

European Year of
Volunteering



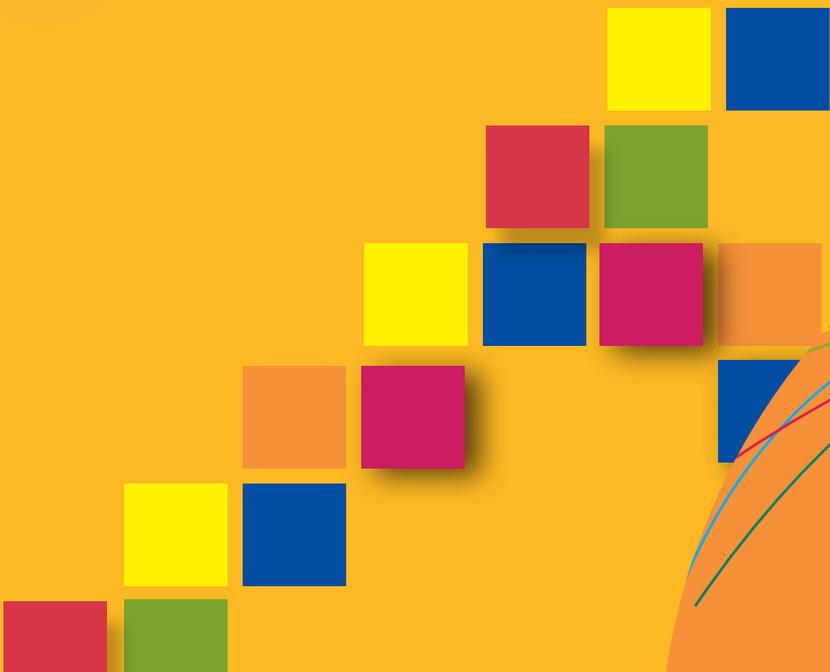
European Year of Volunteering 2011

Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe

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2011
EYV ALLIANCE

European Year of
Volunteering



Volunteer!
● Make a
difference®

Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe P.A.V.E

Working towards a true legacy for EYV 2011

Executive Summary	4
Preface	5
Context	6
SECTION 1 – Policy Recommendations	8
1. Introduction	9
2. All Stakeholders.....	10
3. European Institutions	11
4. EU Member States	13
5. Social Partners	16
6. Civil Society	17
SECTION 2 Quality Volunteering	20
SECTION 3 Legal Frameworks	22
SECTION 4 Volunteering Infrastructure	27
SECTION 5 Recognition Tools	31
SECTION 6 Value of Volunteering	36
SECTION 7 Employee Volunteering	38
Annexes	44
Glossary	44
Working Groups recruitment and working process.....	46
Working Groups participants.....	47
Endnotes	50
Chronology of European legislation and key policies on volunteering	52
Acknowledgements	53

Executive Summary

The EYV 2011 Alliance Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe (P.A.V.E) provides recommendations for a more efficient and effective European policy framework to support and promote volunteers, volunteering, volunteer-involving organisations and their partners. The recommendations include proposals for action echoing the aspects of volunteering policy already identified as needing attention in both the 2009 European Council Decision on EYV 2011¹ and the EC Communication on Volunteering 2011². The P.A.V.E. recommendations promote and support volunteering as a demonstration of European values, providing a vehicle for active citizenship and contributing to economic and social-capital growth.

P.A.V.E stresses the need for a partnership approach which involves all stakeholders continuing to work towards an enabling volunteering infrastructure in Europe. Such an infrastructure would involve appropriate and necessary support mechanisms for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations, including appropriate and sustainable funding. It should provide coherent and cross-cutting policy approaches that reduce barriers to volunteering and involve the development of appropriate frameworks for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations, which include recognising their rights and responsibilities.

The recommendations reflect the fact that in order to provide a foundation for evidence-based policy making, improved data collection on the value and impact of volunteering in Europe is required. Such data should take into account both the economic and social value of volunteering and measurement should reflect the specific nature of volunteering in order to provide reliable data.

P.A.V.E also highlights the need for improved access to statistical data and other information concerning volunteering opportunities in addition to agreed common principles for the provision of quality volunteering in order to increase the rate, impact and value of volunteering across Europe. The fact that quality volunteering invariably results from commonly agreed joint actions between stakeholders and involves strong and transparent multi-stakeholder partnerships is acknowledged.

Recognition of volunteers' individual and collective achievements are identified in P.A.V.E as essential to enabling volunteers to better apply the demonstrable skills and knowledge achieved through volunteering in other areas of their lives and therefore further increase the impact of volunteering. Improved mechanisms to recognise how volunteering contributes to Life-Long-Learning processes are recommended as a solution.

P.A.V.E provides, in Section 1, an agenda for the policy framework, which should be developed to secure the legacy for EYV 2011 in terms of cross-cutting policy recommendations to different stakeholders. The subsequent sections, two to seven, provide more detailed analyses and recommendations according to specific volunteering policy themes addressed during 2011.

Preface

The Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe (P.A.V.E) provides policy recommendations for a more efficient and effective policy framework in Europe to support and promote volunteers, volunteering and volunteer-involving organisations. P.A.V.E aims to ensure a lasting legacy for the European Year of Volunteering 2011 (EYV 2011) by encouraging all stakeholders to address the shortcomings of current policies. Consequently P.A.V.E contributes to reaching the EYV 2011 objectives and securing its promised legacy for volunteering in Europe. P.A.V.E is also relevant to Europe 2020 since it promotes policy changes to facilitate even more citizens to be active through volunteering in expressing European values³ and their European citizenship, therefore promoting smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the European Union. The policy recommendations in P.A.V.E are preceded by a chapter to describe the economic and social situation in Europe 2011 and its relationship to volunteering and volunteering policy development.

The recommendations agreed by the EYV 2011 Alliance Steering Group on 17 November 2011 and endorsed by the listed EYV 2011 Alliance member organisations are directed to all stakeholders - the European institutions; member state policy-makers at all levels; social partners (employers from any sector - profit, non-profit, public, private etc and trade unions) and civil society and are informed by the conclusions of the EYV 2011 Alliance working groups. They are clustered according to the four EYV 2011 objectives: work towards an enabling environment for volunteering in the EU; empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities; recognise voluntary activities; raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering.

Recognising that it is freely given, but not cost free, the EYV 2011 Alliance believes that volunteering needs and deserves targeted support from all stakeholders. P.A.V.E advocates for multi-stakeholder approaches to improving and developing volunteering in Europe and the recommendations therefore inevitably require action on the part of actors from different stakeholder groups working in partnership offering different actions relevant to their competencies and expertise. In this context P.A.V.E identifies in section 1 where specific and strong multi-stakeholder approaches are needed and where particular stakeholders should take the lead in partnership with others.

The subsequent sections 2-7 are the working group conclusions and provide more detailed analysis and recommendations according to some specific volunteering policy themes addressed during 2011 giving additional inspiration to “operationalise” the policy recommendations. P.A.V.E is supported by a series of annexes providing further context and explanation.

A total of 100 European experts in volunteering from EYV 2011 Alliance member organisations, many of them volunteers themselves, participated in this unique initiative during 2011 to develop the recommendations included in P.A.V.E. Drawing on the experiences of the diverse EYV 2011 Alliance membership of European Networks Active in Volunteering in this way has allowed P.A.V.E to be developed with a unique practitioner perspective and build on the policy statements made by the EYV 2011 Alliance prior to the European Year.⁴

Reflecting the fact that volunteering is defined in many different ways but that there are underlying universal principles, volunteering in this document is taken to encompass those activities which reflect the principles referred to in the EYV 2011 Council Decision (2009) and the EC Communication on EU Policies and Volunteering (2011):

- All forms of voluntary activity, whether formal, non-formal or informal.
- Undertaken of a person's own free-will, choice and motivation.
- Without seeking financial gain i.e. Financial gain being neither the objective, nor the way to recognise the contribution or the achievement.
- Is a journey of solidarity and provides a way to address human, social or environmental needs and concerns.
- Is often carried out in support of a non-profit organisation or community-based initiative.

Context

P.A.V.E has been developed against the back drop of the economic crisis in Europe⁵. 2011 has found Europe in a very different social and economic situation to that of 2007 when the idea of establishing EYV 2011 was developed. This reality has provided some challenges but it has also provided the opportunity to show just how crucial volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations are to the fabric and culture of Europe and the importance of a supportive and enabling volunteering infrastructure in allowing and facilitating the impact they can make.

It has been argued that the economic crisis is accompanied by a social crisis⁶ and that this situation has triggered the dawn of a new societal order. One characteristic of this new order is the changing role of the state regarding the provision of services to citizens. The crisis is forcing governments to re-assess the European Social Model and consider how the welfare provision and other state services that have been an essential feature of that model can be sustained. The situation has also provided in some cases the opportunity to question if it should be sustained at all in its current form. In some spheres the debate has led to suggestions that volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations can and should deliver services instead of the state.

