

Risk and Young Person Protection in the European Union

A Country Guide

2006

(latest update 2009)

Risk & Young Person Protection in the European Union – A Country Guide

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INTRODUCTION

The EU Youth Programme (2000-2006) has brought huge opportunities and benefits for learning to many thousands of young people taking part in international youth exchanges throughout Europe and in other parts of the world. The Youth Programme has also brought opportunities for learning and professional development by youth workers and for the development of the international aspect of Youth Work. This Country Guide is aimed at improving the information available to young people and those working with them about countries that they intend to visit as part of a Youth Programme Exchange project. This will help to enhance the experience of international youth exchange for young people as a safe, effective and enjoyable learning experience.

The Country Guide is produced with the Support of the EU Commission. The source of all of the information is the network of National Agencies of the Youth Programme. This Europe-wide network has developed during the life of the Youth Programme and possesses a unique store of information and insight into international youth work. Thanks for their support are due to my fellow members of the Working Group on Training in Risk and Young Person Protection in International Youth Exchange at whose initiative this resource has been produced:

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The group is composed of staff of National Agencies, representatives of the European Commission and specialists in international youth work.

What follows is the collated data supplied by all participating countries during 2006 in respect of Risk and Young person protection issues. The research focuses on the legislation, policy and practice in each country. The first section of the report provides individual 'country guides' with a narrative on the nature of youth work practice in each country and particular initiatives focusing on risk and young person protection.

The second section of the report draws together all the information to look at the general pattern, trends and differences across all the Member States.

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Des Burke September 2006

Austria

Information last updated: 15 Apr 2009

Youth Work Practice

Extracurricular youth work in Austria is done by different public and private facilities on local, regional and national level. The variety of activities offered is very wide.

Following institutions are responsible for youth work in Austria:

- The Federal ministry for economy, family and youth (BMWFJ)
- Youth departments of the different provinces; Youth Information Centres.
- Youth organisations and Youth federations
- “open” youth work (e.g. Youth centre, Youth club)
- Traditional youth work

The work of Youth organisations and Youth federations fulfils an important contribution for political participation of young people. They provide activities and implement projects, where not only members of their institution are involved but which are open for individual young people without any organisational background.

Within the last years, a special focus was set on the right to vote at the age of 16 (implemented in 2008) and due this special info campaigns to inform and sensitise to participation in the political and democratic life.

Especially the tasks of the so called ‘open youth work’ are very varied. In general they are working on a local or regional level and respond directly to regional needs, problems, deficits and conditions.

A lot of youth work is done by voluntary workers and also people in their educational phase are doing their practical trainings within youth organisations.

Many organisations are members of the “Austrian National youth council” which acts as a platform for youth work in Austria (Bundesjugendvertretung – www.bjv.at).

A big emphasis on Austrian level is set on the development of knowledge and experience of professional and voluntary youth work. There is a broad offer of trainings dealing with different issues of youth work and the use of it is part of the work plans of youth organisations.

Name of Country: Austria	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	officially at the age of 16
Consuming Alcohol	16 (drinks like beer, wine ...), 18 (strong drinks, like spirits)
Buying Tobacco	officially at the age of 16
Consuming Tobacco	16
Driving	Cars and Motorbikes – 18 (in some cases with 17) Moped, Motor-Scooter, etc. – 15
Sexual Consent	14
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Dealing, possession and use are all prosecutable offences

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Frequentering places which sell alcohol	There is no national regulation, it depends on the regulations of each federal province
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	There is a distinction made between beginners and experienced drivers. 0.0 per ml for beginners and 0,5 per ml for experienced drivers
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	There are no specific laws pertaining to exchanges. Please note that the ‘law of protection of the youth’ is different in any 9 federal states!
General Cultural Practices of Note	-
Ratios	In general 5-8:1 but may change depending on the needs of the group. If minors are involved, NA recommends 2 leaders of each sex.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	One leader should be trained in first aid, NA recommends (inter-)national Training Course for preparation and organization of the exchange.
Reporting of Abuse	No obligation to report.
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	Rat auf Draht, Tel. 147 – 24h Helpline, anonymous and for free. Emergency Numbers: Fire brigade 122; Police 133; Ambulance 144
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	No specific laws
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	No specific laws
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	No specific laws
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No fee for access to the emergency room if the person has medical insurance.

Useful web addresses:

<http://www.bmwfj.gv.at> -the website of the Austrian federal ministry for economy, family and youth.
<http://jugendvertretung.at/jugendvertretung/content/site/englishsummary/index.html?SWS=e216b4f5ce59d538863d06cfbf64e21> –the umbrella organisation for young people’s organisations in English
<http://www.bmwfj.gv.at/BMWA/Schwerpunkte/Jugend/Jugendschutz/default.htm> - Law for protection of Youth – short overview
<http://www.jugendinfo.cc> – Youth Information Centres (YICs) in Austria in English – every federal state has a Youth Information Centre, they usually serve as a regional office and contact point of the Youth in Action Programme.
<http://www.jugendinfo.at> –the website of the youth information centre of the ministry of the Austrian federal ministry (in German)
<http://www.imag-gendermainstreaming.at>
 Topics about gender mainstreaming and current workshops and seminars
www.jugendbeteiligung.cc - official website of young people’s participation
www.polipedia.at – project to create a ‘Wikipedia’ for political topics, made with involvement of young people.
www.kija.at – Advocacy of children and youth
<http://www.bmwfj.gv.at/BMWA/Schwerpunkte/Jugend/Jugendpolitik/default.htm>
 nur auf Deutsch: Kompetenzlage auf dem Gebiet der Jugendpolitik in Österreich

Info and contact related to Drugs:
<http://www.dialog-on.at>

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http://www.checkyourdrugs.at/data/_static/info/index.html
http://www.dialog-on.at/article_324.html

Belgium (DE)

Information last updated: 23 Apr 2009

Name of Country: Belgium (German Speaking)	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	officially at the age of 16 for drinks with less than 22% officially at the age of 18 for drinks with more than 22% proof.
Consuming Alcohol	16 for drinks with less than 22% proof 18 for drinks with more than 22% proof.
Buying Tobacco	16
Consuming Tobacco	16
Driving	Car: 18 Motorcycle Category A: 16 years and a licence is not required Motorcycle Category B: 50ccs 16 (licence required) Motor Vehicle Limited cc's 25kW 18 Motor Vehicle unlimited cc's 21 years
Sexual Consent	16 years. For sexual activity with a young person between the ages of 14 and 16 years, even with their consent, the perpetrator is prosecuted for assault. For sexual activity with a young person under 14 years, the perpetrator is prosecuted for rape.
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Importation, consumption and sale of drugs is illegal. Possession of up to 3gms of Cannabis is not usually pursued by police if a person is over 18 and not at risk.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	No young person may frequent places which sell alcohol after 10pm (22.00 hrs) unless accompanied by an adult.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	0.5 mgs per 100mls of blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	Nothing specific. Everyone must use seat belts in motor coaches.
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing of note
Ratios	7:1 There is no law regarding male/female ratios but it is recommended that both genders are represented in the leader group. There is no ratio recommendation for youth clubs.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	The honorary youth workers must undertake paid vocational training.
Reporting of Abuse	There is no obligation under the law but people do inform the respective organisation if they have information regarding abuse.
Contact telephone numbers for young people's	

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help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	Nothing specific to exchanges but the child protection laws apply.
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Not answered
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No immediate payment required. There may be a small excess payment required but that is invoiced after the fact.

Belgium (FL)

Information from Sept 2006

Name of Country: Belgium (FL)	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18 and over
Buying Alcohol:	16. Alcohol cannot be offered or sold to anyone under 16 years
Consuming Alcohol	Those under 16 cannot be offered or sold alcohol in a pub or café. For stronger alcohol (spirits, alcopops, cocktails or breezers) the consumer must be over 18. Any youth leader ordering alcohol for those under 16 is committing an offence punishable by law.
Buying Tobacco	16 years
Consuming Tobacco	No legal constraint regarding consuming tobacco
Driving	Car: 18 Motorcycle Category A: 16 years and a licence is not required Motorcycle Category B: 50ccs 16 (licence required) Motor Vehicle Limited cc's 25kW 18 Motor Vehicle unlimited cc's 21 years
Sexual Consent	16 years. For sexual activity with a young person between the ages of 14 and 16 years, even with their consent, the perpetrator is prosecuted for assault. For sexual activity with a young person under 14 years, the perpetrator is prosecuted for rape.
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	All drugs (hard and soft) are forbidden to people of any age. Cannabis is forbidden by law but there is a difference in the sanctions attributed to each offence depending on age. If under 18, the young person is considered to be infringing the law if caught using or in possession of cannabis, Those over 18 in possession of a very small amount will not be prosecuted unless a) they are using in the presence of minors or b) they disturb public order
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Unless accompanied by a parent or an adult, young people under the age of 16 are not permitted in places where alcohol is sold. An exception is made in regard to activities relating to “non-profit” or benefit performances. These activities refer to parties organised by youth movements, clubs or sports clubs etc.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	0.5mg per 100mls of blood is the limit for driving. If the level of blood alcohol is above 0.8, then the punishment becomes more severe.
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	There are no specific laws pertaining to exchanges but the general laws on safety also apply to youth exchange which covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decree on recognition/funding for youth accommodation • Decree on tourism for all – this formulates the standards and conditions regarding accommodation • Repertoire on Camp Sites – provides an overview of “bivouac” houses, campsites for youth projects. All

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	<p>sites are visited and a safety check is carried out.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local communicates can impose their own regulations concerning Health & Safety in public buildings. • Legislation on how groups behave on public roads • New legislation pertaining to the rights and duties of volunteers stating that all organisations working with volunteers should provide civil liability insurance for their members. • Decree on recognition/funding for nationally organisation youth work – to ensure that all have an insurance policy on public liability for all affiliated local groups. Many insurance policies exclude explicitly “damage caused by youth leaders during their activities” • Written consent of the parents/guardian if under 18 and crossing Belgian borders.
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing specific.
Ratios	<p>The NA recommends a ratio of 10:1-2 but there is no requirement in law.</p> <p>There is no recommendation on male/female ratios for young people to staff on a youth exchange.</p> <p>No specific laws in regard to youth clubs though, public liability rules indicate that the number of youth leaders should be ‘reasonable’ in relation to number of members, age and type of activity.</p>
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	<p>Much youth work in Flanders is volunteer-based. They can participate in officially recognised training modules but are not obliged to do so.</p> <p>The most commonly requested professional qualification is bachelor/master of human sciences, social assistance or pedagogical qualification.</p> <p>First Aid is not required but strongly advised. The Flemish Red Cross provides training for youth leaders. The Red Cross also offers training to youth organisations on crisis counselling (psycho-social care for victims and their families in crisis). This can take the form of direct training or on the job coaching.</p>
Reporting of Abuse	No specific regulation in regard to reporting. However, any person guilty of “neglect” is punished under the penal code
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	None
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	No specific laws
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	<p>There are no Child Protection Policy / Guidelines in Belgium Flanders. Belgium undersigned the International Treaty for the Protection of Children’s Rights. There is a Children’s Rights Commissariat and a Commissioner who has an advisory function to the Flemish and national authorities and Parliament. However, the NA has published a guidelines document called “Veilig aan de Slag” for safety and risk prevention in international youth projects and is downloadable from the</p>

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	website. The NA also provides training workshops on the subject of safety in international youth projects.
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No fee for access to the emergency room if the person has medical insurance
Other	Several websites and publications of interest which include: 'Loslopend Wild' www.jongereninformatie.be www.druglijn.be www.vrijwilligerswerk.be www.kinderrechten.be www.jint.be

Belgium (FR)

Information from Sept 2006

Name of Country: Belgium FR	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	No law to prevent the sale of alcohol to minors
Consuming Alcohol	16
Buying Tobacco	16
Consuming Tobacco	No legal constraint
Driving	Cars – 18 Motorbikes – 16 Other Vehicles - 18
Sexual Consent	16
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	All drugs are illegal and prosecutable. The Belgian authorities do not make a distinction between hard and soft drugs and/or drugs for personal use. Sentencing is at the discretion of the courts.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	None
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	50 mgs per 100mls of blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None
General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	7:1. This will vary with the level of special need. No recommendation on male/female ratios. The only rule pertaining to youth clubs is that a full-time youth assistant is present.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	Certain competences have been outlined for those working in this field. Action of the association; Human Resource management; administrative work and acquaintance with the association environment.
Reporting of Abuse	No obligation to report.
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	None
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	Internal regulations must be developed and submitted to the Youth Department of the Ministry.
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Youth protection is entrusted to the Communities with the inclusion of social and judiciary protection. However, the following five matters are under the auspices of federal authority: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Civil law rules relative to the status of minors and the family, 2. Criminal law rules turning into law -breaking behaviours violating youth protecting laws

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	<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. The organisation of the youth courts,4. The forfeiture of parental authority and the guardianship on family allowances5. The fixing of measures that could be taken towards minors guilty of an infraction of the law Belgium (FR) has a very particular structure and practice around Child Protection. Details of the policies and practice of the communities will be annexed to the report.
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	Yes - Different rules and fees apply depending on the hospital policy

Cyprus

Information from Sept 2006

Youth Work Practice

Cyprus has a long history and practice of Volunteerism especially in the areas of charity work and support to people with experiencing disadvantage. There has been an increase in interest in youth matters and non-formal education. The youth board of Cyprus is the Government agency for youth matters. The National Youth council is a member of the Youth Forum and other NGOS.

Any initiatives on risk or drug use among young people

There are Governments agencies and NGO's which support the following areas: Road Safety, Family Violence, Sexuality, Young Refugees, Aids, Teenage Pregnancy and Drug Use. They is a National Anti-drug Agency that coordinates all the activities relating to prevention of drug-use..

Name of Country: Cyprus	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	16
Consuming Alcohol	18
Buying Tobacco	16
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars – 18 Motorbikes – 17 Other Vehicles - 18
Sexual Consent	18
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	All drugs are illegal and a prison sentence is applied for any offence.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Night clubs, general stores and supermarkets, mini markets stores
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	38ml very strictly applied
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None
General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	No recommended ratios
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	No professional qualifications for youth workers
Reporting of Abuse	report cases of child abuse to the social welfare ministry and police
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	None
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	General laws apply
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	General Laws as listed below:

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	26(111) 94 2 (1) 96 83 (1) 99 143 (1) 02 Charter 352 203 (1) 04 190 (1) 02
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	None

Useful web addresses:

www.youthboard.org.cy

<http://www.moi.gov.cy>

gdirector@moe.gov.cy

perm.sec@moh.gov.cy

Czech Republic

Information from Sept 2006

Youth Work Practice

National level

- The **Czech Council of Children and Youth** – is an organisation which acts as a platform for youth and children associations in the Czech Republic (established in 1998 and has 200,000 members). It safeguards and promotes, in spirit of the "Convention on the Rights of the Child", all reasonable interests of children and young people in order to contribute to the development of their spiritual, mental, physical and social qualities
- **Circle of Children and Youth Associations** - enforces the conditions for work with children and youth in civic associations)
- **National Institute of Children and Youth** - the activities of this organisation are focused particularly on carrying out interdisciplinary child and youth research projects (the Czech National Agency YOUTH also falls within this structure).

District level (There are 14 districts in the Czech Republic)

- each district establishes its own **House of children and Youth** (offering leisure activities for children and young people)
- There are also **District councils of Children and Youth**

Local level –at local level there are multiple NGO’s – big and small - which offer various activities for children and youth (e.g. Association of Youth Information Centres, youth clubs etc.)

Initiatives on Risk Issues and Drug Use

- National level– There is a directed *Primary Prevention Programme* from Ministry of Education intended for schools. Some NGO’s can be approved to deliver this programme to schools.
- Local level– There are numerous so-called C-centre (contact centres), Prev-centre (prevention centres), A- centres (after-treatment centres) – which provide information about prevention programmes, special initiatives for those dealing with substance addiction etc.

