of 25 members, 7 Affiliated and 2 Co-operating Organisations from 28 countries.

Introduction

#SUYIC2014

From 9 African and 10 European countries (Angola, Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Sao Tome and Principe, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Austria, Belgium, Finland, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Portugal, The Netherlands), 25 core partners came together to build a meeting point among young people and youth information workers from Africa and Europe. With the collaboration of the Portuguese Institute for Youth and Sports (IPDJ) and the Portuguese National Youth Council (CNJ) and the support of the Youth In Action Programme of the European Commission and of the Council of Europe, together with the collaboration of the local partners, the Municipality of Braga and the GNRation Centre – Bracara Augusta Foundation, ERYICA coordinated the preparation and realization of a Summer University on Youth Information and Counselling that involved not only the 25 core partners but also other ERYICA members, youth information organisations and networks, such as the European Youth Card Association (EYCA) and Eurodesk.

The Summer University was designed to be a space dedicated to the development of youth policies in Europe and in Africa, based on the importance of quality youth information and counselling for young people, focusing on the discussion of the state of the art of youth information in order to support and develop the provision at local, national and regional level of youth information and counselling services. With this event, held in the multifunctional GNRation Centre in Braga (Portugal) from 14 to 19 June 2014, ERYICA and the partners aimed to support the development of youth policy in Europe and in partners’ countries by leveraging on quality youth information and counselling, sharing good practices and networking. Furthermore, the partnership that was created aimed at gathering data and evidence on the situation of YIC in partners’ countries, as proved by some examples included in this final report, in order to increase understanding of youth information and counselling in Africa and Europe not only among the SUYIC participants, but also among other partners and stakeholders.

Aims of the Summer University were set in order to:

- Analyse and present youth information as provided in Europe and in Africa;
- Improve the provision of youth information services in Europe and in Africa;
- Exchange good practices in the field of youth information in a global perspective;
- Foster the creation and/or the enhancement of development plans and Euro-African partnerships in the field of youth information and counselling;
- Improve the capacity of youth information workers and organizations to increase young people’s employability, health, mobility and reduce youth poverty on a global scale.

To reach these aims, each day had a specific objective:

**DAY 1:** Gain an overview of the situation of YIC, current trends, developments and main challenges

**DAY 2:** Deepen understanding of how YIC supports the achievement of the main objectives of youth policies

**DAY 3:** Understand the importance of proving that YIC positively impacts a young person’s life, in order to further develop YIC work and reflect on how to measure impact in political-economic terms

**DAY 4:** Develop development plans on the improvement of provision and recognition of YIC in the participants’ countries

The Summer University consisted of a number of non-formal education activities using various methodologies along with expert presentations, working groups, workshops, training modules, networking activities, feedback sessions and intercultural events. In the morning, the topic of the day was presented and discussed with inputs from keynote speakers, experts and the participants’ experience during joint plenaries moments. In the afternoon, participants were able to choose to which of the various workshops they wished to take part according to their interest and field of work.
All these activities had in sight the drafting of development plans and the establishment of new partnerships, making the event the first step of a comprehensive development process among partners. The participants had the chance to gain knowledge and experience of African and European projects, to discover common links and common interests, making the Summer University a push to move forward and bring forth the European model of youth information to a global perspective, by learning from others’ practice.

Background on SUYIC

Context of ERYICA’s Africa – Europe partnership

The youth information and counselling (YIC) field in Europe has been developing rapidly over the past 40 years, influenced by changes in our society. The European Youth information and Counselling Agency ERYICA was established in 1986 to respond to a growing need for exchange and cooperation in the youth information field on European level. Since then, the network has developed and grown, always being open to new cooperation with partners from all over Europe. In an increasingly complex and interconnected world, young people are becoming more and more present in the realities of their own societies. Youth are faced with an ever-growing range of choices, when it comes to education and employment, for example.

However, this freedom of choice might become an illusion for those who are not skilled enough to sift through the deluge of information available or do not have access to all sources of information in the first place. Despite the increasing availability of mobile phones, the Internet and applications for every topic and situation giving a 24/7 access to information, in a survey carried out by ERYICA, more than 70% of young respondents prefer receiving information via face-to-face communication, followed by less than 40% who prefer private search on the Internet. One fourth of young people in the sample prefer face-to-face interaction mediated via group work, and one fifth embraced social networks sites for communication. “Traditional” media (radio, TV or newspapers) seem to be negligible as sources of information among youth as less than 10% of youth prefer them. Therefore, youth information services continue to prove valuable and not-easily replaceable by simple availability of other tools, with 63% of young respondents agreeing that using youth information and counselling services has changed their life for better.
While the survey demonstrates that young people have different informational needs depending on their age and life situation (socio-professional status), interconnections between preferred media for communicating youth-targeting information led to the conclusion that gender, socio-professional status and years of experience with youth services do not significantly diversify youth.

This evidence, together with the changing socio-economic conditions in Europe and in other areas of the world, make it compulsory for youth workers to analyse and redefine their way of working, in order to comply with the constantly changing needs of young people. It has therefore appeared evident the need to initiate a partnership building process with other areas of the world, under the assumption that youth policy is to become more and more a global matter, as young people are faced with global challenges, live in a more and more globally interconnected society and, even more importantly, have plenty of opportunities on a global scale.

Moreover, in the age of Internet, youth information and counselling has become a more and more important topic to tackle today’s challenges like the constant increase of youth unemployment and social exclusion among young people. Now more than ever, there is the need of focusing in providing quality youth information to help young people navigate in this global society. Therefore developing new regional and international partnerships, even merely among European organisations, is essential to pool competences and experiences from different actors, develop professionalism and further improve competences and skills of youth information workers. A joint effort is needed to streamline youth information, to increase recognition and visibility of the crucial role and impact it plays in supporting young people, and therefore the society they live in as a whole.

Starting from this believe, the Summer University brought together about not only youth information workers, trainers and facilitators but also young people, current or potential users of youth information centres to work from their first-hand experience in order to create together what youth information should look like in the future in our global, regional and national realities. Along with this consideration, and the growing need of bringing these different actors together, ERYICA’s initiative to organise and foster the establishment of an Africa-Europe partnership in the field of youth information was born. Within this broader framework, the Summer University on Youth Information and Counselling is seen as a moment to learn from current experiences in Europe and in Africa and exchange ideas for improving services to young people, for young people and with young people, analysing the specific and common information and counselling needs and resources.
Venue – Why Braga?
“It is not incidentally!”

Like our distinguished hosts stated, it is no longer strange for Braga to welcome initiatives regarding youth, like this Summer University. As one of the youngest cities in Portugal and in Europe, in 2012 Braga was proudly awarded the European Youth Capital title which “reinforced a youth dynamic that the city was already developing and transmitting” (cit. Sameiro Araújo, Councillor of the City of Braga – Camara Municipal de Braga). That same year, the city inherited important legacies, including the GNRate building itself where the Summer University was held. The centre was reconstructed within that initiative and today is a reference point for youth, housing StartUp Braga, supporting young entrepreneurs and receiving various training and cultural initiatives in a logical relationship between the city and the local, national and international youth population. In this mind-set, the city made a clear commitment in what concerns facilitating and strengthening the access of European movements in Portugal and in the city of Braga, therefore strongly calling for this “one of a kind” international youth information and counselling event to be hosted there. On a similar note, light goes on the Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth (IPDJ), that strong of a long and very fruitful relationship with ERYICA since 1989, co-organized the SUYIC and provided continuous support throughout its implementation.

“Portugal as the host of the first Summer University on Youth Information and Counselling is not incidentally”
(cit. Ricardo Araujo, Director of IPDJ).

“Developing the holistic vision for young people – putting together and in a cross-cutting way so different dimensions that affect youth from cultural to employment and entrepreneurship GNRate couldn’t be more inspirational!” (cit. Joana Lopes, President of the Portuguese National Youth Council).

In the picture, from left to right: Manuel Barros, Paulo Pinheiro, Davide Capecchi, Emidio Guerreiro, Ricardo Rio, Sanja Vuković-Ćović, Jorge Orlando Queirós

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Youth Information nowadays

Current trends, its development and main challenges
Before exploring current trends regarding young people’s needs in terms of information and counselling services, we should remind ourselves of the basics, understanding how YIC work has developed and how it fulfils these needs, starting from the general concept of youth information answering the core questions: why youth information? When? How?

Seeking answers to these questions, after the opening remarks the speakers addressed the participants of the Summer University, starting to give some orientation points and to weave the red string that connected all the various topics tackled during the event.

**General Concept of Youth Information**

“Youth information comes in the phase of life (the transition from childhood to adulthood) to support young people and give them the first info as a foundation for decision making.” (Alexandra Beweis)

Through a short overview of key elements to consider when talking about generalist youth information, Alexandra Beweis addressed special needs for information in this period of transition from childhood to adulthood pointing the very important aspect of the first experience of a young person with youth information and counselling services comparing it to a first kiss experience. With this interesting analogy, she introduced the importance of bearing in mind some of the main aims of Youth Information such as supporting young people in becoming independent and informed, as well as giving orientation in various fields. Regarding information literacy, special attention was put on the importance of supporting youth, teaching skills on how to deal with information, empowering them for autonomy, independence and participation.

To explain the question on “how we do it”, answer is hold in the different forms of intervention that youth information and counselling can take:

1. **Information** – putting an emphasis on large variety of topics of youth interest:

   “Generalist youth information work covers all topics that interest young people and can include a spectrum of activities: informing, counselling, advising, guiding, supporting, befriending, coaching and training, networking and referral to specialised services.” (From the EUROPEAN YOUTH INFORMATION CHARTER)

   When informing youth, we must bear in mind to use online and offline services as response to the increasing trend of using modern technology and internet among youth.

   Another important aspect of informing youth is a youth information worker’s pro-active role meaning he needs to find young people, go to them, be in the places where young people are gathered, cooperate with schools, always be on the spot, in direct contact with youth.

2. **Orientation and advice** – giving an overview and selection of information so young person can make an informed decisions.

3. **Signposting and referral** – networking, involving experts, direct link with all others who can help in delivering right information according to the young person’s need.

4. **Counselling** – a professional process provided by specialists on certain topics.

It is up to youth information centres or organizations to set how far and how in depth they develop their expertise into certain topics, and which form of interventions they will offer to young people. However two basic rules always apply:

- The needs of young people must be at the centre.
- Check and reflect before you act.
The Role of Youth Information in the context of Young People in Transition

In order to better understand young people's needs during transition to adulthood and provide them with the best possible services available in information and counselling, we must go deeper in exploring trends and issues young people face in that period of life. A member of the pool of European Youth Researchers, sociologist Magda Nico researcher on youth transition to adulthood, from CIES University Institute of Lisbon gave an expert overview on young people in transition to adulthood, highlighting major trends and issues.

She focused on 3 major topics:

- Main features that make the period of transition to adulthood particularly important and decisive in the life course of a young person: what makes it “special” and worthy of attention, research, concern and social policies;
- Most persistent and emergent problems and issues that people between 15 and 30 years old are confronted with;
- Demographic trends that characterize contemporary transitions to adulthood and that have to be taken into account when designing and providing access to information.

These points demonstrate how the vulnerable status of young people and the socially stratified and unequal arena of transitions to adulthood demand a massive democratization of access to information.

Core aspect of the research among both higher and lower educated youth, is the relation among the three most important “boxes of life”: education, work and family considering youth's social and cultural background.

A “demographically dense” period of life
Transition is a relatively short period of life where many of our voluntary (and also involuntary) life changing events happen. Most of these life-changing events can be included in what literature calls the “three boxes of life”: school, work and family. A second aspect that makes taking informed decisions even more crucial is the interdependency of timing of these events during this phase of life. Until the recent past, the order of the events was rather linear: a young person would first finish school, then he or she would enter the labour market and only after he or she would think about having a family and/or even starting to live in a conjugal format. Therefore having trouble in accomplishing one transition would have serious effects in accomplishing the next ones. For instance, difficulties to enter or remain in the labour market often prevent young people from leaving their parents’ home, starting to live with their partner or even thinking about having a family and children. The difficulties of similar situations become more evident when young people are unaware of existing welfare measures, youth and social policies that can support them and provide them solutions in concealing studies, work, and having a family. In a very short period of time several experiences take place such as leaving school, entering and leaving the labour market, getting married or starting to live together, having children, etc. which makes decision-making and designing life plans even more complex and difficult. In contemporary contexts, access to information on available solutions for conciliating various goals in life, traditionally accomplished during this period of the life course, is even more necessary because these events are less likely to happen in the described order and are often intertwined with multiple other possibilities.

Literature on youth research coming from different geographical often presents diverse interpretations regarding what are youth main challenges (e.g. the timing and order of transitional events), which is normally explained by the differences within their cultural system of reference. Historical research has found that there are symbolic lines that divide Europe into north and south, according to types of family ties; and into east and west, according to residential and family structures. Thus, researchers and policy makers should take into account the presence and substance of existing national policies and welfare states to better understand and learn from these comparisons.

Information and policy should also take social differences into account. Transition to adulthood is indeed a very socially stratified period of life, even within the same country, and is generally a very different experience among high and low social classes. For example, for young people coming from privileged social backgrounds education is a long process, with attendance to higher education institutions, and the entry in the labour market happens later in life, usually only after finishing college education; consequently, because family formation processes tend to occur when a more or less stable link to the labour market is established, this process also takes place rather late in life, and surely much later than in the past. On the other hand, for people with more disadvantaged social backgrounds, the educational path tends to be shorter; the entry in the labour market thus occurs sooner and frequently while the educational trajectory is still ongoing; directly connected the family formation processes occur sooner. People from different social backgrounds are differently affected by transition to adulthood and they face different obstacles and barriers to their full participation in society.

The most emergent issues in the youth field

At the professional level, unemployment is, and has always been, higher among youth than in other older age groups. Furthermore, the distance between youth unemployment and general unemployment is increasing and becoming harder to overcome. Besides that, new non-extreme forms of precariousness are becoming transversal to all social backgrounds.

It was demonstrated that the lower the education attainment, the earlier young people would entry the labour market. However in most cases it appears that this earlier start allows higher levels of “stability” (achieved both
through temporary or permanent contracts). Around age 23, these young adults are able to have a relatively stable job that allows them to design a life project based on quite realist expectations. A different case seems to be the one related to young adults who attained higher educational levels. The most frequent educational strategy is to delay the entry in the labour market, and only start working full time after graduation, leading to more precarious situations. Yet in a context of vulnerability, both categories (young people with lower and higher educational attainment) are vulnerable to situations of precariousness. While unemployment, mainly due to transition from one job to another is more frequent in lower levels of education, young people with higher educational levels tend to experiment other kind of precariousness, also characterized by the difficulty of attaining more stable jobs.

**Housing** is a clear example of how the heterogeneity of lodging systems and welfare provisions, or their lack, is many times disguised in “cultural values and orientations towards autonomy”. People are postponing more and more this transition, delaying also what comes after, including family formation.

The timing and process of leaving home is rather heterogeneous in European and also globally. It reflects not only, nor primarily, social norms and value orientations towards autonomy, but especially the characteristics of housing systems and the provisions offered by the different welfare states. In Scandinavian countries, where renting houses/flats is more common than buying them, most people leave home before getting married or living in a consensual union. Vice versa southern European countries are more oriented to homeownership, and trends very explanatory show that leaving home occurs at later age considering youth unemployment rate combined with current difficulty to access credit.

Another important issue is the disconnection between youth policies and youth problems felt at national and individual level. In this field, results and recommendations of youth researches, including the one presented by Magda, appear to be crucial and very much needed to give attentions to these hidden situations and to create effective youth policies and agendas. Her conclusion highlighted how sometimes political and policy attention given to youth topics is balanced, but does not take into consideration national and individual priorities. **Citizenship, participation and information; human rights; social cohesion and equal opportunities must be considered priorities** and enabling environments have to be established in order for these other goals to be achieved.

**Media** nowadays are not making it easier to correctly understand the situation, by disseminating mistaken images of youth and painting incomplete pictures of their problems and obstacles in transitioning to adulthood. Magda gave several interesting examples of how the supposedly postponement of adulthood is wrongly advertised in the media:

- “Adultolescents” or “kidults”
- “Kids who refuse to grow up”
- “Mummy hotel” or “hotêl famille”
- Kangaroo Generation
- Lost generation
- KIPPERS: “Kids In Parents’ Pockets Eroding Retirement Savings”

**Media influences the perception of the situation of young people**
The above explained trends are influencing the prolongation and duration of the process of transitioning to adulthood. It is a consequence of the complexity of this process, of the reversibility of the life course, where young people are forced to make many opposite decisions in a relatively short period of time making the conciliation and synchronization of life a complex challenge. There is still the problem of attaining economic and financial independence, in order to plan, decide and concretize the aspects of transition. For this conciliation, information on the legal conditions and rights is crucial.

“Having access to information on their rights would not only increase the possibilities of success and participation, but also attenuate the social inequalities that lie in these processes of transitioning to adulthood.”
(cit. Magda Nico)

Madga’s interesting presentation went to the essential of youth information work and aimed to provide participants an overview on the complexity, heterogeneity and vulnerability of contemporary transition to adulthood. For this purpose, quantitative and qualitative data were presented, giving substance to the three addressed topics. The first one concerned the “special” vulnerability of this period of life, where issues such as the high density of life events; the interdependency of family, work and school paths; and the cultural and social differences within and between countries are discussed. Also, the most important and persistent problems in the process of transitioning to adulthood were presented such as the employment/unemployment issues and the residential autonomy obstacles and, or a larger scale, the disconnection between youth policy agenda and youth problems, on one hand, and the public image of young people, including in the media, on the other. The presentation addressed the general demographic trends in the transition to adulthood and how these directly reflect and affect the lives of young people throughout empirical data and short life stories and testimonies. She concluded with a brief statement on how a massive democratization of (access to) information would attenuate some of the mentioned difficulties in transitioning to adulthood; a dominant light was put on information not only as a civic right but a decisive tool to overcome various obstacles in youth’s life in order to work more easily on the difficult puzzle of being a young person nowadays.

“Conducting a research among youth in transition to adulthood, gaps of information are evident in their decision making process, regardless of their educational background. It is obvious that information is of utmost importance for young person to proceed in social activities, carriers and life in general.”
(cit. Magda Nico)

Regional perspectives on Youth Information

To better understand conditions, status, common trends as well as difficulties in the field of youth information, examples of work and achievements from both African and European partners were brought about. Presenting challenges as well as stories of success, it is clearly easier to identify issues for which we can join forces and efforts we can make to influence further development of the field of youth information globally, to reach through joint work the main aim of this Summer University.

European perspective

It is impossible to summarize a European perspective on youth information seen the diverse development of the field in the various countries represented. However a similar compilation has been collected in ERYICA’s latest publication the Compendium on national youth information and counselling structures. This booklet, used as background document of the event, collects the history of ERYICA, dealing with “the past, present and future of youth information. It traces the evolution and development of youth information and counselling services from their initial inception to where they are today, one of the central pillars of youth policy in Europe.”
(cit. Davide Capecchi; Compendium on nation youth information and counselling structures; ERYICA, 2014.) The
document presents the first systemized source of information for youth information workers and stakeholders, with a special emphasis for those based in countries where no youth information and counselling structures are yet established and where such structures or separate services could be significantly improved. It focuses on the concept of YIC, its history, the impact of YI, outlining processes and examples of establishing YIC structures on national level. The Compendium is therefore an essential tool for every youth information worker, as well as youth workers who wants to familiarize with this field.

Another essential tools for YIC workers is the European Youth Information Charter created and adopted by ERYICA General Assembly in 1993 as the first declaration aimed at setting “minimum standards and quality measures” in providing YIC services. Its revised version was finalized in 2004, as an appropriate reaction to the continuous change of young people’s environments and life conditions, to stay up to date with the work and effort of YIC workers to always keep youth on top.

Ensuring stability through showcasing and improving visibility of YIC work

Social changes are the most difficult ones to measure especially because they occur over long periods of time. For this reason, despite YIC services having undeniable positive impacts on young people’s lives on the short as well as lasting a lifetime, this long term dimension makes it difficult to measure and record this impact. Analyses ranging through different generations of young people are needed to track the impact of information and counselling services. Yet, it is of utmost importance to be able to quantify such impact now, on the short term, in order to evaluate and adapt services according to changing youth needs, but also to widen their reach and influence policies and decision-makers. From these reasons comes the growing need of making YIC more visible and showcasing its impact more clearly.

To help measuring and proving described influence and to have better understanding of young person’s need of YI, level of satisfaction on services provided for them in YI centres, a Survey on Impact of Youth Information and Counselling was conducted in November 2013, by Ewa Krzaklewska and Dunja Potočnik on the initiative and under coordination of ERYICA. The survey was designed to rate:

- the access to information
- level of satisfaction with information on the youth information facility
- reliability of information from diverse sources
- correctness of information on Internet
- influence on the improvement in life quality by information and counselling
- preferred method of YIC

“Young people are aware that information on Internet, TV and newspapers are not the most reliable ones nowadays.” (cit. Davide Capecchi)

From the survey, it appears that young people clearly perceive the impact of YIC centres and the benefits YIC workers provide to young clients; including the interesting finding that 70% of respondents stated they prefer to receive advice on information face-to-face.
However, only if these benefits become clear also to decision-makers, policies can be drafted in order to ensure stability and further development of this youth policy area, ensuring also financial stability as an obvious and fundamental basis for quality and continuity.