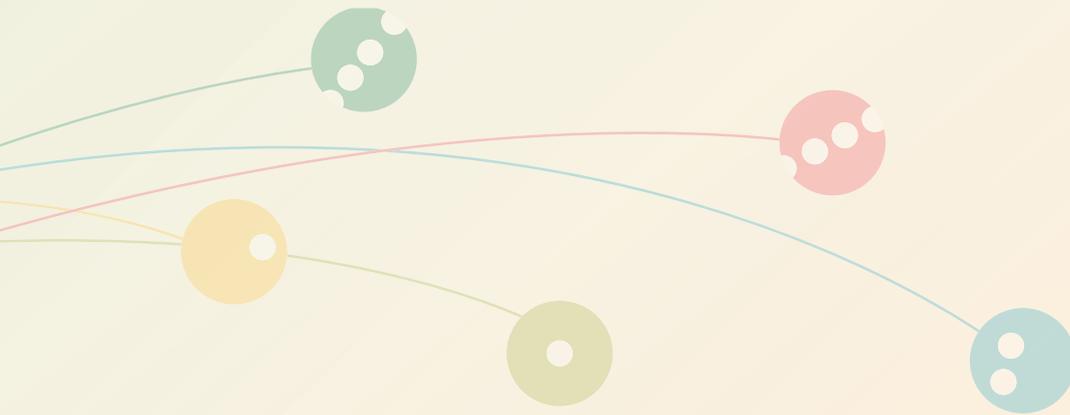
The EYV 2011 Alliance believes that limiting the value given to volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations to merely replacement vehicles for delivery of services previously provided by the State demonstrates a failure to appreciate the role, value and ultimately the impact of the sector which on numbers alone represent more European citizens than the EU's biggest member state. The EYV 2011 Alliance also believes that volunteering as a complementary feature of the European social model and should not be harnessed as integral feature of it.

It must be seen as a beacon of hope that in times when more and more European citizens struggle with their reduced economic capacities due to the high unemployment rates and rely on food aid and help with other basic commodities that an increasing number of willing volunteers are available to respond to the need. The current economic and social situation has not reduced the willingness of European citizens to exercise and demonstrate European values through volunteering. The spirit of volunteering runs deeper than financial cuts and economic hardship and generates social capital that while almost impossible to accurately measure is an intrinsic and necessary aspect of life. Times of hardship provide increasing occasions for citizens to demonstrate their selflessness acting in solidarity with one another. The widespread wish to be active citizens in society rather than passive consumers is clearly demonstrated through the diversity of people who volunteer their time and expertise when and where it is needed.

Europe is undoubtedly undergoing a transformation process. Civil society has a vital role to play in working with policy-makers and the social partners to ensure that in focussing on economic growth and financial stability the transformation does not inadvertently impact on such an important aspect of Europe's social fabric as its volunteers. EYV 2011 has shown that volunteers deserve to be celebrated with due and appropriate recognition and volunteer-involving organisations deserve to be supported with an enabling volunteering infrastructure. Furthermore, that Europe and its citizens rely on and deserve quality volunteering in an appropriate legal framework where the rights and responsibilities of volunteers, volunteer-involving organisations and their beneficiaries and stakeholders are respected. Above all EYV 2011 has shown that volunteering should not be exploited as a solution to Europe's challenges but be properly valued as an expression of European values, a legitimate counterbalance to injustice and an appropriate expression of solidarity amongst its citizens.

Just as the economic situation in the run up to EYV 2011 was different to that during EYV 2011, the situation will again change as we look towards the legacy of the year. Volunteering has and will remain a constant feature of European life despite this changing environment. The impact it can have however is variable and depends on the volunteering policy context in which it operates. The EYV

2011 Alliance hopes that the inevitable forthcoming changes to the overall policy framework in Europe will enable and facilitate volunteering to remain a central feature of European society and that civil society will continue to provide citizens with opportunities to engage and to take action.



SECTION 1 - Policy Recommendations

Endorsed by:



1 Introduction

The EYV 2011 Alliance believes that reaching the EYV 2011 objectives requires strong and transparent multi-stakeholder partnerships. EYV 2011 has enabled these partnerships to be developed and strengthened and has allowed for greater clarity in the identification of the conditions needed in Europe for volunteering to truly flourish. The legacy of EYV 2011 must be to further support and facilitate this dialogue working towards the implementation of concrete actions as described in P.A.V.E. This support and dialogue requires the following approach and conditions.

An enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering demands secure and sustainable funding for the volunteering infrastructure, especially volunteer-involving organisations. It requires understanding, coherent support and development from all stakeholders but especially policy makers, and needs a combination of support mechanisms and/or appropriate organisational structures which can be further strengthened by suitable legal frameworks and clearly identified rights and responsibilities for volunteers and volunteering.

Improved quality of volunteering requires a common understanding of the key principles and components of quality volunteering, including for example opportunities concerning training and the proper management of volunteers. Improved quality increases the rate, impact and value of volunteering and there are many existing examples of good quality volunteering in Europe which, being context specific, will not always be the same in different circumstances. Quality volunteering invariably results from commonly agreed joint actions between stakeholders and involves strong and transparent multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Recognition of volunteering is crucial in order to encourage appropriate incentives for all stakeholders and so increase the quantity, quality and impact of volunteering. It requires the development of a culture of recognition across Europe with re-enforcing positive public awareness messages through the media which show volunteering as a driving force that puts European values into practice. Recognition schemes and tools should include mechanisms for individual as well as collective volunteer achievements.

Volunteering has a value and importance as one of the most visible expressions of solidarity promoting and facilitating social inclusion, building social capital and producing a transformative effect on society. Volunteering contributes to the development of a thriving civil society which can offer creative and innovative solutions to common challenges and contributes to economic growth and as such deserves specific and targeted measurement in terms of both economic and social capital.

2 All Stakeholders

The EYV 2011 Alliance believes that all stakeholders in volunteering should work together to support and develop volunteering in Europe. As such, some actions should be shared and special effort invested to take coordinated action to increase impact and prevent the duplication of efforts and resources invested and ensure that volunteering promotion and implementation involves an inclusive approach. This will allow the capacity of volunteering to be maximised especially concerning its contribution to social cohesion and inclusion.

2.1 Work towards an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering in the EU

2.1.1 Ensure the provision of a range of funding opportunities for volunteer-involving organisations. Possibilities should go beyond major contracts and project based funding to include core funding or smaller grants and contract packages, allowing for full cost recovery (including overheads). Volunteering as a contribution in-kind for co-funding should be permitted and preferably mandatory. Being in receipt of direct private donations or tax assignments should not be a reason to cut other forms of support.

2.1.2 Create and invest in a “European Knowledge Institute on Volunteering” with corresponding “National Knowledge Institutes on Volunteering” in the member states. Such institutes should systematically collect comparable data on rates of volunteering, analyse the impact of volunteering, provide research on needs that volunteering can address, act as repositories of good practice, and create a body of evidence that is often required in policy making or to support funding applications.

2.1.3 Elaborate guidelines for volunteer engagement. The guidelines should promote good practice and pay attention to the development of complementary and harmonious roles for volunteers and staff.⁷

2.1.4 Ensure that the rights and responsibilities of volunteers are recognised and respected and that volunteers themselves are aware of them. A European Charter on the Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers could be used as a reference for policy making and national legislation in this field.

2.1.5 Support the further development of brokers and intermediary organisations that facilitate partnerships between different stakeholders. Such an infrastructure plays a critical role especially in developing and supporting the involvement of businesses with civil society and local communities to strategically tackle social challenges faced by communities and society as a whole.

2.2 Empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities

2.2.1 Agree quality volunteering principles that allow quality volunteering to flourish and contribute effectively to society and continue to identify good practice models of how best to measure and monitor the quality and impact of volunteering. Building on the work undertaken by the EYV 2011 Alliance and using existing information, practice and research on quality volunteering the results should be widely disseminated and contribute to the development of an EU quality assurance label for volunteer-involving organisations. Such a scheme should follow

other models and aim to certify whether a provider has quality assurance systems in place in order to support volunteering and not give a value judgement on the quality itself⁸.

2.2.2 Base funding for volunteering not only on the numbers of volunteers involved but on the quality, impact and ease of repetition of the opportunity provided. Adopt a flexible approach towards outcome measurement by recognising the importance of soft outcomes as the most appropriate to assess the impact of volunteering and tailor evaluation and reporting procedures to the size and nature of different volunteering opportunities.

2.3 Recognise voluntary activities in order to encourage appropriate incentives for individuals, companies and volunteer-development organisations

2.3.1 Develop and promote a European Volunteer Card. Such a card would recognise and support the contribution of volunteers and highlight the potential for the cross-border nature of volunteering. It could be developed following the models of euro26 and ISIC⁹.