Name of Country: Czech Republic	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18
Consuming Alcohol	18
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars – 18 Motorbikes (depending on cc) 15-21 Other Vehicles – 15-18
Sexual Consent	14
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	The law does not prohibit the simple use of drugs but prohibits preparatory acts i.e. possession. If caught with a “small amount of drugs (less than 10 doses/lines) without the intention to supply, then the authorities can impose a non-criminal sanction e.g. a fine of up to €500. Since 1998, possession of a “greater than small” amount is a criminal offence with a sentence of up to 2 years. Trafficking,

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	sale and possession of a significant quantity has a sentence of between 2 and 10 years in prison.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	No specific laws
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	Law no. 361/2000 adopts a zero-tolerance to drinking and driving. The law also prohibits drinking alcohol before or while operating un-powered vehicles (e.g. bicycles)
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None
General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	Minimum of two instructors one of whom must be over 18 years. Youth clubs in the Czech Republic should have at least one adult experienced leader who can be assisted by an instructor who can be aged 15+. There are no other recommendations in respect of ratios.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	Professional qualifications and standards for youth leaders are currently being developed. For those who are principal instructors/leaders of summer camps and instructors responsible for healthcare must have attended a training course accredited by the Ministry of Education, Youth & Sport.
Reporting of Abuse	No obligation to report. However, a sexual abuse that is current or likely to continue in the future must be reported to the police.
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	Currently, there is no exclusive law dealing with child protection. There are several national regulations in place to govern the safety of young people during leisure time activities. Also, the Convention on the Rights of the Child must be respected.
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	There are no special regulations for youth clubs
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	There is no official Child Protection Policy in place.
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No charge is imposed for treatment and medication for EU citizens on presentation of a valid health insurance card and ID. Czech republic has bilateral agreements on the provision of health care free of charge with some other European countries (e.g. Bulgaria, Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia etc). Thus these countries receive the same provision as applies to EU citizens. Citizens of 3 rd countries are provided healthcare at a negotiable price which varies from country to country

Useful Websites and Resources

www.crdm.cz/en/index.html (Czech Council of Children and Youth)
www.icmcr.cz/ (Association of Youth Information Centres)
www.prevcentrum.cz/index. (Prev-centre)
www.msmt.cz (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports)

Denmark

Information last updated: 31 Mar 2009

Name of Country: Denmark	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	16 in stores 18 in bars
Consuming Alcohol	18 in a bar, but no other laws.
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	No law about that
Driving	Cars: 18 Motorbikes: below 500ccs 18 Motorbikes: above 500ccs 21 Mopeds: 16 with a special driving license
Sexual Consent	15
Section II – Laws and Practice in relation to Drug Use	
Drug Use	In Denmark there is a law addressing Euphoric Drugs. The Government has developed an action plan to fight against drugs – details can be seen at: http://english.vfm.dk/social-issues/Disabled/drug-misuse/Sider/Start.aspx Particularly about young people and drug abuse: http://english.vfm.dk/social-issues/children-and-youth/disadvantagedyoungpeople/youngpeopleanddrugmisuse/Sider/Start.aspx
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Many bars have an age limit of 18, 21, or even 23 years. Children may frequent a bar in the presence of a parent or guardian.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits (concentration per 100mls of blood.	The permissible alcohol concentration is 0.5 mgs per 100ml of blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	Passengers and the driver must wear seat belts in motor coaches
General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	10:1. However, if the group is mixed then there must be a leader of each gender. In the case of disadvantaged youth groups or those with special needs – leader ratios may be higher. No other recommendations regarding ratios
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	None. However, many paid youth workers have an pedagogical education/qualification
Reporting of Abuse	No obligation except when in a public club The abuse must be reported to the local municipality and then by the municipality to the national ministry
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency	The general emergency numbers are: 112 for ambulance 114 for police assistance 116 111 is a help line for children and young people manned by adult counselors

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numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	None
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	None but associations/institutions working with children can request police clearance on recruited youth workers
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No charges to access the emergency room of a hospital

Estonia

Information last updated: 15 Apr 2009

Name of Country: Estonia	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18
Consuming Alcohol	18
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	<p>Cars: 18 years. It is possible to apply for a license at 16 years but the driver must be accompanied by an adult who has a minimum of 2 years driving experience For heavier vehicles – cars, trucks, minibuses the minimum age is 21 years.</p> <p>Motorbikes: - Generally 18 years Smaller motorbikes 125 ccs – 16 years Bigger motorbikes above 25kW – 21 years</p> <p>Other Vehicles (helmet is compulsory) Bicycles on the road/street – 10 years (ages 10-15 need to have special license) Moped – 14 years (with special license) Rowboat – 16 years (with vest compulsory) Motor Boat – 18 years (with license, life vest compulsory)</p>
Sexual Consent	14 years
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	All narcotics (including cannabis) are illegal. Nevertheless, they are consumed to some degree.
Frequentering places which sell alcohol	Those under 18 are not permitted in places selling alcohol during the hours of 10pm and 6am. Consumption of alcohol in a public place (unless a bar) is prohibited.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	No blood alcohol concentration is allowed while driving.
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None. There are some regulations pertaining to youth camps but youth exchanges do not qualify under these criteria. No obligation to wear seat belts in motor coaches, but seat belts are obligatory in cars (in front and in back). People under aged of 18 traveling without parents, should have a written consent from parents to travel.
General Cultural Practices of Note	Culturally acceptable to go to the sauna nude, also in mixed gender groups if agreed. Nothing else in particular.
Ratios	No recommendations regarding any ratios
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	There is a higher vocational diploma in youth work offered by 3 educational institutions. There is a recently developed professional standard for youth work which defines three different levels of youth worker with specific requirements for qualifications.
Reporting of Abuse	Specialists, who are working with children, have an obligation to report to the police or local municipality child protection worker.
Contact telephone numbers for	116111 child helpline

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young people's help lines and emergency numbers	110 police 112 rescue 1220 free family doctor helpline (24h)
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	Child Protection Act – Youth Work Act
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	Child Protection Act – Youth Work Act
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Yes – Child Protection Concept
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No charge

Finland

Information last updated: 22 Apr 2009

Youth work in Finland

The Ministry of Education is responsible for coordinating public youth work and youth policy measures. The Youth Act provides for the improvement of young people's living conditions and youth services. The aim is to support young people in their life management. Alongside traditional youth work, there are new forms of youth service, such as youth workshops, local youth councils, tele-democracy projects and after-school activities.

Youth services are provided by the government and local authorities. The Ministry of Education supports youth work done by local authorities and provinces. The Ministry subsidises youth and youth work organisations; youth workshops; schoolchildren's morning and afternoon activities; international youth cooperation; preventive drug and intoxicant work; national youth centres and youth facilities construction; youth information and advisory services; youth research; and the development of new forms of activities for young people.

The role of the government is to create a favourable environment for the work of youth organisations but does not interfere with the content of activities. Young people participate in activities provided by youth and sport organisations, parishes, school hobby clubs and student bodies, and in informal groups in municipal youth facilities.

The Ministry supports financially some 100 organisations, which have a total of 6,000 local associations and 800,000 individuals as members. Young people under 29 years of age constitute 36% of the population of Finland.

(<http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/?lang=en>)

Name of Country: Finland	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18 for mild alcoholic beverages 20 for all strong alcoholic beverages
Consuming Alcohol	18 years Finland has specific definitions for alcohol strength: Mild alcohol drink contains maximum concentration of ethanol of 22% by volume Strong alcoholic drink is defined as containing more than 22% of ethanol by volume.
Buying Tobacco	18 years
Consuming Tobacco	18 years
Driving	Cars – 18 years Motorbikes – 18 years Mopeds and Tractors – 15 years old
Sexual Consent	16 years
Criminal responsibilities	12 years – liability for damages 15 years – criminal liability and responsibility
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Drug abuse and associated acts are totally prohibited in Finland. The anti-drug laws are strictly enforced as a deterrent to young people.

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	<p>Prevention and information are tools used to impede any experimentation with drugs among young people. Care and treatment must be linked to individual needs and applied to all drug users</p>
Frequentering places which sell alcohol	<p>Alcohol Act (1994/1143) - Alcoholic beverages containing a maximum of 4.7 % can be sold for example in the shops, kiosks and gas stations with the retail license of the local authority. Stronger alcoholic beverage is allowed to sell only in specific retail shops for alcoholic beverages. Alcohol may not be served/sold to a minor (under 18) and the management of bars and restaurants may determine times after which minors may no longer frequent the premises.</p> <p>The National Product Control Agency for Welfare and Health (SSTV) steers the implementation of the Alcohol Act at regional and local level. SSTV has published recommendations for licensed premises in which they responsibility for monitoring alcohol consumption. Proof of age is required.</p>
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	<p>0.5 ‰ (5g per litre) for “driving under the influence” 1.2 ‰ (1.2g per litre) for “aggravated drunken driving” Narcotic substances or metabolic agents in the blood will also result in a charge of drunken driving.</p>
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	<p>Road Traffic Act (1981/267) - In Finland, everyone travelling in cars, vans, coaches or trucks is obliged to wear seat belts if they are installed in the vehicle.</p> <p>Public organisations like youth departments of municipalities or cities are obligated to draw up the risk assessment plans by the Rescue Act (468/2003). All the public facilities must have plan and equipments for rescue as well.</p>
General Cultural Practices of Note	<p>Foreign people usually have lot of questions about Finnish sauna culture and nudity in saunas. In Finland having a sauna is very common. Public saunas are segregated by sex. More information at http://www.sauna.fi (the Finnish Sauna Society).</p> <p>The EVS volunteers have also discussed the personality of Finns in general, focusing on Finns being quiet, needing their own space and being slow to warm up to new people as well as the habits of drinking alcohol to the state of intoxication.</p> <p>Virtual Finland http://finland.fi/, produced by Ministry for Foreign Affairs, contains a lot of useful information about Finland.</p>
Ratios	<p>To fulfil the criteria of youth exchanges there has to be at least one youth leader per 10 young persons. The Finnish National Agency recommends that there are at least two leaders, one male and one female for a youth group. The ratio depends on the needs of the group. The municipal youth departments and offices recommend two leaders as well, but it not always carried out in practice because of resources within the local organisations.</p> <p>Ratios in youth clubs are dependent on the policies of the municipal youth departments and the resources that are</p>

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	allocated to youth work from each municipality. Generally as many leaders as possible are used and supplemented with volunteer staff but there are no specific recommendations.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	<p>The recognized qualifications of a professional youth leaders include vocational training in youth and leisure work or polytechnic (university of applied sciences) level education programmes. Trained volunteers can be recruited to youth houses for evening and weekend work but a qualified youth worker is always present. Risk assessment plans and procedures are being planned in several municipalities.</p> <p>By the Act on checking the criminal background of persons working with children (2002/504) an employer must ask a person to produce an extract from the criminal record when the person is employed or appointed for the first time to a position which includes work with children.</p>
Reporting of Abuse	By the Child Welfare Act (2007/417) persons employed by, or in positions of trust for, for example social and health-care services, education services or youth services have a duty to notify the municipal body responsible for social services without delay if they discover that there is a child for whom it is necessary to investigate the need for child welfare on account of the child's need for care.
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	<p>112 Emergency number 01019 5202 National crisis line 0800 120 400 National help line for children and young people (free of charge)</p>
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	<p>None, but according to the Youth Work Act (2006/72) in Finland youth work and youth policies are part of the tasks of municipalities. Youth work is implemented by municipalities, youth organisations and organisations which carry out youth activities. Municipalities and youth organisations draw guidelines concerning international activities carried out.</p> <p>Governmental youth work in Finland is alcohol free meaning consuming alcoholic beverages and intoxicating substances are not allowed within youth work.</p>
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None, but professional youth workers are always present in youth clubs. Again as above, the guidelines and policies concerning this are drawn on municipal level.
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	<p>By the Child Welfare Act (2007/417) the municipal bodies responsible for social services must work together with the municipalities' other authorities to monitor and promote the wellbeing of children and young people. Social services must provide information on the circumstances in which children and young people are being brought up and on any social problems arising, and must provide expert assistance for other public authorities and for residents of, and organizations operating within, the municipality.</p> <p>The Ombudsman for Children promotes the realization of children's rights in Finland. The Ombudsman raises the awareness of decision-makers and influences societal policy by speaking out on behalf of children. She acts as a soundboard for</p>

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	the voice of children and a bridge builder for child policy. The basis of the work of the Ombudsman is the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the implementation of which the Ombudsman assesses and promoted at general societal policy and legislative levels. The Ombudsman does not handle individual cases. (http://www.lapsiasia.fi/)
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	Local authorities are free to decide whether or not to charge patients for this service. There is some latitude for the introduction or abandonment of client fees at local level. For example, Helsinki Health Centre charges €1 for access to the emergency room but it is not charged to those under 18 years. The emergency fee is €15 (only two emergency hospitals in Helsinki) and those under 18 are not charged. Most medical expenses are covered by tax revenue European Health Insurance card is valid in Finland.

Useful Websites and Resources

www.minedu.fi/OPM/Nuoriso/
Ministry of Education in Finland

The overall direction and development of youth work is the responsibility of the Youth Division. From these www-pages you will find more information about youth work, The Youth Act and Youth Policy in Finland.

www.alli.fi

Finnish Youth Co-Operation – Allianssi (umbrella organisation for Finnish youth organisations), includes material in English e.g. "Who's Who in Finnish Youth Work" –publication. Allianssi runs the Youth Policy Library and its collections include research literature and other publications, which deal with young people. The collection contains some 13 000 publications and 200 volumes of journals and reviews. Allianssi also publishes an educational magazine Youth Work (Nuorisotyö), eight times per year.

<http://www.nuorisotutkimusseura.fi/>

Youth Research Society promotes multi-disciplinary youth research in Finland. The society organises national and international seminars, maintain a registry of youth researchers, publish the journal Nuorisotutkimus (Youth Research) in cooperation with the Finnish Youth Co-operation Allianssi, and produce a series of youth research publications.

France

Information last updated: 8 Apr 2009

Youth Work Practice in France

In France, the legal definition of youth is **from 16 year old up to 25 year old**.

Several actors are involved in youth policy:

- **Public actors at national level :**
 - o Ministry of youth
 - o Ministry of education
 - o Ministry of employment

- **Public actors at regional and local level :** local and regional authorities
- **Civil Society**

1. National level

France implements a **youth public policy** (formal education, employment, health, etc.).

For example, Ministry of Youth and Sports has 3 main priorities:

- Programme *Envie d'Agir* (Willing to act) to support youth initiatives and youth projects (in several fields such as culture, solidarity, entrepreneurship, etc)
- Voluntary work : to give a legal status to volunteers in France
- Summer jobs (in France and Europe) : to develop information on summer jobs on a large scale

National Programmes on youth

Youth and Voluntary Organisations Programme

The programme is divided into 5 priority actions:

- Action 1 : promoting voluntary organisation
- Action 2 : promoting actions targeted at young people
- Action 3 : promoting actions geared towards non-formal education (popular education)
- Action 4 : youth protection
- Action 5 : training youth workers and voluntary organisation managers

Other national public bodies who are directly involved in youth policies

Other Ministries: the Department of Foreign and European Affairs, of Justice, of Agriculture and Fisheries, of Employment, of Social Affairs and Solidarity, of Education, of Housing and City, of Culture and Communication.

The Parliament commission in charge of youth issues is called “Commission of Cultural, Family and Social Affairs” of the national Assembly and the Commission for Cultural Affairs.

The Parliament commission is in charge of the preparation of the legislative discussions and a larger mission of information and supervising.

2. Regional and local authorities

France has local governments: Regions, Departments and Municipalities.

Regional public authorities - with competencies in the youth field - can adopt any decision in their area of competences, concerning youth (i.e. to support to international mobility, to support youth initiatives, etc.)

Local public authorities with competencies in the youth field

Public authorities on the local level are as far as the Region is concerned, the *Conseil Régional*, for the Department the *Conseil Général*; for the municipalities the *Conseil municipal*. Each of these bodies has

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specific competencies in the Youth field and above all is able to deal with Youth issues if the local interest is concerned.

3. Civil Society

- **Community Education NGO** (non governmental organisations)

The concept of “community education” appeared during the French Revolution and it was developed during the 19th century and officially recognised in 1945. It aims at offering a wide access to education and knowledge for all and at promoting and facilitating access to a wide range of voluntary educational and developmental activities to all members of the community, regardless of age/gender/status.

- **Other NGO** (associations)

NGO are concrete actors and partners in the implementation of youth public policies. They run their own youth policy and programmes but they take part into the elaboration of youth policies together with public bodies. Local organisations are **organised in regional and national networks**. Most of these networks are members of **CNAJEP** (French National Council for Youth and Community Education Organisations) French member of the European Youth Forum (EYF).

There are two kinds of youth workers (translated in French by *animateur*):

volunteers, mostly young people working within leisure time centres or youth clubs and **professionals** working for a wide range of structures (i.e. centres for youth and culture, social centres, rural clubs) with different target groups (i.e. young people with less opportunities, disabled people, elderly people..) and running all sort of activities (sport, arts, culture,... etc.)

These structures are mainly public or managed by non-profit organisations.

Volunteers are fundamental for youth work in France. Without them, most of the activities in youth field could not be implemented.

Both volunteer and professional workers need to have a certificate or a diploma (to be trained) to work in the youth sector.