Complete information on methodology, questions and conclusions of the Survey can be found within Compendium on national youth information and counselling structures.

**Current foci**

As it was previously stated, (generalist) YIC workers provide information on a large variety of topics of youth interest: employment, education, leisure time, health, sport, family planning, sexuality, mobility, housing, substances, violence, entrepreneurship, legal advice, psychological support etc. According to these numerous considerations as trends of nowadays society, the main topics to be presented by youth information workers are:

- Entrepreneurship and employability
- Mobility
- Youth Rights

Youth information and counselling services go beyond the mere provision of data on possible employment opportunities and rather focus on supporting young person in making decision before choosing their education path, the course of carrier etc. based on pitched information regarding status, expectations and possible consequences in order for them to make informed and quality decisions regarding their own life.

In the context of information needs and information literacy we, as YIC workers, should go beyond providing quality and pitched information but must also strive to teach young person’s not only how to access information, but how to deal with information as well.

For example if a young person decides to follow the career of a dancer, and commits to go to ballet school, he should know the possible struggle before getting a fair employment and the realistic fact that he might have to move to a different city and that he will have to cover all expenses until finding a scholarship or similar.
Stories similar to this one highlight the importance of the work of YIC workers beyond the provision of pitched and quality information, and the empowerment of the young person to access this information, as well as enabling him to deal with its consequences.

**African Perspective**

Moussa Masumbuko, experienced youth information worker originally from Burundi but long-based in Norway provided an overview of YIC according to an African perspective, with a focus on East African countries.

To speak of youth from an African perspective is a generalisation effort that summarizes the situation of 50 different countries, each with diverse realities and needs. Unlike the European Union, the African Union is not a strong institution that can somehow have unified structures, finances and a vibrant civil society. However, counting more than half of the youth population (1.111 billion in 2013), presenting similar trend of high unemployment rates and of educational systems that accept only the ones who can afford it in almost all its 50 countries, the situation of youth in the African Continent can be described with the disappointing quotation “Young people are always at the bottom!”

Youth work in Africa was firstly codified by the 1969 document “Youth and Development in Africa” (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1970). Since then, many reports followed up to most recent “State of the Urban Youth 2010/2011” (UN Habitat, 2010); yet since that first publication to nowadays similar trends in youth policies can still be recognized, mostly due to the fact that hardly any policy was based on actual, real and measured youth needs. Although there are very different understandings on youth information across the continent, including how it is delivered to young people and what youth information centre are supposed to offer, three main youth information concepts can be singled out:

- Youth work in general
- Specialized youth services
- One-stop youth information centres

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More information on African Youth can be found in the website of the African Union Commission “Youth and the African Union Commission” http://africa-youth.org/
Regarding the development, concept, structure, professionalism and, above all, training of youth information workers turned out to be essential for the sustainability and development of YIC field. Partnering with experienced organizations and networking with youth information centres is the crucial part of each success story that can be spotted in African countries. One main challenge remains that there is still a trend of adapting projects, especially their budgets, to the wishes of donors and focusing on one-time event or short-term projects rather the sustainable ones that can provide continuity, due to the fact that there is both lack of structures along with little awareness of importance of continuity.

Despite different understandings of youth information delivery, the shared common grounds stand on the concept that the starting point are young people's needs and that information is a catalytic tool that makes participation and inclusion possible; thus youth information has to be understood as a tool that can facilitate equal distribution of opportunity. Information availability to young people is the key determinant of youth development throughout Africa however, in many parts of Africa, the right to information (Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) is still a battle that many young people dream to win. In most countries there are movements of local and international organizations focusing on youth work, which include information as part of the provided services but it is mostly limited to distribution of brochures and flyers. It is however important to mention that events and campaigns on specialist information, e.g. reproductive health and diseases, are well developed in some part of Africa, likely more than in other parts of the world.

The “Arab spring” has been another factor that pushed many African leaders to introduce youth policies or to review existing, and often obsolete, ones. These policy changes have seen the integration of youth information and entrepreneurship in their core issues. Indeed many local and international organizations have followed the wind and are now focusing on youth entrepreneurship as the biggest core activity, right after reproductive health and HIV/AIDS. However, there a number of dilemmas associated to these changes. On one hand, there are countries still struggling with conventional believes making it hard to give a proper definition to youth for several reason: traditionally one can remain a child until living with their parents; and often youth age is not harmonized between the various policy and legislative documents, such as the Constitution and youth policy. On the other hand, there are countries that are aware that information is a perquisite for participation, inclusion and access to opportunities for young people but do not know how to establish systems and networks that can do that or are unaware of how to set up youth information centres. In a few cases, youth centres have been established, but they are only empty structures without any activity going on. Limited knowledge on how to search, collect and deliver tailor-made youth information makes it hard to find updated and adaptive responses to young people's quest for answers to their questions.

“Young people are fighting for political rights but keep forgetting to fight for the right on information as a human right.” (cit. Moussa Masumbuko)

From the practitioner’s point of view – What do YI Workers have to say about it?

Having such a heterogeneous group of youth workers and youth information workers from different background in one place is an excellent opportunity to share and discuss certain topics relevant to their daily work with youth across Europe and Africa. Every day during Summer University was dedicated to creating an open space for exchanging thoughts, ideas, good practices and challenges among participants in order to get a deeper understanding on current trends and issues and finding answers for them as well as inspiring one another in dealing with challenges and influencing development in youth information and counselling field. This was done during two main moments: a first reflection in small groups followed the presentations during the plenary sessions, and the afternoon workshops, being addressed to a specific topic, gave space to in depth conversation. In the following paragraph you can find a summary of the discussion groups and the workshops that dealt with the following topics:
A. Understanding of YI in the YIC local reality
B. Youth Information needs
C. Challenges faced by YIC workers

“Youth information leads to freedom of choice and new opportunities.” (cit. participant of SUYIC)

Understanding of YI in the YIC local reality

Large number of participants agreed on a fact that young people don’t see YI as their right and are also not aware of information being a human right in general, concluding that more effort is needed from YI workers in rising awareness of this reality among youth.

In order to raise youth information workers awareness and build up their competences upon youth rights, the workshop “How to inform young people about their rights?”, held by Julie Cakiova, gave an overview of different methods how to deliver human and youth rights topics to the target group. Making an excursion into the mind of young people, participants used their own experiences to detect possibilities for their organisations to increase knowledge of human and youth rights among the young generation and to find inspiration as well as practical tips on how to inform young people about their rights. After going through methods on how to work with youth on topic of human rights from activities taken from the “Kit on how to inform young people”, participants have prepared their own “action plan” of the first steps in delivering youth rights to their target group using various approaches and activities.

“Youth rights, it is not just human rights, but also huge range of national rights, laws and regulations, that are touching young people in daily live. That is something YIW should be always aware of and prepared for answering questions about this topic.” (cit. participant of SUYIC)

A developing reality of youth information is the virtual world. In accordance of rapid growth of new digital technologies, more focus is on the online aspects of information together with the recognised problem that it is yet not accessible to everyone. Furthermore, trends are increasing among young people of creating and acting out “different identities”, where the “online” ones can be very different from the “offline identity”, exploring
different parts of oneself, allowing a whole new way of expressing themselves, and they are bringing brand new challenges for YIC workers in delivering YIC services. The workshop “How to use the digital world and ICT in Youth Information” held by Dick Smit (Member of ERYICA Training Task Force) addressed the lack of competences among YI workers in addressing these issues. It was an opportunity to discuss the use of new technologies in youth information work and to share diverse use and ideas about engaging in digital networks and social media. The traps and tricks one might face while “surfing the www” in search information were also explored by participants.

One theme that came through was the fact that young people now have ‘merged lives’ i.e. the have online lives and “offline” lives and the two, as exemplified earlier, can be very different. The workshop tried to address two questions: what does this mean for Youth Information Workers and how do we adapt services depending on which life is presented to us by the young person? Another aspect of the same challenge was what to do differently when meeting the young people face-to-face or online. The conversation thus highlighted the need of youth workers to have digital skills, as acknowledged in ERYICA’s Digital YIntro training course that is a good and complete resource to gain digital competences. Final thoughts were around Internet safety and how the ‘merged lives’ of young people are different e.g. they expose themselves more easily to danger in their ‘online’ lives than they do in their ‘offline’ lives. To show how we may not be as Internet savvy as workers ourselves a great online tool www.takethislollipop.com was presented to the group and it was welcomed as quite of a revelation to some of the participants, it gave them a useful tool to take home, which warns young people about the importance of privacy settings on social media sites.

Another point to contextualize YIC work in its reality is its level of recognition in the regional/ national context. A first signal of this is the fact that youth information is (almost) always not among priorities in youth policy agendas. Local and national authorities should give more recognition to YIC work. In achieving that, more promotion of YI centres and provided services by professionals as well its impact on youth and society is needed. It should help reaching out more young persons but also with lack of funding always needed for enabling stability and development. Recognition is not only important for ensuring sufficient funds and a voice to be heard by stakeholders but also for the motivation and self-esteem of workers and volunteers involved in Youth Information Work. During the workshop “Recognition of YIC work”, held by Alexandra Beweis (Member of ERYICA Training Task Force) participants explored questions like “What do we want to be recognised for?” or “How do we notice that our work is recognised?” and worked on different ideas and strategies how to achieve recognition by a wide range of stakeholders. Regarding this topic, youth information workers have to have a clear picture what YI should be recognised for and also be aware of different stakeholders and their needs.
Here are the main outcomes of the so-called “Dream Session”, which aimed to help participants to picture a perfect world in their minds and then to understand which actions they can take to get closer to such dream world.

“In a perfect world where YI is fully recognised:

- Smooth cross-sectional collaboration is a must
- Quantity is not as important as quality
- every possible channel is opened for advertising: in schools, underground stations, social media
- We are available wherever and whenever (24/7) young people need us
- YI workers are V.I.P (very informed AND very important persons)
- exists a training/education/diploma on YI (Master on YI studies)
- YI centres employ well-trained YI workers and high quality training programmes
- we can afford a state of the art website for our YI centres
- a youth info centre is in every city/town with really cool Café and facilities for different activities
- bundle of informational and educational materials
- Our expertise is an obvious must in discussing and changing policies
- media comes to us for information and expertise
- trained Youth Ambassadors are in every school.

The list of first steps towards this dream started with being present at the Summer University and continued with further steps because tomorrow we need to:

- build on/work with our networks
- invest in contact with schools
- create a communication plan on all levels – especially on national level (stress coverage of the whole country)
- get into curricula of “social work studies”
- get more expertise – on-going training
- do more MARKETING – be brave!

Having experienced, innovative and up to date YI workers as highly motivated participants immediately brought to great bold ideas. The participants came up with one suggestion of combining the Council of Europe youth and education partnerships to work on a Master Degree on youth information. In preparation of that, creating and attending a massive open online course (MOOC) could be a first step to keep sharing networking and leveraging on common experience, knowledge and competences. And of course, one major thing shall not be forgotten: keep dreaming!

More feedbacks, and ideas to overcome challenges emerged from the participants during the discussion groups. One example was the statement emerging from one group that said “outreach work is needed improving accessibility of youth information”. Indeed, even in countries where YIC structures are established, young people do not know they exist or they do not use it to the full potential of their capacities. On the other hand, some of the participants coming from developed YIC structures addressed the experience in which even too much structured approach can also block youth involvement/participation in youth information or just using YIC services in YIC centre. More relaxed and youth friendly approach and laid back atmosphere is more welcoming and appealing to young persons. One of the recognised ways in reaching youth even more is going to places where young people are gathered, such as high schools or universities and other places of study or spending quality leisure time and delivering information on the spot. The participants jointly concluded that there is a need to make youth information visible and more known among young people.

Sharing experience among YIC workers and their results is important in leveraging learning opportunities throughout partnerships and cooperation between YIC workers and YI centres.
Evidence based services are crucial. More research should be done on the impact of youth information and counselling. A lot of attention during SUYIC was given to this topic.

Youth Information needs

Understandingly, youth information needs are dependent on local realities in which young people live and are diverse as the conditions of nowadays life including individual context for each young person, especially in this period of transition. Common needs were however recognised by YIC workers as follows:

- Carrier guidance and counselling
- Development of soft skills relevant to improving young person's position in the labour market through non-formal education
- Professional orientation (access to information to plan their education)
- Mobility (in attaining know knowledge, skills, experience, networking)
- Education opportunities (specialized university programs)
- Relationship issues
- Health services
- Security
- Funding for youth projects.

From YIC workers perspective, youth today is in need of new role models who represent positive and true human values and can inspire them to make positive change, take initiatives and be proactive. Special effort is also needed to widen their horizons, to guide to new opportunities, to seek alternative ways of dealing with problems they face and to empower them to make informed decisions being aware of all possible consequences of their action. Clearly all these are very noble values and would require a lot of hard work for the already overloaded youth information workers and their dynamic working conditions.

Challenges faced by YIC workers

Speaking of dynamic working conditions, typical youth information workers have to find a suitable, quality, up to date and relevant answer in a very short time on large diversity scale of topics. Life-long learning, upgrade and support are just few of the needs of youth information workers to keep delivering quality information and counselling services. The discussion groups were therefore not only a time to find answers but also a moment for practitioners to raise new questions about their struggles to support youth on their development regardless of their realities. Here are some issues stated by them:

- How to make young people aware that they have the right on information as human right (including the right on information)?
- How to move forward in terms on addressing concrete needs such as youth unemployment?
- How to keep volunteers involved and motivated in YI work?
- How to change and adapt youth information approaches according to cultural/traditional context?
How to make an assessment of youth needs? (Inquiry or research?)
How to keep up with growing dynamics?
How to support young person in the overwhelming jungle of information?

There are so many forms of interventions in youth information work. How can we be sure that we have chosen right channels to reach young people and serve them in the best way? (cit. participant of SUYIC)

Challenges
- covering huge diversity of youth information
- reaching out youth from excluded, marginalized and vulnerable groups
- raising information literacy among youth
- getting frustrated/ burn out from constantly being up to date with information
- adapting approaches of providing information (life-long education and training for YI workers)

It's never ending process." (cit. participant of SUYIC)

Some useful feedback from a practitioner’s point of view underlined more challenges that youth information workers deal with on daily basis. Besides doing a hard and good job, they have to keep on finding ways to communicate with youth and promote their services in order to reach as many of them possible. Most of them find it very useful keeping their website attractive and administrate it as a platform for showing all what they do. One of the attractive ways of doing it is also by making use of all kinds of testimonials especially through social media. On the other hand, however media is a good tool for reaching out to more young people and very fast, in some African countries, like Burundi, mass media is not reliable because it is used for political purposes. “Word to mouth” information and peer-to-peer is very important but there is a very serious risk that the information gets “spoiled” during the chain.

Specific challenges of certain countries were brought up in discussion groups. Here are only a few of them, to paint the main differences within the Africa-Europe context:
Positive examples | To be improved
---|---
Kenya: special focus on needs of young persons who are lacking education | Guinea Bissau: lack of youth information workers
Austria: profound cooperation between different stakeholders in YIC area resulting with very good status of the field in genera | Portugal: missing active approach to youth
Andorra: not structured YIC system – few groups of isolated actions

Knowing the various YIC backgrounds and countries represented by the SUYIC participants, special attention was given to raising level of knowledge towards establishing for the first time local youth information centres or national coordination in order to start making first steps towards developments of youth information systems in countries where similar systems are not existing or where efforts should be intensified. To address this specificity, two workshops were prepared: “Changing with the times: Adapt or disappear!” by Pepe Herrera and “ABC for initiators of youth information structures on national level” conducted by Evaldas Rupkus.

Many participants showed interested towards establishing youth information network in their country and to find out more on how different YIC structures work in other European countries. Evaldas’s workshop addressed the following questions: What are the main steps for an easier start? What lessons have others already learnt? What are the alternatives for the national setting of the youth information structure? The content of the workshop was based on the research and information collected in the Compendium on National Youth Information and Counselling Structures; however this document being based only on the European reality, the workshop integrated a broader vision that included the African situation, avoiding an Euro-centric approach and allowing all participants to feel involved and reflect on their national situations. Understanding why national coordinating bodies for YI services are needed, getting an overview on what kind of structures exist in different countries, their strengths and weaknesses was the starting point for participants to structure a concise action plan with a special emphasis on political lobbying with impact evidence, as a capstone for the successful initiation of these
structures. They also worked on identifying help and support in the starting process, underlining the importance of coordination and having support from all the relevant stakeholders. After the workshop, participants felt confident and motivated to pilot their first youth information centre being the first ones engaged in this topic are a success indicator not only of the workshop but the University itself, responding to the needs of YI workers and influencing the development of quality network of YI centres across the Europe and Africa.

Pepe’s workshop also targeted participants who are starting Youth Information Services and especially the ones realising the need of adapting their services to nowadays challenges. Capitalizing on shared experiences and knowledge of participants, the workshop focused on questions how to establish collaborations between modern Youth Information Services and Services for young people; which kind of needs, challenges and opportunities will we meet in this process; who can support us and how and what is young people’s roll in all of it.

“It’s time to review the old concept of youth information centres and develop new ways to offer quality information services!” (cit. Pepe Herrera)

A set of recommendations and actions arose from YIC workers future delivery:

• Youth work and youth information: find all possibilities for a more pro-active approach (Sense of coherence).
• Put more attention to the real needs of the young people by getting more contact with young people and their demands; find ways to follow/coach them during the process.
• Use different approaches to directly reach different groups: i.e. being present/organising debates, exhibitions, concerts, sports, board games etc. and by using multipliers within schools, family and especially peers.
• Make contact activities/places where young people are already active.
• Analyse and plan your networking (personal, professional, online and offline, active, passive etc.)
• Establish priorities and decide your role (passive, active member, promoter...).
• Take advantage of other organizations/people’s expertise and resources.
• Offer your knowledge/experiences/skills/facilities to other.
• Discuss the pros and cons to network with companies (for example informational exhibitions in famous youth like companies) and create other kind of partnerships with schools (for example, digital literacy workshops for students and teachers).
• Improve the evaluation methods (by coaching young people from their quests and following during the whole process, we have a better chance to measure the impact of the YI and offer to politicians and stakeholders facts about quality, importance and results of the YI services (and not just numbers).
• Raise awareness about the importance of YI among young people: it is important to be informed; it is an advantage to be able to take informed decisions. Make clear for young people why YI is useful and what their benefits are. Make it a trend to be well informed, to use quality information.

Taking into consideration how many participants stated the challenge of adapting YIC work on daily basis, Pepe’s workshop could have been held in the auditorium where all 120 participants would fit.
Youth Information as an effective tool for creation and development of youth policy
As one of the most dynamic and direct work that interacts with young people on a daily basis, youth information and counselling is extremely most relevant when it comes to providing an evidence-based approach for the creation and developments of youth policy. According to provided services in youth information and counselling field, professionals working in generalist or specialised youth information centres are the ones more up-to-date regarding youth needs, their life conditions and personal motivation. This experience is therefore an irreplaceable source of information when it comes to setting directions upon strategies regarding youth.

This topic gained relevance during the SUYIC in a dedicated session on how YI supports youth policy in different areas: speakers involved in the policy making field provided participants with an insight on how important their work is and how it can influence youth policy making as well as establishing partnership with relevant stakeholders for networking and advocating.

Youth policy and Youth Information in Europe: an example from Croatia

“Youth Policy consists of activities of different stakeholders that should provide young people with opportunities and experiences that are likely to improve their life quality and to enable them to be optimally integrated in the society.” (cit. Morana Makovec)

Upon those important reasons and relationship between Youth Policy and Youth information in Europe, an overview of Croatian context in the YIC field was given by Morana Makovec (representing the Ministry of Social Policy and Youth, Croatia) gave a thorough presentation on the importance of YIC and its relations with youth policies, drawing from her experience in the development of youth policies in Croatia, and also at European level.

As an example of a very structured and effective YIC system built upon on a two-way relationship, the Croatian model was presented to participants, stating the importance of partnership and cooperation among all relevant stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of youth policies. These key actors include:

- Governments
- Youth researchers
- Youth work practitioners
- Youth organisations
- Youth
The Croatian model was also brought as example of how important inter-ministerial cooperation is: the cooperation among a range of ministries with different portfolios such as youth, sport, education, culture, defence, health, transport, labour, agriculture etc. especially taking into consideration how diverse topics of youth interest can be. A similar cooperation varies from different field to field but it is clear that it can provide more comprehensive and coherent policies, to support and create conditions for the wellbeing of young people.

Another crucial point remains the dialogue between institutions and young people and youth organisations. In order to assure this process consultations and partnerships should be established (such as a consultative committee – Youth advising bodies) and should be regularly consulted, and given the mandate to influence governments on issues regarding young people.

“The cornerstone for a ‘youth policy’ is its focus on how young people can become active citizens and positive contributors to society. This implies a much wider perspective, and an emphasis on non-formal education – education outside the formal school system.” (cit. Morana Makovec)

To be able to actually influence and have a considerable role in supporting young, any youth policy needs to have a budget that includes support to youth initiatives and to youth organisations (a so-called “Youth budget”); such an important feature needs to be planned in advance and should not only reflect what decision makers support, but it should also respect youth needs. A long-term, secure budget line is the only way to ensure stable growth and development of quality youth policy affecting young people’s lives for the better.