2.3.2 Support the continued gathering of good practice recognition tools across the EU. This can be done taking inspiration from existing platforms¹⁰ which gather knowledge and build on the work undertaken by the EYV 2011 Alliance.

2.4 Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering

2.4.1 Promote volunteering as an essential social activity that adds value to society, fosters solidarity. This should show that volunteering not only promotes European values but converts them into genuine action.

2.4.2 Contribute to the development of common volunteering measurement practices. Such practices should measure both the impact and the economic and social value of volunteering. In this way the true value of volunteering as an essential driver of a healthy civil society and as a critical vehicle for participation, social inclusion and active citizenship can be more fully understood and demonstrated. Common practices to measure volunteering are also important in order to enable evidence-based policy making that takes into account the economic and the intrinsic and sustainable value of social capital generated by volunteering.

3 European Institutions

In establishing EYV 2011, the issuing of the EC Communication on Volunteering¹¹ and agreeing Council Conclusions on volunteering and social policy¹² and sport, volunteering has been confirmed as an important and relevant issue for Europe. EU institutions are at the forefront of setting the volunteering policy framework for Europe alongside which individual member state policies should fit coherently and compatibly without any unnecessary harmonisation. The EYV 2011 Alliance believes that specific actions at the EU level are needed in order to further support and follow up on the established policy frameworks.

3.1 Work towards an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering in the EU.

3.1.1 Develop a more co-ordinated and pro-active approach to volunteering policy. Recognise it as a cross cutting policy theme¹³ and establish a permanent volunteering unit in the European Commission complemented by the required policy structures in the other EU institutions. Such a unit should safeguard the legacy of EYV 2011 and develop, support and maintain proper inter-service and inter-institutional co-ordination. This will ensure that volunteering is made a priority within EU policy areas where it plays an important role, especially in the achievement of

the Europe 2020 agenda and beyond. The unit should ensure that the interests of volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations are recognised and respected in the relevant policy areas and that the adoption of restrictive legislation that would cause barriers to volunteering and volunteer-involving organisations is avoided.

3.1.2 Include volunteering as a policy field using the Open Method of Co-ordination (OMC).

Use the OMC process to facilitate exchange and cooperation between actors in the different member states.

3.1.3 Develop the network of Europe for Citizens contact points into active citizenship units at national level. To operate as effective interlocutors on volunteering issues to complement the structured dialogue for civil society organisations in the framework of the Europe for Citizen's Programme.

3.1.4 Safeguard and improve the amount and range of funding programmes and mechanisms for volunteering. Continue, and when possible increase, the support that is currently given to volunteering in future EU multi-annual financial frameworks using the proposal in the EC Communication on Volunteering as a basis. Possibilities should go beyond major financial agreements, contracts and project based funding to include core funding or smaller grants and contract packages, allowing for full cost recovery (including overheads) and the current thematic focus should be widened. Volunteering as a contribution in-kind for co-funding should be permitted and should be mandatory for small and very small grants¹⁴. In this way the targeted support for European networks active in volunteering should be maintained whilst at the same time increasing access to EU funds for grass roots organisations. This will guarantee a continuing exchange of ideas and good practice in volunteering.

3.1.5 Improve the management of information about and access to European programmes, projects, and funding opportunities related to volunteering. Create new tools and improve and simplify current mechanisms where needed taking into account the capacities and needs of smaller volunteer-involving organisations especially with regard to the application and reporting procedures for funding.

3.1.6 Adopt a common approach to volunteering legislation. A stronger role should be developed in determining the legal recognition of volunteers in the EU which would contribute to a more equal treatment of volunteers, enhancing their mobility within the EU.

3.1.7 Adopt a European Statutes of Associations¹⁵. This will support the creation of a European-level volunteering infrastructure by allowing the legal and institutional recognition of European volunteer-involving organisations enabling volunteering to be a truly European activity which can promote and support mobility.

3.1.8 Facilitate volunteering for third country nationals in the EU to support volunteer cross-border mobility. This should be for both third country nationals already in the EU and for those who wish to enter the EU for the purpose of volunteering through the development of a specific visa category for volunteers with fast-track, free of charge visa procedure.

3.2 Empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities

3.2.1 Conduct and fund research on volunteering. Such research should target different models and frameworks for volunteering such as employee volunteering¹⁶ or full time voluntary service. The findings should be used to improve quality in the different volunteering fields, models and approaches.

3.3

Recognise voluntary activities in order to encourage appropriate incentives for individuals, companies and volunteer-development organisations

3.3.1 Increase the efficiency and validity with respect to volunteering of all current and future European Life Long Learning (LLL)¹⁷ recognition tools together with other stakeholders. The reduction of the administrative burdens in the use of these tools and increased support for their use would contribute to this, as would an extensive evaluation of current and planned tools.

3.3.2 Recommend to member state governments to raise awareness of volunteering in education systems. This would contribute to the development of increased knowledge and awareness of the benefits of volunteering.

3.3.3 Standardise the outcomes of recognition tools and other opportunities to gain supplementary European Credits at universities through volunteering. This would mean that the European Credit Transfer Accumulation System (ECTS) would incorporate a standard mechanism for recognising learning achieved through volunteering.

3.3.4 Continue to support the Employee Volunteering Awards to encourage and promote employee volunteering. Using examples of excellence to inspire and promote good practice and encourage further development of employee volunteering schemes.

3.4

Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering

3.4.1 Call on Eurostat to introduce appropriate measurement tools and comparable qualitative and quantitative indicators for volunteering within their data gathering at all levels such as that proposed by the European Volunteering Measurement Project¹⁸. This would ensure accurate data collection taking into account the size, scope, dynamics, impact and economic value of volunteering and so ensuring the possibility of evidence-based policy making and comparative analysis.

3.4.2 Allow volunteer time to be included as contribution in-kind with a financial value as co-funding in all European funded programmes and call on member states to do the same. The introduction of a common volunteering measurement practice would facilitate the fair application of such a possibility.

4 EU Member States

In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity the role of the EU member states in the field of volunteering is to ensure that volunteering policies and strategies create an environment that enables citizens to contribute to a better society through volunteering. The EYV 2011 Alliance believes that whilst volunteering policy at member state level should be in accordance with the overall EU policy framework for volunteering national traditions and contexts should be an essential factor when developing the volunteering environment. Consultation and collaboration with all relevant stakeholders at the national level should also be an essential feature of all matters related to volunteering. Policies should aim to support, recognise and trust the added value of, and innovative approaches to, volunteering that contribute positively to the development of respectful and cohesive communities. Sometimes as an added value to the services provided by the State.

1997

Treaty of Amsterdam: Recognised the contribution of volunteering and encouraged the European dimension of voluntary organisations.

4.1

Work towards an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering in the EU.

4.1.1 Develop a national volunteering strategy following the guidance provided by P.A.V.E.

Such a strategy should be based on a co-ordinated and pro-active approach to volunteering policy in partnership with all stakeholders and take into account the benefits of volunteering for the individual, the community and the overall society. The strategy should include mechanisms to closely monitor volunteering especially in those countries with less developed volunteering cultures. Possibilities for cross border volunteering should be facilitated and developed.

4.1.2 Recognise volunteers as an added value in public procurement procedures in the health and social sector. This would make the ability to mobilise a certain number of volunteers in specific cases a positive criterion in public tenders equal to the creation of new jobs.

4.1.3 Develop supportive legal frameworks for volunteering reversing existing laws that create barriers to volunteering. Different stakeholders should be involved in the process and the development of the frameworks and their impact regularly monitored. The framework and monitoring processes should ensure the following principles are maintained:

4.1.4 Everyone has the freedom to volunteer and no-one is forced to take part in volunteer programmes. Attention should be given to the promotion and facilitation of equal access to volunteering through the development of inclusive volunteering policies and programmes and due recognition given to the role that this plays in promoting inclusion.

4.1.5 Access to adequate social protection (health, accident and liability insurance). This should be secured for all volunteers where possible but especially for those operating in an organisational framework. Volunteer-involving organisations should be provided with access to financial support to cover the associated costs.

4.1.6 Protection from the loss of social benefits such as unemployment benefits and social security benefits. Volunteers should not lose their right to state benefits because they volunteer and volunteers, and their volunteer-involving organisations where relevant, should ensure that the volunteering does not interfere with or go against the claimant requirements.

4.1.7 Measures are adopted to facilitate volunteering for emergency services. These provisions should include compensation measures for employers of employees who are also volunteers and who in cases of emergency leave the work place to volunteer for the benefit of the public, for example in relief operations after major accidents, floods, earthquakes or large-scale fires.

4.1.8 Reduced requirements for compulsory criminal record checks. This requirement should be applied to volunteers only when absolutely necessary to protect vulnerable people and should be cost-free and issued in a reasonable time-frame.