Training for volunteers:

- BAFA : basic certificate for volunteer workers (8 days for a basic session + 14 days practical training + 6 days session or 8 days for qualification session)
- BAFD : for volunteer workers who will be responsible for a holiday and leisure centre

3 levels of diplomas for professional workers :

- Basic diploma for youth worker
- Diploma for management and direction of structures, coordination of activities, project management
- Diploma for conception of youth policies like training engineering for example

Initiatives to fight against drug use and to prevent dependence among young people

MILDT (Interdepartmental Mission for the Fight against Drugs and Drugs addiction) is a special national body to fight against drugs use works to increase cooperation between different ministries. The MILDT coordinates government action in the fields of prevention, health and social care, law enforcement, training, communication, research and international exchanges on questions of drugs and addictive behaviours.

Website: <http://mildt.systaliem.org/>

Drogues Alcool Tabac Info Service is the national telephone information and prevention service. The service is available 24 hours a day, and is anonymous and free of charge (0800 23 13 13).

Additional services:

Phone number “alcohol” 0 811 91 30 30

Phone number “cannabis” 0 811 91 20 20

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Name of Country: France	
Section I - Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18 There is no legal distinction made between buying and consuming alcohol
Consuming Alcohol	18
Buying Tobacco	16 No legal difference between buying and consuming
Consuming Tobacco	16
Driving	Cars: 18 Motorbikes: 16 for 125cc; 18 for bigger motorbikes Other vehicles: 18 Driving license is required
Sexual Consent	There is no stated legal age of sexual consent. However, engaging in sexual activity with a young person under 15 years old can lead to legal proceedings. Between 16-18 years parents can start legal proceedings against a/their child depending on the circumstances.
Section II - Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	No legal distinction made between light and hard drugs. Punishment for possession of drugs for personal use is €3750 and/or 1 year prison. Judge may demand a drug therapy instead of prison sentencing. For dealing in drugs (but not trafficking) the fine is €75,000 and a 5-10 year prison term.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Young people under the age of 16 are not permitted in a place which sells alcohol without being accompanied by an adult.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	The blood alcohol limit for driving in France is 0.5mgs per 100mls of blood or more Fines for driving under the influence of alcohol range from €750 – 4500 with between 3 and 6 penalty points added to driving licence (12 points in total). For extreme cases of dangerous driving under the influence of alcohol, people are disqualified from driving and can be sentenced to up to two years in prison.
Section III - Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	Very strict practices regarding youth exchanges involving young people under 18' (minors) both in France and abroad. In this context, if the number of <i>young people under age</i> exceeds 6 minors, a declaration must be made to the local representation of the Ministry of Youth (DDJS). There are specific rules concerning ratios, qualifications of youth workers and the practice of some sports. The ministry is currently working on foreign qualification/diplomas to be recognised in France. One youth leader must have First-Aid training Motor coaches must have seatbelts Rules are very strict about adventure sport - especially water sports.
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing additional
Ratios	Ratio is 10:1 This ratio changes significantly when the group has special needs. There should be sufficient adults of both genders. A specific document is under translation

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Qualifications of Youth Leaders	A youth worker must have at least one professional diploma e.g. BAFA (Youth Camp Certificate) BAFD (Youth Camp and Club Leader) BEATEP and DEFA - a complete list will be appended to the final draft of this report No more than 20 % of total number of youth leaders can be non-qualified.
Reporting of Abuse	Yes, there is an obligation to report abuse cases. An immediate declaration to the police and to the local representation of the Ministry of Youth (DDJS).
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	112 - Numéro d'urgence - norme européenne (Emergency number – European norm) 119 - Enfance en danger (childhood in danger) Numbers of DDJS (local unit in charge of youth and sport) and of a préfecture du département d'accueil
Section IV - Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	Yes
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	Yes - specific rules for outdoor activities and sports relating to equipment, qualification of youth leaders, ratio and medical certification. At least one leader must be qualified in First Aid and the group must have a First Aid kit.
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Details of this are available from the ministry on their website www.jeunesse-vie-associative.gouv.fr
Section V - Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No charge - all fees covered by insurance.

Useful Websites & Resources

Official websites (French)

- General information for young people – Ministry of Youth website
<http://www.jeunes.gouv.fr/>
- INJEP website – Institute for Youth and Community Education. Documentation, research, training activities on youth work and youth policies in France
<http://www.injep.fr/>
- youth information network in France
<http://www.inet.jeunesse-sports.gouv.fr/rij/rijindex.asp>
- Defence of children rights
<http://www.defenseurdesenfants.fr/>
- Young people rights website (about health, school, sexuality, etc.)
<http://www.droitsdesjeunes.gouv.fr/>
- CIDJ - Youth information and documentation centre (the national information centre for young people, located in Paris)
<http://www.cidj.com/>

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- Official website for child protection on Internet (security on Internet for children)
<http://www.mineurs.fr/>
- Official website to notify Internet illicit/illegal websites
<https://www.internet-signalement.gouv.fr/>

Germany

Information last updated: 16 Apr 2009

Youth Work Practice

The Federal Republic of Germany has a wide-ranging and socially underpinned system of children and youth services. Children and youth services describe the area of social work which serves to promote the development of young people outside school. The term children and youth services was introduced in connection with the new legal foundation for this activity, the law which reformed children and youth services – the Children and Youth Service Act – of 26th June 1990.

One of the main features of children and youth services in Germany is the activities of voluntary and statutory support agencies, which stand for commitment by society (non-governmental, as distinct from the state), on the one hand, and public youth support provided by Youth Offices, on the other hand. The state not only recognises voluntary support agencies notionally, but also provides their activities with financial support.

The range of voluntary support agencies is very diverse, taking in associations and organisations active at national level, regional associations, local initiatives and self-help groups. They are autonomous in their activities, meaning that they set the content and goals of their work themselves within the framework of Germany's legal system. Voluntary support agencies do not generally devote themselves to the whole range of youth support services, but are active in certain fields of social work, such as youth work, socio-educational provision for young people, residential care or child and youth guidance.

Statutory youth services represent the other main part of children and youth services system and operate on the basis of the Children and Youth Services Act at four levels:

- At federal level, through the ministry responsible for this field (at present the Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizen, Women and Youth) by preparing legislation and financing measures of national importance and measures intended to serve as a model (The Children and Youth Plan of the Federation).
- At the level of the federal states, through the ministries responsible for this field by preparing the legislation of the federal states, supporting projects covering the whole federal state and developing youth services policy at federal state level.
- At local level support agencies, through the Youth Offices of the federal states with advisory, coordinating, regional planning and further training functions.
- At the level of local youth services agencies, through the Youth Offices in districts and towns which are administrative districts in their own right. The main burden of statutory youth services falls to these bodies.

In 2003 the Protection of Young Persons Act came into force which comprises the protection of minors in public and guarantees the protection of minors from negative media (<http://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/generator/RedaktionBMFSFJ/Abteilung5/Pdf-Anlagen/juSchGenglisch.property=pdf,bereich=bmfsfj,rwb=true.pdf>).

Initiatives on Risk Issues or Drug Use

There are lots of initiatives concerning drug preventive measures, self help groups or programmes. There are also addiction counselling centres at national and local levels, which are coordinated by the Federal Centre for Health Education. They also have a web platform under www.drugcom.de offering help and advice and giving information about legal and illegal drugs.

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Name of Country: Germany	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	Brandies (including alcoholic mixes or brandy containing food): 18 Other alcoholic drinks (beer, wine, etc.): 16
Consuming Alcohol	18; § 9 Alcoholic drinks (1) The following bans shall apply to restaurants, stores, and other points of sale: 1. Brandy as well as brandy-containing drinks or food products with brandy above negligible level or 2. Other alcoholic drinks must neither be sold to <i>Children</i> and <i>Adolescents</i> below the age of 16 years nor must their consumption by said persons be tolerated. (2) Sub-Clause 1, No. 2 shall not apply to <i>Adolescents</i> accompanied by a <i>Custodial Person</i> . (3) Alcoholic drinks must not be available from drinks dispensers in the public. This shall not apply under the following circumstances: 1. A drinks dispenser is located in enclosed company space and furnished with mechanical devices or adequately guarded and supervised to the effect that <i>Children</i> and <i>Adolescents</i> have no access to alcoholic drinks. § 20, No. 1, German Licensing Act, shall not be affected. (4) Sugared alcohol-containing beverages in terms of § 1, Sub-clauses 2 and 3, Alcopop Tax Act, must not be commercially launched without the label ‘Not to be distributed to persons below 18 years of age, § 9, Protection of Young Persons Act’. This notice shall be attached to the sales package in type, size, and colour of print identical with that of the trade or fancy name or with the marketing label or, in case of bottles, on the front label.
Buying Tobacco	18; § 10 Smoking in the public, tobacco products (1) Tobacco products must not be sold to <i>Children</i> and to <i>Adolescents</i> nor must the latter be permitted/tolerated to smoke in restaurants, stores, and other public places.
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars & Motorbikes – 18 Mopeds and motorbikes of lighter cc - 15
Sexual Consent	18 but in special cases with the consent of the parents 16.
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Possession of a small amount of drugs (e.g. Cannabis) for personal use is not prosecuted. All other activities relating to drugs are criminal offences.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Yes, the Protection of Young Persons Act regulates the times that young people and children can frequent a place that sells alcohol. (What does the act say about this?) Chapter 2: Protection of young persons in the public § 4 Restaurants (1) <i>Children</i> and <i>Adolescents</i> below the age of 16 years shall not be present in a restaurant unless they are accompanied by a

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	<p><i>Custodial Person</i> or a <i>Person with Parental Power</i> or for one meal or drink between 5 a.m. and 11 p.m. <i>Adolescents</i> as of the age of 16 years shall not be present in a restaurant between midnight and 5 a.m. unless they are accompanied by a <i>Custodial Person</i> or a <i>Person with Parental Power</i>. (2) Sub-Clause 1 shall not apply to <i>Children</i> or <i>Adolescents</i> who are travelling or who attend an event sponsored by a youth welfare body. (3) <i>Children</i> and <i>Adolescents</i> must not be permitted to be present in restaurants of night club nature or in comparable entertainment establishments.</p> <p>(4) Exceptional permits regarding Sub-Clause 1 may be granted by the applicable authority.</p>
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	<p>0.5mgs per 100mls of blood</p> <p>The 0.5mgs limit applies unless you are picked up for another traffic offence, in which case it drops to 0.3mgs; if you are over that, it will be a criminal offence. If you are in a fatal accident in Germany and over the limit, you could serve five years.</p> <p>A zero alcohol limit is applied to newly-qualified drivers during the regular two-year probationary period and to all young drivers under the age of 21.</p>
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	In general no, but most of the funding programmes demand first aid. Seat belts are obligatory in motor coaches.
General Cultural Practices of Note	Not answered
Ratios	<p>8:1 at a minimum but more usually 8:2 (1 female/1 male). It depends on the needs of the group. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Equal numbers of male/female participants and leaders are sought for youth exchanges.</p> <p>In youth club the number of leaders is dependent on funding than on recommended ratios.</p>
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	<p>Professional youth worker are qualified social workers. A course of study for 4 years with practical studies.</p> <p>Besides some German organizations offer special training courses for volunteers in order to gain skills and certificates for pedagogical work with youngsters. That allows volunteers to conduct national as well as international youth exchanges.</p> <p>First Aid is also required for working with groups.</p>
Reporting of Abuse	Yes, there is an obligation to report cases of abuse. They should be reported to the police.
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	<p>Police: 110</p> <p>Fire: 112</p> <p>Emergency surgeon/rescue car: 19222</p> <p>Poisoning emergency number: 19240</p>
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	Protection of Young People in Public Act
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	Protection of Young People in Public Act
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	As above - <i>Jugendschutzgesetz</i>
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	

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Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	10,- €
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Useful Websites and Resources

- www.bmfsfj.de Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizen, Women and Youth
- www.bag-jugendschutz.de Federal Protection of Young Persons in Germany
- www.bag-jugendschutz.de/gesetze/JuSchG-Engl.pdf Document 'Protection of Young Persons Act'
- www.bzga.de Federal Centre for Health Education
- www.jugendschutz.de Protection of Young Persons

Greece

Information last updated: 23 Apr 2009

Name of Country: Greece	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18
Consuming Alcohol	18
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars – 18 with driving licence Motorbikes – 18 for bikes up to 125 hp Motorbikes – 21 for bikes over 125 hp Other Vehicles – 16 for moped Lorries – 18 years
Sexual Consent	17
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	<p>Not more than 1 year of imprisonment for those in possession of small quantities of drugs or growing cannabis for personal use. The offender is on probation for the following five-year period.</p> <p>PENAL PROVISIONS</p> <p>Article 5 Basic crimes</p> <p>The penalty of incarceration of at least ten (10) years and the pecuniary penalty of 3.000,00 € up to 300.000,00 € to any person who: a) Imports or exports or transits through drugs. b) Sells, purchases, offers, or distributes drugs to third persons in any way whatsoever or intervenes in the above mentioned acts, stores up or deposits drugs. c) Imports drugs or facilitates their import to camps, police lockups, correctional institutions, and juveniles' reformatory schools of any category or places of collective work or life or to infirmaries or convalescent homes. d) Mixes in any way whatsoever drugs with food, drinks or other articles intended or suitable to enter into the human organism.</p> <p>Article 6 Grand cases</p> <p>1. The person violating article 5 is punished by incarceration of at least fifteen (15) years and by a fine of 1.500,00 € up to one hundred and 150.000,00 € if he is an employee, who, due to his service, deals with drugs and especially with their keeping or the prosecution of the offenders of that law.</p> <p>2. The penalties of the paragraph 1 are also imposed to any person who distributes drugs or facilitates their distribution in school units of any level and educational institutions, in sport facilities, camps, orphanages, tutorial schools, or quarters of the armed forces.</p> <p>Article 7 Misuse of the capacity of physicians and pharmacists</p> <p>The penalty of article 5 is imposed to: a) The physician who issues a prescription for the administration of drugs, although he knows that there is no real and specific medical indication, or the physician who administers drugs, containing narcotics in any form, knowing that they will be used for the preparation of drugs.</p> <p>Article 8 Aggravating circumstances</p>

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	<p>By life incarceration and a fine of €30,000 to 500,000 is punished the person violating articles 5, 6 and 7, if he acts professionally or habitually or acts with the purpose of supplying drugs to minors or if there evidence to suggest significant danger.</p> <p>Article 9 Instigation and advertisement Any person who provokes or instigates another to the illegal use of drugs or advertises their use or gives information for their preparation or provision with the purpose of their spread or proffers for the perpetration of the acts provided in paragraph 1 of article 5 of the present law, is punished, unless a heavier punishment is provided in another provision, by at least one year imprisonment and a fine of €3000 up to €60,000.</p> <p>Article 10 Drive of a means of transport The imprisonment of at least three (3) years and the pecuniary punishment of 30,00 up to 30.000,00 as well as the seizure of the driving licence for a minimum period of two (2) years or the relevant diploma or degree are imposed on any person who drives or commands any land, navigable or aerial means of transport under the influence of drugs. If from that act a common danger against the people's life resulted, the punishment of temporary incarceration is imposed.</p>
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Only those of 18 years and over may frequent places selling alcohol without the supervision of another adult.
Drink / driving Blood Alcohol Limits	0.5 mgs per 100mls of blood. In 2002 another ministerial decision limited further the acceptable blood alcohol levels for drivers of certain categories. The limit was 0.2mgs per 100mls of blood. The categories were: School bus drivers; Ambulance drivers; moped or motorbike drivers; new drivers with less than 2 years experience; drivers of public use vehicles; lorry drivers and drivers of vehicles transporting hazardous substances.
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	Seat belts are obligatory in motor coaches. A fine of 350 € for not abiding with the law.
General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	Recommended ratio for an exchange programme is 5:1 which may vary depending on the level of need within the group. This ratio also applies to youth clubs. No specific requirement for gender balance within the leader grouping but the normal efforts are made to maintain a balance.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	There are no professional or academic qualifications officially recognised by the National Education system. Youth workers are recognised on the basis of their experience or on the basis of their professional/academic qualifications from other European countries.
Reporting of Abuse	Yes it is obligatory to report cases of abuse. During a youth exchange programme, these should be reported to the District Attorney for Under-aged Citizens, the police or the General Secretariat for Youth. There is by-law provision for prosecuting people or authorities for not reporting fully. In the case of violated rights, reports can be made to the Ombudsman Child Assistant or to the National Observatory for Children's Rights or to the NGO "Child's Smile"
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and	Police: 100 Emergency number: 166 S.O.S. Help Line NGO 'Child's Smile': 1056

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emergency numbers	Support line – therapy centre for dependant individuals: 1145
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	Young people on exchange should be in possession of E111 document for health insurance. Young participants are strongly advised to arrange private medical insurance for the entire duration of their stay.
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	Young people participating in youth clubs must be covered by their parents (or their own) private insurance.
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	<p>The National Observatory for Children’s Rights, Greek Ombudsman and the General Secretariat for Youth of Hellenic Republic are the responsible bodies for planning and implementing measures for the national Child Protection Policy.</p> <p>Moreover, Greece has ratified the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms on 28 November 1974 and has adopted the United Nations International Convention for Children’s Rights</p> <p>Thus, according to Article 28 of the Greek Constitution: “The generally recognized rules of international law and the international conventions after their ratification by law and their having been put into effect in accordance to their respective terms, shall constitute an integral part of Greek Law and override any law provisions to the contrary”.</p> <p><u>Greek Constitution</u></p> <p>Article 16 (indirect reference to young people): It mainly concerns education and stipulates the role of the state in the intellectual, professional, ethical and physical development of young persons. It also sets as an aim their transformation into ‘free and responsible citizens’. The exact content of the article is the following: “Education constitutes a fundamental state objective and aims at the moral, intellectual, professional and physical instruction of the Greeks, the development of national and religious consciousness, and the formation of free and responsible citizens”.</p> <p>Article 21 (direct reference to young people): It refers to the obligation of the state to take measures ensuring the good health of the young people. More specifically, the exact content of the article is the following: “The state shall be concerned with the health of the citizens and shall take special measures for the protection of youth, old age, cripples, and those who are destitute”.</p> <p>Existing national legislation in the youth field concerns the following issues: Youth Employment (e.g.: protection of juvenile employees; special measures for young employees), Sports (e.g.: special measures for young athletes with outstanding performance, such as easier entrance to State Universities), Education (legislation regarding the structure and function of the public educational system including the participation of students in the governing bodies of state universities), Family (e.g.: special legislation which determines and protects the rights of the child, as well as particular measures against children’s abuse within the family), Military Service (e.g.: exemption from the military service by</p>

	providing an alternative social service), Deviant Behaviour (e.g.: special courts and treatment for juvenile delinquents), Young Television Viewers' Protection etc.
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	By national legislation, there is a public health system in the country, since 1981. For uninsured citizens, there is typically a €3 fee for access to emergency services, in case an examination is needed there is an extra charge. In most cases this fee is never paid, especially, when pertaining to children.