Youth information policy at all levels

A youth information strategy should ensure transparency of government policy towards young people. A similar strategy should also inform young people about different opportunities that exist around them and for them, at all levels:

- **International** – documents that are created by international bodies and meant to apply globally or regionally. Individual countries commit to these international policies when they become signatories.
- **National** – policies formulated at the national level
- **Subnational** – policies at provincial or regional level. These regional strategies are gaining increasing importance as many countries continue to decentralize services and policy-making to regional authorities.
- **Local** – policies formulated and applied locally, for example by municipalities or other local policy-making bodies such as school boards, and other institutions.

**Croatia’s youth policy**

The overall process of creation and implementation of a structured youth policy in Croatia has been following the principle of described cooperation among stakeholders, throughout various working groups and public debates. In particular, the relevance of the cooperation with researches ensures that all relevant documents regarding youth policies are evidence-based and it also provides a comprehensive body of research on youth, including all levels from professional researchers to experts and NGOs’ workers. Inter-ministerial co-operation is ensured through the presence of representatives of each ministry in different working groups, and the establishment of the Council of Youth of the Government. Regarding Youth advisory bodies, the situation is very structured with local advisory boards within every local government as well as a Croatian National Youth Council. Regarding non-formal education (NFE), cooperation with NGOs is in place but NFE has still no legal recognition. A “Youth Budget” is planned and ensured within the State Budget following the needs of youth sector as expressed by these processes of cooperation. Youth participation is ensured in formulation and implementation of youth policy, but they are not yet included in the decision-making processes.

**Youth Information in Croatia**

Information and counselling is supported by the Ministry in charge for Youth since 2007 and from 2008 until today, information and counselling is mostly provided by 4 regional info-centres for youth, regularly financed.
by the Ministry. In 2012, the European Youth Information Charter has been signed by the Vice president of the Government, representing an important step forward towards the involvement in the European dynamics. Although YIC work is very structured and YIC services are rather successful, Croatia still does not have a Youth information policy. From the point of view of the decision and policy makers, the role of YIC work includes the dissemination of YIC services to youth, and the participation of YI workers in drafting relevant documents and providing feedbacks is still related to the general field of from the field helping establishing and creating better youth policies, not necessarily specific YIC policies. In order to ensure growth and development of the YIC provision in YIC centres across Croatia, financial support for local info-centres is planned for 2014 as well as the long-term (3 year) financial support for Regional info-centres starting in 2015.

Youth policy should be evidence-based and who is better informed about needs of young people than YIC workers, who provide answers to their quests, worries and dilemmas, helping them struggle with issues on a wide range of topics on daily basis?

Examples of good practices: from active citizenship to social inclusion

Among the participants of the Summer University sat also very experienced youth information and counselling professionals that shared some experiences and good practices in five specific fields. These examples then inspired the work of the discussion groups, whose results reinforced possible common actions and learning from shared practices.

Social inclusion (Stefan Kuehne, Austria)

Stefan made a short remark on what social inclusion can mean related to youth information. Social inclusion is not only about economic or cultural issues, it is also, for example, about sexual orientation of young people. Human rights are universal, not negotiable and indivisible, meaning that nobody can repress one right without affecting the whole set; so sexual identity and sexual orientation are also part of these fundamental rights. Youth information has to be accurate, high quality, and based on the needs of young people, neither on someone’s belief nor personal, cultural nor religious values.

Youth information centres should provide information for all young people, regardless if they are heterosexual, gay, lesbian and bisexual or transgender persons. Their work and the message they disseminate should fight against all discrimination.

“If social inclusion means, that youth information has to be supportive for young lesbians, young gays, young bisexuals and young transgender persons – well, then let’s be supportive.” (cit. Stefan Kuehne)

An effective way of working with youth regarding topic of social inclusion is to promote or develop projects based on tolerance and non-discrimination.

Active citizenship (Mika Pietila, Finland)

In Finland there are two main instruments for youth policy.

1. **Youth Act**, which gives the framework for youth policy and youth work. The latest Youth Act was designed in 2006. The youth act state the aims of youth policy and youth work.
2. Children and Youth policy program which is renewed every fourth year, and follows the programme of the new government.

Active citizenship is at the core of the Youth Act as well as in the Children and Youth Policy Program. It has transversal aims and it is taken into consideration in all youth work and youth policy implemented. In 2006 youth information and counselling work became a fundamental part of the Youth Act: since then youth information and counselling work is officially seen as a basic service of each municipality youth work. When lobbying youth information to be a part of youth work basic services, these key points were used as motivation and leverage:

- Youth information empowers young people to be active by themselves, take decisions, and take responsibility on their life and independency, with support of professional youth information workers and services. These are important elements when talking about active citizenship and about young people who take actions in their lives.
- Youth information services can act as a tool for local, regional and national authorities when they need to know more about youth, when they want to hear young people’s voice, when they want to approach young people not belonging to any youth group or organisation. Different methods and tools can be used. For example in Finland there is a specific e-democracy tool for young people to offer them an easy way to present their ideas and initiatives.

The story of youth information development in Finland after 2006 has been successful and the turning point was the moment when it was decided that every municipality should have youth information centre. In eight years, the youth information network in Finland has grown from 25 YI services to a network of 160 youth information point/centres, more than 40 online services, tens of peer-to-peer activities, and more than 40 youth information development projects annually. Tens of thousands questions by young people are asked in different ways from youth information services. Tens of thousands young people faced youth information centres, youth centres in general, schools, streets, events. In 80% of Finnish municipalities a young person has a direct access to a youth information service. It is about supporting active citizenship, but also about how active citizenship supports social inclusion of young people.

Employability (Jan Kulenović, Bosnia and Herzegovina)

The responsibility of fighting youth unemployment is not only reserved to politicians. Youth information centres can have a very concrete role in this battle, by providing different services. Jan presented the various actions undertaken by his organisation to have a direct and immediate impact in contrasting youth unemployment by providing young people and YIC workers with concrete tools that they can use. Among other things they:

- Created an informational and education material such as “How to become sexy on labour market?” – Manual for youth presenting various information and possibilities what to do while unemployed.
- Created a manual for Job Club Officers/Advisors – transferring knowledge from NGO experts to public service
- Organised one-day course for unemployed youth (held in public Job Clubs)
- Designed e-newsletter with “30 opportunities open this week”
- Integrated NGO’s services in Job Club’s program within Public Employment Service

This example clearly shows how sometimes there is no need to waiting 3 or 5 years, to see policies changing or to influence strategic documents regarding youth tackling important issues. The process can take form in different ways and it should be dynamic and in line with current trends on the labour market targeting unemployed youth.
Participation (Marc Boes, the Netherlands)

“Welcome to our world. You are free to change it but be careful. It's very fragile and we already invested a lot of energy in it.” (cit Marc Boes)

During the discussion group, the participants agreed on some conclusions, starting from the point that there is no good or bad model of youth participation. The most important thing is to adapt to our reality, according to the needs of young people and goals we want to achieve with it regarding our locality or situation in the country.

Mobility (Claire Conlon, France)

The French national youth information network consist of 500 YI centres supported by national and local government. Mobility is one of youth priorities in action plan for youth and is the third most asked question by the users of YI centres, right after education and employment. In order to deliver information on mobility in an attractive and youth friendly way, fun, festive and informative activities were designed regarding youth mobility issues. The most popular and effective ones are a kind of living library, the “mobility live books”, that aim at informing young people in a face-to-face method, connected both by experienced YI workers sharing information and by young person's sharing their personal experience, making information become alive and acquiring a human face.

“Face-to-face interaction is very much needed in youth mobility context.” (cit. Claire Conlon)

Mobility is a very “hot” topic in the YI field nowadays and a lot of YI workers across Europe are designing and realizing several dynamic and interesting activities, taking different initiatives to respond to youth information needs in this area. As also emerged during the discussion group, Claire confirmed that the activities that show the best results and are recognized as most useful ones by youth themselves are face-to-face and peer-to-peer methods, like the “live info markets” and mobility stories coming from young people with experience or involved in mobility programmes.

The network of Eurodesk, EVS (European Voluntary Service) and YoMIM (ERYICA’s latest mobility project) are all very useful resources when delivering youth information on mobility. Mobility is indeed a particularly challenging topic for YI workers, because young people have multi-layered needs, and need support in covering all different aspects of living in a certain country (housing, legal documents, health, institutions etc.). Along with receiving information before leaving their home country, young people need support from local YI worker to guide them once their reached their hosting country. These are only a few examples of the several competences and skills that YI workers need to deliver information on mobility. Another example, brought about the participants, pictured the importance of mobility-focused network of YIC within and across Europe and Africa (it could be for example a further step for the YOMIM network) that could help not only young mobile people, but also YI workers who could have a reliable source to find quality and up-to-date information to deliver YI services reflecting the needs of youth in this area. Along with the lack of competences of YI workers, other challenges were mentioned by participants. For example, often it is recognised that are always the same people that receive information on mobility opportunities; on one hand, this point could represent the result of very good provided services that influence young people to go back and keep taking advantage of available opportunities; on the other hand, it raises the question on how to reach out to more and more young people to provide them all with actual equal opportunities.
Recognising the topic of mobility as one of the “most wanted” in the context of youth needs immediately creates a need among youth information workers in gaining specific competences to address those needs. To support increasingly mobile young people, ERYICA and its members have developed a new competence framework, creating a network of “Youth on the Move Info Mobility” (YoMIM) guides. A YoMIM guide is a youth information worker that has developed the specific set of skills to work with mobile young people and knows how to make a young person feel at home, away from home. Find out more about YoMIM here: http://eryica.org/news/young-people-promote-latest-service-eryica-network

Touching the sensibility of the YIC workers present at the SUYIC, the workshop “Youth on the move – InfoMobility” contributed to addressing these challenges and questions by giving an overview on mobility and providing specific insight on the latest ERYICA project. Hannes Sildnik, Member of ERYICA Training Task Force and directly involved in YoMIM, helped participants to go more in depth on the concept of mobility and on YoMIM in particular. Participants discovered what it can offer to young people, youth information workers, organisations, and local communities by giving an overview of its structure, values and illustrating the possibilities on how to join the network.

Youth Policy in diverse African realities

Continuing to provide a framework of understanding of the very diverse African realities, as done by Moussa, Dito Namassi Max, President of the National Youth Council of Guinea-Bissau, presented the state of youth policies in the continent.

The focal starting point of Youth Policies in Africa is the African Youth Charter – a policy paper that aims at orienting the signatory states on regards to youth rights and to promote participation and involvement of young people in the development of the each country and of the continent, as a whole. The Charter defines the responsibilities of the Member States of the African Union towards all African youth; it was adopted in 2006, at the Heads of State and Governments Summit in Banjul, Gambia. So far 37 Member States have already signed the document (representing a majority within the Union).³

³ Find out more and read the AYC here: http://africa-youth.org/youth_charter
What is the role of the African Youth Charter in relation to the Public Youth Policies?
The African Youth Charter gives governments, young people, and civil society and partners a continental framework that emphasizes the rights, duties and freedoms of African young people, but it also opens a way to the development and creation of youth programmes and national strategic plans to empower young people. The Charter defines the foundations that push Member States to defining national policies as well as integrating youth matters and issues in all their policies and development programmes, to transversally boost youth empowerment and participation. The Charter is an official lawful policy paper so it predicts a jurisdiction domain to assure the present and participation of youth people in governmental structures and national and international forums. It also gives young people the right to pressure the governments to increase the investment in the youth sector.

Main challenges in implementing the Charter at national and global level
Dito clearly emphasized how public policies regarding Africa’s development cannot keep neglecting the weight (not only demographical) that young people have in the continent – a real African development cannot be achieved and promoted without an adequate investment in youth. It is needed greater policy sensibility towards young people’s issues as well as the creation and implementation of coherent national youth policies that have young people’s wishes and aspirations at their foundation. In order to achieve this, structural capacities and supervision mechanisms of the African Union need to be reinforced on what concerns the Charter’s follow up and implementation by the Member States as well as promoting good governance and accountability towards all citizens. Promoting peace and stability in the continent is extremely important for there are still many countries in Africa that face challenges regarding keeping peace and providing security for its citizens.

Finally, since the Charter is still widely unknown to many citizens, promotion and dissemination of the African Youth Charter needs to be done for making it visible and in a similar context the role of YIC clearly stands out.

How Youth Information and Counselling contribute to supporting the implementation of Youth Policies in Africa
Keeping in mind the high diversity within the continent, there have been efforts done by the African Union in collaboration with the Member States to create mechanisms that strengthen the implementation of collective measures by Member States and their partners (including civil society, international partners) in order to develop youth information and counselling services in the continent. Nonetheless, despite advancements, there are still many challenges to overcome and many countries in Africa still do not have policies directed to young people. Civil society organisations in Africa have a very important role in development processes regarding youth issues and it is in a similar context that some countries, like Sao Tome and Principe succeeded in the realization of national youth policies.

Being the president of the CPLP (Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries), Dito gave a specific overview of how CPLP countries develop their youth policies:

- Acting as a Community, the Youth Ministers’ meeting was instituted to create an annual space to discuss issues among young people of the CPLP Youth (e.g. Sport, education, etc.);
- In 2009 the CPLP Youth Forum worked on the strategic 5 year plan that foresees the creation of the CPLP Youth Foundation. This foundation would aim at working towards mobilizing resources fulfilling young people's needs.
- The Youth Rights Charter of the CPLP was created to identify a set of rights for youth in areas such as
mobility, health, entrepreneurship and employability; it was adopted by the Ministers’ of Youth that met in 2013 in Brazil.

Dito finished his presentation underlining how everybody involved in making possible the dream of African youth empowerment is aware that it is up to them to build a continent that grants the rights of young people at all levels from access to information, participation, quality education, health, etc. and it is thanks to partnerships and networks, like the one of this SUYIC, that such a dream becomes a step closer.

African youth information system

Lawrence Ndambuki Muli from African Observatory for Policy Practice and Youth Studies (Kenya/Ethiopia) briefed the participants on the African YI system with a focus on youth unemployment. He gave an interesting presentation on current research, results and trends within youth information work, as well as the objectives for an African Youth Information System (AYIS):

• To provide comparative data and statistics on Member States, Regional Communities and the Continent as a whole
• Track progress in Member States on youth development on the five priority areas of the African Youth Decade (National Youth Policy, Employment, Health, Education, Entrepreneurship)
• Evidence-based policy making and programming in youth development

At this point, Lawrence presented the research that his think thank is carrying. Conducting research among youth in Africa is challenging not only because of the demographic reasons (with 70% of entire population being under 35; 91 billion) but also because of gender matters, along with income and rural-urban inequalities across the continent. Around 46% of researchers agree that the reasons for such a high youth unemployment rate could be find in gaps of information flow. All though they agree that public services are not providing quality information to youth seeking for employment, around 60% of young people would rather work in that very public sector.

As it was mentioned before, the African Youth Charter is legally binding but it is not implemented and it is the only document of its sort, ratified by only 34 out of 54 countries in Africa. The impression of youth workers and all of those working in the youth sector and in development of youth policies, is that the Charter is only lying on the shelf where it was put: it is not promoted, not implemented and any possible result within youth policies are is not measured.

Independent researchers, like Lawrence himself and his colleagues, are working to track and explore how public policies are implemented for the benefit of youth, with a special focus on national youth policy, employment, health, education and entrepreneurship as burring issues among African youth.

Working in such a diverse landscape of youth sectors across the continent, their work is focused on evidence-based policy making by mapping good practices, especially on entrepreneurship, and aiming to develop youth policy that tackle high youth unemployment and poverty rate (46 % under 35 live with up to $1.25 per day). Their aim is 2% annual reduction in unemployment target along with the 13% economic growth needed to achieve it.

“Africa needs to re-evaluate national youth policies not only focusing on gaps but painting opportunities.”
(cit. Lawrence Muli)

To achieve all of this, popular and tokenistic youth participation needs to be transformed with meaningful participation promoted by governments as well as a new attitude among young people themselves: a mind shift from looking for a job into creating a job.
Suggested measures for youth policy toward creating conditions for youth employment to achieve this goal are:

- More investment opportunities
- Changes in tax revenues
- Support of micro-financing schemes
- Youth start-ups
- Trainings and capacity building
- Change of youth attitude toward agriculture
- Access to land: Agribusiness
- Social security, Insurance
- Civic education
- Promotion of public-private partnerships that are aligned to African Transformational Priorities
- Pedagogic overhaul including education infrastructure for courses that may not have high employability rates
- Social protection programmes addressing gender based cultural practices
- Equal pay laws and affirmative action programmes to ensure qualified young women are treated fairly in recruitment

From 2010 the most relevant program and a source of opportunities for African youth is the African Union Youth Volunteer Corps, that organise various trainings for young people, travels etc. actively promoting altruism, participation and youth empowerment trough volunteering. (www.africa-youth.org)

**Example of good practice: Association of Youth Friends of Development (AJAD), Burundi**

One more example came from Burundi, with the presentation of the organization Association of Youth Friends of Development (AJAD), by Jean Bosco Girukwishaka. The organisation was initiated in 2002 with the overall aim of informing young people on civic education as well as concrete actions to fight against poverty and unemployment of vulnerable segment of the population. The objectives are to create a framework for youth to create a meeting place for information, dialogue and self-development; to identify and promote development projects in all areas of interest for members; to create a solidarity fund for supporting members facing greater difficulties; to find the best development strategies to fight against poverty and protect the local environment; to work preventively to protect the environment in all activities, including participating in local development and promoting youth participation in domestic production.

Project activities are designed to achieve these goals and objectives, and they include city cleaning and sanitation such as street sweeping, cleaning and collection of solid waste in various public markets, cleaning and clearing of roadside etc., city beautification (landscaping of public open spaces, planting flowers and maintenance of parks and monuments etc.) and environmental protection (planting ornamental shrubs on the main roads, planting trees on riverbanks to prevent rock falling from their banks during floods, beach management to prevent pollution of the lake).

The organisation managed to combine joint work for public good together with the recruitment of local workforce, as a way to include members of vulnerable groups and provide them with opportunity to gain competences, socialise, and contribute to the society as well as earning a small income. AYFDs recruitment strategy is based on the outreach towards those members are most motivated. It recruits among the following groups: unemployed youth (orphans, demobilized former children soldiers and war returnees), widows or widowers, unemployed young mothers, women beggars and their young children.
“It is easy to be supported by the national and / or international community when one is already doing something good and showing what he is capable of.” (cit. Jean Bosco Girukwishaka)

Results of their work are very visible and influential in their society. It is very obvious in the context of sanitation and environment protection that they contributed to improve health conditions of citizens as well as the city cleanliness and beautification with tree and flower planting. Along with making the city a nicer place to live, the organisation’s activities resulted with job creation and poverty reduction for over 600 employees as their members by organising themselves and doing something about the poverty, not waiting for external support that might never come.

The foundation of its success is that the organisation promotes ownership on its work by including members in decision-making at all levels: from what kind of project to be implemented, to how it is going to be done, relying only on human resources within the organization members and creating a meeting place for members where they can share experiences and learn from each other. Their good and important work was recognised by local authorities and good collaboration was established.

To keep up its legacy as an exceptional model of youth empowerment and participation, AJAD’s ambition is to continue being innovative in order to create more employment and fight against poverty, to collaborate with more experienced and advanced companies in cleaning and landscaping their local environment and to have more efficient working machines and tools in order to deliver quality job. They are planning to establish a youth information centre to inform, mobilize and teach young people about entrepreneurship skills and competences; also in this case collaboration and partnership with ERYICA members can provide a strong added value for the achievement of AJAD ambitious objectives while offering a chance to European practitioners to experience a completely different reality.

“Information is the key to any youth development and participation.” (cit. Jean Bosco Girukwishaka)
From the practitioner’s point of view – What do YI Workers have to say about it?

Africa – Europe exchange

Confirming the high interest of European participants towards finding out more about the African reality, and the strong will of the African participants to set up new capacity building and knowledge sharing partnerships, the most attractive and attended workshop was the one aiming to increase the “Africa-Europe Exchange” mostly based on sharing regional perspectives between Africa and Europe. Unlike the other workshops, this sharing moment took place each afternoon, and every day it had a different focus, always creating a space that stimulates the exchange between African and European experiences in the field of Youth Information and Counselling, allowing also the exchange within and between different regional African realities (East and West Africa and Portuguese-speaking Africa). Specific objectives were set at deepening the reflection on the understanding of what Youth Information and Counselling is in the African context, focusing on the main dilemmas expressed in the morning plenary; exploring and getting to know the reality of Youth Information and Counselling in the different African and European countries (existing structures, services, framework...) and comparing with different European realities (existing structures, services, framework...) and main developments acknowledging the fact that a lot of effort needs to be put in structuring the YIC field in the African continent through cooperation’s, partnerships, support and especially trainings for the YIC workers.