4.1.9 Tax provisions support volunteering: Volunteers should not pay income tax on money received as reimbursement of expenses incurred in relation to volunteering; VAT requirements should avoid administrative burdens that cannot be easily undertaken by volunteers; volunteer-involving organisations should not be required to pay tax on funds received through private donations; private donations should be tax deductible for the donors; measures should be introduced to prevent companies sending tax assignments to organisations and foundations exclusively benefiting the employees of the company and/or their relatives; financial incentives for employers that establish employee volunteering schemes should be developed.

4.2

Empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities

4.2.1 Agree, together with other stakeholders a national framework of the key principles and components of quality volunteering. Such a framework which should be developed taking into account the specific context and culture of volunteering and the good practice examples available. It should also reflect the general framework of the key principles and components of quality of volunteering and quality assurance processes developed at the EU level. It should be used by all stakeholders and be applied to funding decisions and the development of policies and programmes.

4.3

Recognise voluntary activities in order to encourage appropriate incentives for individuals, companies and volunteer-development organisations

4.3.1 Create and allow an official status of volunteer. This should be available for all those who want it without forcing anyone to be registered.

4.3.2 Promote awareness of volunteering in education systems together with other stakeholders. This would contribute to forming a more solid culture of volunteering and increase the recognition of the contribution of volunteering to individual self-development and active citizenship. Co-operation between education providers and volunteer-involving organisations should be fostered and through the development of appropriate mechanisms provide support for the provision of recognised training for volunteers.

4.3.3 Develop in partnership with other stakeholders national standards for measurement of personal competences gained through volunteering. Recognised accreditation for prior learning (APL) through volunteering would facilitate better understanding of its value to Life-Long-Learning processes. Partnerships with other stakeholders should also be used to develop suitable tools which take into account the existing culture of recognition and serve to recognise the variety of competences that can be gained through volunteering. These should be developed within a common framework to enable the transferability of skills.

4.3.4 Develop public rewards or awards systems for volunteers. This will promote a culture of recognition amongst the public, media, and social partners and other stakeholders generally.

4.4

Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering

4.4.1 Develop mechanisms to enable volunteer-involving organisations to be able to officially include the value of the volunteer effort in their profit and loss accounts. The mechanisms should be manageable and not create insurmountable administrative burdens. They should be designed so as to allow for a more accurate value to be given to the activity which has been enhanced through volunteering.

4.4.2 Introduce, as part of the official data gathering procedures, appropriate measurement tools and comparable qualitative and quantitative indicators for volunteering. This should ensure accurate data collection taking into account the size, scope, dynamics, impact and economic value of volunteering and so ensuring the possibility of evidence-based policy making.

4.4.3 Recognise a link between volunteering and employability. Whilst volunteering should not be seen as a replacement for employment the capacity of volunteering to provide innovative responses to this common challenge should be recognised and supported.

5 Social Partners

Employers from all sectors and trade unions are important actors for volunteering and in the inter-stakeholder volunteering dialogue. Employers and trade unions have an important role to play in recognising and supporting volunteering whether it occurs as part of an employee volunteering scheme or in an employee's own time. The EYV 2011 Alliance has identified several concrete actions that employers and trade unions can develop together in order to further support volunteers who may be their employees or members and volunteering generally.

5.1 Work towards an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering in the EU.

5.1.1 Lead a dialogue about employee volunteering and employer supported volunteering.

This should take place on both a policy and programme level in different decision making structures, should involve all stakeholders and take special note of the views and wishes of employees.

5.1.2 Foster and develop employee volunteering schemes and employer supported volunteering. Volunteering undertaken by employees themselves at their own initiative (and in line with the employer's values) should, if desired by the employee concerned, be treated equally as that in the framework of employee volunteering schemes.

5.2 Empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities

5.2.1 Promote corporate social responsibility (CSR) policies that result in better quality volunteering. The policies should be developed together with volunteer-involving organisations and be used to contribute to the support given to volunteering both financially and in-kind.

5.3 Recognise voluntary activities in order to encourage appropriate incentives for individuals, companies and volunteer-development organisations

5.3.1 Raise awareness of the contribution that employees engaged in volunteering can make. Especially to economic and social capital through the skills and competences they gain through volunteering whether undertaken as part of an internal employee volunteering scheme or volunteering at an employee's own initiative.

5.3.2 Explore and develop ways to include employee volunteering programmes as part of the usual management of career development. This is especially relevant for employees who are under-occupied or in transition due to changes in the workplace, for example in into retirement or a new post.

5.3.3 Develop human resources policies and capacities to assist employees and potential employees in better communicating the learning achieved through volunteering. This will increase the recognition of the critical role of volunteering in increasing employability, personal development and active citizenship.

5.3.4 Acknowledge that volunteering is an important part of employees' personal and skills development and act as ambassadors to promote the possibilities for volunteering in relevant forums. Appraisal systems should be used to recognise the learning achieved through volunteering undertaken by their employees

5.3.5 Recognise that Business Community Investment is more than just philanthropy. Focus should be given to how activities in the community create a positive impact and provide added

value with employee volunteering as a vital element engaging the workforce and putting a face on an organisation's (CSR) programme.

5.3.6 Develop a national level catalogue of those who actively promote employee volunteering. This should be done together with volunteer-involving organisations and would serve as a resource for other stakeholders interested in exploring employee volunteering opportunities and partnerships.

5.3.7 Create a challenge such as community action days at local, national and European level. Media coverage in such an event would further stimulate interest of and discussions in employee volunteering and volunteering generally.

5.4 Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering

5.4.1 Clearly state how volunteering is valued and promote the value of employee volunteering and employer supported volunteering as an integral part of CSR policies. Document it as part of an organisation's wider public reporting (e.g. CSR or integrated report) and communicate it to all stakeholders.

5.4.2 Build upon the results of projects such as the CSR Laboratory "Skills for Employability Enhanced through Employee Community Engagement".¹⁹ This will allow for the increased promotion of the value of employee volunteering programmes in fostering the skills of disadvantaged and excluded groups.

5.4.3 Recognise the value of volunteering for the "triple bottom line".²⁰ Full cost accounting undertaken as part of CSR policies and commitments should take into account the ecological and social performance as well as financial and should therefore include any volunteering undertaken by its employees especially when done in the framework of an employee volunteering scheme and when the employee accepts that it should be so.

5.4.4 Contribute to better understanding of the value of employee volunteering for all stakeholders. Promote the inclusion of suitable key performance indicators for employee volunteering and its impact into existing and widely acknowledged reporting standards complemented with qualitative methods, case studies and evaluation and monitoring processes.

6 Civil Society

Whilst focussing on civil society generally as an important stakeholder for volunteering, civil society organisations in particular not only involve volunteers but rely heavily on volunteers for their continued existence. Civil society organisations therefore are the stakeholder group with the closest direct contact with volunteers themselves. A primary responsibility of civil society organisations is not only to work with other stakeholders to ensure that the volunteer and volunteer-involving organisation perspective is taken into account but also to directly care for and support volunteers in the best way possible and set good practice examples for all other stakeholders and partners. The EYV 2011 Alliance believes that some direct initiatives on the part of civil society would contribute immensely to the improved situation for volunteers in Europe.

6.1 Work towards an enabling and facilitating environment for volunteering in the EU.

6.1.1 Continue to develop legitimate representation platforms of volunteer-involving organisations at all policy levels. Such platforms should aim to be representative and facilitate valuable dialogue with other stakeholders.

6.1.2 Develop and establish strategies to reduce and monitor possible tensions between local needs and project deliverables required by funders. This will contribute to ensuring a more enabling environment ensuring that the value of volunteering is always maximised.

6.2 Empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities

6.2.1 Implement strategies and invest resources in the continuous development of effective leadership, participation and volunteer management systems. The introduction of quality principles, volunteer agreements, monitoring systems and mechanisms to ensure that volunteers are more involved and have influence on the management and decision-making in volunteer-involving organisations are examples of this.

6.2.2 Promote and support the recognition, training and development of volunteers. This would result in a better development of their talents and help to address any mismatch between volunteer availability and organisational need.

6.3 Recognise voluntary activities in order to encourage appropriate incentives for individuals, companies and volunteer-development organisations

6.3.1 Ensure that the methods of recognition continue to reflect volunteers' needs. Establish a strategic approach to the recognition of volunteering, identifying the aims of such a strategy, the needs of different stakeholders, available resources and methods of monitoring and evaluation basing the recognition methods and practices on the individual needs of volunteers and on self-recognition tools.

6.3.2 Develop systems to recognise the knowledge, skills, and competences acquired through volunteering. Making full use of available tools for qualitative recognition and accreditation²¹ and the development of new initiatives.

6.3.3 Establish systems of volunteer management which also develop and sustain a culture of recognition within the organisation. This will enable both staff and volunteers to be aware of their role in recognising volunteering.