Hungary

Information last updated: 20 Apr 2009

Youth Work Practice

Regarding risk related to A1 projects, this issue is addressed through awareness-raising activities for A1 project-coordinators. After each selection meeting, a “day for winners” is organized to prepare the project-holders for the potential risks that can arise in a youth exchange. During this day, the NA staff members, together with the participants develop the topic and share experiences and discuss ways in which these problems may be addressed.

Unfortunately, currently, there is no other mechanism to deal with the issue.

Name of Country: Hungary	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18
Consuming Alcohol	18
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars – 17 years Motorbikes – 14,16,18,21 based on increasing cubic capacity of the bikes Other vehicles - 18
Sexual Consent	16
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Illegal to use any quantity or type of drug listed on the international official drug list. Lowest age of culpability is 14. Sanctions include imprisonment but most drug users charged with crime are offered “diversion” programmes as an alternative to prison. The criminal procedure is suspended pending the successful completion of a semi-annual treatment or prevention programme. On completion of the programme, the criminal charge is dismissed. In 2007 approximately 10 000 people participated in different diversion programmes. It is considered that the law reaches only the socially less harmful cases.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Only those over the age of 18 can frequent places which sell alcohol.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	There is a zero-tolerance policy in regard to driving under the influence of alcohol in Hungary
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing remarkable
Ratios	10:1 is the ratio of young people to youth leaders on youth exchanges. The ratios change when there are special needs in the case of the young people. Male/female ratios vary but the National Agency promotes 1:1 (50/50%) There is no recommendation regarding the young people/youth leaders ratio in a youth club because there is currently no developed youth club culture in Hungary

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Qualifications of Youth Leaders	11 universities in Hungary offer graduate and post-graduate courses for youth workers. This is a new development and the courses are part of the state-financed curricula.
Reporting of Abuse	Yes, there is an obligation to report any cases of abuse in Hungary. There are youth and child protection agencies attached to Local Government. This is a long established network with legal recourse. These agencies co-operate with schools, police, drug prevention institutes and other social partners.
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	Ambulance: 104 Fire: 105 Police: 107 General Emergency number: 112
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	There is a law on Child Protection dating from 1997 and a ministerial decree for its implementation.
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	None
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	Officially there is not charge for Hungarian citizens but there is a culture of giving “parasolvencia” – an illegal payment to doctors for their services. For foreigners, payment is required unless they have insurance.

Useful Websites and Resources

Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour

www.szmm.gov.hu

Institute for Social Policy and Labour

www.szmi.hu

Mobilitas National Youth Service

www.mobilitas.hu

The Hungarian Police website

www.police.hu

Iceland

Information from Sept 2006

Youth Work Practice

In Iceland, there is no youth law yet but they are in the pipeline and will probably come into effect at the end of 2006. Each municipality has its own regulations about youth work which are determined by the local authorities.

Initiatives on Risk Issues and Drug Use

There are initiatives concerning drug preventive measures, for example: peer to peer training,, “the together group”, ‘total-counseling’ (a website for youth).

Name of Country: Iceland	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	20
Consuming Alcohol	Illegal to sell, offer or give alcohol to those under the age of 20 but the law is unclear about consumption. This law is under revision at present.
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars – 17 Motorbikes – 17 Other Vehicles – smaller motorbikes - 15
Sexual Consent	14
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Selling, possessing and consuming drugs is illegal.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Children under 12 are not allowed in public places unless accompanied by a parent/adult. Those 18 and younger are not allowed in bars and places selling alcohol after 8pm. Those young than 16 years are not allowed in such places under any circumstances.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	0.5 mg per 100 gm of blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing in particular. Customs are similar to those in neighbouring countries.
Ratios	No specific laws on ratios but organisation and municipalities have their own working rules. In Reykjavik the common rule is that at least two leaders accompany each group. The number of leaders changes according to the needs of the group. New regulations for young work are under development but not published as yet. No specific recommendation but the common rule is that one male and one female leader must accompany each group. In regard to Youth Clubs, the common rule is that at least three youth leaders are present during opening hours with a ratio of 10:1. However, resource issues mean that this is not always

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	followed.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	No specific qualifications for youth workers. Some municipalities require a university degree in pedagogy for full time youth workers. Special training for youth workers is becoming more common with the advent of leisure studies in two universities in Iceland.
Reporting of Abuse	Yes, youth workers as public employees have to adhere to the child protection law and report all cases of abuse of children All cases should be reported to the Social Authorities in each municipality.
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	There are no specific laws for youth exchanges. The child protection laws apply.
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	Health & Safety as well as the child protection laws apply in this regard.
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Yes. The government has published child protection laws.
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	Yes, you pay 36 euro if you have insurance and a lawful domicile within EES, you pay 268 euro if you live outside EES and if you don't have insurance.

Useful Websites and Resources

www.logregla.is – The Icelandic police website

www.bvs.is – Government agency for child protection.

www.ahus.is – The intercultural centre

Ireland

Information last updated: 16 Apr 2009

Youth Work Practice

The Minister for Children and Youth has responsibility for youth affairs. The Youth Affairs Office is based in the Department of Health and Children, Hawkins House, Dublin 2. Youth Work was placed on a statutory basis with the enactment of the Youth Work Act, 2001 which provides a legal framework for the provision of youth work services.

The Act defines Youth Work as:-

“A planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young persons through their voluntary participation, and which is –

- complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training;
- and
- provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations.”

For the purpose of the act, a young person means a person who is under the age of 25 years.

Both professional and voluntary youth workers are working together to provide initiatives and opportunities to young people in their areas and to contribute to the Youth Work Development Plan.

The main Youth organisations in Ireland are;

- NYCI : National Youth Council of Ireland, (www.youth.ie) which represent the interests of young people and youth organisations
- Youthwork Ireland (www.youthworkireland.ie) is a federation of 21 local youth services 500 Youth Clubs and Groups, 40 Youth Information Centres and Outlets and 100 Youth Projects
- Foróige, (www.foroige.ie) Foróige’s work is directed primarily at young people in the 12-18 age group. Foróige operates Local Youth Services and Local Youth Development Projects.
- Macra na Feirme (www.macra.ie) is a national, voluntary organisation for young people between the ages of 17 and 35. The organisation aims to promote agricultural and rural development and the personal development of its members.
- Catholic Youth Care (www.cyc.ie) is a Catholic organisation with 300 youth clubs and affiliated groups, providing recreational and educational activities for children and young people and a comprehensive range of support services

Initiatives on Risk Issues and Drug Use

The Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs has overall responsibility for the management of the National Drugs Strategy in Ireland. There are a number of other Government departments and state bodies involved in its operation. Four areas were pinpointed in the Strategy as being "crucial" in any attempt to address the problem:

- Reduction in the supply of drugs
- Prevention of drug use (including education and awareness)
- Drug treatment (including rehabilitation and risk reduction)
- Research

Ireland's National Drugs Strategy 'Building on Experience'

The Government set up the Local Drugs Task Forces in response to the worsening situation in areas that were already hard hit by drug misuse. Members of community and voluntary groups and elected officials

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were asked to work with Government agencies in coming up with new and more effective programmes of education, awareness, prevention and treatment. The task forces were asked to prepare action plans for their area, which would co-ordinate the drugs services that already existed and would identify and eventually fill in any gaps in the services. Over 200 projects have received funding from the Government. These projects range from support centres and rehabilitation programmes for drug users and their families to drugs awareness training.

Code of Good Practice - Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector

The Code of Good Practice was published in September 2002. It was prepared with the youth work sector specifically in mind. The publication in 1999 of *Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children* charged each and every organisation, whether statutory or voluntary, providing services to children, to produce a child protection policy tailored to their specific needs.

The Code of Good Practice was prepared by Youth Affairs Section of the Department and Education and Science, in consultation with partners in the Youth Work Sector and the National Youth Work Advisory Committee.

Police Vetting

Vetting by the Garda Saiochána of all new staff and volunteers who have substantial access to young people under 18 is being introduced during 2006. Youth organisations are provided with information on prosecutions, convictions and pending cases against applicants for posts. Youth organisations then make decisions on whether to proceed with recruitment.

Name of Country: Ireland	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18
Consuming Alcohol	18 – unless in a private house with expressed consent of a parent or guardian.
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars – 17 Motorbikes – 17 Other Vehicles – 17
Sexual Consent	17
Section II – Laws and Practice in relation to Drug Use	
Drug Use	Consumption of drugs including cannabis is illegal. However, consumption of drugs is not uncommon
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Under 15's are not permitted in such places but may be present up until 9.00 p.m. if in the company of an adult. Young people aged 15-17 years are allowed in bars until 9.00p.m. without a parent. Young people under 21 – not accompanied by a parent or guardian must possess a document giving evidence of their age in order to enter and stay in a bar after 9.00p.m.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits (concentration per 100mls of blood).	80 mgs per 100ml of blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	Drivers and all passengers in cars must wear seat belts but passengers in motor coaches are not required to wear belts except

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	<p>where they are provided.</p> <p>People drive on the left side of the road.</p> <p>Those requiring visas for entry into Ireland should apply in good time.</p>
General Cultural Practices of Note	<p>Consumption of alcohol is common among young people. Smoking is not permitted in restaurants, pubs, shops or in any workplace.</p> <p>Ireland has now an increasing number of migrant communities with different cultural backgrounds</p>
Ratios	<p>8:1 with an additional adult for each group of 8 thereafter. Lower ratios may be required to meet special needs.</p> <p>There should be sufficient adults of both genders</p>
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	<p>There are professional qualifications for youth workers. However, many youth workers are unpaid volunteers with no professional qualifications</p>
Reporting of Abuse	<p>There is a responsibility to report abuse but no obligation in law. There is immunity from civil liability for persons who report child abuse reasonably and in good faith.</p> <p>Such reports should be made to the Health Authority, An Garda Siochana (police) or to a designated person with a youth organisation</p>
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	<p>Police 999</p> <p>Childline 1800 666 666</p> <p>Drugs Helpline 1800 459 459</p> <p>Dublin Rape Crisis Centre 1800 77 88 88</p> <p>HIV Helpline 1800 459 459</p> <p>Missing Persons Helpline 1800 616617</p> <p>Samaritans 1850 60 90 90</p> <p>Victim Support 1800 661 771</p> <p>Women's Aid National Freephone Helpline 1800 341 900</p>
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	No specific law
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	No specific law
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector Code of Good Practice
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	€66 fee. Some emergency rooms can be very busy and with very lengthy waiting periods

Useful Websites and Resources

www.youth.ie (National Youth Council of Ireland)

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www.education.ie (Department of Education & Science) Government Website, Youth Affairs Section with Code of Good Practice – Child Protection Guidelines

www.youthworkireland.ie Policy documents relating to Alcohol, Drugs, Juvenile Justice, Youth Work Act.

www.leargas.ie Léargas the Youth in Action National Agency for Ireland

Italy

Information last updated: 15 Apr 2009

Youth Work Practice

Until 2006, Italy was one of the few countries in Europe not to have a national youth policies institution. Until then there were different Ministries to coordinate the different competencies (Welfare, Labour, Education, Foreign Affairs, Internal Affairs).

In 2006, for the first time a Ministry with competencies on Youth Policies and Sport was found, a Ministry without Portfolio.

Since 2008 it became the Ministry of Youth and it is in charge of the youth policies together with the promotion and coordination of youth exchanges and the prevention of youth deviancy.

The main rule referring to youth policies is the Constitution (art.31) but Italy is one of the few countries in the EU not to have a national law on youth policies, yet. According to the devolution Regions, Provinces, Municipalities but also schools and the so called Third Sector actually run youth policies, in Italy. There are 13 Regions out of 20 to have their regional law. They also adopted the European guidelines on Youth Participation from the European Charta and different Recommendations from the Council of Europe.

The youth policies cover a wide range of actions (culture, participation, labour, house, education, mobility, etc.) and they involve many actors (adolescents, young people, informal groups, co-operative societies in the field of non profit, associations, schools, sporting clubs, student clubs, Local and National Authorities and public bodies in general).

After the '70, many structures for young people have been set up, with the aim of prevention and protection of young people "at risk" (see the Law 309/90 "National Fund for the Fight Against Drug", Law 216/91 "First interventions in favour of minors at risk of being involved in illegal activities", Law 285/97 "Childhood and adolescence protection").

Thanks to these actions, many services, addressed to young people and to the prevention of disease, sprung up: services such as youth centres, "Informagiovani" (info-centres), youth forums, children's recreation centres.

In Italy, youth work is addressed to promote social and active participation. It is difficult to define the concept of "youth work" because the range of activities is wide and different areas are embedded:

- Socio-cultural area;
- Socio-educational area;
- Welfare and sanitary area (projects about prevention and care)

In Italy, there is no national law on the the recognition of youth work as a professional work.

For those who want to be "certificated" as youth workers, they need a formal recognition such as a degree as "professional educator", "socio-cultural animation youth worker" "social worker" "cultural mediator", "intercultural educator or mediator". It means that the recognition is within the formal field, even if there are training courses provided by the organization within the Third Sector and non-profit organizations.

Actually, young people acquire their skills and competences "afield" during their voluntary activities or attending training courses organized by the non-profit organisations. So that a youth worker can be a social worker, a psychologist, an educator, a sociologist, an "operatore sociale" (social operator).

His work deals with the management of leisure time, educational and socialization activities As "social operator" he supports the welfare state work (of the Juvenile Court e.g.), sometimes also the work within the National Health Service. The youth worker can be a voluntary or a paid youth worker. The youth work is either an activity on voluntary basis or a professional job (in the non-profit field).

Initiatives on Risk Issues and Drug Use

Recently, also in Italy the “Risk Issue” became a priority.

In Italy, the alcohol consume legislation for youngsters is still backward and sometimes contradictory, even if there is a great discussion on how to put limits and some proposals to be approved by the Italian Parliament. In Italy, too many are car accidents concerning young people, because of alcohol assumption. There is a Bill to be approved to forbid selling and putting in alcohol to young people under 18. The Bill foresees the same restrictions for tobacco either in selling to young people under 18 customers or in consuming it.