“Youth information is about networking and bridging. If it was important to go through with the project for Europeans, it was even more important to put together Europeans and Africans willing to work together and to profit from each other’s experiences” (Cit. participant’s evaluation)

The sessions allowed participants to share the main challenges that they are facing in the field of youth information and counselling. During the different moments of the afternoons, non-formal activities provided the space to exchange quite diverse experiences and realities (existing structures, services, frameworks, etc.). It allowed African participants to understand better how youth information and counselling works in Europe and at the same time European participants got a deeper look on the reality and challenges that practitioners are facing when trying to develop and implement youth information and counselling in Africa. This exercise enlarged participants’ understanding of the diversity of practices within the regions themselves. Exploring also the similarities, participants increased their understanding of the importance of cooperation among
organizations and institutions operating in the field. For example, African participants expressed their need to receive specific trainings on how to set youth information and counselling services in their country since African youth workers lack all basic knowledge about YIC. As a conclusion suggested by the participants, more spaces of cooperation between Africa and Europe in the field of youth information and counselling are a priority since a lot can be learned from each other.

**Continuous training, capacity building and life-long learning for YIC workers**

During the plenary sessions on the very first working day of the SUYIC, while presenting an African perspective on youth information, Moussa Masambuko pointed out how the only sustainable and successful youth information centre is the one with educated YI workers, bringing up the importance of having trained and competent staff who keeps investing in capacity building and learning throughout their professional career to always provide updated services and quality information. This concept is a crucial point for ERYICA and its network and Mika Pietila (ERYICA Training Task Force) took Moussa’s words and the participants’ need as a starting point for an overview of the [current training offer of ERYICA](#) in order to provide the participants with an overall view of training opportunities that ERYICA offers to its members, affiliated and partnering organizations. The topic was also deepened during Mika’s afternoon workshop, giving space to go more into details which was particularly appreciated by participants from countries with less developed on YIC. The workshop participants got familiar with ERYICA’s Training System and different training courses offered, such as YIntro, Digital YIntro, Advanced YIntro, Jimmy, YoMIM and Webbie. The workshop was in general a good opportunity to discuss about training needs, which could inspire Members and the whole network to further studies and develop new training concepts.

**Presenting YIC**

The presentations of good practices and examples of YIC experiences highlighted the importance of promoting and presenting YIC work. Hannes Sildnik, Member of ERYICA’s Training Task Force, held a workshop on the topic to support participants who felt the need to improve their skills in showcasing their work. Promotion and marketing are well known in the business world and are commonly associated with advertising campaigns and big money. Youth information workers also promote and advertise their services on events, websites, leaflets and various gadgets. However, the big money appears to be always missing. During the workshop, participants looked into what can be learnt from businesses on how to “sell” YIC services, making the best use of the available resources. Participants explored both theoretical principles and practical examples, discussed and interacted on to apply such techniques to their work. The conversation focused on what YIW in fact promises to young people as a key point to understand how to promote it. Conceptual understanding has to come first – what do we promote, what is the promise of our products and their value to young people. Only then comes the question of how do we do that.

The main conclusion was drawn that advertising material is always a matter of subjective understanding provoked by personal memories, associations, etc., yet there are common elements that get translated similarly. There is no magic tool for improving promotion of YIC work but the fact is it needs to be promoted more, especially outside the “usual circuits” to increase outreach and therefore the way to do it is very important.

Here are some suggestions from YIC professionals on promoting YIC work:

- Be braver in advertising and promoting your YIC work!
- Think outside the box when presenting it!
- Non-formal sector has so much to learn from the commercial world and should not be shy or ashamed about it!
Gathering evidence to showcase the impact of Youth Policies and Youth Information on young people’s lives
After the first inputs on how YIC supports Youth Policy and Youth Information, it emerged how the two are even more interlinked than that. On this line, Marius Ulozas from the Institute for policy, research and analysis (Vilnius) shared his experience of the opposite dimension of this relation, in other words how cross-sectorial cooperation and evidence-based policy development can support the development of YIC.

Youth policies contribute to the development of YIC because:

• It gives YIC workers a framework in which to operate
• It defines links to other actors in the field: e.g. institutions and other systems of youth empowerment (youth participation, youth work)
• It defines priorities (e.g. if youth unemployment is an European priority, youth information centres providing services in this field means you are responding to the current needs of youth and working towards achieving set goals)
• It helps to do YIC work and to establish concrete links between young people and policy-making

Youth information and counselling workers can support awareness building, lobbying with policy makers, as well as involving young people, youth workers and researchers

Youth Information workers therefore should also think into influencing youth policies not only to ensure that they respect young people needs but also to create stronger policy frameworks in which YIC can operate. Advocacy can be done mainly by:

a. Being or becoming a stakeholder in the YIC area:
• Taking part in decision making process and/or structures
• Cooperating and influencing directly other Youth policy and Youth information stakeholders

b. Supporting young people to influence Youth Policy:
• Raising awareness among young people that their opinion matters
• Inform about ways to participate (as well, in decision-making)
• Supporting advocacy actions, visibility of youth activities
• Collect and analyse youth needs in different areas of Youth Policy

In order to draw attention to the importance of YIC impact in creation of youth policy, Marius raised very important question:

Is it more important to do a good job OR be able to prove others that you do a good job?

The vast majority of participants agreed on that beside the good job we do, we must also know how to present it to others and to convince them of the benefit it brings to youth and society. It is not only important for our donors but also for decision makers if we manage to implement good practices and contribute with concrete results to the often vague programmatic lines of youth policies.

“For governments (local, regional, national and international) quantity is more important than quality.” (cit. participant of SUYIC)
What and how to measure?

It is thus self-evident the importance of measuring and analysing youth needs together with the results of the work done in the field to fulfil these needs. This realization however brought along several other questions raised by participants, including what can be measured in youth work and in projects with young people. Marius’s presentation gave an answers to these questions, despite the fact that, as himself reminded, it is easier to measure quantitative indicators, while it is very important to also measure quantity and other difficult indicators, especially with the support of research and analysis to keep track of evidence-based success and results, during all stages of project and/or work on, giving the first row to:

- the need(s)
- the quality of implementation
- the impact.

Being able to complement the conversation on how important YIC work is and the impact it has with figures can make the difference in the extent to which YIC work is supported and promoted. However even knowing what needs to be measured, several questions still remain open such as: who should be measuring, YIC workers or external people/agencies? Which resources should be dedicated to such measuring and how can practitioners get involved in defining quality criteria and measurement?

“We work with young people not with figures but we have to spend too much time on collecting data and writing reports.” (cit. participant of SUYIC)

YIC workers should know how to measure the work they do with young people, and also the impact this has not only on youth but also on the community and the society as a whole. They should be able to quantify and evaluate the work they do, in order to be more flexible, adapting according to comparisons between these results and the needs of youth and of the community. A similar analysis will prove most effective also when advocating influencing development of the YIC field as well as youth policies in general (local/national level). Participant’s feedback on measuring and analysing data on information services are coloured with field experiences and everyday work situations. Some interesting key points were drafted and some questions rose. During the discussion, participants agreed that is crucial to have evaluation/measuring/data collection as internal part
of the service provision, and elaborated some general guidelines:

- For collecting data and evidence, use different methods. Remember always to whom the report is addressed; use method relevant to the target group.
- Think why you evaluate, measure and analyse the numbers: keep your aims in mind when formulating conclusions and feedback on your work/results.
- Collecting data is a job itself so measuring should be done by professional of that field.
- Keep in your mind the YI Principles when collecting data of YIC services.
- Multi-professional and cross-sectorial approaches to youth information create greater challenges when measuring the impact of YI work. E.g. how to ensure that it was that very YIC service that impacted the young person’s life and not some other service that the person received/was referred to?

The role of monitoring and evaluation in YIC work

The overall topic of monitoring and evaluating services and activities deserve a series of seminar on its own. However it was important to focus on why monitoring and evaluation are important to YIC services:

- Help make services for young people better by getting feedback from youngsters. According their opinion on services provided changes can be made to achieve better quality of YIC services;
- Help YIC workers understand the needs of young people. “Otherwise we are just guessing.”
- Help YIC workers to prove they do useful work (to young people, stakeholders, donors etc.) because they are aware of the current needs of people;
- M&E are not just a tick-box. It is often the case that evaluation are only done because it is a mandatory task, forgetting the important role they play not only for that service but also for all future activities to be implemented and also for the process of growth and development of YIC workers and of the YIC field in general.

Discussion among participants was deepened on the statement that statistics do not tell much about quality impact for young people on their lives and that numbers can be interpreted differently depending on the context as well as who is using them for what purposes. Three key points were singled out regarding this topic:
• Monitoring and evaluation are a cycle and should lead to action/adaption of practices.
• Reflecting is crucial.
• Adapting according to the findings of monitoring means work and needs creativity and imagination. It is not a passive task and therefore needs dedicated time and resources.

Triangle of policy making

Also, Marius stressed the importance of cooperation of policy-makers, practitioners/youth representatives and researchers, who are connected to policies as summarized in this visual representation. Contribution of all the relevant stakeholders to creation of youth policies is of utmost significance if we strive to design and implement comprehensive youth policy according to youth needs and to modern life conditions, and that can actually achieve the set goals of youth autonomy and inclusion.

About the role of YIC in achieving these goals, Marcio Barcelos, board member of European Youth Forum gave his perspective as representative of the largest network of National Youth Councils and International Youth Organisations across Europe, on the link between young people and youth policy. Marcio brought the example of the structured dialogue process as a powerful method to boost youth participation, to implement youth rights, for young people to be heard and to exercise their right to be involved in society and directly influence the policies that will have a direct impact on them. However, it must be kept in mind that youth participation starts earlier in life, as a result of an attitude towards one's civic role in society, where civic education contributes to develop youth's democratic competences and values, promoting active citizenship at all different levels: from club meetings, to school councils and youth organisations all the way to elections.

“Youth information and counselling is the most influential in development of young people and taking the ownership of their life.” (cit. Marcio Barcelos)

From the practitioner’s point of view (What do YI workers have to say about it?)

During the discussion groups regarding the topic of how youth information workers and services in the field influence youth policy, the participants got very involved and interesting points were drawn upon the subject. Again, points of view as well as the ways of influence depend firstly on the existence of youth policy in each country and also on how the YIC field developed, how it was structured and how it is considered and recognized by decision and policy makers. Some participants, mostly from African background actively do lobbying actions and try to promote the design and implementation of youth policies at local, national and regional level. Participants coming from countries in which YIC exist as a recognised field, regardless of the level of development of youth policy, worked and were previously engaged in youth policy in different ways and to different levels:

• Writing youth policy programs,
• Advocating certain matters to be noticed in youth policy,
• Implementing youth policies,
• Evaluating the impact of youth policy.
• Working in national institutes, NGO’s, youth councils, youth information centres, as national coordinators of youth information etc.

From their own experience, participants listed the following as some of the main trends related to youth policies:

- European institutions (namely European Union / European Commission) are influencing national youth policy,
- Youth needs are not necessarily considered
- More opportunities to participate in the development of youth policy are available for all citizens
- There is not always a coherent approach
- Shared and common values upon which to build up a youth policy are not yet identified.
- Coordination bodies are a good way to connect YI workers and youth policy makers on national (or regional) level

Regarding the role of youth information services in developing youth policies, participants prioritized the followings:

- Involving youth in the process of developing youth policy
- Informing policy makers what are the information needs of young people
- Reaching also young people who are not part of any official youth group or organisation
- Giving young people opportunity to participate
- Making different sectors more aware of the work and services provided by (smaller/local scale) organizations (working in different field: health, prevention, sexuality, mobility etc.)

Quality Matters

Talking about quality of implementation and the impact of Youth Policy and Youth Information on young person’s life, conclusions of the workshop “Quality matters in youth information and counselling work” held by Alexandra Beweis are very relevant. They focused on different aspects of quality within Youth Information Work – Quality of the information we provide quality of our services, quality of our communication, etc. and try to answer questions such as: What do we mean with quality in different contexts? How can we evaluate and ensure our quality? What instruments do we know and use on different levels? The workshop was designed to give participants a concrete idea of quality information they can provide and to give a deeper look on why quality matters in Youth Information Work. The workshop was a space to get ideas on how to evaluate and ensure quality in different areas of YIC work and participants discussed their experience with the Quality Management Tools. After collecting the list of quality features of information, participants discussed which features are for them more difficult to ensure and the ones related to objectiveness/non-judgemental were certainly the most discussed. Shared conclusions led to the agreement that key to solving this issue is continuous awareness raising, and continuous exchange and conversation with other YIC workers.

The second part of the workshop was dedicated to new ERYICA reflection tool with the short input on Criteria/Standard and the Principles of the Charter, and participants became more confident in how to using this tool and applying shared standards.

From Vulnerability to Sexuality

The most judgmental topics, always biased with most prejudices, are those of sexuality and issues related to it, including the relationship between sexuality and identity. Helping participants to understand the role of Youth Information and Youth Work in this field, Evelien Luts and Bart Vandenbussche prepared and implemented a workshop on how to react to questions and to situations concerning sexuality that see children and youth involved. They offered tips and tricks about how to train children/adolescents regarding relationships
and sexuality presenting some useful methodologies and teaching how to talk about specific situations concerning sexual development with this target group.

The main aims of this workshop were to gain skills to have conversations about relationships and sexuality with children and adolescents, to learn how to answer their “difficult” questions and how to educate them about relations and sex, instead of hiding behind stereotypes and misconceptions.

Another important aim of the workshop was to increase participants’ competences in order to judge and properly react when facing so-called “unacceptable” sexual behaviour. During the workshop participants became more aware of the cultural differences towards sexuality and identity and the consequences that these might have on their work as YIC operators. These cultural differences are not only noticeable between countries but also between citizens from the same country. From this perspective, this workshop has been very useful to stress the need for greater cultural awareness, for YIC workers, but also for young people and transversally for society as a whole.

This session revealed a need of YIC workers to talk about relations and sexuality, even when it comes to personal situations and subjective opinions. By talking about it and giving space for different experiences, people hear other opinions and widen their views on relations and sexuality, being able to better accept and understand diversity. This is certainly necessary, seeing the existing variety of relations and sexuality and the societal struggle to accept and include people representing these diversities.

“It’s important that YIC workers learn to see ‘the question behind the question’ and not to judge the sexual behaviour from youngsters.” (cit. Eveline Luts)

Issues on sexuality and identity come hand in hand with the topic of vulnerability, which was also tackled during the SUYIC. Stepping outside of one’s comfort zone is not always easy thing to do; however YIC workers are often in situations where they need to answer those “tricky” and uncomfortable questions. Embracing one’s own vulnerability and stimulating confidence towards the environment, YIC workers can create a stronger connection and trust bond with young people that go to them with these complicated situations. Moreover, a similar process empowers individuals not only for their career as YIC workers but also in these social and personal relationships.

In fact, in the workshop “YI, the next step: step into your own vulnerability and grow stronger” held by Dominique Verschuren, the intention was to make participants more aware of their vulnerability and give a
clue of the richness that can be embraced when coming out of one’s comfort zone. The activities also wanted to create a safe environment to practice failing and (as it happens) facing inconvenient/powerless feelings. The workshop provided participants with inputs on the theory about vulnerability, confidence and inconvenient feelings, along with encouraging discussions, games and the vision of an educational film ‘Dare to dream’ about the process of moving from comfort zone to learning zone. Beside background information based on researcher Brené Brown, this session used some self-directed exercises wherein one steps inside his/hers’ own vulnerability. Part of time during the workshop was provided for discussion on what YI worker needs to bring vulnerability into their own YI working environment.

Key lines of the workshop were the sentence “let shame disappear” and “Everything is possibility and nothing is stupid”. These punch lines meant to underline the importance of creating a safe environment whether it is a counselling session or in a group, as way to encourage young people to feel safe and free to show themselves. It is important to stimulate vulnerability and confidence of young people, not being afraid to say or do what they are convinced about and support them in unlocking their potential.

Unlocking youth potential: peer-to-peer methodologies

The best way to unlock young people’s potential is by participation and by actively involving them to interact with other young persons. One of the most popular ways of doing it in the YIC field is through peer-to-peer (P2P) work methodologies. To contribute to the development of competences of participants and raise the quality of peer-to-peer work within YIC work, the workshop “Peer-to-peer methodologies and approaches in Youth Information and Counselling” was delivered by Mika Pietila, Member of ERYICA’s Training Task Force. In this workshop participants became familiar with different kind of peer-to-peer approaches in YIC work. By using different methods they had the chance to share and learn to identify which topics and practices are effective when using peer-to-peer approaches in Youth Information work, projects and experiences.

The participants of the workshop presented very different level of experience in P2P activities, from no experience at all, to just the will to start using them to those who run P2P activities frequently as part of their youth information services. In the beginning participants defined peer-to-peer information as the giving and sharing of information between young people who are on the same level. This can happen through various methods (face-to-face, through social media) but it was pointed out the importance of educating young people on how to best disseminate information and advice among their peers. After reaching this common understanding, participants discussed the benefits of peer-to-peer activities and came up with a long list of reasons why these activities
should be widely implemented:

• Youth workers gain more time to dedicate to other tasks
• Delivering authentic information
• Improving the results of YIC work
• Same language, same perspectives
• Costs effective and time saving
• Young people developing their skills – empowerment
• Multiplying effect
• Real participation of young people
• Regular, sustainable, dynamic method of delivering youth information
• Learning from young people’s previous experiences
• More informed and improved decision making
• Young people working on their self-confidants by taking on such responsibilities
• Builds ones network and relationships
• International and intercultural
• Reaching more young people
• Low financial costs needed
• Making information more attractive
• Good promotion of YI centre

Participants pointed out how all these positive intentions need structure and formalization to be implemented and to ensure accuracy and trainings so “active peers” can offer more objective options instead of subjective ideas like any other young person could do. Other important steps and elements should also be taken in consideration when deciding to start a P2P activity:

• Real needs of young people, what do young people want?
• Expectations of young people and organization
• Aim and target group
• Training of young people so they can give more objective options instead of a subjective idea
• Training of staff so they can give quality support
• How to motivate young people, staff and organization (money, partnerships, benefits, help other YP, therapeutic/reflect on own situation, training)
• Balance between P-2-P activities and other Youth Information and Counselling Services
• Structure of YIS and P-2-P activity as part of it
• Responsibility and autonomy of young people and organizations
• Structure and formalization to ensure accuracy (good plan for P-2-P)
• Resources: Time, money, enough young people involved in implementation
• Set up evaluation of the project
Youth Information Tomorrow: how to improve provision and recognition
Where are we going and how are we going to get there?

“If you want to make it in YIC work, you must realise it won’t happen overnight. Share with everybody and keep the flame up!” (cit. Moussa Masumbuko)

Mission Youth information: Lithuanian success recipe

It all started in Haikko, in 2011 during a ERYICA’s seminar where Evaldas Rupkus (Lithuanian Youth Council) was introduced to the concept of generalist youth information and counselling and was inspired to continue with international seminars on the establishment of national coordination of YIC. There, Lithuanian stakeholders met experts from Estonia, Poland, Finland, Germany and the overall ERYICA network. In 2012, a concept of the system was made and followed by concrete action:

- **Expert group** involving all levels and main actors in the field
- Three regional **focus groups** with young people and youth workers
- **ERYICA inputs**: seminar, visits, meetings with ministry
- **Study visits** in Austria, Estonia, Finland

Special attention was given to legal, cost-benefit and youth analysis, examples of other countries, identification of “white spots” in the information provision (local/national). Eurodesk was recognised as a very useful existing resource piloting and influencing 20 existing regional youth information spots/centres across the country. Cooperating with ERYICA, Lithuanian YIC team build up their capacities: 3 national trainers, more than 30 trained YI workers, lobbying support etc.) With a small budget, they invested in creation of a Manual for Youth Information Workers and info publications for young people. Their concrete and dedicated works as well as results were recognised by Vilnius city municipality, which in less than two months contributed to find recources for opening a first youth information centre in the capital in April 2014. The centre is organising numerous events that are already attracting young people.

Plans for the future are ambitious, but also justified seen the important results already achieved: establishment of 9 more YIC centres in main cities in Lithuania; development of YI points all over the country and lobbying for financial support by the ministry for national coordination.

In key bullets, the Lithuanian success recipe can encourage all countries developing YIC system to try by:

- Believing in the idea of generalist YIC
- Having motivated hard-working team and professional colleagues
- Building awareness on the topic for policy makers and actively include them in the creation process
- Using existing resources, being creative and efficient
- Piloting the first YIC and showing how it really looks in practice
- Showcasing impact and steadily reacting to the changing social and political environment.

Croatian YIC story

Like the Lithuanian experience, the Croatian story of the development of youth information and counselling system similarly starts, with a first contact with ERYICA network during a study visit in the Netherlands. Sanja Vuković Čović, president of ERYICA, talked about the bottom up approach used in Croatia. Getting to know ERYICA and going through all the materials it was evident that the development of YIC in Croatia should start with mapping the status of the youth sector (collecting information on youth organisations, organisations for youth with an emphasis on those working in the field of youth information). When these parts met, they made a plan to present their shared ideas on YIC to the Ministry in charge of Youth and relevant stakeholders at local and regional level. In 2008, the training for YI workers of the region was organised in Croatia. In that same year,
a new national document, the National Youth Programme 2009 – 2013, was approved and YIC was present in it and started being implemented by youth workers.

Plans for future are aiming at the development of a network of YIC centres across Croatia, new services for youth, as well as constantly reminding stakeholders and decision-makers of the importance of their continuous support to youth information and counselling structure in Croatia.