6.3.4 Ensure that the role of volunteers and their contribution to the goals of their organisation are promoted. This should include all relevant communication materials developed by the organisation or its partners/ funders and involve collaboration with other volunteer involving organisations to celebrate the contribution volunteers make to society using relevant occasions such as International Volunteer Day (5 December) or International Volunteer Managers Day (5 November).

6.4 Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering

6.4.1 Encourage media support for activities intended to raise public awareness about volunteering and its value and impact on society. All available forms of media should be used including more traditional media and social media.

6.4.2 Facilitate the involvement of volunteers in decision making at every level in the organisation. This will not only increase the value of the contribution they make but also awareness of it internally and externally.

6.4.3 Provide an appropriate and effective recruitment, training and management cycle for volunteers to maximise the added value of their efforts and activities. Special attention should be given to ensure that the contribution of new volunteers is promoted, understood and supported by existing volunteers. Every volunteer is only one new volunteer away from doubling the volunteer numbers in Europe.

SECTION 2 Quality Volunteering

Conclusions Working Group 1 – Quality Volunteering

Defining quality volunteering

For the purpose of the development of P.A.V.E working group 1 have defined quality volunteering as follows:

- Volunteers are enabled and supported by policies and procedures to provide a positive impact.
- That impact should make a measurable difference, for the better of society as a whole.

Volunteers should be enabled and supported to operate in a safe, strong and free environment and must be empowered and resourced in this way to ensure a quality outcome.

Two key principles of quality volunteering that working group 1 agreed upon were:

- In order to capture the true spirit and benefits of quality volunteering the activity has to be undertaken by free will. To volunteer, or not, has to be a choice.
- A key enabler to sustaining quality volunteering is sustainable and long term funding for volunteer-involving organisations. The demands of society that individual volunteers are choosing to act upon are rarely short term, in order to address these fully a medium to long term approach is needed.

The current situation

Understanding, practice, policy, awareness and resources around the issue of quality volunteering is currently so diverse across member states that it is sometimes hard to engage in common dialogue. However, quality volunteering already takes places across Europe, although this can look very different in different situations.

A vision for the future

There is a common understanding of the key principles and components of quality volunteering and collaboration between all key actors (e.g. EU, member states, civil society and social partners), resulting in a supportive environment that enables increased quality volunteering - in all its diversity - to improve the lives of all citizens of the EU.

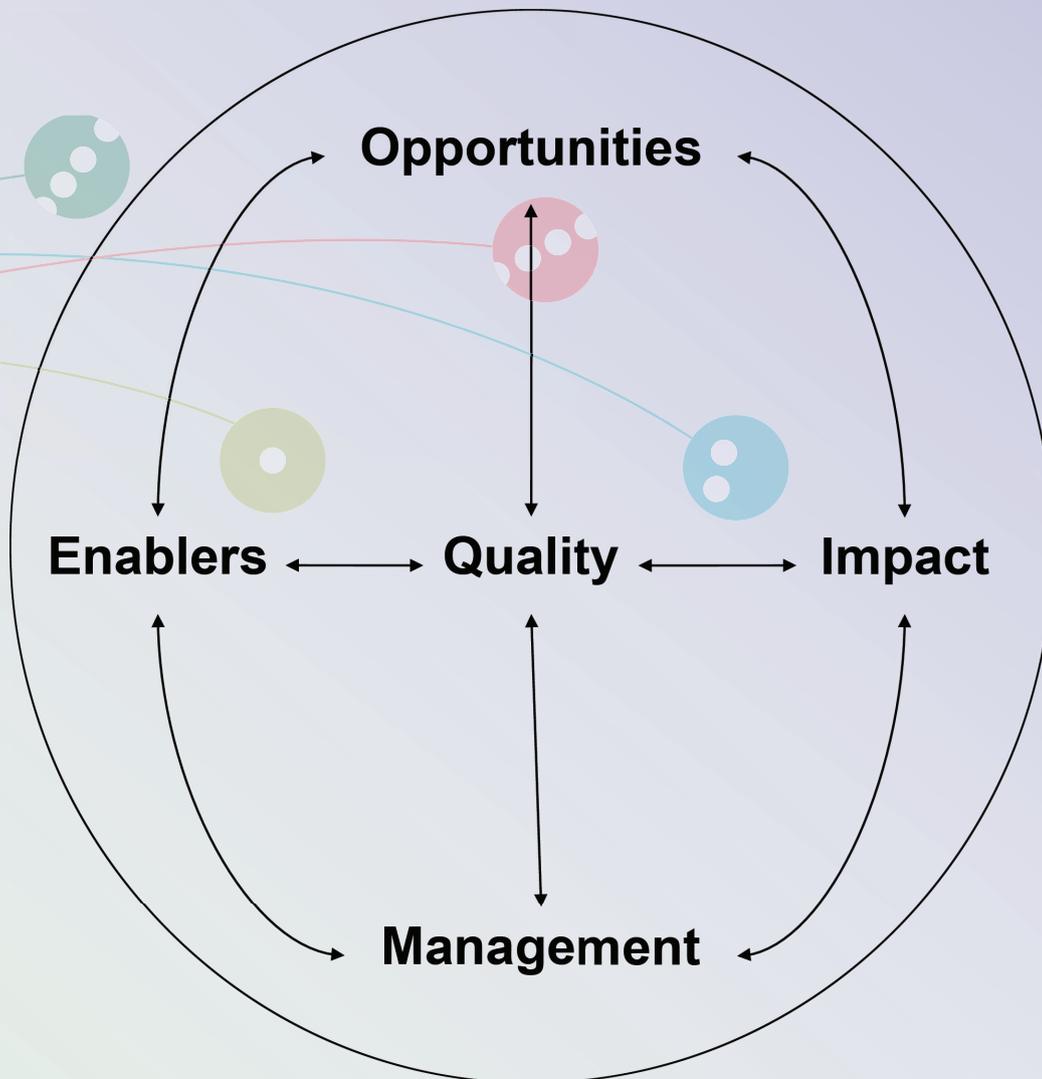
The “Wheel of Quality”

Working group 1 developed the “Wheel of Quality” model to demonstrate how key aspects of quality volunteering – the opportunities offered to volunteers, the way they are managed, the impact they achieve and the factors that enable all of these - interact in order to provide a coherent whole to the overall concept of quality volunteering.

This graphic is supported by a compilation of quality volunteering resources²² assembled by the group which gives examples of:

- Quality assessment/assurance tools.
- Good practice resources in volunteer management.
- Ensuring quality volunteer-involving organisations.

The “Wheel of Quality” model demonstrates how key aspects of quality volunteering - the opportunities offered to volunteers, the way they are managed, the impact they achieve and the factors that enable all of these - interact in order to provide a coherent whole to the overall concept of quality volunteering



2007

White paper on sport: Called for the promotion of volunteering and active citizenship through sport.

SECTION 3 Legal Frameworks

Conclusions Working Group 2 – Legal framework of volunteering

The purpose of these policy recommendations is to facilitate the development of more favourable policies and legal environment for volunteers, volunteering and volunteer-involving organisations within the EU and its Member States and to provide the EU institutions as well as the governments of EU Member States with concrete and evidence based guidance on the reshaping of the legal provisions which pertain to volunteering, promoting a Rights Based Approach to volunteering²³.

Freedom to Volunteer. (EU+MS)

Everyone should have the freedom to volunteer. This includes groups potentially at risk, such as unemployed people, asylum seekers, refugees, migrants, older people, people with disabilities etc. No one should be forced to do “voluntary work”, neither for public nor for private institutions.

Equal treatment of all volunteers across EU. (EU+MS)

The EU and its Member States should adopt a common approach to volunteering involving a stronger role for the EU when it comes to determining the legal environment for volunteering. This would ensure more harmonised approach and guarantee a more equal treatment and easy access to volunteering activities. The EU should enhance the mobility of all volunteers and their valuable services within the EU through for example reinforcing EU funding programmes like “Youth in Action” and “Lifelong Learning Programme”, and also promoting the idea of a new “Seniors in Action programme”, coming from the EU Parliament in 2011.

Social protection of volunteers (MS)

- Volunteers should have adequate social protection doing volunteer work (health, accident and liability insurance). Member States should support volunteers and voluntary organisations financially to cover these expenses through a sustainable framework

In **Germany**, there are different kinds of Volunteers. As an example, Volunteers working in the Federal Voluntary Service (Bundesfreiwilligendienst), the Voluntary Social Year (Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr) and the Voluntary Ecological Year (Freiwilliges Ökologisches Jahr) are compulsorily insured within the social security system and are therefore compulsorily insured within the statutory health / accident / pension / nursing / unemployment insurance schemes because of their volunteering with the respective programme. In general the statutory accident insurance scheme is financed by the contributions of corporations which employ individuals protected by the statutory accident insurance scheme, this also applies for corporations employing Volunteers.