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Name of Country: Italy	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18 years
Buying Alcohol:	16 years
Consuming Alcohol	16 years
Buying Tobacco	16 years
Consuming Tobacco	16 years
Driving	Cars – 18 years Motorbikes of lower cc and mopeds – 14 years (certification of eligibility to drive, obtained through a written examination) Age limit for higher powered motorbikes: 16 years 125 cc, 18 years over 125 cc Other vehicles are not restricted by legal age but by other restrictions e.g. particular type of license
Sexual Consent	14 is the age of sexual consent. In Italy the age limit for the legal consent to have sexual intercourse is 14 years old; this age comes down to 13 years old, if there is a difference of three years old between the two partners and goes up to 16 years old, if one of the two partners has a sort of authority or ascendancy on the partner who is younger, for example teachers, tutors, educators.
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	According to the Law 309/1990: buying or keeping drugs for personal use is an offence punished with an administrative sanction and the withdrawal of driving licence and passport for a limited period. A therapeutic programme may be suggested or requested for the accused and once it is successfully completed, the charge is suspended. Legal sanctions can be applied to those who have, grow, produce, sell, buy, offer, give, receive, import, export or transport drugs. If the impeached is a minor, he/she will be obliged to follow special educational programmes. There is a revision of the Law 309/1990, which is Law n. 49/2006. The main redacted aspects concern penalties for those who produce, illegally detain, are involved in drug trafficking or consume narcotic drugs. In the revision there is any difference between “heavy”, such as heroin and cocaine and “soft” drug, such as cannabis. The person who owns more than the quantity foreseen by the law is considered to be a pusher or a dealer and can be prosecuted (prison until 20 years and a fine, up to 260 million of euros).
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	None
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	0.5mgs per litre
Section III – Youth Exchanges	

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Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None
General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	10:1 There are no specific recommendations regarding male/female leaders. No recommended ratios for young people/leaders in youth clubs.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	There is no national law that requires that the youth workers are professionally qualified. The most useful qualifications for the role of youth worker are: “professional educator”, “ socio-cultural animation youth worker” social worker” “cultural mediator”, “intercultural educator or mediator”.
Reporting of Abuse	No specific law
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	“Blue telephone” N. 1.96.96 (for children) 199.15.15.15 (for teenagers and adults) Emergency Telephone Number 114
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	None
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Since 1997 there is a Law, L 285/97 “Childhood and adolescence protection” which gives the guidelines to experiment actions in favor of children and young people
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No charge.

Useful Websites and Resources

<http://www.giustizia.it/minori/indice.htm>

Latvia

Information from Sept 2006

Name of Country: Latvia	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18 but in special cases over 16 may be considered the age of adulthood
Buying Alcohol:	18 and one must present evidence of age and identity
Consuming Alcohol	The Protection of Children’s rights law states that one is not allowed to consume alcohol until one has reached the age of adulthood.
Buying Tobacco	18 and one must present evidence of age and identity
Consuming Tobacco	The Protection of Children’s rights law states that one is not allowed to consume tobacco until one has reached the age of adulthood.
Driving	Cars: 18 (Categories A, B, C1) Motorbikes: 16 (Categories A1, B1) Categories C, D1, D, BE, C1E: 21 years Other Vehicles: Moped: 14 Bicycle: 12
Sexual Consent	The law does not state explicitly but it is a criminal offence to engage in sexual activity with a young person who is under 16 years.
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Drug use is a crime in Latvia. For repeated illegal drug use within a 12-month period, a person may be imprisoned for up to 2 years, may be sentenced to enforced labour or fined an amount which is 50 times the minimum monthly wage. These are considered administrative sanctions. Under Criminal sanctions an addict may be released from serving a prison sentence if they agree to undergo rehabilitation treatment. Trafficking drugs is a very serious offence and those charged may be sentenced to up to 13 years in prison depending on the quantity of substances seized.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	No specific law
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	The severity of the sanction is in direct proportion to the blood alcohol levels recorded. 0.001-0.025 mgs per 100mls – there will be a fine and suspension of licence for 3 months 0.025-0.05 mgs per 100mls – a larger fine (200-300 LVL) and suspension of licence for 6 months 0.05-0.075 mgs per 100mls – a larger fine (400 LVL), suspension of licence for 12 months and imprisonment for 5-10 days If blood-alcohol level exceeds 0.075 mgs per 100mls of blood, then the fine is 500 LVL, suspension of the licence for 2 years and imprisonment for 10-15 days
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	No specific legislation in this regard
General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	There is no definition of the term “youth leader” in the legislation and therefore no specific regulations on ratios. Regulations issued

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	<p>by the Cabinet of Ministers concerning children’s camps there is a suggested ratio of 10:1 (if the camp is organised by educational institutions)</p> <p>There are no recommended ratios in respect of male/female ratios or those pertaining to a youth club.</p>
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	There are no professional qualifications provided for youth workers
Reporting of Abuse	There is an obligation to report any abuse to the Police or to the Local Municipality, Ministry for Children and Family Affairs, and/or Custody Court.
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	None
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	There are none
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	There are none
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	There is no charge for visiting the emergency room of a hospital for children.

Liechtenstein

Information last updated: 13 May 2009

Youth work Practice in Liechtenstein

At national level, ASD (Amt für Soziale Dienste), the social services, is responsible for the implementation of youth policy in Liechtenstein. Therefore, ASD can rely on the communal youth centres, on the youth organisations and on "aha-Tipps & Infos für junge Leute".

Youth centres (Jugendtreffs):

Open Youth Work is well implemented in Liechtenstein. Every community has its youth centre. These youth centres are financed through the communal services and for this reason youth workers are part of the communal staff. Every community has a youth council (Jugendkommission) who is in charge of promoting, supporting the communal youth policy. In some councils you can find young representatives, in some other only adults. All youth centres are members of the association of youth centres of Liechtenstein (VLJ).

Youth organisations (Jugendorganisationen):

The biggest youth organisation in Liechtenstein is the Scouts from Liechtenstein, who have a representation in each community.

Young people in Liechtenstein are likely to create also informal youth groups. They get then some room and money from the community and have their own self-independent management and activities. These groups are named "Jugendgruppen".

The association of youth leaders from Liechtenstein (EJL) is a young youth organisation which is implementing youth exchanges on an international level. EJL is the result of some young adults' initiative.

"aha-Tipps & Infos für junge Leute":

This organisation is the only one on the national level except the scouts. "aha" is running different projects and programmes in the youth field: a youth information centre, a project counselling place and the National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme.

Youth workers in Liechtenstein are not only professional but also volunteers. Regarding their education, there are different possibilities: a full education as social/youth worker in Switzerland or in Austria, trainings for voluntary workers...

Initiatives on Risk Issues or Drug Use

A campaign for alcohol, medical drugs and tobacco prevention started 2006 and should last until end 2009. This campaign could be even extended. This campaign aims to avoid the early addiction to these drugs. More information about this campaign is to be found under the following link: www.duseschtwia.li
Unfortunately this homepage exists only in German.

Name of Country: Liechtenstein	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	% Strength of alcohol makes a difference 16 for Beer, cider, wine 18 for spirits and alcopops
Consuming Alcohol	16 for lighter alcohol – beer/cider/wine/

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	18 for spirits and alcopops
Buying Tobacco	16
Consuming Tobacco	16
Driving	18 for cars and similar vehicles 14-16 depending on category 14 agricultural purposes
Sexual Consent	16 (no conditions), 12 (with conditions). No distinction is made between homosexual or heterosexual orientation in terms of age of consent.
Section II – Laws and Practice in relation to Drug Use	
Drug Use	Use, Production, Business all forbidden
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Liechtenstein indicates that there is a law pertaining to this and is downloadable from their web page.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits (concentration per 100mls of blood.)	0.8 mgs per 100mls of blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	No particular laws presenting particular problems for youth exchange
General Cultural Practices of Note	We have to respect the youth law also the rules about going out.
Ratios	The only recommendation regarding ratios is 10:1 1 leader per 10 young people. A gender balance is recommended for leaders from the same group/country No ratios stated relating to leaders/young people in a youth club
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	Youth workers generally qualified to 3 rd level in Switzerland or Austria. Voluntary leaders are offered a variety of courses – TCP and national training
Reporting of Abuse	No obligation to report instances of abuse in youth clubs or on youth exchanges
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	112: Emergency number 147: young people’ help line
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	None
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	Youth Law is relevant
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	None
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No fee required to access the emergency rooms of hospitals in Liechtenstein

Useful web addresses

Some Information about the Tasks of the Social Services (ASD)

http://www.llv.li/amtsstellen/llv-asd-kinder_und_jugendliche1.htm

Some Information about the youth law in Liechtenstein (only in German)

<http://www.jugendgesetz.li/>

The Homepage of the association of the youth centres in Liechtenstein (only in German)

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<http://www.vlj.info/>

"aha-Tipps & Infos für junge Leute" Homepage (only in German)

www.aha.li

As the youth information centre, this organisation can answer all general questions about youth work in Liechtenstein in English also. Please feel free to ask.

Lithuania

Information last updated: 15 Apr 2009

Name of Country: Lithuania	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18. It is forbidden to sell alcohol after 10 pm in shopping centre.
Consuming Alcohol	18. Using alcohol in public places is forbidden.
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18. It is forbidden to smoke in bar, pub or restaurant and other indoor public space.
Driving	Cars – 18 Motorbikes – 15 Other Vehicles Bicycles – 12 (10 if they have completed a special course in school) Seat belts are compulsory and must always be worn if they are installed.
Sexual Consent	14
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Use of drugs is forbidden
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	No specific laws
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	0.41mg per 100mls 0.2 mg per 100 mls if the driver doesn't have 2 years of practice
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing in particular
Ratios	In a school excursion the recommended ratio is 15:1 There is no particular recommendation for Youth Exchanges No recommendations for youth clubs or gender balance in leader groupings.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	None
Reporting of Abuse	Yes it is an obligation to report abuse to the police or child protection services, despite the situation or place where abuse has been committed.
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	Emergency call number 112 Young people's free help lines 8 800 28888; 8 800 11111; 8 800 60700
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	None
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency	No charge for treatment and medication for EU citizens on

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Rooms	presentation of a valid health insurance card and ID. Different rules and fees apply depending on the hospital policy.
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Luxembourg

Information from Sept 2006

Youth Work Practice

The Ministry of Family and Social Integration (www.fm.etat.lu) is generally responsible for coordinating all aspects of relevance to youth, without directly encroaching on the areas of work of other ministries which also deal with youth affairs.

The Ministry is given advice by the Higher Youth Council (Conseil Supérieur de la Jeunesse), which brings together various ministries and umbrella associations and acts as a multi-level discussion forum. The higher Youth Council traces its origin to the Act of 27 February 1984 which also set up the “Service National de la Jeunesse – SNJ”, the National Youth Service (www.snj.lu), which merged into the Ministry as a result of the Grand Ducal Decree of 11 August 1999. The SNJ takes over the operational implementation and realisation of the youth policy.

In practice, the SNJ has acted as the contact and support structure for young people in connection with training and support since 1984. It promotes co-operation nationally between youth associations and organisations on the one hand and the Government and government bodies on the other. Locally the Ministry plays a major role especially in co-operation with municipal authorities which maintain youth centres (Maisons des Jeunes – MJs) or pursue other local youth policy initiatives.

Practical aspects handled by the SNJ include major tasks in out-of-school educational provision, socio-cultural activities and specific training for those working with young people as a main or secondary occupation or as volunteers.

The Ministry also consults the youth organisations and associations by involving the CGJL (Conférence Générale de la Jeunesse, www.cgjl.lu) in need to raise intended pilot projects in the youth field or devise basic youth policy documents. Member-associations range from political and unionized groupings, through scouting associations, student associations, youth clubs and voluntary organisations. Some other structures involved in youth policy and practice have the form of quasi non-governmental organisations because the principal scope of their task is the pursuit of national approaches to youth policy (e.g. CNIEJ, CRIAJ, CeSiJe).

On a local level, 118 municipalities are responsible themselves to implement specific youth policy initiatives. The state offers support in the form of funding, advice and monitoring, but every municipality decides what they implement and how far they want to go, whether they use a local youth committee or not. Young people and other citizens can also participate in this.

Furthermore, in Luxembourg, private non-profit making organisations and associations have since ever played an important role in the field of youth and social policy. The state as rule confines itself to initiatives, setting outline conditions and financial support of the private structure responsible for specific implantation.

Initiatives on Risk Issues or Drug Use

Concerning risk or drug use in Luxembourg, different actors are working on different levels:

1) Drug Use

Research and surveys among the youngsters to find out their awareness of the legal situation, their attitude towards drugs, their consumption habits as well as to detect the need for prevention, are carried out periodically.

(Ministry of health: www.ms.etat.lu, Centre de prevention des toxicomanies: www.cept.lu)

Information sessions on drugs are held by the different actors in schools and public parties and conferences, exhibitions and seminars are organized to sensitize and educate the different target groups (www.police.public.lu, Jugend an Drogenhëllef, www.jdh.lu)

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2) Child Abuse

The act of 25 July 2002 created an OMBUDS-Committee (www.ork.lu) for the rights of the children. Its aim is to monitor and to promote the rights and the interest of the children (person under 18).

3) Education

A major problem in education in the Grand Duchy is the very high proportion of children of foreign extraction who have to be integrated into the Luxembourg school system. To meet this challenge a concept of intercultural education has been developed. (Ministry of Education: www.men.lu)

4) Unemployment and Poverty

The number of young people in a poverty situation is rather low as we can take into the consideration the allocation of the “Revenu Minimum Garanti” RMG (guaranteed minimum income) to the young person’s family or to the young person in his/her own right (www.legilux.public.lu). The National Employment Plan, implemented in 1998, has created special measures for the employment of young people (CAT- contract of temporary auxiliary employment).

5) Juvenile Delinquency

Minors (<18) who have broken criminal law are referred to a special youth court.

In some cases the public prosecutor may also open mediation proceedings through the “Centre de Mediation” (www.mediation.lu) which convenes the parties in writing, listens to them and proposes a solution to the conflict.

Name of Country: Luxembourg	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	Not permitted to sell alcohol to those under 16 years in a bar/pub or restaurant but no restrictions to buy alcohol in commerce. However a new law is under construction which stipulates that it is not permitted to sell or to give for free alcohol higher than 1,2% to those under 16 in bars/pubs/restaurants, shops and public places. Punishment is foreseen 251 – 1000€
Consuming Alcohol	No legal restrictions for the moment (06/2006)
Buying Tobacco	No specific rule regarding the purchase of tobacco
Consuming Tobacco	No specific rule regarding the consumption of tobacco. There are restrictions on smoking in certain places e.g. educational institutions, places where young people may congregate, sports halls etc.
Driving	Car: 18 Motorbikes: 16 50cc’s Other Vehicles: Bus: 21 years
Sexual Consent	The law (1992) regarding the protection of young people states it is a criminal offence to engage in sexual activity with a young person who is under 16 years. It is considered assault against minors of 16 or under and rape against those of 14 years or under. The punishment is severe.
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Is prohibited with sentences ranging from 8 days to 6 months in prison, fines of between €251 and 2,500 for personal use, selling, trafficking etc.
Frequenting places which sell	Young people under 16 years are not permitted in places which sell

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alcohol	alcohol unless accompanied by a legal representative.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	0.8mgs per 100mls or blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	No specific regulations just for youth exchanges. However, any organisation or person operating in the social, family and therapeutic sectors must obtain State accreditation by the respective Department. To do so, they must fulfil specific conditions in terms of respectability, have the infrastructure and qualified personnel necessary and in sufficient numbers, guarantee free access to their accredited activities and demonstrate healthy financial standing.(8/9/1998 Act on the links between the State and voluntary organisations in the social, family and therapeutic sector)
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing specific
Ratios	7:1 recommended by the NA No legislative requirements regarding male/female ratios on exchanges or for ratios in youth clubs.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	Yes there are professional qualifications for youth workers but it depends on the nature of the job. For those working within the youth service – a graduate diploma for educators i.e. BAC+3 There is no qualification specifically pertaining to those working on an intercultural exchange. For volunteers, certificate “animateur” awarded by the Ministry with responsibility for youth
Reporting of Abuse	Yes there is an obligation to report cases of abuse to the police.
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	No specific law for youth exchanges but see also section III – 8/9/1998 Act. There are some child protection laws pertaining to the implementation of the Convention de l’ONU relating to the rights of the child.
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	There are no specific laws, but the 28/01/1999 Act is regulating the agreement given to the management of youth clubs
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	There are primarily, the Children and Young People Protection act of 10 August 1992 (amended by Act of 18 August 1955) and the Act of 20 December 1993 ratifying the UN Convention of Children’s Rights. The present legislation originates from the Act of 12 November 1971, which abolished the distinction between crime and contravention of the law. Now even less serious matters had to be submitted to the juvenile court in order for the latter to detect cases of maladjusted young people that would justify its intervention and thus prevent possible delinquency. Through the law on 31 May 1999, aimed at reinforcing the measures against slavery and sexual exploitation of children, Luxembourg has, among others, also adapted the national legislation to the Convention on Children Rights. Henceforth the penal code not only punishes incitement to debauchery, corruption or prostitution of young people, but also exploitation of a minor for

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	<p>prostitution or the production of pornographic spectacles or material...</p> <p>The act of 25 July 2002 created an OMBUDS-Committee (www.ork.lu) for the rights of the children. Its aim is to monitor and to promote the rights and the interest of the children (person under 18).</p>
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No fee required

Malta

Information from Sept 2006

Name of Country: Malta	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18 years
Buying Alcohol:	16
Consuming Alcohol	16
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	All vehicles 18 years
Sexual Consent	18
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	All drug use, possession or consumption is considered an illegal offence and is prosecutable
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Children under 16 years are not permitted on any premises, pub, discos which sell alcohol.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	The limit of blood alcohol concentration in Malta is 80mg%
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None
General Cultural Practices of Note	There is a dress code for entering churches or cathedrals. Most of the traditions of the country reflect the country's strongly catholic population. Shouting or playing loud music in residential areas during siestas is prohibited. An out-door culture due to the Mediterranean weather.
Ratios	10:1 but anything over 10 participants requires two leaders. There must be a gender balance within the leader group where possible.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	Youth Workers are required to hold a University degree in Youth and Community Studies but this is not obligatory in every youth organisation
Reporting of Abuse	Youth workers are "expected" to report any cases of abuse in youth clubs or during exchanges but there is no regulatory framework in this regard. They should report directly to the police.
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	No specific laws
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Yes. A child protection policy was issued in 1999 mostly focusing on schools. In 2003, the Commissioner for children was enacted which seeks to ensure that the rights and interests of children are properly taken

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	account of by Government departments, local authorities, other public bodies, voluntary and public organisations when decision affecting children are taken.
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No charge to Maltese nationals. EU citizens temporarily visiting Malta will receive emergency treatment at public hospitals (A&E) free of charge if they present proof of EU citizenships and hold a valid E111

Netherlands

Information last updated: 15 Apr 2009

Youth Work Practice

Nearly one third of the people living in the Netherlands is under 25 years of age (approximately five million). As in most other industrialized countries the proportion of youth in the total population is decreasing. Youth policy has been very high on the agenda in the Netherlands for quite some time. Present youth policy is largely decentralized to the municipalities and to the provinces. National government is responsible for legislation and innovation of youth policy (health and education programmes, parenting support, etc.). Since 2007, the Netherlands has a Ministry for Youth and Families.