**Opportunities, Support, Cooperation, Partnership, Sharing, Funding**

**The Council of Europe and young people**

Andre-Jacques Dodin represented the Council of Europe (CoE) during the Summer University and was called to present the relationship between the CoE and young people as well as its youth policy, good practices, and opportunities.

The Council of Europe has three main **aims with its youth policy**:

- To help young people find ways of responding to the challenges facing them;
- To encourage young people to be active citizens;
- To support the development of youth policies in the member states, based on the Council of Europe standards;

In order to achieve these aims, annual priorities are set every year addressing current topics and youth issues according to their needs. The priorities of the Council of Europe in the field of youth for the period of 2014 – 2015 are:

**A. Democratic governance and innovation**

- Good governance: Youth policy with a focus on young people’s access to rights
  Recognition of youth work and non-formal learning
- Promoting democratic competences: Human rights education and education for democratic citizenship
B. Diversity

- Building capacities for dialogue: Contribution of youth NGOs to peace building, conflict transformation and intercultural dialogue (Campaign « No Hate Speech Movement »)

C. Participation

- Strengthening participation: Quality education in formal and non-formal settings
  - Participation of Roma and other vulnerable groups
- Strengthening social cohesion: Young people’s autonomy and transition from education to work
  - Young people’s access to social rights (disadvantaged groups)

Regarding examples of good practice, Andre-Jacques presented the two residential youth centres: Strasbourg (opened in 1972) and Budapest (opened in 1995) where approx. 5000 young people are trained every year through various activities such as: Study sessions, Training courses, Seminars, Symposia, Educational materials, Cooperation activities in the member states. These centres are designed as multifunctional buildings with all needed facilities: 24/7 reception Desk, accommodation, meeting rooms with interpretation, information, computers with internet access, Wi-Fi, leisure facilities, other facilities (washing machine, iron, etc.)

Speaking about opportunities, the European Youth foundation is the CoE’s programme aiming to provide financial support youth organisations across Europe that aim to implement European youth projects that run in line with the values of the Council, encouraging co-operation among young people in Europe and empowering them to promote the Council of Europe values. This support is given through 4 categories of activities: International activities, Work plans, Structural grants, Pilot activities meant for local youth NGOs.

Aware of the particular importance of YIC, the Council has a partnership with ERYICA through which activities are implemented as well as promoting research and publications regarding the field.

The Council activities related to youth can be found on its websites:
- Council of Europe – youth: www.coe.int/youth
- European Youth Foundation – www.eyf.coe.int/fej
- European Youth Centre (Budapest) – www.eycb.coe.int
- Partnership with the European Commission – www.youth-partnership.net

“Their is no youth policy without youth information. “ (cit. Andre-Jacques Dodin)

The Council of Europe – ERYICA partnership
Since April 1997, the Council of Europe maintains a Partnership Agreement with the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA), based on Recommendation No R (90) 7 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe concerning information and counselling for young people in Europe.  
www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Source/IG_Coop/Documents/CM_Rec_90_youth_information_counselling_en.pdf

The partnership agreement has been established to promote and develop European cooperation in Youth Information and counselling, in particular by organising training activities for professionals involved in Youth Information and counselling.

Looking back to his participation in the Summer University, Andre-Jacques Dodin stated how much he learned from trainers but from participants coming from different backgrounds comparing the working atmosphere from 1976 when he participated in his first seminar remembering the hunger for knowledge she shares with
SU/YIC participants. Working on YIC topics he realizes the challenges that constant changes are bringing in front of YIC workers with everything moving and changing so fast. It makes quality information more important than even and especially thought human contact with face to face approach. From his point of view is evident that young people need counselling and support to decide for themselves. From the Council of Europe’s point of view, two concerns are in focus at this present time:

- **No Hate Speech Campaign** responding and facing threats to democracy and human right online especially youth. Youth information can contribute greatly in this battle cause racism and discrimination comes from lack of knowledge and information;
- **Access to human rights** with a special focus on employment and housing of young people.

ERYICA’s role and contribution in achieving these aims is of great importance.

> „Young people need to be informed and aware of their rights. “ (cit. Andre-Jacques Dodin)

A deeper insight on **opportunities and good practices promoted by the Council of Europe** was given by Muriel Julien who held a workshop about the Council of Europe’s work in the field of youth, with a special emphasis on YIC, including the Committee of Ministers recommendations on youth information, Partnership between the Council and ERYICA. Space was given also to the presentation of the unique mechanism of co-management that the Council has put in place: why it is unique and what it does. She also gave an overview on the activities of the North-South Centre, based in Lisbon, Portugal and its youth and education programmes; how to use the European Youth Centres and what is the European Youth Foundation. As long as providing a lot of useful material produced by the Council, Muriel updated the participants on news, trends and activities and she introduced the No Hate Speech movement.
As every quality education event, SUYIC had a study visit at the local YIC centre of IPDJ and also a visit to the Portuguese National Youth Agency. This visit was offered during two afternoons, and it was guided by the coordinator of IPDJ Norte, Rolando Silva, the technical assistant of the National Agency Joaquim Freitas and facilitated by Dúlio Santos. Aim of the visit was to see the key objectives of information and advice services for young people provided by the local youth information centre “Loja Ponto Ja”, as well as knowing the structure and functioning of the National Agency. The National Agency works in the same building of IPDJ, which also hosts a Youth Hostel. The visit started at Loja Ponto Ja where the coordinator Rolando Silva explained the main characteristics of the centre and the concept of “Lojas Ponto Já”, its products and services, as well as the dynamics and the support tools. In the Health Office (for young people aged 12 to 25 years) participants had the opportunity to talk with medical nurse Irene Silva about the concerns of young people in the area of health and adolescent sexuality. The visit was closed by a moment to exchange experiences, ask questions and to focus on the importance of youth information, counselling network, and public polices for the area of Sport and Youth. The guides also briefly presented the main challenges for Portuguese youth today, like unemployment. Both visits ended with distribution of promotional Kits containing information about IPDJ and the National Agency, as well as the new ERASMUS+ programme.
Mapping national YI situation and creating a national/regional development plans

Before reaching Braga, the participants of the SUYIC had a pre-task to start drafting plans on YIC in their own countries and to design possible paths for its growth and development. They were assigned to map their national situation on YIC as a preparation to the whole event and in particular to the activities of the last day when their teamed up with other participants from their country/region, discussed of the current situation and status of the YIC field and finally tried to concretize possible steps for the development of YIC provision in their countries, in the form of the so-called “development plan” (See Annex). Guidelines were provided to support their reflection.

This collective exercise was to provide an additional resource on YIC among the various partners present at the SUYIC, as well as to become the main tool for them and their organisations to best use the Summer University as a moment to identify challenges and needs, along with possible solutions and training and networking opportunities for future development. It is also a tool for other partners and organisations to find out more about a specific country situation, understand a different reality, share experiences and work together during and after the University. Some examples of development plans designed by the SUYIC participants can be found in the Annex section.

In particular, during the activities of the last day, like the working groups and the Open Space, participants worked on networking, creating partnerships and cooperation setting already achievable goals and steps to give a concrete follow-up to the SUYIC. After 5 days of working together, participants know each other enough to find potential partners and create synergies as well as putting together new ideas.

During the presentations Davide and Simona gave feedback and advice on possible ways ERYICA can help and give its support, continuing the process of development of youth information and counselling system that the Summer University has contributed to ignite.
#SUYIC14 from Young Reporters perspective

During the entire Summer University, a workshop for young people on media literacy was held by Soraia Ramos and Imre Simon. Eight young reporters from different African and European countries worked on various assignments every afternoon, narrating and documenting the event from a “youth” point of view, presenting it on a daily basis to other participants as well as general public via social media (Facebook and Twitter).

The goals of the workshop were to promote the Summer University as seen by ERYICA’s main target: young people and therefore by using “their” means of communications such as short videos, photos, social media and articles. Another goal was to learn how to report and to work on creating a network of young active ambassadors that will also work also as a multiplier in their countries or associations, in Europe and Africa. Last but not least, the aim of the organisers was to make the target group cover the event on different media channels, through their own eyes.

Participants discussed and learnt about a new topic each day, such as tools of media production, characteristics of mainstream and social media or writing a press release. They were happy to discover how non-formal methodologies and activities revealed the content relevant to journalism. Besides, acting like ‘real’ journalists during the event and having the opportunity to learn the concrete usage of digital media tools have been highly popular among participants. Practical assignments helped raising young reporters’ awareness about what is journalism and what is a PR job, thus they realized that citizen journalism can take place everywhere and not only during an event. For the young reporters the SUYIC did not end in June and they continued their commitment by applying the learned principles in their daily life and activism as well as by realizing one last post-workshop assignment: a #SUYIC magazine.

“The topics were incredibly interesting and to be able to document this was a privilege.” (cit. member of Young Reporters team)

“Thank you for organising an excellent event. It was interesting, educational and FUN!” (Cit. participant’s evaluation)

“Asante Sana, muito obrigado,merci, mucha gracias, siyabonga kakhulu, thank you very much” (Cit. participant)
APPENDICES

DEVELOPMENT PLANS
PROGRAMME
LIST OF WORKSHOPS AND TRAINERS
OVERVIEW OF EVENING ACTIVITIES
SUIC COMMUNITY – BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS, TRAINERS AND FACILITATORS
EVALUATION
REFERENCES
DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Before their arrival in Portugal, participants of the SUYIC had been asked to work in national groups to gain a shared understanding of the situation of youth information and counselling in their countries/regions. A draft outlined was suggested to guide and support this reflection.

Many development plans were submitted to ERYICA Secretariat and below there are a few examples of the work produced by participants. These plans do not represent the official position of ERYICA nor of its partner organisations, but they are the sole opinion expressed by the participants of the SUYIC during an activity taking place in the framework of the project.
The Republic of Burundi is a country in East Africa without access to the sea, but with a large lake (Lake Tanganyika) in the Great Lakes region and surrounded by the Democratic Republic of Congo to the west, Rwanda to the north, Tanzania to the east and south.

In Burundi, the literacy rate has decreased since 2005 because of the free primary education. However, the large number of enrolled students is significantly higher than available schools in addition to the lack of infrastructure and scarily number of teachers. Moreover, only ten percent (10%) of Burundian boys and girls have the right to secondary education. The oral tradition is strong and often the only information channel of history and life lessons through storytelling, poetry and songs.

The word “information” has several meanings:

- Information may be defined as the action of informing or inform
- Information about something
- News media release

These three different meanings of information come back to the same fact meaning: “informing” the need to learn and expand knowledge but also be up to dated on opportunities that may arise.

In a country like Burundi, where 67% of Burundians live below the poverty line (January 2014), access to information is not a priority for the government. However, the existing information in different public and private institutions is not equally and systematically distributed to the population.

Culturally, information is transmitted largely by word of mouth in Burundi which means that information is often owned by a portion of the population that has access to it from different institutions. This culture of information monopoly still exists today and this explains why there is only a certain class of people that has access to it. This culture is also present in all institutions (public and private) that should guarantee the right to information. This monopolization involves the sale of information and people are willing to pay according to the value of the content, which consequently contribute to institutionalized corruption.

On one hand, these people working in public and private institutions that should ensure equal distribution of information, do not respect the Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which Burundi is a signatory that states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”

On the other hand, the lack of structure and techniques of distribution of information and culture of information monopoly is causing a big information disparity among classes. Young people who often at certain level share information with friends by word of mouth have a challenge to verify the source because of the lack of structures of information that can assure the accuracy of the spread information.

The manifestation of the situations mentioned above are observed in the participation of the same people in seminars, workshops, conferences for free if they are lucky and at a substantial sum of money when don’t know well the organizer. All these factors mentioned lead to a lack of information for the public and especially young people that has a negative impact directly affecting their social and economic well-being.
4. The main actors

At the local level: local organizations, CBOs, parents, circle of friends etc…
At the national level: public and private institutions, NGOs and national media
At regional level: regional organizations and East African directives

5. Achievable goal in 3 years

Improve and strengthen the state of information and communication which knowledge, participation and provides opportunities to young people

6. Strategies to achieve this goal

• Conduct an information situation appraisal
• Identify challenges, needs and possible solutions
• Create information exchange networks (among youth who share the same challenges of being unemployed, demobilized soldiers, orphans …)
• Use mass media for campaigns (community radio, newspapers, internet, …)

7. Recommendations

7.a. To Burundian Government

• Reform institutions by establishing an information service.
• This reform must be followed by an awareness of all the institutions to remind them of their responsibility and duty to guarantee the right to information to all citizens. Each service should have a special information section for youth and in transparency, make available opportunities of young people.
• Create and encourage young people to come together in book clubs and encourage them to compete with others to improve their knowledge.
• The government has non-functional youth centers. These structures are empty of content. There should be a training of coordinators of these centers with the participation of youth people to identify local needs and propose local solutions in order to use these structures in a consistent manner and that meets the needs of young people. The government must carry out several actions to support participatory structures for young people and encourage dialogue between partners in the field of youth.

7.b. Young Burundians

• Young people have to take key decisions in their daily lives. Young people must be proactive in seeking information relevant to their needs at the right time in order to succeed with their projects.
• Young Burundians must be proactive and innovative in seeking opportunity, participation, ownership, at different stages of youth information work; whether at local, regional, national or international level. This may include, among other things, participation in identifying information needs, preparation and dissemination of information, management and evaluation of services and information projects and activities involving peers.
• Peer involvement should be encouraged in areas where projects are developed. It is necessary that young people are the main actors of their participative projects. Young people should also support relevant structures to their cause such as youth organizations.
• Young people from Burundi should seek cooperation with other young people in order to get new impulses, learn from what works elsewhere, to further establish and strengthen youth participation structures. Young leaders should take the front seat in finding solutions to their challenges and emerging issues. They should also encourage participation of their peers at the local level by mobilizing local peers and pushing local authorities.
7.c. NGOs and other organizations working in the field of youth and information
- Conduct advocacy campaigns and awareness for the respect of the right to information.
- Organize workshops for people working in the public and private institutions with the aim to start a process of mentality change especially on information monopoly and its consequences.
- Initiate meetings / seminars / conference between NGOs to discuss how NGOs should show good example by availing special information for young people & opportunities and in a transparent manner while including youth in the process.
- Identify / develop together (NGOs) information strategies responding to issues affecting young people with their participation.
- Promote appropriate information tools and innovative approaches in order to reach disadvantaged youth who do not visit these NGOs.

7.d. What APFB, AJAD and Step By STEP will do after the Summer University?
- Restructure our organizations and explicitly include the information in our programs and services.
- Focus on youth participation in the development of information strategies and reinforcement of the role of youth organizations in the promotion of youth information.
- Initiate a workshop / conference between organizations working with young people to build their capacity in relation to knowledge in the field of youth information gained at the Summer University.
- Initiate partnerships with other youth organizations and agree to develop common tools and common values in youth information.
- Conduct advocacy campaigns and awareness for the respect of the right to information.
- Organize workshops for people working in the public and private institutions with the aim to start a process of mentality change especially on information monopoly and its consequences
- Assist the government to train managers of the existing non-functional youth centers mentioned by sharing skills and experiences in youth information centers gained during the summer university.
- Lobby Parliamentarians and Senators to make legislative initiatives in favor of young people.
Finland

1. Introduction

Finland has two official languages: Finnish and Swedish. Population of Finland is 5.5 million and Swedish speaking Finns make out a minority of about 5% of the population (ca 300 000).

2. Current status of youth information and counselling in the country

The Finnish Network in Numbers (11/2014):
- 205 municipalities run youth information and counselling services à 76% of all Finnish municipalities
- 164 youth information points and centres (local/regional)
- 39 web based youth information services

Strong and professional network is developing Youth Information and Counselling work on different levels in Finland.

Legal framework and youth policy

The Finnish youth information and counselling work has been strongly influenced by:
- Finnish Youth Act (2006)
- Child and Youth policy Development Programme (current one 2012-2015)
- Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)8 of the Committee to member states on Youth Information

Which all emphasizes:
- The right of young people to receive information
- Their right access to complete, objective, understandable and reliable information
- On all their questions based on their specific needs

Koordinaatti - Development Centre of Youth Information and Counselling

Koordinaatti was established in 2006 and is funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture and part of the National Youth Work Service and Development Structure in Finland. The Development Centre is a supportive expert service for the local and regional services both in Finnish and Swedish speaking municipalities. Five employees.

The role of Koordinaatti:
- Quality youth information services to all young people in Finland
- Right tools, methods and channels to reach all young people
- Youth participation in youth information and counselling work

The information- and cultural centre Luckan (in Swedish)

Luckan is a third sector organisation that produces Swedish services for Swedish speaking Finns. UngInfo is a youth information service founded in 2004 for Swedish speaking youth in Finland and functions as a part of Luckan r.f.

UngInfo can be found in 5 regions of Finland. Six employees.

The role of Luckan (UngInfo):
- Working towards achieving equal services when it comes to youth information in Swedish in Finland.
- To monitor and insure that Swedish speaking youth has access to web services produced in Swedish as
opposed to mere translations form existing web services produced in Finnish for the Finnish speaking population.

• Produce and provide Swedish speaking youth with the information and support they need in their situation and at their age.

• Regularly assembles all Swedish speaking youth organizations in the 5 regions where UngInfo is active. Encourages collaboration between organizations both municipal- and third sector organizations.

3. Achievable Goals in three years time

Main goals of Koordinaatti

• Create equal opportunities locally and regionally for young people in all of Finland to find and use youth information and counselling services by using different kind of methods and tools.

• Achieve the goals set for youth information and counselling by the Ministry of Education and Culture (included in the Action and Economic plan).

• To reach a high level of quality in all youth information and counselling services: centres, points, web services, social media, phone services and face-to-face work (audit model, competency mapping)

• Develop online democracy and participation possibilities for young people: new online participation service is being developed in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Justice and Koordinaatti

Main goals of UngInfo

• Achieve the goals set for youth information and counselling by the Ministry of Education and Culture (included in the Operating and Financial plan).

• Create equal access for Swedish speaking youth to services related to youth for young people and personnel within the youth sector.

• To approve Swedish information services for youth and personnel within the youth sector through a coordinated web portal produced in Swedish for Swedish speaking Finns.

• Develop youth information in the Swedish speaking community through further-education, seminars and workshops for personnel within the Swedish speaking youth sector in Finland.

• Increased visibility in communities and municipalities where the Swedish population might be neglected.

4. Objectives

• To guarantee equal opportunities for young people no matter language, ethnicity, etc.

• To guarantee that the educational targets set for youth information and counselling are met.

• To strengthen the national and professional network of youth information and counselling.

• To provide advisory services and counselling services of high quality by guaranteeing accessibility to all youth and meeting young people on their terms and where they feel comfortable.

• Support and encourage youth into becoming independent, active citizens with a sense of responsibility and enable them to cope with life independently.

• To enable young people to make choices and decisions that support their own coping strategies.

• To help young people achieve their targets both in and outside work or studies.

• To support young people’s growth towards independence and active participation.

• To broaden young people’s horizons and promote their autonomy and mobility.

5. Possible steps to reach the goals

• To provide expert and support services to youth information and counselling workers and organisations in Finland.

• To create and develop possibilities for the national service network to cooperate which includes both third sector and municipal organizations.

• To organize training, seminars, further-education opportunities, lectures, workshops in both national
languages.

- To develop new tools and methods together with network (e.g. statistics program, audit model)
- To guarantee high quality information through various means: face to face, web services, phone brochures, guides and other available sources.
- To ensure that the services and information is of the same high standard in all languages and not a mere translation. Emphasis especially on the services provided in Swedish.
- To provide young people with information, counselling and advice concerning different issues in young people’s lives.
- To allow young people an access to extensive and comprehensive information through a one-stop shop.
- To strengthen the social identity of young people in Finland through multicultural youth work and norm-critical methods.

6. Evaluation criteria

Koordinaatti and UngInfo both follow annual individual action plans and annual reports approved by the Ministry of Education and Culture who financially supports the services.

To ensure that the services provided are of high quality and meet the needs of young people and personnel within the youth sector. This is done through sending out surveys and collecting feedback.

Statistics are regularly analyses in order to find out the current interest and needs of young people nationwide. This way we can be sure to provide what’s needed when it comes to important themes and subjects as well as the way in which the information is provided.

7. Possible partnership and synergies

Koordinaatti and UngInfo strive to have a good and productive relationship and collaboration with other partners and organizations on local, regional, national and international level.

Local level:
- Youth work services
- Youth information and counselling services
- Other services targeted to young people
- NGO’s, third sector and municipal organizations
- Schools and educational institutions

Regional level:
- Regional level youth work services
- Regional level youth information and counselling services
- Regional NGO’s and third sector organizations
- Regional coordinators
- Schools and educational institutions
- Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment/Youth issues Ministries

National level:
- Ministry of Education and Culture
- Finnish National Board of Education
- Centre for International Mobility CIMO
- Finnish Youth Co-operation Allianssi
- National NGO’s and third sector organizations
- Finnish Society on Media Education
- National institute for health and welfare
• Youth research
• Educational institutions (e.g. HUMAK – University of Applied Sciences)
• National youth projects and campaigns

International level
• ERYICA
• Youth information and counselling services in Europe
• Council of Europe
• European Union
• International youth projects and campaigns
• NGO’s, third sector and municipal organizations

Additional information and list of sources:

National online platform for youth information workers (partly also in English):
www.koordinaatti.fi/en
National Youth Portal which leads to local and regional level services (in Finnish and partly in Swedish):
www.nuortenelama.fi
National youth information portal for Swedish speaking youth in Finland:
http://unginfo.fi
Finnish Statistical database
Finnish Youth act (2006)
Child and youth policy programme (2012-2015)
Ireland

1. Current status of youth information and counselling in Ireland

Youth Information is funded through the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, a new cross cutting department. Within the department Youth Information sits with in Youth Affairs. In Ireland Youth Information has been linked with Youth Service provision and has been subject to the Youth Work Act (2001) and the Youth Development Plan 2003-7. These documents are superseded by the 5 National Outcomes for Children and the Youth Policy Framework.