In **Poland**, if the period of the volunteer’s performance for the beneficiary is shorter than 30 days, the beneficiary is obligated to provide the volunteer with accident insurance. If the period of the volunteering agreement between the volunteer and the beneficiary exceeds 30 days, the volunteer is entitled to a benefit for any accidents occurring during the performance of services pursuant to the Act on Benefits for Accidents or Occupational Diseases Caused in Particular Circumstances (dated October 30, 2002, Journal of Laws of 2002, No. 199, item 1674, as amended). A volunteer whose period of performance for the

beneficiary exceeds 30 days is entitled to this benefit from the moment of entering into an agreement with the beneficiary, but the beneficiary is not obligated to provide a volunteer with accident insurance for the period of the first 30 days in this case

The **Belgian** Volunteer Law provides a clear protection for volunteers against third party liability. The Flemish Community established a model insurance, setting minimum standards for the insurance companies to meet in case they provide a volunteer insurance.

- Volunteering during unemployment should not be the reason for losing social benefits such as unemployed benefits and social security benefits

In **Romania**, Under the specific legislation related to unemployment - Law No. 76/2002 (the "Unemployment Law") - volunteering is not an express cause for losing social benefits (e.g. the unemployment indemnity and the related capacity of insured within the social health insurance system and social insurance system). The Volunteering Law expressly provides that participation as a volunteer is not equivalent to a remunerated employment. Thus, subject to the fulfilment of all requirements to benefit from the social protection measures under the Unemployment Law, the simple fact that a person volunteers cannot entail the loss of the unemployed status, because that person cannot be deemed to have acquired a paid job. Only in the case where the volunteering activity would be remunerated, the person's right to receive social benefits would be terminated.

In the **UK**, Volunteering should not affect an individual's right to benefits, as long as the only money the individual receives is reimbursement for volunteering expenses. There are no limits on the amount of time which an individual can volunteer for nor are there any restrictions on the types of organisation which an individual can volunteer for.

Taxation (EU+MS)

- All reimbursement of volunteer's expenses incurred in relation to volunteering should be exempted from income taxes

In the **UK**, sums paid as reimbursement of volunteer's expenses incurred in relation to voluntary activities are exempt from income tax. A volunteer is not likely to have a formal contract of employment with a charity, so the expenses they claim whilst carrying out their voluntary work will not be liable to income tax nor will the reimbursement of any extra costs that might be incurred (such as travel expenses between home and work). In terms of an individual who performs unpaid work for a non-charitable company, an individual who is truly a volunteer – i.e. an individual who has no contract of employment or no contract to provide work or services – is not an employee under English law and is therefore not subject to income tax relating to their voluntary work.

In **Germany**, if the Volunteer is unlimited or limited tax liable, the reimbursements received for volunteer services could be (partially or totally) exempt from German income taxes depending on the sort of volunteer services provided by the respective Volunteer. If the individual provides services as (some sort of) trainer, guardian or comparable activities to tax-exempt organisations (for the requirements see

below), income received for such services up to EUR 2,100 per year is exempt from German income taxes (Section 3 No. 26 German Income Tax Act).

In **Poland**, according to the law on income tax for individuals, the value of all benefits received by volunteers under the Act on Public Benefit Activity and Volunteer Work (dated April 24, 2003, as amended, Journal of Laws of 2003, No. 96, item 873) in connection with their work are exempted from income tax. These are, for example: costs of food, costs of business travel and per diems and other indispensable expenses incurred by the volunteer when providing services to the beneficiary (i.e., the organisation the volunteer is working for), costs of the volunteer's training in the field of services the volunteer provides, costs of civil liability insurance, health insurance, accident insurance, etc.

In **Belgium**, a cost reimbursement for volunteers is not seen as an income. Volunteers can be reimbursed (within limits) without having to pay neither taxes, nor social security contributions from the reimbursement.

- Volunteering should be exempted from VAT as it wouldn't bring any additional budget income in majority of cases, but rather put administrative burden that cannot be undertaken by volunteers

In the **UK**, Volunteering is exempt from VAT. Volunteering is a non-business activity and volunteers do not charge fees for the services they provide to the charity for which they are volunteering and, as such, are not in a position to charge VAT. As a result, issues of payment and recovery of VAT do not arise. However, expenses incurred by volunteers which include a VAT element (such as transport costs) can be set-off against VAT charged by the charity (provided the charity is VAT registered) and the activity is a VATable activity of the charity.

In **Poland**, Volunteer services are beyond the scope of the VAT law, as volunteers do not act in their capacity as entrepreneurs when providing their work and thus their services do not fall under the definition of "service" under the VAT law.

- Volunteer-involving organisations should be fully exempted from tax of donations

In **Germany**, in general, donations received by an entity carrying out non-material activities (ideelle Tätigkeiten) should be exempt from income tax, trade tax and VAT. Such corporation has to comply with several formal requirements.

In the UK, volunteering is exempt from tax on donations. Most of the income and gains received by charities are exempt from income tax and capital gains tax provided that the money is used for charitable purposes only. Income from voluntarily given donations by individuals are tax exempt provided the donor opts to 'Gift Aid' their donation (which also entitles the charity to reclaim an amount equivalent to the basic rate of tax payable on the donation by the donor) (ss. 471-472 Corporation Tax Act 2010). In the case of income received by non-charities, their donations are tax-exempt to the extent that they are applied to charitable purposes only (s. 473 Corporation Tax Act 2010) otherwise they are subject to income or corporation tax in the usual way.

- Member states should support volunteering by making private donations tax deductible. Receiving donations and tax assignments shouldn't be a reason to cut public support to volunteer-involving organisations

- Member states should introduce measures to prevent companies from sending tax assignments to organisations and foundations exclusively benefitting the employees of the company and their relatives

Visa issues (EU+MS)

EU and Member States should consider facilitating the entry of third country nationals into EU territory for the purpose of volunteering within the EU. This could include developing a special visa category for volunteers with fast track visa procedures and reduced formal requirements for visa applications and the reference to this is in the EC Communication on EU Policies and Volunteering is encouraging. These measures should further ensure amongst other things that third country volunteers and their volunteer-involving organisations can easily access and operate within EU territory in cases of public emergencies, disasters, major events and other situations of need.

Criminal record checks (MS)

Member States should require compulsory criminal record checks for volunteers only in cases in which this is absolutely necessary to ensure the high quality of volunteers and volunteer-involving organisation work or to protect vulnerable people. Compulsory criminal record checks certificates should be produced in a reasonable time and be free of charge for the volunteer and the volunteer-involving organisations.

Encourage companies to support employees who are also engaged in voluntary activities in emergency situations (MS)

Member States should adopt measures to facilitate the volunteering of staff members of private as well as public employers. These provisions should include compensation measures for employers of persons who are also volunteers and who in cases of emergency have to leave the work places to volunteer for the benefit of the public.

The 'disaster protection law' of the Upper Austria region contains a provision in its section 9 which stipulates that the region will partially reimburse private companies if they have paid wages to their staff members while they were volunteering for a disaster relief organisation in the region during a disaster. There are some limits of course: a maximum of 58,34% of the wages is reimbursed, if the staff member has been volunteering for more than 3 days. The reimbursement is further limited to a max. of 42 days per staff member and year.

Public tender – recognise volunteers as an asset (EU+MS)

Legal provisions on public tenders especially in the health and social sector, should be adopted to recognise the value of volunteering. This should be done by making active volunteer base and the ability to mobilise a certain number of volunteers for certain activities a positive criterion equal to creation of new jobs.

Monitoring the legal framework. (EU+MS)

The EU as well as its Member States should regularly monitor the status and the development of legal conditions for volunteering in order to ensure the implementation of volunteering policies and more favourable conditions for volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations, while preventing creation of new barriers. Volunteer-involving organisations should be involved in this process.

Charter on Volunteering (EU+MS)

We encourage the EU to adopt a European Charter on the rights of a volunteer²⁴ which would outline the basic principles of a Rights Based Approach²⁵ to volunteering and to apply them when designing/redesigning volunteering policies and legislation. A charter could include inter alia the subjects covered above and could be structured as follows:

- Broad definitions of volunteer, volunteer-involving organisations and volunteering.
- Rights of a volunteer (core rights, support from volunteer-involving organisations²⁶ and right for personal development).
- Responsibilities of volunteer.
- Rights and responsibilities of volunteer-involving organisations
- Responsibilities of public authorities.

SECTION 4 Volunteering Infrastructure

Conclusions Working Group 3 – Volunteering Infrastructure

Introduction

Volunteering Infrastructure is a combination of organisational structures and support mechanisms which together provide the enabling environment needed to encourage and adequately support volunteer involvement for the benefit of society as a whole.

