



Narrative Report Grant Agreement 2021

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Introduction

The year 2021 was different from earlier ones: it was still under the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic but it was already taken into account in the planning phase of the 2021 grant agreement. Its main impact was in the difference of activities from earlier years: we focused on online events and programmes instead of residential seminars or trainings, whereas the continuity of the dissemination and exploitation of the outcomes of earlier years of the partnership were also ensured.

The year was also the first when the Quality Label was open to public, and currently we count 4 Label holders in Europe. However, the majority of the costs incurred during the year were related to the new webinar series that constituted the backbone of the 2021 programme of the Partnership Agreement. They were more numerous than initially planned, following the breaking down of the topic of communication into 5 masterclasses. Earlier publications of the partnership were also on the agenda, in the form of new translations, a Liaisons update and further promotion activities.

Each line of activity is detailed further in the present report, and more details are provided in the annexes.

The activities carried out in the framework of the Grant Agreement would not have been possible without the active support and involvement of the members and experts of the ERYICA network, as well as the Quality Label Task Force, who have contributed to each main area of activity, with their expertise, enthusiasm and dedication.

Objectives

The objectives of the Grant Agreement for 2021 can be summed up as follows:

1. Webinar series

Without replacing face-to-face events when more appropriate and possible, ERYICA planned to increase the number of online events and their outreach in 2021. Their core purpose was sharing inventive solutions and good practice in 4 different topics related to the core purpose of the Partnership Agreement and current areas of interest for youth information services. The events took place over the year 2021 and had a somewhat inventive format themselves, which intended to make them different from a simple online meeting or webinar. Graphic recording, professional facilitation and online networking were among the diverse and interactive tools to increase their value. The topics of the webinars were to be chosen by a vote of youth information providers from across Europe.

2. European Youth Information Quality Label

The Quality Label, developed in the framework of the present partnership in 2019-2020, was launched in 2021. It was a very important year in the process of establishing a recognised quality tool in youth information and counselling. To ensure the most competent co-ordination from the beginning, we were set out to establish the European Quality Label Task Force, the successor of the Working Group that developed the Label itself. It was seeking to involve the most relevant experience, know-how and overview in this body, hence an open call for applications was published to gather the different profiles set by the Terms of Reference (ToR). Ensuring continuity with the former European Quality Label Working Group was among our aims. Their main task was the assessment of the applications for the Label.

3. Update of Liaisons and dissemination activities for joint publications

During the latest translation process of the “Liaisons” manual, developed in the framework of the Grant Agreement in 2017-2018, it was realised that an update of the publication was desirable. There have been new developments in the prevention of violent radicalisation among young people and the overall situation has changed as well, just like certain tools and activities proposed by the manual. Therefore a general update of the “Liaisons” manual in 2021 was planned for the two original, English and French versions.

The “Youth Information 2020” publication, prepared under the Grant Agreement of 2020, was published in December 2020. As a new publication, it required that all its promotion took place in 2021. Besides, the promotion of the “Liaisons” manual, the Youth Information 2020 booklet and other previous publications of the Council of Europe-ERYICA partnership continued.

Activities under the Grant Agreement

1. Webinar series

Without giving up on face-to-face events, we chose to increase the number of online programmes in the framework of the Partnership Agreement, in order to achieve maximum outreach even in times of pandemic. The core purpose of the webinar series was sharing inventive solutions and good practice on 4 different topics related to the core purpose of the Partnership Agreement and current areas of interest for youth information services. The events took place over the year and the topics were selected by a vote of ERYICA Members.

The flagship initiative of the 2021 programme of activities was a series of webinars on the subjects chosen by youth information providers from across Europe. The following webinars were delivered:

- Young people's needs in post-pandemic Europe: The role of youth information and counselling (14 April 2021);
- Outreach and communication with young people divided into 5 short thematic sessions (May-June 2021):
 - o Inclusive communication: 5 May 2021;
 - o New trends and platforms: 12 May 2021;
 - o Facebook and Instagram ads: 19 May 2021;
 - o The show must go on(line)!: 26 May 2021;
 - o Basics of brand design: 2 June 2021;
- Service design in youth information (9 June 2021);
- Digitalisation & Artificial Intelligence: The future of youth information? (28 September 2021);
- Consumer rights for young people: A new challenge for youth information, in cooperation with ERYICA's German member IJAB (17 November 2021);
- Youth Information and Media and Information Literacy – Navigating the infodemic. Foreseen during the UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy week, later postponed to 30 November 2021.

The webinars attracted 40-100 participants each and received positive feedback. They included keynote speakers, external experts as well as professionals from the ERYICA network, panellists, good practice presenters, professional facilitators and at times graphic recorders and an online networking sessions.