Youth Information has been seen as part of an informal education, youth centred support and has been delivered by voluntary youth work organisations. The major provide by far is Youth Work Ireland, with Foroige, YMCA, Crosscare and Galway Diocesan Youth Service being the other providers. Youth Information in Ireland patchy with some key gaps in service (Dublin) and no national provision. The development of Youth Information has been largely left to the providers. SpunOut.ie and Youth Work Ireland have been working in partnership to develop a national service that is web based but linked in to local services.

All providers have developed a convergent model of Youth Information based on seeing young people as key providers, creators and disseminators of information. The role of the Youth Information has moved from static literature based provision to dynamic youth involved systems, and supporting other people working with young people to deliver youth information (see Navigating the Transitional Years and The Integrated Services Model by Youth Work Ireland).

3. Achievable goals in three years time

- The development and implementation of a comprehensive and active partnership between Ireland's youth website, SpunOut.ie and the national network of Youth Information Centres
  - The partnership will provide young people with the best possible youth information dissemination model combining the benefits of online tools and the face to face interaction with experienced youth work practitioners across the country (improved accessibility of information for young people)
  - The development of a combined brand that will bring a consolidated national identity to the youth information scene in Ireland
- Full enactment of a Youth Information Charter
- The development of an integrated service provision across the national network of Youth Services, built on a strengths based model enable the needs of young people to be addressed in an efficient and effective manner
- Enhanced opportunities for young people to actively participate in Youth Information provision
- Improved satisfaction levels among young people with regard to the provision of accurate and accessible information

4. Objectives

- Develop the highest quality youth information to young people in order to ensure that the information they receive is accurate, appropriate, useful and safe
- Work together in the spirit of the two organisations' deep commitment to equality and inclusion of all young people to deploy the resources of both organisation so that the services of information provision is strengthened and the cost involved are kept to a minimum
- Maximise how the two agencies work together
- Share information about services, training and resources
- Promote each others work and co-brand joint work
- Identify new areas of work for collaboration and cooperation
- Develop joint funding proposals to resource existing and establish new areas of collaborative work
- To clarify the roles & responsibilities of both organisations
• To develop and clarify communications messages which clearly represent the relationship between both organisations and the respect both have for each other
• To enable young people to interpret and disseminate information so that they can apply it to their own lives and wider society, which will translate into effective actions and decisions at a personal and societal level

5. Possible steps to reach the goals

• Planning is already well underway for the partnership and the staff of both organisations have been heavily involved in identifying the steps required to realise the shared goals
• The working group has established the changes required to the workflows of both organisations and are preparing a protocol on the basis of which the partnership will operate
• SpunOut.ie have mapped out the web development required to execute both the streamlined access to the offline provision and the monitoring of its outcomes
• A plan for a ‘soft’ or ‘test’ launch in early Autumn 2014 has been made to roll out the new service provision to service users
• A national launch and marketing plan will be developed to notify the young people of Ireland of the enhanced service available to them
• The steering group which has been established will monitor the progress and success of the partnership
• The quality of the online content and the signposting for offline users will be enhanced and improved as the partnership progresses and the new model is rolled out
• Other agencies will be invited to collaborate in the partnership to further enhance the experience of service users

6. Evaluation criteria

Ultimately a strict set of agreed upon KPIs will be used to evaluate and measure the impact of the new partnership. These will include:
• A measurement of a change in the volume of service users to both services
• A measurement of a change in the satisfaction of service users
• A measurement of whether or not outcomes have improved on previous models

The development of the software to enable this partnership has been planned to ensure the data collection and analysis from the partnership can be easily synchronized at the different stages of young person’s interaction with the integrated service model. The service provision will also be measured against the defined national outcomes set by the Department of Children & Youth Affairs.

Any measurement of KPIs and outcomes will have to be done by benchmarking against previous measurements. We will also use the ERYICA Charter to measure our impact. Overall, a mix of quantitative, qualitative and focus group data will be used to evaluate the success or otherwise of this new model for youth information provision in Ireland.

7. Possible partnerships and synergies

Ultimately the objectives and goals of the plan for a new model of youth information provision in Ireland will be delivered by means of improved partnership and collaboration by the two main providers of youth information currently. Youth Work Ireland, as the leading offline provider and SpunOut.ie as the leading online provider, will both bring different strengths to the partnership and we have already identified the synergies possible to deliver on this plan which include:
• Streamlining how young people interact with both services and making them more accessible
• Developing our communication, monitoring and measurement systems
• Involving further partners and stakeholders once the partnership is fully developed
Kenya

Introduction

Onestop Youth Information Resource Centre is a Nairobi City County programme that was established in 12TH August 2003 in partnership with various government agencies, civil society organisations, UN-Habitat and other stakeholders within the city of Nairobi. The main objective of the centre is to provide a youth friendly space where different youth organisations can provide relevant services, disseminate youth information, and provide opportunities to young people under one roof. This objective is in tandem with the Vision 2030 Second Medium Term Plan(2013-2017) which has identified Establishment of Youth Development Centres as a key Flagship Project. In addition, the centre provides youth information and trainings related to issues ranging from reproductive health, employability, entrepreneurship, environment and other areas relevant to youth empowerment. The centre also provides an opportunity to youth service organisations and youth groups to hold various forums and meetings.

Target Group: The centres services and activities are particularly geared towards young people aged between 18 and 35 years from disadvantaged backgrounds. The centre is premised on the need to have a place where young people can address their issues and exercise their influence on what kind of services they would like the centre to offer. We seek to empower the youth through availing generalist youth information and complementary training opportunities. In collaboration with partner organisations, we organise, identify and avail opportunities for young people all under ‘one roof’.

2. Current status of youth information and counselling in the country

Youth in Kenya have been empowered in various ways by the Government, Local Government and Various Constituency development funds which are kitty’s by the Government to help the Youth and the entire constituents in funding projects and overall Empowerment.

The major strategy that has ever been in the recent years by the Government to improve the lives of the youth through Empowerment has been notably the Kenya Vision 2030 which is a strategic plan by the Government to address Social, Economic and Political Milestones. These are better called the Pillars of Kenya Vision 2030.

The youth have been addressed and their Empowerment come out clearly in the Social Pillar where there are flagship programs among them being creation of Youth Development centres. During the First medium term Plan(2008-2012) construction of youth Empowerment centres all across the country was one of the key flagship projects under the Social Pillar. The country had been divided to various constituencies, this is up to 210 constituencies, and each constituency was allocated one empowerment centre. The Empowerment centres started construction from the year 2012 and up to date there are 153 empowerment centres all over the country. The main objective of these centres was to provide access and avail different services and offer opportunities to young people at the constituency level. However, one of the major challenges facing these centres was sustainability of their operations since the government only offered support at the formative stages i.e budgetary allocation for construction and in some instances equipping the centres.

It is noted that these empowerment centres are nothing close to the 210 constituencies that were to each have a youth empowerment centre, and why is this so? Because the country has faced quiet a lot of challenges and calamities that has resulted to reallocation of funds to salvage such situations as famine, floods, diseases and various other calamities.

There are Legal measures and steps that have been followed and are to be followed when constructing these Youth Empowerment centres and these includes

• acquiring land to build these centres in various constituencies in the country;
• an Allotment letter that is issued by the local Authority in Agreement and noting that they have consent
considering all the logistical factors and agreement to the construction of the Youth Empowerment centres.

Then finally an agreement by the Government after an assessment by Government officers to now provide funding. When it is approved, a go ahead is now given for the construction of these centres.

In conclusion, and in consideration of the current status of the Youth information and counselling in Kenya, we see a country that is dedicated to empower its youth but lacks adequate funding. Nevertheless, there is a bright future for the Youth situation in the country and we are hopeful that the Government will address the challenges identified in the First Medium term plan of 2008-2012 and address them in the Second Medium Term Plan of 2013-2017.

3. Achievable Goals in three years’ time

- Upgrade our computer lab
- Establishment of a mini library
- Have a internet connection at the centre throughout.
- Put up and maintain a website for the centre
- Print out pamphlets and brochures with information on education and employment for distributing to youth
- Strengthen the content and quality of our sensitization/empowerment programs in order to serve 200 youth per quarter.
- Organizing youth forums for all the constituencies in Nairobi county.
- Have a permanent salaried position for a youth worker at the centre
- Have professionally trained youth to assist in proper running of the centre
- Increase the number of youth served by our programs through expanding our outreach.
- Expand our active network of educational enrichment programs to schools and institutions of higher education.
- Keep the Centre’s ICT/Multimedia/Computing lab open to youth in the community for educational use.
- Create an efficient database to strengthen date collection and ongoing program evaluation, including the tracking of youth who have passed through the Centre.
- Profiling youth groups and Community Based Organizations in Nairobi and Kenya
- Better integrate career awareness activities into all the programs we provide at the Centre.
- Documentation of OneStop activities and trainings
- Purchase of Equipments as Cameras, P.A System, Video Camera and related equipments for documentation purposes
- Organize for exchange visits between youth information centres locally and internationally
- Create linkages with Kampala, Kigali and Dar es Salaam One Stops.
- Mapping out Potential partner organizations for all focal points
- Organise Nairobi City County Youth Week

4. Objectives

- To provide valuable information to young people through dialogue
- To help young people to help themselves
- To have a place where young people can address their issues and exercise their influence on what kind of services they would like the centre to offer.
- To empower the youth through a comprehensive integrated approach so as to achieve sustainable development.
- To organise, create and avail opportunities for young people all under `one roof`
- To empower young people with required skills and information that will no longer make them job seekers but job creators.
- Linking young people with relevant organizations, provides training and creates awareness on environmental
issues and develops a network of conscientious environment youth groups.
• Organise workshops for young people with the support of our partners on reproductive health, HIV and
AIDS, peer education among other areas.
• Disseminates relevant information and train young people to actively participate in governance issues at
the local, national and international level.
• Imparting basic computer skills to out of school youth with a bias to those coming from disadvantaged
backgrounds.

5. Possible steps to reach the goals

• Attend open public meetings focusing on the creation of curricular in academic institutions and audibly
putting forth my input concerning the dire need for an overhaul of the education system in Kenya.
• acquire space and funding to set up talent/dream academies where youth can explore their gifts and
passions hence rescuing them from the pipeline mentality.
• approach the representatives at the office of Youth and Sports and dialogue about increase in funding for
youth projects throughout the country. Projects on entrepreneurship, interfaith, talent search etc.
• Draft various grant and fund proposals
• Seek funds to get craft/talent experts and mentors to guide some of our youth and making optimal use of
their gifts and talents
• Form or join a strong lobby group to move our case of talent academies to the highest office to ensure we
get support from the necessary governmental bodies.
• Search for non-governmental networks (partners/donors) that can invest into our ideas and work together
to see it come into fruition.
• With the center at the forefront, we will initiate talks with institutions, both elementary and those of higher
learning, so as to establish inter-cultural and inter-faith programs in these institutions, as well as advocate
for these topics to be added into the academic curriculum.

6. Evaluation criteria

• Engaging youth to actively give feedback on the goals outlined
• Engaging partner organisations in also giving feedback
• Engaging a consultant to conduct an external evaluation

7. Possible partnership and synergies

Potential partners include:
• Liverpool Voluntary Concelling and Testing (LVCT)
• National Authority for the Campaign Against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA)
• National Youth Council (NYC)
• Kenya Red Cross (KRC)
• Youth Initiative Kenya (YIKE)
• Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT)
• African Youth Trust (AYT)
• Young Mens Christian Association (YMCA)
• HOPE WORLDWIDE
• Nairobi World
• Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO)
• Nairobi City County Youth Oversight Board
• UN Habitat
• AIDS Health Care Foundation (AHF)
Reference

Kenya National Youth Policy, 2007
National Youth Council Act, 2007
Uganda

1. Introduction

According to the Ugandan Law, a youth is referred to as any person between the ages of 15 to 35 years. However, some organisations consider a youth being any person from the age 13 to 35 years. There are differing opinions regarding the exact ages, but one thing is clear: this is a period of various emotional, physical and psychological changes, and it requires societal support for a safe passage from adolescent to full adulthood.

Uganda is the leading country with the youngest population of 78 percent below age 30 years, 52% is 15 years and below (UBOS, 2012). The population of Uganda is currently growing by about one million people per year, and given the force of demographic momentum, Uganda will see high rates of population growth for decades to come. Uganda’s demographic situation impacts all aspects of its development, from economic growth to quality of education and health care provisions [source UBOS 2009].

Uganda has experienced rapid population growth for several decades. Women in Uganda have an average of 6.7 children, a fertility rate largely driven by high fertility in rural areas of the country. Uganda’s fertility rate has been the highest in the world for 40 years. Between 1985 and 2005, the population nearly doubled, from 14.8 million to 28.7 million. If fertility remains constant, Uganda’s population will quadruple by 2045.

The workforce driving the economy of the country is mainly dominated by youth. However, there is an alarming level of youth unemployment in the country which has been a major threat to national development. This coupled with the widespread of HIV AIDS, limited access to quality education have been the major focus of national sectors and non-profit-organisation.

2. Current Status Of Youth Information And Counselling

Sharing Information and counselling are such great pillars in the equipping youth with skills and empowering them to make best choices in life. In Uganda, the primary responsibility of counselling a child is with the parents. However, as times have evolved, it became paramount that youth access information and counselling in the key areas of their lives including social, academic, health, work, talent and skill among others. In Uganda, the role of information sharing and counselling is now the responsibility of actors at national, community and family level. At all these stages there are several stakeholders; each playing a central role to contribute to the welfare of youth in Uganda.

Legal structure of responsible for youth information and counselling

- The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (Department of Youth)
- The Ministries responsible for Employment, Education, Health, Agriculture, Local Government, Finance, Defense and Information
- The National Youth Councils /District Youth Councils, Subcounty Youth Council
- Relevant Statutory Bodies
- Donor Agencies
- Youth NGOs
- Cultural Institutions
- Private sector
- Urban Authorities Association
- Local Authorities Association
- Member(s) of Parliament
- Religious Institutions

The component of youth information and counselling is very broad. The government institutions and not for profit organisations have however developed policies, strategies and programs on identified key thematic areas.
that were seen as crucial for youth development.

At the national level, the National Youth Council has the mandate of developing and ensuring implementation of policies and other information material. The national Youth Council (NYC) mainly works hand in hand with the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and with not-for – profit organisations and other stakeholders including institutions of learning, police among others.

**The Major Information And Counselling Thematic Areas**

1. **Human Rights and Governance**
   The Uganda government and non government organisations have recognised the importance of the youth to be aware of their rights and to responsibly use them to participate in determining the political affairs of their country. Several programs have been developed aiming at improving young people’s awareness of human rights and change attitudes towards certain human rights issues through improved public outreach and education.
   Under Human rights and governance, the key areas addressed include;

   – **The Civic Education:** the information shared aims to increase the civic competence and participation of youth in Uganda, as well as to create an inter-regional network of youth-led organizations and individuals promoting civic education and youth civic participation.

   – **Youth participation in Democracy and Good Governance:** Through planned projects young Ugandans are educated on democratic norms. These are intended to build a network of youth able to effectively advocate for democratic practices in public policy processes. It also aims to develop democratic traditions in Uganda by encouraging youth participation in the democratic process and politics. In Uganda, youth are actively involved in politics and leadership.
   There are 8 youth members of parliament representing the four regions of the country with two representatives from each region (1 male and 1 female). Through the Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs, young people have a greater opportunity to contribute to the decision making process of the country.

   – **Peace building and Conflict Transformation:** The project aims at promoting and deepening the role of youth in peace building efforts in Uganda: It also aims to enable conflict-affected youth in Uganda to serve as catalysts for stability in their local communities.

   **How youth access information:** Every stakeholder uses an approach that is suitable to their objectives, strategy and program. Commonly used approaches’ of information about human rights and governance include; open discussion forums, awareness campaigns in schools and universities, use of local newspapers, radio and television, community dialogues, music, dance and drama, written and developed information material and documentaries. Some organisations use branded t-shirts and caps with special messages about human rights that they freely distribute to people. Once someone puts it on, the message is going across to another person.

   **Key stakeholders**
   - UNICEF
   - Uganda Human Rights Initiative
   - Human rights network Uganda
   - Human rights defenders in Uganda
   - Youth AID Uganda

2. **Sexual Reproductive Health & HIV/AIDS**
   According to the 2010/2011 Uganda Demographic and Health Survey, 36 percent of young women and 49 percent of young men are engaging in high-risk sexual activity. A quarter of young women reported their first sexual encounters were coerced (UNAIDS, 2011). By age 18, over 62 percent of young women and almost 48 percent of young men have had their first sexual experience.
Millennium Development Goal six requires Uganda to have halted infections in HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis by 2015.

The latest report now shows that even though improved access to treatment has reduced the number of deaths associated with HIV/AIDS, the prevalence rate among the 15-24 age group has increased. The prevalence rate in this age group has jumped from 2.9 percent in 2004/2005, to 3.7 percent in 2011.

Because of the effects of HIV/AIDS on the welfare and wellbeing of youth, families and the nation at large, a lot of efforts have been put into sharing information with youth about how to prevent contracting AIDS. For those that have already contracted the virus, there are several ways organisations and government are working to ensure that they receive information and counselling to enable them life longer. Policies at government level have been developed to guide strategic interventions of key youth actors to address sexual reproductive health and HIV/AIDS.

Key policies that have been developed and followed for implementation include Sexual And Reproductive Health Policy, HIV AIDS Policy, Education Policy

How youth access information: It has been made very easy for youth to access information about sexual reproductive health and HIV Aids. So much has been invested in developing information materials like flyers, booklets, posters with messages about condom use, voluntary counselling and testing. Most of the stakeholders have worked to get to the youth at grace roots level through community based peer to peer educators. Almost all government health centres have been requested to set up a Youth friendly centre at each health facility where young people have an opportunity to receive free counselling and information about health issues.

Special programs have been featured on radios and television stations concerning sexual reproductive health. Outreaches continue to be conducted in schools and communities creating awareness about positive leaving and encouraging youth to seek out for services at existing centres in their communities.

Key stakeholders
- Reproductive health Uganda
- International planned parenthood
- AIDS information centre
- The aids support organisation
- Uganda Youth Development Link
- Marie stopes Uganda
- Pathfinder Uganda
- Straight talk foundation
- The Aids Information Centre
- Uganda Aids Commission
- AVERT
- UNAIDS
- The Remnant Generation Ministries
- Axis Youth Organisation

3. Youth Unemployment
One of the biggest problems of Uganda is the high rate of youth unemployment. Every year over 40,000 students are released into the labour world for employment. Unfortunately, there aren’t enough jobs to accommodate the youth man power. To address this problem government and non state actors have embarked on vigorous information campaigns to enable youth realise their inner potential to create jobs for themselves. The Youth Livelihood program and youth loans are some of the initiatives government has set up to promote entrepreneurship. Initiatives like the Young Achievers Awards have been put in place to reward outstanding youth with unique innovations that contribute to addressing the unemployment problem in the country.
How youth access information: Youth access information about employment opportunities through job adverts on websites, LinkedIn, facebook pages for potential employees, emails. Radio and television media houses have been so instrumental in sending out information and providing counselling about jobs and career choices. Lately, organisations with funding from national and international agencies have organised business seminars and economic “crusades” where hundreds and thousands of young people go to hear experiences of successful entrepreneurs from several sectors. Such forums inspire youth into making good choices to do business or look for a job that suits their skills.

Key stakeholders
• National Youth Council
• Sisimuka Uganda
• Afri Banana Products limited
• Banking sector
• Uganda Small Scales Industries Association
• Uganda Manufacturers Association
• Enterprise Uganda
• Uganda Development trust
• ABI Trust
• Agro-Processing Initiative
• Ashoka youth venture

4. Education
Since government instated free universal primary education and universal secondary education, school enrolment of the Uganda child and youth has increased. Increased numbers of secondary schools combined with their expansion into more rural areas helped improve access and was thought to raise attendance exponentially. There is an increasing number of higher institutions of learning and vocational training centers that are offering youth an opportunity to complete some level of education. Some of the policies in education are, the Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training policy, the Universal Primary education policy among others

How youth access information: teachers play a big role to inform and counsel youth about available education opportunities, scholarships, courses and career choices. Institutions of learning are also involved in intensive advertising campaigns, through all existing media. Many private schools, government institutions have opened up websites that has made it easy for youth to get relevant information on line.