Organisational structures composing the volunteering infrastructure include volunteer-involving organisations (such as voluntary organisations, public and private, non-profit and for-profit institutions) and support organisations (such as volunteer centres, volunteer developing agencies, umbrella organisations, and networks) at all levels (international, European, national, regional, and local).

The support mechanisms for the volunteering infrastructure include: an appropriate legal framework for volunteer-involving organisations and volunteers, reliable and dedicated funding schemes for volunteer-involving and support organisations, research involving comparable and established data collection systems to document the impact and value of volunteering, institutionalised channels of communication and consultation with the decision makers at all levels, agreed standards for good practice and quality assurance.

Volunteering infrastructure fulfils several key roles which make it fundamental for the further development of volunteering across Europe, among which:

- Provision of quality volunteering opportunities.
- Support for volunteers (such as training, counselling, evaluation etc.).
- Matching the supply and demand of volunteering.
- Capacity building and good practice exchange among volunteer-involving organisations.
- Removal of barriers to volunteering.
- Awareness-raising with regard to the value of volunteering for both the individual and the society.
- Influencing policy environment in areas where volunteering takes place in order to build an enabling environment where volunteering can flourish.

We believe that the volunteering infrastructure is fundamental to the achievement of the Europe 2020 objectives by its contribution to ensuring:

- Access to volunteering for all citizens in Europe.
- Quality of volunteering experience and services provided by volunteers.
- Proper management of the supply and demand of volunteers.
- Learning and skills development for volunteers.
- Poverty reduction and social inclusion.
- Added values for the services provided and activities undertaken with volunteer support and involvement.
- Creation of social cohesion and social value.

Overview of the current situation

The current state of play with regard to volunteering infrastructure across the EU is marked by a fragmented approach reflected both at the European level (where key competences on volunteering fall under different Directorates) and at the member state level (where key competences on volunteering either fall under different Ministries or are not assigned to an identifiable institution). Evidence gathered by the Study on Volunteering in the European Union²⁷ and from the experience of the working group members pinpoints as major trends in volunteering infrastructure across European Union the following:

- The key concern around funding issues and especially around the availability of core funding for volunteering in general and for volunteering infrastructure in particular.
- The lack of coherent direction for volunteering support and development in most member states and, to a certain extent, at the European level.
- The changing and increasingly burdensome procedures for accessing available funding and reporting.
- The difficulties of providing accurate data on the size, scope, dynamics, and impact of volunteering at national and European level.
- The increased complexity of information available and difficulty of accessing and processing such information by volunteer-involving organisations at the local level.

The volunteering infrastructure landscape across Europe shows that such infrastructure reflects and depends on the diversity of the cultural, historical, and social traditions of the local communities, regions, and member states. Consequently, there is no such combination that can be considered the ideal volunteering infrastructure. However, there are several identifiable key elements and mechanisms that represent the core of volunteering infrastructure which are needed to enable volunteering to perform.

Vision for the future ideal situation

Our vision for the future ideal situation builds on the wide recognition of the fact that volunteering infrastructure is fundamental for the further development of volunteering in Europe, recognition reflected in appropriate support mechanisms made available for volunteering infrastructure at all levels. Creation and implementation of such support mechanisms is a joint responsibility of all stakeholders of volunteering, requiring a coherent and coordinated approach from policy makers at all levels and volunteer-involving organisations.

Such support mechanisms should include at least:

- An appropriate legal framework for volunteer-involving organisations and volunteers – the different historical, cultural, and social backgrounds across member states lead to different needs related to the legal and regulatory framework for volunteering; however, practitioners recognise the paramount importance of a supportive legal environment for volunteering and of clarity with regard to the rights and responsibilities of the volunteer and the volunteer-involving organisation, liability and insurance, legal status of volunteers.
- Reliable, dedicated, and accessible funding schemes for volunteer-involving and support organisations at all levels – such funding should not be contextual and part of funding programmes focused mainly on other issues, but rather specific funding streams focusing on volunteering / volunteer-involving programmes and organisations.
- Recognition of volunteer contribution as in kind co-funding – the implementation of this requires deep commitment from the European Institutions to make it a unified feature of accessing the available European funds at all levels (European, member state, regional, local).

- Simplified application and reporting procedures – several funding programmes require, significant bureaucratic effort, directing sometimes more than half of the working time of staff involved in implementation towards fulfilment of paper work and reporting requirements and significantly limiting the amount of time and effort invested in the actual delivery of objectives; this approach makes procedures needlessly expensive, not necessarily better.
- Comparable and established data collection systems documenting the impact and value of volunteering for the individual, the local communities, and the overall society – while recognition of the impact and value of volunteering is an established component of public discourse, the policy making processes often puts volunteering aside on the grounds of insufficient data that policy making can rely on, thus preventing decision makers from designing policies that would enable the development of volunteering at different levels and in different fields.
- Institutionalised channels of communication and consultation with decision makers at all levels – to correct the lack of coherence in the overall approach to volunteering at both European and member state levels a dialogue partner for volunteering should be identified among the European and member state institutions and given appropriate competences to provide the needed coherent direction for volunteering support and development at European and member state level.
- Improved and simplified access to information for volunteer-involving organisations at all levels – the increased complexity of information and the variety of communication technologies available is sometimes difficult to manage especially by local volunteer-involving organisations that get lost in searching for relevant information for their activity; an essential role to prevent this belongs to the volunteering infrastructure, namely the support organisation or the umbrella bodies that should be properly supported in order to be able to distil the information and direct it in an accessible form to volunteer-involving organisations at all levels.
- Agreed standards for good practice and quality assurance for volunteering – the increased demands for resources and appropriate policies generate a certain pressure on volunteer-involving organisations to deliver quality services; at the same time organisations are dealing on a daily basis with a more demanding cohort of volunteers; appropriate quality measures need to be taken from within the sector to ensure good practice and quality of volunteering at all levels.

Recommendations for support of volunteering infrastructure development

European institutions and members states are actively encouraged to take volunteering into the European policy agenda as a cross-cutting theme and to make it a priority within such EU policy areas where volunteering occurs and where it plays an important role in the achievement of the Europe 2020 agenda. This should be emphasised properly in policy priorities and their respective funding streams.

The implementation of P.A.V.E created during the EYV 2011 should be pursued not only at the European level, but also at the member state level. Member states should be actively encouraged to develop and implement national policies on volunteering taking the European agenda priorities and translating them into national level policies, thus converging synergies at national and European levels in the field of volunteering. Progress should be closely followed from the European level to avoid increased disparities in the support and development of volunteering, already quite significant, among different member states.

2009

Treaty of Lisbon: New legal basis for volunteering: article 149(1) concerning sports, article 149(2) concerning participation of young people in democratic life in Europe and article 188(5) on the Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps.

Volunteering infrastructure development should be supported properly at both European and member state level. One proposed method to do so is to create and invest in a "European Knowledge Institute on Volunteering" which would:

- Act as repository of good practice at the European and member state levels, facilitating the exchange of good practice among volunteering stakeholders at all levels, and stimulating European partnerships.
- Systematically collect comparable data and analyse the impact of volunteering, using existing data collection systems or proposed ones, such as the Manual for Measurement of Volunteer Work developed by the International Labour organisation and Johns Hopkins University²⁸.
- Provide research on 'needs' that volunteering can address, creating a body of evidence often required in policy making or to support funding applications, evidence focused on the soft outcomes that volunteering boosts, outcomes not shown in usual statistics.
- Distil the vast amount of information on European programmes, projects, and funding opportunities by creating a central searchable database, a single point of information, which systematically collects information about EU funded projects both past and future, results and best practice, partners available to work on trans-national projects and opportunities for volunteering; the data base will be user friendly and information free of jargon as far as possible so that it is accessible to volunteers as well as professionals at all levels.

The creation of a European level volunteering infrastructure should be supported by adopting the European Statutes of Associations, thus giving legal and institutional recognition to the voluntary engagement of Europeans. Thus European networks that promote and support volunteering throughout Europe would be further encouraged as an expression of social Europe and solidarity in order to guarantee a continuing exchange of ideas and best practices both at the European and member state levels.