2. European Youth Information Quality Label

The Quality Label, developed in the framework of the present partnership in 2019-2020, was launched in 2021. It was a very important year in the process of establishing a recognised quality tool in youth information and counselling.

To ensure the most competent co-ordination from the beginning, we established the European Quality Label Task Force, the successor of the Working Group that developed the Label itself. It includes ERYICA member experts in the domain, as well as an Advisory Council representative and young people. The Task Force successfully assessed the applications that arrived in 2021.

The first operational year of European Youth Information Quality Label was rich in activities:

A new Task Force was formed to continue the work of the previous Working Group, with different tasks that now included the assessment of applications for the Label. We paid emphasis on inclusion and diversity of profiles of the Task Force members, which includes youth information and quality management professionals, young people, ERYICA staff and Governing Board representative, as well as a CoE Advisory Council on Youth representative.

The Task Force **revised the model structure**, and merged previous Models 1 and 2 into one structure. This can be found in the “*New model structure*” document in the Annexes.

Once established, **the Task Force had 6 online meetings** in 2021. These took place on the following dates:

- Meeting 1: 22 February 2021
- Meeting 2: 18 March 2021
- Meeting 3: 13 April 2021
- Meeting 4: 18 May 2021
- Meeting 5: 16 June 2021
- Meeting 6: 19 & 22 November 2021

Meeting 6 assessed the **new applications for the Quality Label** and proposed the ERYICA Governing Board to award the Label to Agenzija Zghazagh in Malta and Young Scot in Scotland. This proposal for decision was approved by the Governing Board.

A Labelling Agreement and certificate was prepared during the year and revised by CoE legal department. This agreement will be signed with the Label holders, as well as an awarding ceremony will be held each year at the ERYICA General Assembly.

In the application phase, an **info session** was held on 21 September for potential applicants to detail the application process and answer their questions. The event boosted interest in the Label, and several organisations started contacting the Secretariat afterwards. Its recording is available on the ERYICA website.

3. Update of Liaisons and dissemination activities for joint publications

During the latest translation process, it was realised that an update of the Liaisons manual was desirable. In 2021, this work has been accomplished in the two original languages of the publication, French and English (these are the two versions that have been published directly by the partnership). They will be layouted in 2022.

This and other publications, including the “Youth Information in 2020”, which was published in the end of 2020, were further promoted during the year. Moreover, “Youth Information in 2020” was translated into Spanish by the Regional Government of Madrid.

Besides the “Liaisons” manual, the “Youth Information and Counselling in Europe in 2020”, the “Ensuring Quality in Youth Information and Counselling” and other, earlier publications conceived in the framework of the Partnership Agreement have been further promoted and disseminated. Due to very few face-to-face events and meetings in the course of the year, this took place mostly online. It included online and face-to-face events, workshops and webinars, social media channels, websites, and direct promotion. Due to the very reduced number of face-to-face events, fewer copies were printed and distributed and we intend to keep a reduced number of printed copies in the future as well, to respect sustainability principles.

Conclusion

The webinar series, inspired by the changes in 2020 due to the pandemic, tackled topics of interest in a professional manner. Preceded by a planning phase, they focused on areas that count for youth information workers in light of recent changes and current conditions. They became a recognised professional aid and an interesting path for continuous professional development. However, due to the large offer prompted by the pandemic, with most events taking place online and many organisations offering online activities, interest towards these programmes showed a slight decline towards the end of the year. Therefore, despite all their recognition and advantages, we plan to adapt this offer for the year 2022.

The European Youth Information Quality Label remained in the activity areas of the Partnership Agreement, and hopefully this will be the case for a long time. The Label raised considerable interest and successful applicants greatly appreciated being awarded this distinctive sign. It shall appear in more and more countries to help young people select and find trustworthy information.

Besides the processes above, previous but still highly relevant publications of the CoE-ERYICA partnership were updated, translated, further promoted and disseminated.

The realisation of the activities detailed in this report would have been impossible without the support of the Council of Europe. The ongoing commitment and mutually positive collaboration between the two organisations is a source of great contentment for ERYICA and for youth information work in Europe. It is with satisfaction that we display this support received from the Council of Europe and we are also extremely satisfied with the relations developed with the Youth Department. We also try through our activities to support the priorities of the Council of Europe in the field of youth and the Youth Sector Strategy 2030.

Apart from our close collaboration with the Youth Department, ERYICA has also collaborated with other departments of the Council of Europe. For instance, a representative from the Information Society Department was invited to the webinar on Media and Information Literacy to share the initiatives and resources of the Council of Europe in this area. In the past, we have also established some cooperation with the Children's Rights Division of the Council of Europe. We also participate in different activities of the Partnership between the Council of Europe and the EU in the field of Youth and support cross-European strategies such as the European Youth Work Agenda.