Key stakeholders involved in the education information and counselling include
• Private and government primary and secondary schools
• Government and private higher institutions of learning
• Civil society organisations funding education programs
• UNICEF
• Forum for African women educationalists
• Compassion international
• World vision

General Identified Gaps
• There is still limited information and counselling in the areas on Youth, Society and Culture, Drug Control, Recreation, Sports and Leisure. A lot of campaigns are focusing on sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, employment and education. Uganda is culturally diverse and some harmful cultural practices have remained one of the biggest hindrances of youth development.
• A lot of information is now being shared on internet. However, it’s mainly youth in urban centres that have access to computers and phone that have internet. The youth in rural areas still face challenges of access to internet. In some places there is completely no internet or telephone connectivity.
• Most of the information materials, policies are developed in English. Although the number of youth
accessing education is increasing. There are thousands that still struggle to read, interpret and understand English. Such materials cannot be useful for youth that have never been to school.

• There are several great initiatives to support youth with information and counselling services that have not been sustainable. E.g. Global Partnership Initiative on Urban Youth Development on Africa launched a program targeting to closely work with local government and civil societies to reduce poverty in urban cities. The initiative was to target broad areas of crime prevention, capacity building, urban governance and regional networking. However, this is no longer functional yet its services were so relevant.

• There is a huge problem of insufficient funding for government institutions especially youth councils and the ministry of gender to implement planned activities and policies. These usually rely on civil society organisations to fund their activities. This has limited their ability to deliver. This is one of the reasons why Uganda has many good policies and strategies that never work.

• Need for improved partnership between all stakeholders. There is a lot of duplication of services and the stakeholders. There is need to establish and strengthen institutions dealing with youth development through institutional capacity building programmes and ensure coordination and networking at all levels.

• Although the Government of Uganda (GOU), religious institutions and development partners support programs and policies to meet youth’s Sexual and Reproductive Health needs, these efforts are largely “outmatched” by Uganda’s large, sexually active youth population. Between unsuccessful interventions and high rates of high-risk sexual activity, Ugandan youth remain at significant risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), HIV, dropping out of school, unwanted pregnancy and abortion.

3. Achievable Goals in three years time

Over the next three years; we wish to:

• Work with and through the existing legal frameworks at selected local community, district and national level to mobilise civil society organisations and other key stakeholders to form youth networks to bridge the existing gaps in service delivery and implementation of policies. This will be piloted in selected districts of Wakiso, Masaka, Kayunga and Lyantonde.

• To reduce the risks of youth wellbeing by creating an environment that supports positive development through providing information and services that enable them to realise purpose, restore hope and dignified living to those that have been affected by bad choices and risky behaviour

• Encourage youth artistic and cultural expression through promotion of arts, cultural festivals, competitions, exhibitions and other activities that promote the cultural heritage, foster talent development, innovation and national pride.

4. Objectives

• Increase youth access to information by; 1) Setting up and maintaining a functional one-stop youth information and counselling centre with youth friendly facilities and services
   2)Bringing information and counselling services nearer to the youth at local community level through outreaches in schools and communities.

• Advocate for increased resource allocation and support for youth programmes and activities in national budgets

• To collaborate the organisations and institutions working with youth in Uganda through established networks

• To carryout research and learning in new, youth friendly and working approaches in youth information and counselling

5. Possible steps to reach the goals

• Hold meetings with the National Youth Council and district councils to share lessons and concepts learnt and the national development after learnt from the ERYICA Summer University

• Create a working committee of competent and skilled people to plan how it will all work and lead in the
implementation of the plan.

- Develop clear and detailed working strategies to enable the implementation of the national development plan in consultation of existing youth work policies
- Work through the national youth council at district and national level to mobilise civil society organisations with the intention of forming youth networks at district level
- Identify and procure land to set up a one-stop youth centre; fully equipped with facilities, information and personnel to provide much needed youth services
- Create awareness about the services offered by the one stop information centre.
- Involve youth in the development of programs and information materials in local languages
- Mobilise and train volunteers to provide information and counselling to youth during outreaches
- Engage in fundraising activities to raise funds to run program activities to ensure sustainability
- Work closely with schools, religious institutions and youth groups to build the capacity of leaders to better handle youth issues
- Develop and regularly update a database of all key stakeholders and actors in youth information and counselling services so as to enable effective referral of youth in need of services
- Actively participate in meetings organised at local community, district and national level
- Document and report on all interventions and share such information with all relevant stakeholders for information, planning and decision making
- Identify new learning opportunities and participate in such for purposes of research and understanding how to better improve service delivery
- Mobilise youth and youth organisation to plan and participate in events that promote cultural heritage, foster talent development, learning, innovation and national pride

6. Evaluation criteria

- All planned activities should be responsive to the needs, aspirations and capacity of the youth in selected districts
- The Innovative ways with which the plans relate to mission, vision and objectives of the National Youth Policy and other Policies
- Fulfilment of project objectives.
- Project impact in terms of types of services provided, and access to project's benefits and services.
- Participation of youth in the process of project design, preparation and implementation.
- Project transferability or adaptability to other area/districts of the country and beyond.
- Efficiency of financial management and resource utilization and timely implementation.
- Fulfilment of project objectives and goals.
- Sustainability of project activities, benefits and services after donor funding ceases.
- Social impact of projects in areas where they have been implemented with evidence of change in the lives of youth and their communities

7. Possible partnership and synergies

- There is a possible partnership to work with Uganda Youth Network for learning, sharing concepts and funding
- Partnership with ERYICA and other partners that will be present at the Summer University that have experience and proven working models in youth information and counselling. There is no reason why we should reinvent the wheel if some institution have tested and proven modules that can be tailored to the needs of Uganda.
- Working closely with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Youth Affairs, the National Youth Councils and civil organisations to synergise national development plan with their developed plans and policies. This will enable us achieve a collaborative effort to address the needs and gaps in youth information and counselling holistically.
Other Comments

This national development plan is not exhaustive and will be developed in detail to ensure that set goals can be achieved. The plan will be piloted in selected districts as will be agreed upon by the planning and implementing committee. To enable successful implementation over the three years, a financial budget will be drawn and the funding need will determine the timing of when specific activities can be implemented.
The Netherlands

1. Current status of youth information and counselling in the country

The framework of Youth Information Points in the Netherlands is local. There is though a national association, which function as a platform for cooperation and protect the use of the Youth Information Point logo and name to preserve the quality of Youth Information Work in the Netherlands.

2. Achievable Goals in three years time

Every Youth Information Point in the Netherlands has its own goals to reach, dependant on the demands of the local government. For the Youth Information Point Rotterdam the demands can change every year, which makes a three-year planning difficult to make.

This year the demands are:

• To reach 6000 youngsters in a year in general. 10% Of the contacts should be about money, budgeting and debts.
• To organise 22 trainings about money and budgeting for youngsters in Rotterdam
• To reach 2000 youngsters with the Youth Information Bus (a Youth Information Point on wheels) in Rotterdam. From the 2000 contacts, there should be at least 25 contacts about money, budgeting and debts.
• To visit at least 40 times 10 different organisations or secondary schools with the Youth Information Bus
• To teach 800 scholars about money, budgeting and debts in Rotterdam
• To give 60 lessons in total in a year on 10 different secondary schools in Rotterdam
• To be one evening open till 19.00 o’clock
• To be open on Saturday
• To be open 4 times a week (including Saturday and evening)
• The website should be visited 12000 times. The budget calculator should be filled in 300 times.
• The Youth Information Point publish an own brochure about money, budgeting and debts and spread 2400 copies.

3. Objectives

• To provide youngsters with good, up to date, reliable and objective information. Information on which they can make well considered choices, know how to solve their problem, know how to reach their goal or are informed about the different organisations on which they can turn to for help.
• To provide this information free of charge. To respect the privacy of the information the youngsters share with the Youth Information Worker. To work anonymous.

4. Possible steps to reach the goals

In a team of 3 employees and 72 working hours a week it comes down to plan carefully and smart, make use of each others specific talents, to train the interns intensively so that they can cooperate fully in the team and to work hard.

An present idea is to offer work-experience-places to youngsters who just finished their studies, but have difficulty to find a job. The Youth Information Point Rotterdam will offer them an intensive training, after which they can execute certain tasks independent.

5. Evaluation criteria

The goals or demands made by the local government are the evaluation criteria. Every three months there is an evaluation moment and a report to be made about the progress. Once in a year a final report will be made and
controlled by an accountant.

6. Possible partnership and synergies

The Youth Information Point Rotterdam would welcome partnerships and synergies when it is a win-win situation. Of course, it has to be said that budget-wise, it should be lend itself to apply for funds in order to be possible (more budget means more working hours means more time).
### PROGRAMME

**DAY 1 – Saturday 14.06.2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19:30 – 20:30</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:30 – 22:00</td>
<td>Interactive Welcome Evening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DAY 2 – Sunday 15.06.2014**

Goal: Gain an overview of the situation of Youth Information, of current trends, its developments and main challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00 – 10:15</td>
<td>Opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sameiro Araújo, Councillor of the City of Braga – Camara Municipal de Braga</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Sanja Vuković-Cović, President of ERYICA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Joana Lopes, President of the Portuguese National Youth Council (CNJ)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ricardo Araújo, Board Member of the Portuguese Institute for Sport and Youth (IPDJ)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Framework of Summer University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Background information on the SUYIC, including presentation of Diana, General Facilitator, Davide Capecchi, ERYICA Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presentation of the programme, methodologies and the team of facilitators, Simona Mursec, General Facilitator</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presentation of the team of trainers, Mick Conroy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Practical details and logistics, Silvia Pieretto, ERYICA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presentation of the main partners, Simona Mursec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15 – 11:00</td>
<td>Getting to know each other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30</td>
<td>Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 – 13:30</td>
<td>Youth Information – Regional perspectives, Africa and Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• General Concept of Youth Information, Alexandra Beweis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Young People in Transition and Youth Information, Magda Nico</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>African Perspective – how is YIC understood in different African contexts? What are the current trends and dilemmas? Moussa Masumbuko</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Concluding Summary words, Davide Capecchi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:30 – 15:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:00 – 19:00</td>
<td>Afternoon Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Media training for young people (Imre Simon and Soraia Ramos)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Africa-Europe exchange (Simona Mursec and Bruno Antonio)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. How to promote and present Youth Information work (Hannes Sildnik)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Quality matters in Youth Information and Counselling (Alexandra Beweis)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. The role and the profile of the YIC worker (Dick Smit and Mick Conroy)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. The current training offer of ERYICA (Mika Pietila)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. Changing with the times: Adapt or disappear! – Doing Youth information in Youth Work (Pepe Herrera)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. YI, the next step: step into your own vulnerability and grow stronger (Dominique Verschuren)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:00 – 20:30</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:30 – 22:00</td>
<td>Fair of Youth Information Practice</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**DAY 3 – Monday 16.06.2014**

Goal: Deepen understanding of how Youth Information supports youth policy as one of its most effective tools
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30 – 11:00</td>
<td><strong>Social Media Recap of Sunday</strong>, Media Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>How Youth Information supports youth policy in different areas</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Youth policy and the role of Youth Information in Croatia</strong>, Morana Makovec, Head of Division, Ministry of Social Policy and Youth Croatia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Youth Information and its support to youth policy in the fields of:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• social inclusion, Stefan Kuehne, Austria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• active citizenship, Mika Pietila, Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• employability, Jan Kulenovic, Bosnia-Herzegovina</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• participation, Marc Boes, the Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• mobility, Claire Conlon, France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Youth Policy in the African context:</strong> Dito Namassi Max, President of the National Youth Council of Guinea-Bissau [in Portuguese, with translation of Dulio Santos]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Q&amp;A Time</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30</td>
<td><strong>Discussion Groups deepening the reflection of the morning:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How YI supports: social inclusion</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How YI supports: active citizenship</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How YI supports: mobility</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• How YI supports: employability</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• How YI supports: participation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How YI supports: health, in particular reproductive health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:30 – 15:00</td>
<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15:00 – 19:00</td>
<td><strong>Afternoon Workshops</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Media training for young people (Imre Simon and Soraia Ramos)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Africa-Europe exchange (Simona Mursec and Bruno Antonio)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Youth on the Move – InfoMobility (Hannes Sildnik)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Informing young people on their rights (Julie Cakiova)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. How to use the digital world and ICT in Youth Information (Dick Smit and Mick Conroy)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. Study visit at local YIC of IPDJ and visit to Portuguese National Agency (Rolando Silva with the support of Dulio Santos)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>7. Sexuality and Identity – the role of Youth Information and Youth Work (Bart Vandenbussche and Evelien Luts)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19:00 – 20:30</td>
<td><strong>Dinner</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>20:30 – 22:00</td>
<td><strong>Intercultural Evening</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food, drinks and performances of local groups and national delegations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DAY 4 – Tuesday 17.06.2014**

**Goal:** Understand the importance of showcasing that Youth Information positively impacts a young person's life; reflect on how to gather and provide evidence of the impact of Youth Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:30 – 11:00</td>
<td><strong>Social Media Recap of Monday</strong>, Media Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrating the impact of Youth Policy and Youth Information</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The impact of Youth Policy</strong>, Marius Ulozas, Institute for Policy and Research, Vilnius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The added value and the impact on a young person’s life, on the community, on the society</strong>, Marcio Barcelos, European Youth Forum Board Member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>European Perspective</strong> – where are we now with YIC, what are the current trends and dilemmas, what are the main achievements and biggest challenges – the “Compendium on National Youth Information and Counselling Structures”**, Davide Capecchi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Presentation of the initiative from Burundi</strong>, Jean Bosco Girukwishaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Video testimonies of young people on how youth information impact their lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 – 11:30</td>
<td><strong>Break</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 – 13:30</td>
<td><strong>Discussion Groups deepening the reflection of the morning:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• discussion group 1 – 2: The role of monitoring and evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• discussion group 3 – 4: The role of evidence and added value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• discussion group 5 – 6: What young people get from YI work (what the community gets and what the society gets)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:30 – 15:00</td>
<td><strong>Lunch</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DAY 5 – Wednesday 18.06.2014

Goal: Develop a plan to improve provision and recognition of Youth Information in the participants’ countries and regions; establish partnerships to this end

9:30 – 11:00 Social Media Recap of Tuesday, Media Team
How projects and activities have impact on young people, Lawrence Muli, Ethiopia – Kenya

Where are we going to and how are we going to get there?
• Youth Information in Lithuania, Evaldas Rupkus, Lithuania
• Youth Information in Croatia, Sanja Vuković-Cović, Croatia
• Youth information: a partnership from Norway to Kenya, Moussa Masumbuku, Wainaina Muiruri

Current Opportunities for Funding and Support for Cooperation
• Creating and working in partnership, the example of the African Union Commission, Lawrence Muli
• Council of Europe, André-Jacques Dodin
• ERYICA Training offer, Mika Pietilä, Training Task Force Coordinator

Q&A Time

11:00 – 11:30 Break

11:30 – 13:30 Work in country/regional delegations
1. National mapping of their situation (reality of YI, stakeholders, challenges – reality)
2. Developing a national/regional development plan on YI and C
3. Finalising the national/regional development plan

Background document: (Compendium Part III and Starters’ Kit)

Short Presentations

13:30 – 15:00 Lunch

15:00 – 17:00 Open space for partnership building and further reflections
• Partnership development
• Sharing Experiences

17:00 – 17:30 Break

17:30 – 19:00 Social Media Recap of the week, Media Team
ERYICA’s work in video: Young People – Their Future and the YoMIM Service

The Summer University Video, INI Create Videoteam, Lorena dos Santos Spülbeck and Evelyn Fey

Official Closing
• Sanja Vukovic-Covic, ERYICA President
• André-Jacques Dodin, Head of Division, Council of Europe
• Paulo Pinheiro, Chair of Advisory Council on Youth, Council of Europe
• Ricardo Rio, Mayor of the City of Braga – Camara Municipal de Braga
• Emídio Guerreiro, Portuguese Secretary of State of Sport and Youth

Evaluation

20:00 Dinner and Farewell

DAY 6 – Thursday 19.06.2014

Departures
LIST OF WORKSHOPS AND TRAINERS

During the Summer University, afternoons were reserved for various workshops designed by ERYICA’s Training Task Force. Trainers from the training pool were assigned to create workshops according to the aims and specific objectives of the event taking into consideration participant’s needs, background and different level of experience and working environment as well as YIC realities.

The core aim of the Summer University was to create a space dedicated to promoting the importance of quality youth information and counselling services in the development of youth policies in Europe and in Africa. In order to achieve this aim, the trainers planning the content in advance of the workshops were asked to contextualise their sessions to how their topic related to the various areas of youth information work under discussion at SUYIC. Knowledge and information gained from each workshop was then to be taken away to use as a starting point to support and develop provision at local, national and regional level for youth information and counselling services.

Conclusions, achieved results and important feedback of the participant were integrated in the report among the related paragraphs and the lists of held workshops as well as the trainers are as following:

LIST OF WORKSHOPS AND TRAINERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop</th>
<th>Trainer(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa-Europe Exchange</td>
<td>Simona Mursec, Bruno Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Workshop – Young Reporters</td>
<td>Imre Simon, Soraia Ramos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to promote and present Youth Information</td>
<td>Hannes Sildnik</td>
</tr>
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<td>Hannes Sildnik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexuality and Identity – the role of Youth Information and Youth Work</td>
<td>Evelien Luts, Bart Vandenbussche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding: the new EU programme “Erasmus,”</td>
<td>Pedro Reis (Portuguese National Agency)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognition of Youth Information Work</td>
<td>Alexandra Beweis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-to-peer methodologies and approaches to Youth Information Work</td>
<td>Mika Pietila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study visit at local YIC of IPDJ and visit to Portuguese National Agency</td>
<td>Rolando Silva, with support of Dulio Santos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABC for initiators of youth information structures on national level</td>
<td>Evaldas Rupkus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Council of Europe and Youth Information</td>
<td>Muriel Julien (Council of Europe)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A personal presentation of the team and of their work during the SUYIC is available at http://goo.gl/0PVloe
OVERVIEW OF EVENING ACTIVITIES

Even evenings during the SUYIC became important moments of non-formal and informal meetings. Every night the team of facilitators presented a different theme to support getting to know each other and exchange among participants.
Welcome evening

The first evening was dedicated to welcoming participants and creating a common feeling around the SUYIC, its aims and its programme. It was shaped in the form of a „cocktail party,” where the team of facilitators played hosts, dressed up in aprons, and inviting all participants into different corners of the outside patio, where several smaller activities have been proposed:

• „dress up” corner – an initial get-to-know each other point, where everyone was invited to craft a small detail (a tie, a bow, a flower, a jewellery piece) out of paper, on which 3 true and 1 untrue statements had to be written, as conversation starters
• „how can we help you” corner – a space with an exercise to collect expectations / hopes of participants – a washing line, where each could put up a self-made paper T-shirt, with an expression of hopes and expectations
• „where are you from” corner – a space with a world map displayed, for participants to mark where they come from, and have small conversations with the others
• „guided tour” meeting point – every 15’ a small group has been taken to a tour of the building (as the venue was rather complicated) by one of facilitators or trainers
• „cheers!” corner – a space of informal interaction among participants, with drinks and snacks proposed, and several spots with sofas and cushions to sit and chat

Participants have been very active during the evening, they liked the easy-going format (as some of them have had a long day of travelling behind) and they engaged in some initial conversations.

Fair of youth information practices

On the second evening, space was provided for participants to display the materials they brought from their YI centres/points. Numerous and diverse materials were presented (publications, leaflets, gadgets, educational materials), and everyone could freely go around, having a closer look at the materials of their interest. This evening set the basis for further partnership setting on the evening four.

Intercultural evening

The intercultural evening focused on (a) displaying the highlight of the host city and country (Braga, Portugal) and (b) celebrating the diversity of countries and cultures present at the SUYIC.

In the first part, the facilitation team have prepared a game of „Who wants to be a Millionaire?“, with questions about Braga and Portuguese culture. All groups has been split in 2 teams, with a delegate to the game. As the whole format has been created (visual representation similar to the original show, background sounds etc.), participants found the game really entertaining.

Later on, every national group has been invited to take space on the patio and display what they brought for the evening (foods and drinks, arts and crafts, visual presentations and music etc.), and a non-structured part of the evening started, where everyone could freely go around and explore different cultures represented. It turned into a joyful musical and dance exchange at certain point of the evening, really enjoyable for all.

Partnership building event

Facilitators invited participants to an exercise, where they could review each others YI practices, presented on the Fair night and deepen the process of networking. Each country group prepared a poster with highlighted youth information practice, as well as a set of „business cards“ with basic info. Later on, there was time to go around, get acquainted with the posters and choose „business partners“ to exchange your cards with, according to the interest, potential for networking etc. Additionally, an on-line form has been created, where participants could
insert information about their practice at any time of the evening, so that an e-inventory could be created. Participants have engaged into the activity, they have been sharing their practices. We have found that quite a number of similar activities and initiatives take place in many countries, but there are also some very innovative practices.

