



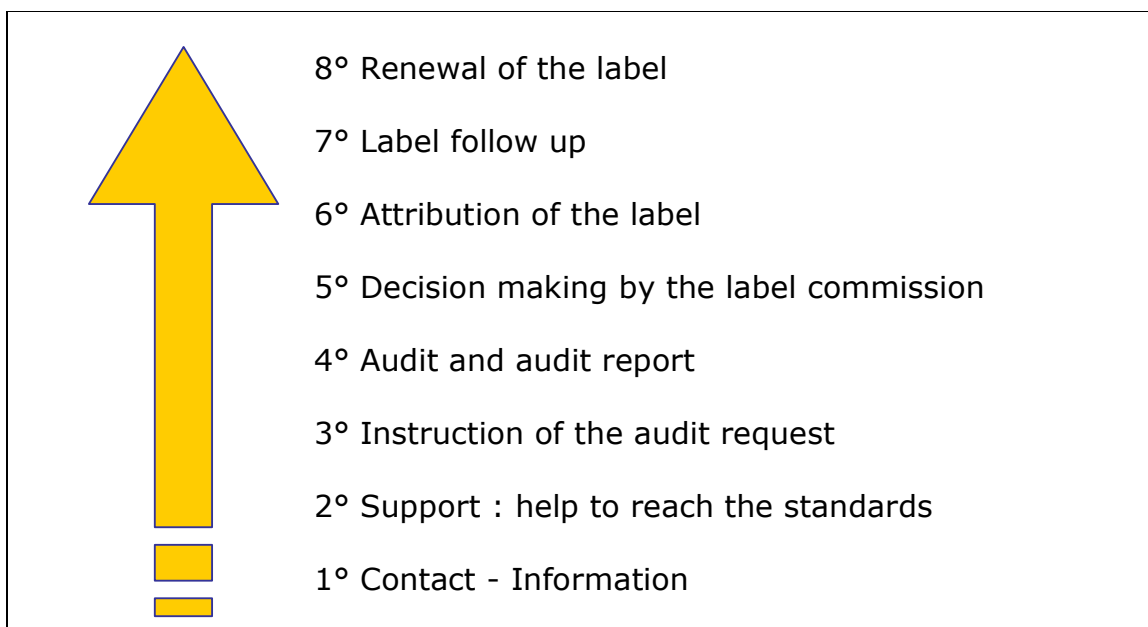
QUALICITIES

DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE
DES VILLES DE CULTURE
QUALITY BRAND OF SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL CITIES

Quality approach and
Qualicities label
User guide



The 8 steps of the labellisation



1° Contact - Information

What is the European label Qualicities?

A will to offer a better quality of life and improve the quality of services

Qualicities (Quality - cities) is a European label created by local communities for local communities. It awards the sustainable development policies of historical cities and territories in Europe.

The quality approach insists particularly on

- value of personal skills,
- transverse work between the community departments
- and synergy created between the community, private companies and citizens.

Based on a common good practices referent document, it enables historical communities in Europe to differentiate and be recognised by the citizens and visitors.

Unique in its goals and its geographical extends, Qualicities label is a quality brand certified by AFNOR, a French certification agency recognised in the world.

European institutions of the Qualicities brand:

The Qualicities label is owned by the Alliance of European cities of culture (A.V.E.C.).

Three different organisations are managing the Qualicities label:

European technical centre	Auditor pool	Label committee
<p>In the heart of A.V.E.C., the European technical centre is made of a team of professionals with excellent knowledge in Qualicities approach.</p> <p><u>Missions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Inform interested cities or territories,- Help the candidates to reach the required standards- Help in the self assessment step- Train the local coordinator designated to manage locally the approach.- Instruct the label request- Prepare the audit	<p>Independent organisation specialised in audits, it selects the professional auditors that it offers for the audits. Auditors perfectly know how to deal with audits of quality of services.</p> <p>They know the activity branch covered by the referent document and participate to the redaction of control points.</p> <p><u>Missions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- realise audits;- write the audit report ;- give an opinion to the label committee.	<p>In the heart of A.V.E.C., the label committee is made of European independent experts and representatives of the association.</p> <p><u>Missions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- audit report analyse- label attribution- label suspension

2° Support: help to reach the standards

Sensitize your community to the project

As in every quality approach, Qualicities approach requires a commitment from the political authorities. They will be in charge of gathering the local committee and defining a calendar.

Agents of the local community must also be deeply involved and interested in the approach. The achievement depends of their involvement.

The **Local Committee** is made of an **elected official** responsible for the Qualicities approach and **members** representing diverse activity branches concerning the project.

Within the community, the label approach can first be seen as additional work. The elected official responsible and the coordinator will have to convince of the relevance and of the positive spin-off of the project. The label is a mean not a goal. The expected utility of the

quality approach must be up graded: i.e., improve the quality and effectiveness of the community, involve the community in a local dynamic of sustainable development and meet the citizen and visitors needs.