Youth work has changed in several ways during the last few years, the original aim still applies: to offer children and young people recreation, (non formal) education and a place to meet.

Local governments are responsible for financing and organising youth work. It strongly depends on local policy whether a town has youth work facilities and, if so, which form they take. Most youth work is initiated by volunteers – supervised by a professional – who work in community or youth centres.

There are also a large number of (voluntary) youth organisations, differing greatly in objective and form. Since 2002 the Netherlands has a National Youth Council – Nationale Jeugdraad – which is an umbrella organisation of national youth organisations. The Youth Council also organises activities in which non-organised young people can participate.

Initiatives on Risk Issues and Drug Use

Lots of drug prevention projects are developed at national, regional and local level. Granted by the National Government or decentralized to the provinces and/or municipalities.

Some Examples include:

National Project: Healthy School. Educational projects for children/youngsters at primary and secondary school. Aim: provide information about drugs and the consequences of using drugs. The project includes also a programme for parents: information, prevention, recognition, “how to get support” and exchange meetings.

National Project: Home Party. Special programme for (ethnic) social excluded families. Small meetings that will be organised by a guest parent, who is trained and supported by a professional in their own neighbourhood. Aim: information, prevention, recognition, “how to get support” and exchange meetings.

There are several manuals and websites for local authorities, catering entrepreneurs and employers; the aim of which is to provide information and awareness.

Regional Project: Unity. A peer-project for young people. Aim: peer educators inform and recommend youngsters in bars, disco’s and parties about the risks of using drugs. “Users” will be informed about how to use the drugs in a limited and responsible way.

National/Local Project: Harm-reduction. A special programme for those addicted to hard-drugs. Addicts who are using heroin needles can change their used needles free for new and clean needles. Aim: prevention of spreading of infection of Hepatitis B and C.

Lots of flyers and websites are developed for youngsters about drugs, alcohol, sex, abuse etc. Also the media acts very active about the topics with special programmes for youngsters. In the Netherlands there is

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a lot of Youth Information Points (JIP). These points aim to have strong communication with youth about the priority topics.

Name of Country: Netherlands	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	Starting by obtaining the age of 18
Buying Alcohol:	16 (light: beer, wine) 18 (hard liquor: spirits, cocktails or breezers)
Consuming Alcohol	16 It's not allowed to offer or sell alcohol (light or hard) to anyone under 16 years. Consuming alcohol under the age of 16 is not punishable.
Buying Tobacco	16 It's not permitted to offer or sell tobacco to anyone under 16 years.
Consuming Tobacco	No legal constraint
Driving	Cars : 18 (driving licence required) Motorbikes: 18 (driving licence required) Other Vehicles: 18 (driving licence required) Mopeds/Scooters: 16 (also driving licence required)
Sexual Consent	It is not allowed for adults and youngsters to have any sexual activity with persons under 12 years. Sexual activities between an adult and a young person between the ages of 12 and 16 is permitted by law, as long as the young person consents. It may only be prosecuted by complaint from the young person or the young person's parents. Sexual activities with young people under 18 is prohibited when there is a situation of authority, deceit, or relation of interdependence, e.g. father and daughter or teacher and student.
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	The possession, production and trade in drugs is prohibited by law. The use of drugs is not prohibited by law, but local governments have the possibility of prohibiting the use of drugs by local regulations. Regarding soft drugs, there is a policy of tolerance; this means the sale of soft drugs in coffee shops and the possession of a maximum of five grams of soft drugs is permitted.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	No specific laws apply. For the most part admittance and frequenting such places is left to the "door policy" of the establishment itself.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	Legal tolerance for alcohol in the bloodstream while driving in Netherlands is 0.5 mgs per 100 ml of blood. With a blood alcohol level of 1.3 mgs per 100mls blood the driving licence of the driver will be confiscated (recalled). For drivers who have their driving licence less than five years, the maximum alcohol level is 0.3

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	mgs per 100 mls blood.
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	Nothing specific
General Cultural Practices of Note	<p>The drugs tolerance policy in Netherlands sets it apart from other European nations.</p> <p>Dutch society is significantly multicultural but not all cultures are well integrated into Dutch society.</p>
Ratios	<p>General ratio is 5:1 Could be changed. Depending on the needs of the group.</p> <p>There is no specific recommendation on gender breakdown in the leader group.</p> <p>No specific ratio on youth clubs leader representation.</p>
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	Professional Youth Workers are educated via specific programmes at academies. Voluntary Youth workers/leaders are not required to have formal qualifications.
Reporting of Abuse	<p>In the Netherlands there is no obligation to report child abuse. Doctors or social workers who come across, or suspect there is a case of child abuse, have to weigh up for themselves whether it is in the child’s interest to report it. However, there is a lot of awareness training for professionals dealing with children (doctors, nurses, childcare workers, teachers) to detect signs of abuse.</p> <p>There is an obligation for management to report abuse and neglect if it takes place in their institutes, by their professionals. For more information: www.youthpolicy.nl “Child Abuse”.</p>
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	<p>Emergency telephone number: 112</p> <p>Kindertelefoon (organisation which children with problems or troubles can call): 0800 0432</p> <p>Advies- en Meldpunt Kindermishandeling (for suspicions of child abuse): 0900 1231230</p>
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	No specific laws
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	<p>There are no specific laws pertaining to the safety of Young people in youth clubs.</p> <p>Laws described as above about drugs, sex and alcohol apply also for youth clubs.</p> <p>Rules and guidelines pertaining to safety in general of young people are most of the times developed and established by the youth clubs themselves or/and by the policy of municipality</p>
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	The Ministry of Justice is responsible for the Child Protection Council. This council is responsible for justice of/for young people and cooperates strongly with the Youth Care Agency in the Netherlands. Both organisations act by respecting and executing the

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	<p>guidelines for child protection in the Netherlands. Youth care in the Netherlands comprises the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- youth assistance work- youth protection- mental health care for young persons- young persons with mild mental disabilities. <p>More information about youth policy: http://www.jeugdengazin.nl/english and www.youthpolicy.nl</p>
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No fee required for access to the emergency room of a hospital for anyone legally living in the Netherlands, this is a cost covered by medical insurance. Insurance forms have to be presented at the hospital.

Useful Websites and Resources

Information about youth policy in the Netherlands:

<http://www.youthpolicy.nl>

Dutch Ministry for Youth and Families:

<http://www.jeugdengazin.nl/english>

English website of the Netherlands Youth Institute:

<http://www.nji.nl/eCache/DEF/1/05/642.html>

Norway

Information from Sept 2006

Youth Work Practice

The direction and development of youth work is the responsibility of The Ministry of Children and Equality Development. There are training activities for peer educators (young people) and training activities for teachers, social operators, youth associations working in the public and private sectors.

Street (Mobile) Units: well-equipped mobile units composed of street operators who give information and support offer their help and counselling about all types of information about the risks of drug use/abuse. This service is targeted at all youth aged 13- 20 years in the local community.

Initiatives on Risk Issues or Drug Use

Youth departments of municipalities and different organisations run different campaigns against drug abuse and for social empowerment among young people at local, regional and national level.

Name of Country: Norway	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18 for wine and beer 20 for stronger alcohol (spirits)
Consuming Alcohol	18 for wine and beer 20 for stronger alcohol (spirits)
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars – 18 Motorbikes – 18 Other vehicles: small motorbikes and scooters – 16 Bus- 21
Sexual Consent	16
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	All drugs are illegal. Only those on medical prescription are permitted.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	No specific law but most premises have their own admission policy which helps them to control of those consuming alcohol on their premises
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	0.2mgs per 100mls of blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	No specific laws but those employed in youth clubs must know First Aid. All car passengers must use seat belts / must be used if in coaches
General Cultural Practices of Note	Consumption of drugs and alcohol is strictly forbidden in youth clubs and activities organised by youth clubs even if the participants are over the age of 18.
Ratios	No specific recommendation in regard to ratio but the National Agency recommends 8:1 concurrent with the recommendation of the YOUTH Programme. They also

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	recommend that both male and female leaders should be present if the group is mixed Within a youth clubs the recommendation is that at least two employees are at work at all times.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	None, but youth leaders get compulsory education/training.
Reporting of Abuse	Yes there is an obligation to report cases of abuse at all times to the police and/or child care services
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	No specific laws
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None currently, but there is an ongoing discussion on the need for police certificates from employees in youth clubs and youth NGO's
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	No but the government has grant aided the Norwegian Youth Council who have developed 3 publications and a web site on "safe" project. One of the publications is loosely entitled "Guidelines for child and youth organisations who encounter boundary transgressing sexual behaviour"
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	Small fee for polyclinic treatment (ca.16- 25 euro) No fee for hospitalisation

Useful Websites and Resources

www.bufdir.no

Norwegian government office for welfare and protection of children and families.

www.lnu.no

Norwegian youth council

www.ung.no

Information for youth (govern. all materials has been checked)

www.ungofri.no

The national youth club organization

<http://www.eung.no/>

Youth portal

www.luk.no

Outreach agency for social workers

Poland

Information last updated: 21 Apr 2009

Name of Country: Poland	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18
Consuming Alcohol	18
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars and motorbikes – 18 Small motorbikes (<125 cm ³ and <11kW) – 16 Other Vehicles – age varies depending on type of vehicle (18 or 21 years)
Sexual Consent	15 years
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Possession, selling or buying drugs is strictly prohibited.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Tobacco and Alcohol are not sold to people younger than 18 years. ID cards are often requested as proof of age. There are no specific rules about frequenting such places but many places operate their own admission policies.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	0.2 mgs per 100 mls of blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	There are no specific laws relating to international youth projects. All the regulations refer to organised youth trips and camps. Where any problems arise, these laws will be used as the legal basis to proceed.
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing in particular
Ratios	1 certified leader for 20 participants is the required minimum, 15:1 if participants are younger than 10 years old. More leaders are required if there are participants with disabilities. No specific recommendations regarding male/female breakdown of leaders but it does happen as a practice.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	Youth work is not a recognised profession in Poland. People organizing trips or camps for young people or working there as leaders must graduate a special course.
Reporting of Abuse	There is an obligation to report abuse if it is perceived as criminal. It should be reported to the police.
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	Psychological help line for young people: 22-9288 or ‘mtz9288’ on Skype (only in Polish) Emergency number (police, ambulance, or fire brigade): 112 (the same as in whole Europe)
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	International Youth Exchange is not recognised in law in Poland. All regulations which are used are those referring to organised youth trips and camps.
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	No answer given
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	None

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Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	Free of charge if the patient has insurance. Patients from abroad need to have the European Health Insurance Card.

Portugal

Information from Sept 2006

Youth Work Practice

In 2003, the Government set up a law about specific requirements for entities who want to develop holiday camps for children and young people aged between 6 and 18, such as: security, sanitary, health conditions and obligation to have a “complaints book”

Initiatives on Risk Issues and Drug Use

*Alcohol campaign “100% cool”

*Portuguese Road Prevention “Klicseguro” (safe klic)

*Eu tenho valor” (I’ve value) anti tobacco consumption

Name of Country: Portugal	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18 but criminal responsibility applied at 16 years
Buying Alcohol:	16
Consuming Alcohol	16
Buying Tobacco	16
Consuming Tobacco	16
Driving	Cars – 18 Motorbikes – 16 Other vehicles – 18
Sexual Consent	16 years
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	All drugs are illegal. Sanctions are applied at differing levels dependent on the types of drug and whether for sale or consumption.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	No specific laws
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	the maximum level of blood alcohol permitted when driving is 0.49 g/l.
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	No but seat belts are obligatory for children in coaches up to 12 years old.
General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	10:1 No other ratios recommended
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	Yes (please specify)
Reporting of Abuse	Yes reporting is obligatory and should be reported to the Children’s Court, Police or Child Protection Commission.
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	None
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None

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Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Yes – please give details of the nature of the guidelines.
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	Free for those under 12 years and there is a charge of € thereafter.

Useful Websites and Resources

www.apsi.org.pt

www.cnpcjr.pt

www.apav.pt

www.psp.pt

www.prp.pt

www.kicseguero.pt

Slovak Republik (SR)

Information last updated: 15 Apr 2009

Youth Work Practice

Organization of youth policy in Slovakia

Youth policy service is organized at the central level and at that of local governments and municipalities. Each level has its own elected representatives, tasks and responsibilities. Some tasks are shared with state service and municipality.

At the central level it's the National Council of the Slovak republic, the ministries, organizations of state administration. **Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic** is the highest central body with responsibility for state policy on children and youth. However, social and legislative protection of children and youth falls under the auspices of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family.

The rights of the children and youth are not codified separately in the legislation of the SR, but they are quoted in the Bill of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution of the SR, which guarantees also a principle of specialized protection of children and youth.

Legislation in Slovakia

Until 2007 the Conception of the State Policy towards Children and Youth was in force. For the 2008 – 2013 period the Slovak Youth Institute, in co-operation with the Children and Youth Department, co-ordinated the preparation works on the Conception of the State Policy for the next period. The document was passed through the consultation process at various levels and was adopted as *The Key Areas and Action Plans of the State Policy towards Children and Youth in Slovakia*. The new conception differs from the former one not only in the extent of the youth life coverage (education, work, housing, leisure time, environment, and the like), but also in the definition of tools used to create the strategy, implementation, and evaluation of the impact of the Conception of the State Policy. The Conception brings about the creation of an inter-resort group, system of 2-years' action plans and the preparation of a National Report about Youth, which will be presented to the Parliament in 2010.

Governmental Council for Children and Youth is a consultative, initiating and co-ordinating body of the Government, which implements in its activities particularly the United Nations Engagement on the Rights of the Child and Declaration of the Human Rights, corresponding resolution of the Council of Europe and the EU White paper on Youth.

Iuventa is an administrated institution of the Ministry of Education, which realises undertakes tasks under the auspices of the state youth policy. Iuventa is also the seat of the National Agency for the EU Youth Programme.

Leisure time activities centres

School centre of leisure time activities

Institute of School Information and Prognosis

Since 1989 there has been a significant increase in the number of civil associations of children and youth with different foci and goals. An umbrella organisation of children and youth organization with nation-wide range is the **Youth Council of Slovakia**, which unites organizations with various objectives irrespective of political, religious, national and ethnic status. Its main target is to influence state policy, in order to create condition the universal, free and democratic development of children and youth to achieve their legitimate interests. YCS is also a founding member of the European Youth Forum.

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The Mission of the **Foundation Intenda** is to support the development of a youth-friendly society by supporting activities of the young people, leading to the fulfilment of their needs in the communities, where they live and by creating space for their involvement in the society.

Youth Information Centres are youth organization working with and for youth. They provide information and counselling services for young people in the field of legislation, psychologies, social matters, health and economy and also provide publishing of information related to the possibilities of studying abroad, travelling etc. An umbrella organization of the YIC in Slovakia is called the Association of the Information and Counselling Youth centres in the SR (ZIPCEM).

