



European Quality Label for Youth Information

An Overview

1. What is the European Youth Information Quality Label?

The ever-growing array of information that young people have access to today through different media, might become misleading and harmful for those who are not skilled enough to sift through the deluge of information available, or do not have access to reliable sources of information in the first place. In a post-truth era where modern propaganda and conspiracy theories are fed by disinformation, populism, fake news, hate speech and “alternative facts”; identifying reliable, complete and unbiased information has become a real challenge for many. In this context, any mechanism designed to help citizens, and especially young citizens, to easily recognise trustworthy sources and to critically scrutinize the information that reaches them in mass are essential.

The European Youth Information Quality Label tackles this challenge and provides a **visible sign that tells young people that a certain piece of information is verified, true and unbiased**, therefore does not require further verification. The Label is designed and implemented for and with young people and linked to a set of quality assessment criteria, mechanisms and tools.

The European Youth Information Quality Label and membership in ERYICA are not linked.

2. Who can be labelled?

The Label can be awarded to the organisation that provides different youth information services. Once the organisation receives the label, they are allowed to label the different youth information products and services they provide. These services include youth information centres and points, materials, publications, websites, helplines, outreach youth information work...

The Label is available for youth information providers in Council of Europe member states. If an organisation is not a member of ERYICA, they have to become a signatory of the European Youth Information Charter and respect its principles in order to apply.



The Label can be provided for **specialised youth information services** too, based on the same criteria: becoming a Charter signatory and meeting 70% of the criteria.

The Label is provided for public or private non-profit organisations that provide youth information services. **The Label is not provided** for commercial bodies, trade unions, political parties, religious groups and institutions.

The Label is awarded for a **period of 3 years**, after which a review shall be held.

3. Types of Attribution of the Label

The Label is awarded based on the same principles and criteria, according to the type of the applicant organisation or network.

Model 1: Countries with a well-established national/regional coordination of youth information or umbrella organisation

a) If a national/regional youth information quality label is in place:

- The provider of the national/regional label has the option to cross-check the criteria of their label with those of the European one and incorporate the missing elements. Once this is complete, the national/regional labelling organisation is granted labelling competence in their region/country. National/regional service providers must apply to this organisation.
- Any new organisation obtaining the national/regional label receives the European label too. Organisations that are already holders of the national/regional label can undergo a supplementary evaluation about the formerly missing criteria and then receive the European one too.

b) If there is no national/regional youth information quality label in place or the two labels have different sets of criteria:

- The application of this umbrella organisation shall include the establishment of a label commission, which would then follow the same procedures as the Quality Label Task Force (see point 4).
- The Quality Label Task Force examines the application and certifies the national/regional umbrella organisation for youth information and entrusts them with awarding the European label to their outlets in their region/country, based on the same procedure that is described under point 4 below.

Model 2:

- ***Countries with no national/regional umbrella organisation coordinating youth information;***
- ***Countries with no national/regional quality assurance system or label specifically for youth information;***
- ***Countries that are not members of ERYICA but are members of the Council of Europe and wish to further develop or establish youth information services;***

These actors will be advised to form a national/regional network to deal with labelling (Model 1.b), or adopt the European assessment tool for creating a national label (Model 1.a). If these are not feasible or interesting, the Quality Label Task Force will conduct an individual review and awarding procedure, as described in point 4.

When an application is received from an organisation that does not belong to the ERYICA network, the Task Force shall co-opt an expert from the concerned country for the evaluation process.

4. Evaluation Process

1. Self-assessment

The self-assessment form is available in a separate document, presented earlier. It is to be filled in by the organisation applying for the Label.

2. Youth Review

The youth reviewers should assess the services, not the principles as such. Rather if they got the information they were looking for and if the information was useful or enough. The system should be easy and straightforward.

Therefore, the youth review will affect certain areas that young people can evaluate and they feel attracted to. These shall be defined, e.g. including the aspects whether the information is attractive, understandable; and not including whether it is reliable, unbiased. Youth reviewers should be representatives of the target group of the service/product/centre. The organisation of the youth review is in the competence of the national/regional youth information coordinator organisation.

3. Quality Task Force Review

The Quality Label Task Force receives the results of the self-assessment and the youth review, examines them and prepares a recommendation for decision for the ERYICA Governing Board.

4. Decision

The Governing Board receives the application documents and the Task Force's review results and recommendation. They make a decision on awarding the Label and the Secretariat is in charge of communicating it.

The applying organisation receives recommendations and feedback. The recommendations will refer to the Charter Brochure, i.e. putting the principles of the charter into practice.

If the Label is not awarded, an **appeal procedure** can be launched. Organisations that do not obtain the Label can reapply any time later, provided there has been meaningful development in the lower performing areas.

5. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria are based on the principles of the European Youth Information Charter. They were set based on the conviction that all the criteria of the charter are equally important and they cannot be differentiated.

6. Application Procedure

Deadlines for application: twice a year, 30 April and 31 October. Decision is then made by the Governing Board (meets 4 times/year).

Language of application: the Quality Task Force will accept the assessments in English. Evidences to support the self-assessment shall be annexed to the self-assessment form.

A visual Label is issued for successful applicants. In case of virtual services, this act would still contribute to visibility.

Appeal procedure: when the Label is not awarded, the applicant organisation has the right to appeal. Under Model 1, the appeal procedure remains in the competence of the awarding body on national/regional level. Under Model 2, the appeal shall be sent to the ERYICA Governing Board.

7. Why to apply ?

- Widen recognition of the quality standards within and outside of the youth information (YI) sector;
- Young people can be visibly aware of the standard of information – part of a wider network;
- Young people will be more aware of YI providers/services in their country/region;
- Youth information providers will get better known in their country/region;
- Encouragement to do better among ourselves;
- The Label helps the continuous improvement of the quality of YI;
- Initial sharing of good practice and co-operation;
- In governance: recognition of a higher standard;
- It could strengthen the role of the national/regional youth information coordinator organisation;
- Increasing the value and implementation of the European Youth Information Charter;
- Strengthen YI work internationally;
- Prevent unqualified practice;
- Acknowledge the work of youth information workers;
- Find out about the learning needs of YI workers and assist accordingly;
- Identify the need to develop tailor-made support on a national level and also within organisations (ongoing process);
- Create awareness within national policies;
- Creates trust – anti-disinformation.

8. Data Protection

This application process will be executed in line with ERYICA's data protection policy, which complies with the amended law of 25 May 2018 of Regulation (UE) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and the Council, relating to the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data – GDPR. By participating in the application process, the applicant gives their consent to the use of their data by the ERYICA Governing Board, Staff and the European Youth Information Quality Label Task Force, in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation, for the purposes of the selection process. The documentation of the application will be kept for the full period while the organisation remains a holder of the Label and/or labelling rights, for quality management purposes and for the triennial review procedure. When an organisation ceases to be a holder of the Label or have labelling rights, the documentation will be kept for a further 3 years, to facilitate the assessment of an eventual renewed application from the same organisation.



Responsible:

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