Enter in a quality approach

- ∂ The main purpose of the quality approach is to understand better the community users' needs and to keep up with their evolution.
- ∂ Then, processes of the community have to be checked, i.e. activities led by different departments of the community to reach the same goal: the sustainable management of the community. The community will have to know what resources are used –staff, environment and/or tools – and for what they are used in the satisfaction process.
- ∂ The quality approach requires formalizing these processes, writing them clearly. The European Technical Pole has a powerful tool: the Qualicities good practices referent document, which counts all the criteria to be set up to make sure that the community achieves its goals.
To improve the processes, the community will set up document monitoring.
- ∂ Continuous improvement is essential. Each problem encountered constitutes an occasion to improve the system.

Devote time to the project

You have to count between one and one year and a half to set up the quality approach and to obtain the label. The elected official, the coordinator and other agents of the community must devote an important time to it. The difficulty of the approach comes from the change which it implies in-house. It brings to change the practices.

A quality approach requires much rigour.

∂ Phase of diagnosis

The Qualicities local committee will have to evaluate the activities of its community compared to each criterion of the reference frame. To facilitate this work a grid for self-evaluation is provided to each candidate; it corresponds to the criteria of the reference frame, SWOT table (see below) and control points that will be used by the auditor.

Weaknesses - -	Strengths - -
Threats - -	Opportunities - -

A tool for self-evaluation is also available on line on the site www.qualicities.org.
You will obtain the access codes and instructions of this tool by contacting the European Technical Pole.

Construction of the Local Progress Plan

From the results of the diagnosis realised, the local committee will have to write a plan of progress that it will follow and update constantly.

Local Progress Plan:

- Program to set up and follow to respect the requirements of the referent document.

Structure of the Local Progress Plan

1 - Definition of heritages included in the local approach

Perimeter: the inventory of heritages, which must be produced by each community, will make it possible to define the geographical perimeter and set of themes.

2 - Qualicities local strategy

It is a question of laying down the orientation which the elected officials of the community chose for the Qualicities approach. What are the objectives, the priorities?

3 – Local committee composition

(Indicate members' positions and their skills which can be useful to reach the level of every criterion of the referent document)

4 - Program (to set up the strategy):

Development and definition of a program with evaluation of its cost and establishment of an estimated budget.

- Who?
- What?
- When: short, medium or long term? => action planning

- How?
- Budget?
- Synergies?

The objective is to complete a work adapted to the community and its means. It is not a question to lay down objectives which would not be realistic for lack of budget, means or time.

The progress plan is not a fix document for the 10 years to come. It will evolve, on the basis of annual evaluation; it is the image of the approach life within the community.

If the general strategy must be defined for the long term, the program will evaluate progressively.

A guide to facilitate the development of the progress plan will be provided to you. It corresponds to the referent document and adds to each criterion the following table:

Goal set by the community to respect this criterion (synthesis) :						
-						
Deadlines	Description	Steps	Human means	Technical means, procedure	Financial means	Proofs
Short term commitment (1 year)	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -
Medium term commitment (1 mandate)¹	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -
Long term commitments	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -	- -
Comments						

¹ Medium term: until the end of current mandate, if it finishes in more than one year. If not, commitments are planned for the duration of following mandate.

Short term commitments are to be defined every year on the bases of progress made past year.

Medium and long term commitment must be validated by political officials at the beginning of each mandate.

3° Examination of the application of audit

The request for audit must be made to the European Technical Pole, which will check the progress made by the community in the approach before fixing a date of audit with the pool of independent auditors.

4 °Audit and audit reports

Obtain a positive audit report

The audit should only be a formality for a community which followed the method. Qualicities label is organized in a three years cycle.

- ∂ The first audit is complete. It lasts between one and two days, according to the community, and is based on the 53 requirements of the Qualicities referent document. It is carried out by an independent organization of certification. If there is no major nonconformity, the community receives a certificate and can pretend to use the label.
- ∂ One follow-up audit takes place 18 months later. The same auditors come to check the evolution of the application of the Local Progress Plan according to the remarks made at the time of the first audit.
- ∂ Then, 3 years after the initial audit, the cycle begins again to zero. If the audit of renewal is positive, the label committee delivers a renewal of certificate.

5° Label committee decision making

As indicated in the preceding chapter, it is the label committee which makes the final decision of attribution of the certificate after studying the audit report and the opinion of the auditor.

6° Label attribution

Once the label attributed, it is useful and important to communicate on your success

- ∂ Within the community departments, you can, for example, organize a cocktail or a meal to celebrate the certification. For the team which carried out the project, its result will be certainly a source of motivation for the future.

Do not hesitate to address a mail to your citizens, to the local actors of heritage, tourism and economy, to Medias and inform visitors that you obtained this distinction brand which is for them a guarantee for good quality services.

- 🔔 For a broader communication, you can also send press releases. On your Internet site, cards or leaflets, you can make the logo of the label appear, respecting the Qualicities charter of communication.

7° Follow up of the label

Between two renewal audits, the community begins to implement its Local Progress Plan and tries to improve the points which were the object of a remark from the auditor.

8° Renewal of the label

Every three years an audit of renewal of the label will evaluate the work of the community. The concept of continuous improvement is very important. The community must keep the traces of its preceding annual reports of evaluation and make evolve its Local Progress Plan according to new objectives set in order to always reach a level of excellence. Credibility of the label and the labeled communities are based on this principle.