Initiatives on risk or drug use among young people

The Research Institute of Child Psychology and Patho-psychology guaranteed preventive program „The way to emotional maturity“ with delegation of the Ministry of Education. This program focused on drug prevention was implemented during the years 2000/2001. In regions was this program guaranteed by the Pedagogical-psychological Counselling Centres or Centres of Educational and Psychological Prevention. The programme was implemented by teachers of primary schools on local level (also teachers of secondary schools, especially the 8 – year secondary schools).

Name of Country: Slovakia	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18
Consuming Alcohol	18
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars – 18 Motorbikes – 15 years old (to 50 cm ³), 16 years old (125 cm ³) Other Vehicles – age varies depending on type of Vehicle - 18-21 years
Sexual Consent	15
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	For trafficking and possession of drugs there is a penalty from 2 to 8 years in prison, financial penalty or forfeiture of the stuff. For selling it to the person under 18 year it is 3-10 years in prison and to person under 15 year it is 8-10 years in prison.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	No
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	There is a zero-tolerance regarding to drinking and driving (0.0 mg per 100 ml of blood)
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None
General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	There are no recommendations regarding ratios.
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	Status of youth leader is defined by law on youth work (from 2008)
Reporting of Abuse	There is an obligation to report any cases, which violate rights of the children. You should report to the social-legislative body for

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	protection of children and social guardianship.
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	There is an international or national telephone number for different kinds of emergency: Ambulance: 112 or 155 Fire department: 112 or 150 Police: 112 or 158
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	No, there are no laws regarding the youth exchanges. There are some specific laws regarding summer camps for children as for example there is an obligation to have a medical care-taker some sanitary standards etc.
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	There is no specific policy, however the Convention on rights of children must be respected.
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No charge

Useful web addresses

<http://www.minedu.sk> - Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic

www.mladez.sk - Youth Council of Slovakia

www.zipcem.icm.sk - Association of the Information and Counselling Youth centres in the SR

<http://www.uips.sk> - Institute of School Information and Prognosis

www.cipc.sk - Centre for the international legal protection of children and youth

<http://www.unicef.sk/ldi/> - Children hot line

<http://www.infodrogy.sk> - General secretariat Board of Ministers for drug dependencies and drug control

Slovenia

Information last updated: 10 Apr 2009

Youth Work Practice

Slovenia boasts a long tradition of non-governmental organisation operation in the cultural, sport, youth, social and other areas. Also characteristic of Slovenia is a rather high proportion of people pursuing leisure activities or interests. The above mentioned contributes to the acquisition of knowledge and experience in participation, democratic dialogue within organisations, voluntary work etc. Although this area is not regulated from a single centre, there exist various ways of promotion and assistance which are very efficiently used by both non-governmental organisations and individuals.

The Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth is a body within the Ministry of education, science and sport which monitors the situation of young people and implements measures in the field of non-formal education, leisure time and participation of young people in society.

Still, problems regarding youth in general are being regulated by different state authorities without sufficient coordination or collaboration

Initiatives on Risk Issues or Drug Use

Web events serve as an entertaining way to attract visitors to a web site and to educate young people about drugs. The Office for Drugs, with external assistance, has to date prepared three web games. Because of the encouraging response, more are planned in the near future.

Name of Country: Slovenia	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18 years
Buying Alcohol:	18 applies to all establishments selling alcohol. It is not possible to buy alcohol after 9 pm in open stores. It can be served only in bars.
Consuming Alcohol	Minors under 18 may not buy alcohol but it is not illegal for them to consume it.
Buying Tobacco	15 years
Consuming Tobacco	Minors under 15 may not buy tobacco but it is not illegal for them to consume it.
Driving	Cars – 18 years Scooter (category H) 14 Motorbike (category A) 11kW 16 years 25kw 18 years Other Vehicles – tractor – 15 years
Sexual Consent	15 years
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Soliciting another to use drugs or proving drugs is considered a criminal act punishable by law. It is also illegal to provide a person with a place for the use of drugs.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	No minors – under 18 – may frequent night clubs and minors under 15 may not visit public events that are classified as unsuitable for young persons.
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	No alcohol in blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	None

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General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	8:1 No ratios regarding male/female leaders for a youth exchange No recommended ratios for youth clubs
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	No professional qualifications for youth workers.
Reporting of Abuse	There is an obligation to report cases of abuse of young people to social services.
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police station, 113 - Call in case of emergency, 112 - TOM telephone for child and youth who are threatened and problems of any kind – 080 12 34 (every day from 12 am to 8 pm) - SOS telephone for women and children, victims of violence, 080 11 55 - CPM Center for helping young up to 26 years (all kind of problems), + 386 1 438 22 10 - Crisis center for youth (up to 18 years), all kinds of distress, 080 15 52 - Intervention service of social security, 041 424 281 - MISS – Youth information and Counselling Service, informations and help for young - +386 1 510 16 75 - The young for the young telephone (young give the advices), + 386 1 510 16 75 - SAMARIJAN, help in mental distress, 080 11 13 - SOS telephone, info about drugs, 080 12 34 - Union against sexual abuse, 080 28 80 - EMMA-Center for help victims of violence – 080 21 33
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	There is no specific Laws for Youth Exchanges
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	None
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child protects the youth up to 18 years. Over 18 years – European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Council of Europe document)
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	<p>Payment is only required if a person has no insurance. During their temporary stay in the Republic of Slovenia, insured persons from the EU member states will be able to claim medical services in public health institutions and from private doctors who have concluded a contract with the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia (HIIS) on the basis of the European health insurance card.</p> <p>More about the Public Health Care Service on http://www.zzzs.si/.</p>

Useful Websites and Resources

- The Slovenian Office for YOUTH <http://www.uradzamladino.gov.si/>
- The Office for Drugs at the Ministry of Health <http://www.uradzadroge.gov.si/>
- National YOUTH Council of Slovenia <http://www.mss.si/>
- Human Rights Ombudsman <http://www.varuh-rs.si/>
- Youth Information and Counselling Centre Slovenia: <http://www.z-misss.si/>

Spain

Information last updated: 3 Jun 2009

Name of Country: Spain	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18 years
Buying Alcohol:	18 years
Consuming Alcohol	18 years
Buying Tobacco	18 years
Consuming Tobacco	18 years
Driving	Cars and similar vehicles – 18 Motorbikes – depending on power of the engine – 14
Sexual Consent	13
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	The law regard drug abuse is 1/1992. In the case of possession of a small quantity of drugs for personal use, an administrative sanction can be imposed. If the offence is related to trafficking, then the sanction will be judicial and carries a penalty of jail. The consumption of illegal drugs in a public place is considered a violation of public health. Driving under the influence of euphoric drugs is punishable by fines, confiscation of the driving licence and arrest.
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	None
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	0.5gms per 100mls of blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	No laws at national level. May be at regional and local level
General Cultural Practices of Note	None
Ratios	
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	
Reporting of Abuse	Yes. Reporting is obligatory and should be reported to the Children’s Court
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	Some Municipalities as Madrid (112), Barcelona and others, have help lines and emergency’s numbers
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	The general law pertaining to child protection applies – 1/1996
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	As above
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	The Secretary of State of Social Services, Families & disabilities coordinates the Child Protection policies through the Directorate of Families and Childhood
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No charge for access to hospital emergency rooms

USEFUL WEBSITES AND RESSOURCES

Instituto de la Juventud de España: www.injuve.migualdad.es

Plan Nacional sobre Drogas: www.pnsd.es

Red española de Servicios de Información Juvenil: www.infoven.migualdad.es

Información al ciudadano: www.060.es

Ministerio de Justicia y Protección de Menores, www.mjusticia.es

Sweden

Information last updated: 27 Feb 2009

Name of Country: Sweden	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18 in restaurants; 20 in shops. Alcohol is only sold in special shops
Consuming Alcohol	18
Buying Tobacco	18
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	Cars – 18 Motorbikes – 18; Lighter versions 16 Other Vehicles – bus – 21 years
Sexual Consent	15
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	No drugs are allowed in any circumstances
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Young people may frequent restaurants and bars but must not be served alcohol if they are under 18 years
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	Permitted blood alcohol concentration is 0.2 per 100mls of blood.
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	Seat belts compulsory in cars, must be used if in coaches
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing in particular other than a less than flexible attitude towards timekeeping!
Ratios	No formal recommendations regarding ratios. Some municipalities have determined their own ratio requirements but this may differ from one municipality to another
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	There are no formal compulsory qualifications but there is education/training for people who want to work with young people professionally or as volunteers
Reporting of Abuse	Staff who work professionally with young people, as teachers, doctors are obliged to report abuse. The general population, not working professionally are encouraged to report but it is not obligatory. This is the case for volunteer leaders also. Cases should be reported to the local social services body.
Contact telephone numbers for young people’s help lines and emergency numbers	Help line: 0200-230230 (BRIS – Barnens rätt i samhället; public organization funded by the government) Emergency number: 112
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	Nothing specific to youth exchanged. The law as it applies to safeguarding the rights of children/young people and the general laws of the land apply.
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	Nothing specific.
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	None
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	Yes, if you have a European sickness insurance card, you pay the same fee for emergency and necessary care as a Swedish citizen.

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	The fee is 140 Swedish kronor, 15 euro.
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Turkey

Information last updated: 26 May 2009

Name of Country: Turkey	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	<p>18</p> <p>Turkish Civil Code sets the completion of the eighteenth year of age as the beginning of legal age, a person could be accepted as having legal age in an earlier age by means of a marriage or court verdict.</p> <p>“The legal age of majority is eighteen (18) years. Marriage confers a person majority” (Turkish Civil Code, Art:11).</p> <p>“A 15-year-old minor may be declared with court verdict as having legal age with his or her request and the parents' consent” (Turkish Civil Code, Art:12).</p> <p>“The legal age of consent for marriage is seventeen (17) years for both male and female persons” (Turkish Civil Code Art: 124).</p> <p>“But, the judge may permit the marriage of a 16-year-old male or female for important reasons and under exceptional circumstances” (Turkish Civil Code Art: 124/2).</p>
Buying Alcohol:	<p>18</p> <p>Sale and serve of alcoholic beverages under 18 years of age is forbidden and Police will deny access to bars, music halls and places where alcoholic beverages are served to persons under 18 years of age, even if they are accompanied by their guardians or tutors.</p>
Consuming Alcohol	18
Buying Tobacco	<p>18</p> <p>Sale of tobacco and its products under 18 years of age are forbidden</p>
Consuming Tobacco	18
Driving	<p>Motorised bike, motorcycle, tractor and special manufactured-changed-equipped vehicle for patient and disabled person - 17,</p> <p>Automobile, minibus, pickup truck - 18,</p> <p>Truck, wrecker, bus - 22</p>
Sexual Consent	<p>18</p> <p>The perpetrator of child abuse shall be imprisoned for a term of three to eight years.</p> <p>Sexual abuse means:</p> <p>a) any act of sexual nature against a minor who has not completed fifteen years of age or though completed fifteen years who lacks the competence to perceive the legal meaning and consequences of such acts,</p> <p>b) sexual acts against other minors depending on use of force, threat, deception or by any other reason affecting the will of the child,</p> <p>Sexual intercourse with a child over fifteen (15) without any violence is</p>

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	punished between six (6) months to two (2) years imprisonment if the victim complains (Turkish Penal Code Art: 104).
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	Possession, selling or buying drugs is strictly prohibited. “A person who buys narcotic or stimulant material for using or accept and keep these materials, will be punished from one to two-year prison sentence” (Turkish Penal Code Art:191).
Frequentering places which sell alcohol	“Access to bars, music halls and places where alcoholic beverages are served to persons under 18 years of age is forbidden, even if they are accompanied by their guardians or tutors” (Laws on the Duties and Authority of the Police Art:12).
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	0.5 per 100mls of blood is the legal limit. The punishments are: For the first offence: 235 YTL (135 Euro approximately) <u>fine</u> , 6-month driving prohibition. For the second offence: (135 Euro approximately) <u>fine</u> , 2-year driving prohibition and these drivers have to succeed “Examination Of Training For Developing Drivers’ Behaviour” prepared by Ministry of Health. For the third or subsequent offence: 5-year driving prohibition, with 532 YTL (€72 approximately) fine and minimum 6-month security prison, also end of the driving prohibition these drivers subject to psycho-technical evaluation for regaining driver license.
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	There are no specific law pertaining to exchanges but the general laws on safety also apply to youth exchange. In affiliation with the State Planning Organisation, the Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes, a corporate body, possessing administrative and financial autonomy was set up in August 2003 in order to implement EU Youth Programme.
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing in particular.
Ratios	The NA recommends a ratio of 8-10:1 but there is no requirement in law. In the case of disadvantaged youth groups or those with special needs – leader ratios may be higher. Male/female ratios vary but the National Agency promotes 1:1 (50/50%). Within a youth clubs the obligation is that at least one youth leader, educator, trainer have to work at all times (Youth and Sport Clubs’ Regulation Art:20)
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	20% of youth workers are paid, the rest are volunteers. Youth leaders and educators who will work in youth clubs have to get a certificate to be given by General Directorate of Youth and Sport and

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	<p>other Authorised Institutions (Youth and Sport Clubs' Regulation Art:20)</p> <p>The NA also provides training workshops on youth exchange projects.</p>
Reporting of Abuse	<p>The NA must report known cases to the Directorate General of Education and Culture of the Commissions regarding abuse on Youth Exchanges.</p> <p>Reporting on irregularities and fraud The obligation to report applies at the moment of the detection. Any irregularity should be reported in writing to the Commission (original hard copy duly dated and signed by the Director of the NAs) regardless of the amount and the (supposed) prejudice.</p>
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	Available Child Protection Laws and other general laws cover youth exchange activity and are considered adequate.
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	Yes, professional youth workers are always present in youth clubs. There are also specific rules for outdoor activities and sports relating to equipment, qualification of youth leaders, ratio and medical certification of fitness.
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	<p>Turkey has "Child Protection Law" passed from the Parliament in July 2005.</p> <p>The child protection is the responsibility of various institutions including General Directorate of Social Services and Child Protection Agency and The General Directorate of Youth and Sport, State Ministry and other public bodies.</p>
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No charge if all fees covered by insurance. If there is no insurance, the patient is invoiced later.

United Kingdom

Information from Sept 2006

Youth Work Practice

Youth work in the UK promotes young people’s personal and social development, helping young people learn about themselves, others and society through non-formal education activities. About 60% of young people in the UK come into contact with youth work at some point between the ages of 11 and 25. There are over 8,000 youth workers, 25,000 part-time and an estimated half a million volunteers working in the youth sector in the UK. The government has set out 5 outcomes that matter most to children and young people:

- Being healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoying and Achieving
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Economic Well-being

Good youth practice encourages civic learning and involvement. The National Youth Agency works with regional partners in youth work units to secure better regional infrastructure and a platform for youth work and youth services. The Youth Work Unit align themselves to local and national priorities and provide an effective route to regional youth work staff from local authorities and the voluntary sector.

Name of Country: UK	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	18 It is illegal to give a child under 5 years alcohol.
Consuming Alcohol	Can consume alcohol in a licensed premises at 16 but cannot consume alcohol in a public place until 18 years old
Buying Tobacco	16
Consuming Tobacco	16
Driving	Cars & Motorbikes – 17 Other Vehicles (hgvs – 21 with special licence)
Sexual Consent	16 (17 in Northern Ireland)
Section II – Laws pertaining to Drugs and Euphoric Substances	
Drug Use	With the exception of alcohol, tobacco and prescribed medical drugs all other drug use is illegal
Frequenting places which sell alcohol	Young people under 14 who are unaccompanied are not permitted in bars but admission policies are operated by the individual premises
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits	80mg of alcohol in 100ml of blood
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on Youth Exchange	Seat belts in motor coaches are compulsory. Health & Safety and comprehensive risk assessments of every aspect of a Youth Exchange must be carried out.
General Cultural Practices of Note	UK is a multi-cultural society, therefore, cultural aspects such as religious toleration must be observed.
Ratios	If a mixed group – leaders of both genders must be present. Lone working with a group is not permitted

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	General ratio is 8:1 but this varies depending on the needs of the group. For youth clubs the accepted ratio with most local authorities is 10:1
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	Yes, but they are not pre-requisite to undertaking an international exchange. Experience and training are essential. Different qualifications apply depending on the sector e.g. (voluntary/statutory/leisure sector etc)
Reporting of Abuse	Yes, there is an obligation to report abuse through the appropriate channels. There are usually set procedures in place. Local authorities have their own protocol on reporting of abuse. NGOs involved in youth exchanges often have their own policy on reporting of abuse and problems sometimes arise when there are discrepancies between the two policies. The NCVYS (National Council Voluntary Youth Service) offer advice to NGOs. The NCVYS offers tailored training packages in safeguarding and child protection.
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	Yes
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	Yes
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	Not answered
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	The NA advises youth groups to take out insurance for an exchange. We recommend AXA. Activities centres are often covered by their own policies. Different rules apply for different countries regarding non-EU citizens accessing free medical care whilst in the UK. Norway, for example has a similar arrangement for medical treatment in UK EU countries. Other countries have different arrangements.