**Farewell evening**

A closing dinner was served in a garden restaurant in the city centre. Part of the dinner was a recognition moment by Sanja Vuković-Čović and Davide Capecchi, where certifications were handed out to participants in recognition of the efforts and commitments made to realize the SUYIC. Afterwards, participants have been invited to the informal farewell party in one of Braga’s dance corners.
General Rapporteur

Kovačić Diana was born in Rijeka (Croatia). Her first experience in the civil sector and youth work was gained through the environmental association Žmergo. She graduated at Teachers Colleague and in the next four years gained valuable experience working as a teacher in several elementary schools in Rijeka. In 2009 started working in NGO Forum for Freedom in Education, where the next three and a half years works as head of Mediation centre Rijeka and a trainer in mediation within youth work. Further work continues in the most successful local association for youth, Regional youth information centre Rijeka, known as UMKI where she commits to active contribution to creation as well as implementation of youth policy on local and national level. She believes that quality and the right information delivered in the right way at the right time can change youth’s life. This belief motivates her to work on creating the best possible conditions, giving systematic support and opportunities for youth’s active contribution to their community and society.

Speakers

Barcelos Márcio, Portugal, European Youth Forum – YFJ
Márcio is a Portuguese young activist, currently a Board Member of the European Youth Forum. He has a background in youth work from a young age, as a young scout growing up and later through his involvement at National and European levels. He has been developing work on Non-Formal Education, specifically on Quality Assurance and Recognition of NFE. Education is a main element on his Youth Forum portfolio, along with Africa-Europe cooperation.

Boes Marc, The Netherlands, Stichting JONG Rotterdam.
Marc Boes started as a social worker in 1982. In 1992 he started in youth information by working for JONG Rotterdam (CEO since 1994). In 1999 he founded the national structure for youth information in the Netherlands. Since 1995 he has been a Board member of several Dutch Foundations working in the area of welfare and media. He is representing the Netherlands within EYRICA and was the president of ERYICA from 2006 until 2013. He is the managing director of POYWE (Professional Open Youth Work in Europe).
Capecchi Davide, Luxembourg, ERYICA Director.
Director of ERYICA since 18 June 2007, Davide will be happy to celebrate his workiversary during the Summer University. He studied philosophy and art history in Milan, and holds an MBA in international arts management awarded from the University of Salzburg (Austria). He currently studies non-profit management at Johns Hopkins University. Before working for ERYICA, he has been president of the Erasmus Student Network and a trainer. Davide is Italian and lives in Germany: he is hopeful to gain soon German citizenship, too.

Conlon Claire, France, Centre d’Information et de documentation pour jeunes (CIDJ).
Claire started as a Youth Information worker in CIDJ, the French national Youth Information centre, 17 years ago. She has been delivering information and counselling to young people, writing information contents, training professionals, organising events and seminars. She is now Head of European and International Affairs at CIDJ. She coordinates the French Youth Information network, with a focus on European and International mobility for young people. Claire started representing the French Youth Information network within ERYICA in 2003 and is a member of the present ERYICA Governing Board team.

French nationality, born in 1951, he studied history and then social work at Lille University. In 1974-1976, he became Director of a Pan-African youth training centre based in Ivory Coast followed by 6 years as Programme executive at the European Region. World Scout organisation. Since 1982, he has been in the Council of Europe in different positions becoming Executive Director of the European Youth Foundation in 1986. Since 2003, he is head of intergovernmental co-operation and youth policy of the Youth Department.

Julien Muriel, France, Directorate of Democratic Citizenship and Participation, Council of Europe
Muriel works as Information officer in the Youth Department of the Council of Europe, more precisely in its European Youth Centre, an educational and residential centre where hundreds of young people meet to improve and develop youth work and youth policy through trainings, seminars etc. Muriel is responsible for publications and documents production and dissemination, both online and in paper, as well as providing information on youth work to different audiences, going from the general public to experienced youth workers/leaders. She also makes presentation of the Council of Europe and its work in the field of youth to groups coming to visit the EYC. Before joining the Youth department, Muriel worked for the Global education programme at the North-South Centre in Lisbon

Kühne Stefan, Austria, wienXtra –jugendinfo.
Stefan Kühne is head of the wienXtra-youth information centre. He studied Social Management and has expertise in online-counselling, cyber-psychology and social media. He is editor-in-chief of the open access journal e-beratungsjournal.net. Before he moved to the wienXtra-youth information centre he worked for the wienXtra-children information centre. He is a member of the working group for the implementation of the European Youth Strategy in Austria. www.stefankuehne.net

Makovec Morana, Croatia, Ministry of Social Policy and Youth.
Born in 1976, Morana Makovec graduated at university for social work in 1999. Since 2002, she is involved in the youth field through state institutions where she started as a trainee and for last 2.5 years she is the head of department for youth. Through those years she has been working a lot with NGOs for youth, working on and coordinate the process of national programme for youth, Act on Youth, Act on Youth Advisory Boards, and worked on other national documents related to youth. On international level, she has been a member of the Council of Europe’s Steering Committee for Youth for the last 5 years.

Masumbuko Moussa, Norway – Burundi, Our Contribution – Youth Information (OCYI).
With background of Development Studies and Migration Studies from Oxford University, Moussa Masumbuko has over 10 years’ experience in youth information and development work. He is currently working as a Policy Adviser on Gender-based violence and Harmful Traditional Practices at the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi). Prior to joining the Directorate of Integration and Diversity, Moussa worked as a consultant
for the International Organization for Migration Oslo office and as a youth Information officer at Oslo Youth Information Center where he represented his organization in Kenya to establish a youth Information program in cooperation with UN-Habitat and Nairobi City Council. He has continued to work with Eastern African countries supporting them to implement suitable youth information services according to their local contexts and needs.

**Namassi Max Dito**, Guinea-Bissau, Conselho Nacional de Juventude da Guiné-Bissau
President of the National Youth Council of Guinea Bissau, Dito also covers the position of President of the Youth Forum of the Community of Portuguese-speaking countries (CPLP), therefore attending meetings with national ministries of youth, as well as other partners, such as national youth councils and youth NGOs representatives. He studied Administration and Management, and grew as a youth leader in the field of youth employment and participation, gaining experience also as a trainer and as project manager. As a president of the National Youth Council, he advocates and manages the areas of youth rights, funds for youth projects as well as transparency and recognition of competences. He has also worked with the United Nations Development Programme.

Kenyan Nationality, Lawrence is a Public Policy Analyst and Environmental Sustainability Expert. He is the Policy and Programmes Advisor of the African Observatory for Policy Practice and Youth Studies. He has recently coordinated on behalf of UNESCO a continental programme on tackling youth unemployment through leveraging creative economy. He has also spearheaded Universal Health Coverage Scheme research and statistical analysis for Kenya for the UN Economic Commission for Africa. Prior to this he worked for 3 years as a Programmes Associate of the UNFPA Liaison office to the AU and ECA where he was seconded as a Policy Advocacy Expert to the Youth Division, Department of Human Resources Science & Technology, African Union Commission.

**Nico Magda**, Portugal, Centre for Studies and Research in Sociology of the University Institute of Lisbon.
Sociologist, currently a post-Doctoral researcher at Centre for Studies and Research in Sociology of the University Institute of Lisbon. She has been a frequent collaborator with the Youth Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe and have been part of the Pool of European Youth Researchers. Magda is interested in young people’s transitions to adulthood in Europe, topic on which she has conducted both quantitative and qualitative research. She is the author of the article “Variability of the transitions to adulthood in Europe: A critical approach to de-standardization of the life course” by the Journal of Youth Studies and “Temporality and Critical Youth Studies” forthcoming in a international book on critical youth studies for the 21st century. She is also part of an on-going European project on the well-being of children and young people, funded by the European Commission.

**Ulozas Marius**, Lithuania, Director of Institute for Policy research and Analysis
Currently Director of the Institute for Policy Research and Analysis, Marius is a senior trainer working as a freelance since 2003. He worked with different international youth organizations and Institution related to youth policy issues, he has been member of Council of Europe Pool of Trainers, European Youth Forum Pool of Trainers; Lithuanian NA (Youth in Action) Pool of Trainers; Lithuanian Council of Youth NGOs Pool of Trainers and INGYO Youth for Exchange and Understanding Pool of Trainers. He has strong expertise in the fields of advocacy, lobbying as well as public relations, communication and public affairs. Throughout the years, Marius developed comprehensive and hands-on experience in the youth policy field at local, national and EU level, being directly involved into EU youth policy development and execution of structured dialogue in the youth field at European level.

**Rupkus Evaldas**, Lithuania – Austria, Foundation “For Youth”.
Evaldas has been active in the field of youth information since he was 10, when he started hosting children programmes in the local radio station. Last five years he has been working in the office of Lithuanian Youth Council (LiJOT) as Eurodesk Lithuania coordinator and since 2011 taking care of establishment of youth information and counselling structure in Lithuania. Evaldas with his colleagues has prepared the Compendium on National Youth Information and Counselling Structures, which is a tool for those establishing such structures back home or just interested in the general overview of concept, history and impact of youth information.
Vuković-Čović Sanja, Croatia, AYICC – Zajednica informativnih centara za mlade u Hrvatskoj. Executive director of PRONI Center for Social Education in Croatia, Sanja has a substantial 16-year professional experience in community reconstruction, policy making, youth and community work, and social entrepreneurship. She has been heavily involved in cross sectoral cooperation and has cooperated with numerous Croatian and foreign ministries and departments; she has been proactive in community work, and in development of post-war communities, with a special emphasis in working with ethnically devided communities and empowering of marginalized groups. Besides being an executive director for PRONI, Mrs. Vukovic Covic has been involved in creating and promoting three youth info centers in Croatia. Since 2010 Sanja is engaged in developing youth information work at European level through Governing Board of ERYICA and was elected President in 2013.

Zlatan Kulenović Jan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Youth Information Agency (OIA).
Jan Zlatan Kulenović is Executive Director of the Youth Information Agency Bosnia-Herzegovina (OIA), the national partner of ERYICA and one of the leading NGOs in the field of youth policy development and youth empowerment with special emphasis on youth employment in the last years. In 2012 he was founder of the Social Innovation Incubator in Sarajevo. In the last 15 years he was board member of different CSO networks and consultant for more than 20 international organizations. He is (co)-author of various articles, manuals and reports on youth. He holds Master of Art degree on Social Development Practice from the London Metropolitan University and was fellow in numerous international programs such as the US State Department International Leadership Visitors Program 2007, Young Leaders Program of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2014, Young Leaders Network of BMW Foundation since 2010, Global University Program (Peaceboat Japan) 2001, OXFAM Australia “International Youth Partnership” 2004-2006, Peoples to People Program of European Commission 2009 etc.

General Facilitator

International trainer and facilitator, Simona Mursec (Slovenia) is an expert in youth policy processes on European and global level. Active in Africa Europe Youth Cooperation Process and activities and in the Euro Arab Youth Cooperation since 2009. Recently coordinated the team of facilitators and rapporteurs at the World Youth Conference. She is focussed on supporting young people in their advocacy work towards institutions and generally in youth empowerment.

Workshop Coordinator

Mick Conroy (United Kingdom) is a experienced youth worker and trainer who helped develop a national quality assurance model for youth information services across Wales including accredited training and professional development courses for youth information workers. Has spent the past 15 years ‘hanging’ around the Eryica network sharing his ideas, skills, and experiences whilst at the same time managing to learn more every day from others.

Team of trainers and facilitators

António Bruno, Portugal, ECOS – Cooperative.
Trainer and youth worker that have been working on the national and international field in the last ten years. Currently focusing his work on participatory approaches and instruments for local and regional youth policies development. And more than ever believes that we continue to have what we need to create a better world… young people!

Beweis Alexandra, Austria, Bundesnetzwerk Österreichische Jugendinfos.
Experienced youth information worker, trainer and facilitator on national and European level. She works in Youth Information since 1994 and was involved in diverse developments e.g. the creation of quality criteria on different levels. She served as vice president for ERYICA from 2006 to 2012, (re-)created the ERYICA Training Task Force in 2007 and is a member of it since then. She published on Youth Information on national and European Level e.g. the CoE/ERYICA “Youth Information Starter Kit” published in 2010 under her married name of Cangelosi.
Debono Marvic, Malta.
Youth worker, involved for the past 14 years in the field on a national level in Malta and intercontinental level. Being given the opportunity to travel and be acquainted with different youth organisations, was involved and supported numerous organisations to plan and realise own projects – including youth exchanges and training for youth workers and leaders, mainly supported under the framework of the Youth in Action Programme. Now works for the European Programme for Education – Erasmus+.

Herrera Pepe, Sweden, Solna UngInfo.
Youth worker and trainer with experience in the fields of youth work and youth information in Spain and Sweden. Work with development of youth work both local and international where he likes to exchange experiences and find new ways of collaboration. Has been involved in European projects such as ERYICA’s Youth Ambassadors for Youth Information.

Jakubek Ela, Poland, European Youth Forum Pool of Trainers and Facilitators.
Freelance trainer and facilitator in the fields of organisational development, international youth work, global cooperation and policy-making processes. She is driven by passion for facilitating change for individuals and organisations, fascinated with group dynamics and oriented towards best possible results. Ela developed her interests while studying International Management at Jagiellonian University, Poland and Multi-Disciplinary Studies in Management and Economics at PUCP in Lima, Peru. She has been working with actors from all sectors: major international institutions, including the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the United Nations, as well as with national and local governments and businesses of several European countries.

Luts Evelien, Belgium, Jong & Van Zin.
Evelien holds a Master’s degree in Sexology and a Teacher Training diploma. At Jong & Van Zin, she works as a trainer and educational material developer. She is passionate about educating children, young adolescents and adults about relationships and sexuality in schools and youth organisations. Currently, she is creating a game for children in primary school to teach them about friendship and being in love.

Menšík Čákiová Julie, Czech Republic, National Institute for Education – National Youth Information Centre.
Youth and Youth Information worker, experienced in direct work with youngsters, in trainings and also in methodical support for youth information centres in the Czech Republic. One of the youth information centres quality auditors named by Ministry of education, youth and sports. She was involved in the Information right now! Campaign and has continued with its topic as a trainer of Youth Ambassadors of youth rights and as an author of publication regarding non-formal education about human and youth rights, which will be published soon.

Muiruri Wainaina, Kenya, Onestop Youth Information and Resource Centre (OSYIRC).
Coordinator of Onestop Youth Information Resource Centre in Nairobi Kenya, Wainana has worked in the Youth Information field for the past 7 years. During this period, he engaged and interacted with different youth information structures in Europe and Africa. In the course of his work, he participated in a volunteer exchange programme under the auspices of the Fredskorpset Norway and worked as a youth information officer at the Oslo Youth Information Centre. He contributed in designing a manual for the establishment of Onestop Youth Resource Centers that are supported by UN Habitat in East Africa. In addition, he has also undergone TOT in youth information work organized by ERYICA held in Cardiff, Wales in 2007 and thereafter facilitated trainings on youth information work for East African youth workers organized by UN Habitat.

Pietilä Mika, Finland, Koordinatii-Development Centre of Youth Information and Counselling.
Mika has worked as a Planning Officer at Koordinatii since September 2007. He has a degree in Community Education, and he first started working with young people in 1995. He first became involved in youth information and counselling in 1997, when he worked on a project for the City of Kokkola and contributed to establishing youth information and counselling service in the city as well as a web-based service. Since then, he has been a jack of all trades in the youth information and counselling field, both in Finland and elsewhere in Europe. His work
at Koordinaatti involves a wide variety of things. He plans and implements training events and seminars, visits municipalities, participates in various expert groups and prepares and implements national and international projects.

**Ramos Soraia**, Portugal, Freelance Journalist and Trainer.
With professional experiences around the world, national and international courses, Soraia wanted to be a journalist since ever. She has a Journalism degree from Coimbra (Portugal), one of the oldest European Universities. Soraia is working as a Journalist for ten years now and has worked for different national and international media outlets: newspaper, radio and television broadcast, both academic and professional Institutions. Nowadays, she is working as an entrepreneur freelance journalist and as a freelance Media International trainer. Politics and international issues are her favorite topics.

**Santos Dulio**, Portugal, Conselho Nacional de Juventude (CNJ).
Actively and feverously engaged in youth work since 2007, found his passion in preparing and delivering trainings about 4 years ago, and has ever since been dynamically involved in different pools of trainers. Dúlio has recently taken particular interest on youth who lives far from big cities, being currently involved in some projects that intend at empowering young people living further away from the “society of information”

**Sildnik Hannes**, Estonia, Egomind and Tallinn University.
Hannes is a diplomated engineer who accidentally got into youth work 14 years ago and never left. Has worked last 10 years with youth information on national and European level and is now a freelance trainer and a youth work lecturer in Tallinn University. Affiliated with ERYICA since 2006 as a trainer and hugely appreciates the mutual learning environment it has provided.

**Simon Imre**, Luxembourg , ERYICA.
Imre Simon works in Luxembourg for the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency (ERYICA) to intensify European co-operation in the field of youth information work and services. He manages projects to develop youth information and counselling work. A certified youth information trainer, Imre has been active in the training field in human rights education and global education as well. He has translated such training material to Hungarian. He has a keen interest in contemporary art and culture.

**Smit Dick**, The Netherlands, Stichting JONG Rotterdam.
Works in the field of Youth Work and Youth Information work for many years. For the last 10 years he is working as a consultant and trainer, developing methodology for street based youth work, setting up new projects of (street based) youth work and has been a member of the ERYICA Training Task Force for the last 2 two years. Combining the best of both worlds (Youth Work and Youth Information Work) he developed the Dutch JIMMY training course which has now been adapted by ERYICA.

**Vandenbussche Bart**, Belgium, Jong & Van Zin.
Bart holds a Master’s degree in Agogic Sciences and a Teacher Training diploma. Besides his job as a trainer and educational material developer at Jong & Van Zin, he educates Teacher Training students. He really likes to train adults who work with children/young adolescents about how to deal with sexuality in different cultures. Currently, he is making educational material about intimacy for teachers to use with their pupils.

**Verschuren Dominique**, Belgium, Connected Elephant.
Experienced youth worker and trainer. Worked, before Connected Elephant, four years for In Ppetto, an YI organization in Belgium. Was responsible for the inquiries, magazines, learning methods and trainings. During the year 2013-2014 active participants for Youth In Action Training of Trainers. Also working as moral counsellor for humanistic organization. His central theme is developing the personal identity of youngsters and adults, individual and in groups. Prefers non-formal education because of the focus on equality and mutual interaction by learning from each other.
EVALUATION

All participants of the SUYIC jointly contributed to evaluating the event, formally and non-formally. During the last afternoon, after the official closing ceremony, participants came together to evaluate the event using a non-formal methodology, which included giving feedbacks on the contents and methods used during the event, highlighting what they liked the most and what the least. After the event, participants, speakers, facilitators and trainers received an online questionnaire where they provided further feedbacks and comments on the SUYIC.

80 questionnaires were collected among participants (out of 90 expected). Generally, high level of satisfaction was expressed regarding all aspects of the event: logistic, support staff, programme contents, programme elements and structure of the overall SUYIC, including the preparatory work. Comments expressed different kind of feedbacks including regarding particular workshops, but also highlighting the added value of the event: it brings more “cohesion in the field of YIC. It also gives motivation to YIC workers” and “[it showcased] the power of visibility of youth Information and of building networks across Europe and beyond” An external factor also emerged: the Fotball World Cup, bringing along divergent opinions as for some “the world cup helped a lot to meet people and get together in an informal way” while for others it took some time away, especially in the afternoon and in the evenings.

“The added value of a similar event is the chance of enhancing cooperation between organisations, countries and continents by gaining a better understanding of needs and possibilities by meeting many people in one place. Furthermore, towns/cities will benefit from the international atmosphere given by the conference participants, fostering tourism, cultural activities, etc. The SUYIC is a good example of cooperation between continents and could stand model for other events such as Europe-Asia/Europe-South America Summer Universities.” (Cit. participant’s evaluation)

“The added value is that this is a great opportunity for youth information officers to meet, discuss and share experience together, something that I cannot do in my country as there are no other youth information offices around.” (Cit. participant’s evaluation)

The question on follow-up projects and activities also demonstrated the importance of having a similar space for networking, partnership building and, most of all, for growing together as practitioners of the field. The graphs below provide an overview of the questionnaire and the participants’ feedbacks. In some cases, results do not add up to 80 as not all questions applied to all participants.
Figure 2. Insight on the background of participants related to their attendance to previous similar events.

Figure 3. Question “Express level of satisfaction regarding the logistic of the SUYIC.”

“It is not often easy to manage people from different countries, different cultures...” (Cit. participant’s evaluation)
Figure 4. Question “Express level of satisfaction with the support received before and during the event by”

Figure 5. Question “Express level of satisfaction regarding the following moments of the Programme”

“When I first saw the programme it was too tight and too long. When I sat and we followed it and went through it together during the Summer University, I noticed it was well structured and I never got tired” (Cit. participant’s evaluation)
Figure 6. Question “Rate your appreciation for the following elements of the Programme”

Figure 7. Question “Express level of satisfaction regarding the structure of the morning Plenary Sessions of the SUYIC”

“The Evening programme gave a great opportunity for networking and discussing with peers in a more informal environment. It always gives you a lot to think about, new ideas and a lot of inspiration for when you go back home :3” (Cit. participant’s evaluation)
Figure 8. Question “Express level of satisfaction regarding the preparatory work and the development plans”

Figure 9. Question “Express level of overall satisfaction regarding the workshops of the SUYC”

“The week was actually quite hard and exhausting! More time for reflection would have been useful” (Cit. participant’s evaluation)
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