Useful Websites & Resources

www.nya.org.uk
www.ncvys.org.uk
www.child-safe.org.uk

Switzerland

Information included: 3 Apr 2009

Switzerland is a country with a federal structure where its 26 cantons (districts) play a very important role. Many rules concerning young people can therefore be quite different from one region to another. Most of the laws related to young people’s issues belong to the competence of the cantons, the national level has only a few competences, for example through the criminal law.

Switzerland has a well developed system of youth work. On the one hand, there are many private associations that provide a wide range of activities and services.

On the other hand, almost every major municipality has at least one professional youth worker.

Disclaimer: The following indications may be subject to change and vary from one place to another. The information given is not legally binding and does replace a good preparation!

Name of Country: Switzerland	
Section I – Issue of Legal Recognition	
Adulthood	18
Buying Alcohol:	16 years for beer, wine cider etc., 18 years for distilled alcoholics and mixed sweet alcoholic drinks (“alcopops”)
Consuming Alcohol	16 years for beer, wine cider etc., 18 years for distilled alcoholics and mixed sweet alcoholic drinks (“alcopops”)
Buying Tobacco	Generally no limitations, but some cantons have set a limit of 16 years
Consuming Tobacco	Generally no limitations, but some cantons have set a limit of 16 years
Driving	18 years (14/ 16 for special vehicles like for example mopeds)
Sexual Consent	Any kind of sexual relations with children below the age of 16 years are forbidden unless the age difference is not more than 3 years. Under certain situations of dependency even sexual relations with young people between 16 and 18 are considered as illegal.
Section II – Laws and Practice in relation to Drug Use	
Drug Use	Production, possession and consumption of all kind of illegal drugs are punished by the law, yet a distinction is made between “soft” drugs and hard “drugs” (more severe punishment). Despite some attempts of legalization, consumption even of “soft” drugs like Cannabis is illegal in Switzerland. Yet the enforcement differs a lot from one canton to another. In some (but not in all!) places, consumption of “soft” drugs is more or less tolerated.
Frequentering places which sell alcohol	Different from one canton/ municipality to another. There may be no regulation at all or an age limit of for example 16 years (sometimes also related to time, for example forbidden after 9pm.)
Drink-driving – Blood Alcohol Limits (concentration per 100mls of blood.)	0.5‰
Section III – Youth Exchanges	
Laws regarding Young People on	No particular laws for youth exchanges

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Youth Exchange	
General Cultural Practices of Note	Nothing additional
Ratios	Recommended: 1 leader per 10 young people
Qualifications of Youth Leaders	
Reporting of Abuse	There is no legal obligation to report abuse
Contact telephone numbers for young people's help lines and emergency numbers	National emergency numbers: Police: 117 Fire brigade: 118 Medical emergency: 144 Swiss toxicological information center: 145 Help line's: Young people and adults: 143 Children: 0800 55 42 10 Online counseling: http://www.tschau.ch http://www.ciao.ch
Section IV – Child Protection	
Specific Laws for Youth Exchanges	No special national law
Child Protection Laws pertaining to Young People in Youth Clubs	No special national law
Child Protection Policy or Guidelines	No special national law
Section V – Medical Care Charges and Access	
Access to Hospital Emergency Rooms	No fee in case of emergency → settled after the incident with the insurance

Useful web addresses

Most of the following content is available in German, French and Italian only.

The Swiss federal ministry in charge of youth questions:

http://www.bsv.admin.ch/themen/kinder_jugend_alter/00067/index.html?lang=en

The umbrella organization of (volunteer) youth organizations:

<http://www.sajv.ch>

The umbrella organization of (professional) youth worker's associations:

<http://www.doj.ch>

The umbrella organization for Youth exchange:

<http://www.intermundo.ch>

Recommended book about youth worker's questions about the law (in German only):

<http://www.okaj.ch/okaj/publikationen/rechtshandbuch>

Link to the national criminal law:

http://www.admin.ch/ch/d/sr/c311_0.html

Link to the national criminal law for young people:

http://www.admin.ch/ch/d/sr/c311_1.html

Medical information for various countries including Switzerland:

<http://www.safetravel.ch>

Tips from the Swiss ministry of foreign affairs:

<http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/de/home/travad/imigra.html>

Trends and Patterns across the European Union

2006

1. Legal Age Limits:

1.1 Adult

There was consensus among all countries of legal recognition of “adulthood” at age 18. Latvia, Portugal and Austria identify 18 as the legal age of adulthood but specify further conditions e.g. in Portugal criminal responsibility pertains at age 16 and in Austria, young people are considered politically mature¹ at age 16.

1.2 Alcohol Purchase

The range of responses for the purchase of alcohol stretches from “any age” in Belgium (FR) to Iceland at age 20. 62% of respondents identified 18 years as the legal age for the purchase of alcohol. Liechtenstein and Norway distinguish between the ages for purchasing mild and stronger alcohol i.e. 16 for the purchase of wine and beer but 18 years for stronger spirits. Finland makes a similar distinction around the strength of alcohol but the lower age limits are 18 for milder alcohol (under 22% proof) and 20 for stronger alcohol. Sweden and Denmark distinguish age between buying alcohol in shops and stores and buying in bars.

1.3 Alcohol Consumption

As with purchase, 62% of countries identify 18 as the legal age for consumption. 35% of countries identify 16 as the legal age for alcohol consumption. Ireland and Latvia specify conditions e.g. parental consent for consumption of alcohol under the age of 18. Five respondents (France, Norway, UK and Belgium (FL), Belgium (DR) and Greece) distinguish between mild and stronger alcohol and allocate ages of 16 and 18 respectively. In Slovenia it is illegal to purchase alcohol under the age of 18 but not illegal to consume it. In the UK it is illegal to give alcohol to a child under five.

1.4 Tobacco Purchase & Consumption

All countries except Belgium (FR), Denmark, Belgium (FL) and Cyprus identify the same age for both the purchase and consumption of tobacco. The age range across all respondents is from 15-18 years. There is no legal constraint on the consumption of tobacco in Belgium (FL). Luxembourg had no legal age for either category. Latvia indicate that tobacco may be consumed under the age of 18 in special circumstances²

1.5 Driving and Operation of Motor Vehicles

1.5.1 Cars

Almost all countries identify 18 years as the legal age for driving.

1.5.2 Motorbikes

There is a wide variation in age limit for motorbikes ranging from 14-21 for differing reasons. Some respondents distinguish between more and less powerful bikes i.e. the age range differs according to the cubic capacity of the machine. Those in this category are Liechtenstein, Sweden, Latvia, France, Denmark, Slovenia, Estonia, Czech Republic and Belgium (FL). Italy identifies 14 as the age for motorbikes.

1.5.3 Other Vehicles

¹ The exact meaning of “politically mature” e.g. right to vote?

² What are those special circumstances?

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There is a wide variation in age limits depending on the type of vehicle being driven/operated. Lithuania – 12 years for bicycles or 10 with special course in the school.

Italy doesn't specify legal age but has restrictions and constraints which relate to requirement for particular licences.

Liechtenstein – age 14 for Agricultural purposes

Poland depends on the type of vehicle – no minimum age given

Estonia gives an age - range from 10-18 from bicycle to motorboat

Sweden, Latvia, Luxembourg, UK give 21 or up to 21, for differing types of vehicles.

1.6 Sexual Consent

The range of age pertaining to sexual consent is 13-18. Spain, Iceland, Austria, Slovenia, Estonia, Lithuania and Czech Republic all at the lower end of the age range i.e.13/14 years with Turkey, Malta and Cyprus at the upper end i.e. 18 years. In Italy, the age of consent is raised or lowered 16 down to 13 respectively, depending on specific circumstances. In Latvia the law is not explicit in relation to sexual consent but it is a criminal offence to engage in sexual activity with someone under 16 years. The situation is similar in France but sexual activity becomes a criminal offence if the young person is 15. The law in Ireland until recently specified a different age of sexual consent for males and females being 15 and 17 years respectively. This has now been amended and the age of sexual consent in Ireland is 17 years.

2 Drugs and Alcohol

2.1 Laws and Practice regarding Drug Use

19 of the 26 respondents i.e. 73% take a tough stance on drugs making both use/consumption as well as dealing/trafficking etc illegal. Some countries make clearer distinctions in terms of sanctions for small amounts of drugs for personal use as opposed to supplying and dealing e.g. Italy, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Belgium (FL) and Germany (possibly included here also Belgium (FR) and Denmark) which impose non-criminal sanctions for smaller offences or not directly prohibiting use.

Denmark has an “Action Plan” which implements the law on euphoric drugs which has a website www.im.dk/publikationer/drugs/index.htm which outlines initiatives with regard to *prevention*, *medical treatment*, *social treatment* and *law enforcement* in order to curb drug use in Denmark.

2.2 Laws regulating frequenting of places selling alcohol

Germany has a law which regulates the times that young people and children may frequent a place selling alcohol enshrined under the *Protection of Young Persons Act*.

Many countries circa 40% do not have laws regulating the time(s) that young people/children may be in bars or places that sell alcohol. A number of countries – Ireland, Slovenia, Malta, Iceland, UK, Estonia, Belgium (FL) and Greece specify age or time limits that young people/children may in such establishments. Some give varying ages for different circumstances.

In some countries where there is no legislation in place or where laws are vague or unclear, it is often the bars themselves that apply age limits on entry, usually ranging from 18-21 e.g. Denmark, Poland, Norway and UK. Many countries allow young people /children in bars but only with parental/guardian/adult supervision e.g. Sweden, France, Luxembourg, Iceland, Belgium (FL), Greece and Austria.

2.3 Laws regarding Drink/Driving – Blood Alcohol Levels

There were varying answers given which supplemented the basic question asked showing that certain countries have varying levels of tolerance depending on the category of the driver (e.g. Greece and Austria) or the level of punishment meted out depending on the amount of alcohol found in the bloodstream.

Czech Republic and Estonia do not permit alcohol in the blood while driving.

Norway allows a minimal 10ml as does Austria for learner-drivers with Sweden and Latvia allowing just 20ml.

Cyprus allows 38ml and Lithuania 40ml. All other countries allow either 50ml or 80ml. The UK, Liechtenstein, Ireland, Luxembourg and Malta at 80ml have the highest tolerance levels of blood alcohol levels while driving.

3. Youth Exchanges and Youth Clubs

3.1 Particular laws impacting on Youth Exchange

In general there is little in the way of specific legal requirements impacting on the implementation of a youth exchange. With regard to First Aid – almost none of the countries have any legal requirements. France has the most demanding legislation in this regard where at least one youth worker involved in the youth exchange must have First Aid training. Wearing of seat belts in motor coaches is obligatory in six of the countries – Denmark, France, Portugal, UK Greece and Finland. Many respondents reply that seat belts are compulsory in cars but not in coaches. Luxembourg cites the European Directive for legislation this year on this issue.

Other issues to take note of include:

- When applying for visas for entry into Ireland, allow lots of time to ensure that visas will be cleared in time for Youth Exchange.
- In France, the regulations for sports and outdoor activities are very strict.
- There are very stringent risk assessment procedures on every aspect of an exchange in the UK.

3.2 Any cultural practices that visitor would benefit from knowing

Most responses to this very broad question centred on the issues of a multi-cultural or multi-denominational society and the need for tolerance. The smoking ban in public places in Ireland as well as levels/frequency of alcohol consumption was cited. In Estonia, it is culturally acceptable to go to Sauna nude in mixed gender groupings if agreed. There was some commentary on the strict prohibition of drugs and alcohol in youth clubs even if the participants are over 18 years of age.

3.3 Ratios

Ranges between 5:1 and 10:1. UK states that two leaders must be with the group at all times. Other cases only if the group is mixed and there is a requirement for a male and female leader. Special needs ratios dependant on the needs of the group. Lithuania cites ratios for school groups as 15:1 and indicates that there is no stated requirement on ratios for youth exchanges. Latvia has no definition on “Youth Leader” and therefore no ratio.

In most countries there is no absolute requirement about the gender ratios for staff to young people but as a matter of good practice and in many cases the NA recommends the ratio and gender requirements.

Ratios in youth clubs are equally unregulated in many countries. In Sweden and Finland, while there may be no national rules, the municipalities have their ratios which may differ from one to the other. Belgium (FR) cites the only requirement as that to have one full-time youth assistant. Norway and Iceland cite the practice of at least two employees at all times. The general response on ratio was 10:1

3.3 Qualifications

In many countries there are no professional qualifications for youth workers. Professional qualifications and standards are currently being developed in the Czech Republic. Those countries which don't have recognised qualifications or don't recognise youth work as a profession include: Greece, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Norway, Iceland and Cyprus. France, on the other hand, has a list of different qualifications for different types of leaders. In Italy, there is no legal requirement to have professional qualifications but access routes to professional qualifications are available. In the Youth Houses in Finland, trained volunteers can be recruited but they must work in the presence of a qualified youth worker. Finland has its own system of training and education for youth workers. In Belgium professional

qualifications are not a legal requirement to work in the youth sector. Many people working in the youth services in Belgium are volunteers but those who work in local communities usually have recognised qualifications to bachelor or masters degree level in relevant disciplines.

3.4 Reporting of Abuse

No obligation to report abuse in Liechtenstein, Belgium (FR), Italy, Cyprus, Belgium (FL), Estonia and Denmark – except in youth public club. In Ireland and Malta there is no obligation but rather a ‘responsibility’ to report. In the Czech Republic there is no obligation to report a committed act, but if the abuse is underway or likely to continue then it must be reported to the police. France, Slovenia, Portugal, Finland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Norway, Iceland, UK, Lithuania and Greece all have an obligation to report under law. In Poland the obligation to report depends on the meaning of abuse – if criminal then it must be reported to the police. In Sweden, staff working with young people e.g. teachers, doctors are obliged to report abuse but volunteers are encouraged rather than obliged. In Ireland, where reporting is considered a responsibility rather than an obligation there is immunity from civil liability for the person reporting if the child abuse is reported in good faith.

Police are the first point of reporting cited by respondents. Others include: Health Services, Social Services, Designated person in the Youth Organisation, Ministry with responsibility for Youth. In Portugal such cases must be reported to the Children’s Court and The Child Protection Commission as well as the police. In Greece there is an Ombudsman Child Assistant and National Observatory for Child Rights and “Child’s Smile” – an NGO.

4 Child Protection

4.1 Laws pertaining to the Safety of Young People on Youth Exchanges

While France, Luxembourg, UK, Estonia and Germany indicate that they have, laws pertaining to the safety of young people on youth exchanges, the vast majority of countries do not have child protection laws relating to this issue.

Many countries refer to general laws covering the rights of children or national child protection laws as the closest link to covering youth exchanges.

4.2 Child Protection Laws Pertaining to the Safety of Young People in Youth Clubs

Again, most countries do not have specific laws regarding youth clubs. General laws on Health & Safety in the workplace and legislation governing child protection of the country cited in some instances – Liechtenstein, Cyprus and Iceland. Certificates from police regarding employees in youth clubs has been adopted as a practice in Norway. There are on-going discussions in relation to this in Norway. France has demanding regulations on specific areas of activity in youth clubs.

4.3 Child Protection Policy or Child Protection Guidelines

Iceland, France, Portugal, Malta, Turkey, Estonia and Germany say they have and it might be useful to have some detail on these guidelines. In the absence of a policy, some countries devolve responsibility and competence for regulation to communities (including social and judiciary protection) – Belgium (FR), local representatives of Ministry of Youth & Sport (France), police, municipalities (Finland), Youth Council (Norway) and via the International Treaty for the Protection of Children’s Rights, or the general laws of the land (Cyprus). Ireland has a *Code of Practice* in regard to Child Protection for the Youth Work Sector but no specific law pertaining to youth exchanges or youth clubs. Norway, via the Youth Council has three Government funded publications with guidance for child and youth organisations regarding sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

5 Medical Care

5.1 Emergency Room Hospital Charges

In the case of visiting the emergency room of a hospital 50% of the respondents indicate that there is no fee required. For those where there is a charge, the fee generally ranges from €3 to €8. However, in Ireland the charge to access the emergency room is €60 and is coupled often with extremely long waiting periods for treatment. Sweden indicates that there is a charge but does not specify the amount. Many countries indicate that the fee is waived if the candidate has insurance.