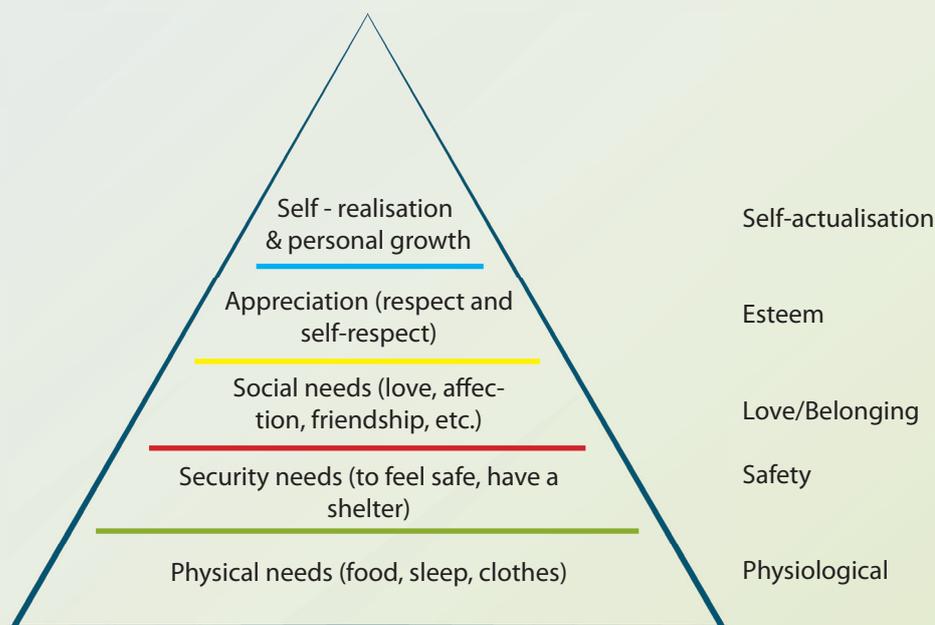
SECTION 5 Recognition Tools

Conclusions Working Group 4 – Recognition of Volunteering

Volunteering plays a vital role, within society, building communities, developing civil society and also contributing to the economy; this vital role that volunteering performs needs to be better recognised not only by society as a whole, but also by volunteer-involving organisations and by volunteers themselves.

Recognition of volunteers is the process of rewarding and motivating those volunteers who have contributed. Every volunteer is unique – and how their contribution is recognised should also be sensitive to individual needs and achievements. Supporting the recognition of volunteering also helps volunteers themselves to understand their role and the responsibility they have when making a volunteer commitment. A culture of recognition of volunteering needs to be developed across Europe, at national level, in volunteer-involving organisations, in society and amongst individual volunteers themselves.

Recognition of the contribution of volunteering is important first of all for the individual engaged in volunteering. Although recognition of the contribution they have made is not in itself a reason why people volunteer, recognising a volunteer's individual and group achievements is one of the most important parts of a volunteer programme and is strongly linked to the motivation they might have to continue volunteering.



Good recognition systems are based on correctly identifying the needs of volunteers. The hierarchy of needs of Abraham Maslow first outlined in his paper "A Theory of Human Motivation" (1943) can be an important starting point when considering how best to recognise the contribution of volunteers. Gaining recognition falls into the "esteem" category of needs and recognition tools should be designed to meet the different motivational needs: for example, the need to have achievement recognised, which could be met by being assigned more challenging tasks, further training or recognising particular skills and competences which have been developed. Other individuals might have their "esteem" needs recognised by having their contribution acknowledged by a personal gift given at a group event, in front of their family or friends; while others might feel recognised by gaining promotion or commendation by a higher authority.²⁹

Recognition systems should also consider how to meet the different needs of volunteers as they pass through the different stages of the “volunteer life cycle”.

Motivation Life Cycle of a Volunteer: Paula Beugen (1985) proposes that volunteers progress



through a motivation life cycle.

The first stage is an exploratory stage when the new volunteers are still exploring the possibilities of being a volunteer, trying out their role and, if all goes well, making a commitment.

In the second stage volunteers are developing themselves and their role by analysing what they are doing and improving on their performance. As they get more involved they become more committed, they begin to gain skills and it's at this stage, Beugen argues it is important to recognise volunteers' achievements and to acknowledge the value of their participation.

The final stage is when the volunteer is ready to share their skills and knowledge and to support and lead other volunteers. Here is when it's important for volunteers to have the skills they have developed recognised so they don't lose interest and motivation. The volunteer may also want their role to be expanded or may be ready to move into a new role altogether, and recognising the skills which have been gained is a necessary part of matching volunteers to the right role.

Most importantly, retaining volunteers is largely a matter of making them feel valued and important. Another study by McCurley and Lynch (1998) maintained that people with a high sense of self-esteem need to feel connected, unique, and effective, all of which are linked to recognition. Volunteers play an integral role by donating their time and expertise, and by making it possible for volunteering programmes and initiatives to be extended often in an innovative way. To ensure a vital and continuous volunteer involvement now and in the future it is imperative to acknowledge and recognise the contributions made by volunteers using a range of recognition tools and methods, according to the individual needs of the volunteer. Volunteer-involving organisations and support structures also have a role to encourage media support for activities intended to raise public awareness about volunteering and its value and impact on society, to ensure recognition in the wider society.

Volunteer recognition schemes can range from simply saying “thank you” at opportune moments; a birthday card, or a meal together: to award schemes organised at local or national level, gathering nominations from outstanding volunteers recognising through certificates or badges length of service or the contribution which has been made. Rather than highlight any one particular method or rewarding or awarding volunteers, the working group looked at identifying principles for developing recognition schemes and criteria for identifying examples of good practice.

JINT (the National Youth Agency for the Flemish-speaking community in Belgium), identifies 10 principles for recognition:

Show recognition for actions which should be encouraged:

To your volunteers - The need for recognition is very important to most people. If their contribution is not recognised, the very least that can happen is that they will lose motivation, or even leave.

To the person, not to the work - Connect the volunteer's name to the activity

Appropriately to the achievement - Small actions should be praised with low-effort methods; larger achievements should get something more.

Honestly - Do not give praise unless it is meant. Do not praise substandard performance, as then the praise given to others for good work will not be valued.

Frequently - Praise should come as soon as possible after the achievement, rather than waiting to thank volunteers, for example, once a year.

In an individualised way - Different people like different things. One might love to get football tickets; another might find them useless. Some volunteers like public recognition; others find it embarrassing. In order to provide effective recognition, it is important to get to know volunteers as individuals and what they will respond to positively.

Consistently - If two volunteers are responsible for similar achievements, they ought to get similar recognition. This does not mean that the recognition has to be exactly the same, but that it should be the result of similar effort.

Through a variety of methods recognition can be categorised into four major types:

- From a person for the work the volunteer did.
- From a person for being part of an organisation.
- From the organisation or the beneficiaries for the work the volunteer did.
- From the organisation, beneficiaries and / fellow volunteers for being part of the team.

Operate a well-managed volunteer recognition programme - Volunteers tend to make rational decisions about the allocation of their time; they will strive to spend it in settings where they obtain value. This value may be the social aspects, the work objectives, the situational settings, or a combination of all of these. Projects and programmes that enable volunteers to do good work, in a good setting, with good people are uniquely positioned to provide this sense of value and accomplishment.

Skills and Competences gained through Volunteering - Another important aspect of recognition is recognising skills and competences gained through volunteering. The 2007 National Survey of Volunteering and Charitable Giving in the UK found that 46 per cent of volunteers aged 16-24 years of age, and 19 per cent for all age groups, volunteered to learn new skills. Through volunteering individuals can also gain a range of vocational and life skills or competences which they can use to improve their personal development, employability, educational achievements, development in other areas of volunteering or their development as active members of the different communities to which they belong. Although sometimes recognised by employers many volunteers are not aware or able to communicate the learning achieved through volunteering or non-formal education. There is a need to develop tools not only to validate the learning gained but also to increase confidence and awareness by individual volunteers, so they can transfer their learning into the different areas of their lives.

Volunteers can have different goals for recognition of competences³⁰:

- Personal development
- Growth in their volunteering
- Development towards other kinds of volunteering
- Exemptions in their (vocational) education
- Improving their position on the labour market

The following aspects are an important first steps in developing a scheme to recognise skills and competences gained through volunteering³¹:

Individual level

- Help volunteers to recognise their own competences wherever they are developed
- Help volunteers to make those competences visible to the outside world (help them to express their learning).

Organisational level / Volunteering activity or project level

- Evaluate and validate competences learned outside of volunteering.
- Adjust training systems to help the individual in their personal development (starting with the individual).
- Evaluate and validate competences learned in other situations and contexts (transferability of learning).

National level:

- Help the volunteer to get their competences accredited by the (national) educational system.
- Help the volunteer to get their competences validated and evaluated by employers (labour market).

Tools to assess learning need to focus on raising awareness of the kinds of competences which can be acquired; recognising which competences have been acquired and when and how; and assessing the level of the particular skill or competence which has been achieved.

How Volunteer-involving organisations can recognise skills and competences gained through volunteering³²

Training certificate - A good training certificate mentions the contents of the training, how long the training lasted, the level (e.g. related to the European Qualifications Framework), and a reference to the (website of) the training institute.

Testimonial - A good testimonial gives a description of the work the volunteer has done, their responsibilities, and the level of autonomy: did the volunteer work with support, independently, or in an executive position. It's also important to mention the duration (1 year? 2 years?), the number of hours spends per day/week/month, and a contact person who can be called.

Volunteering on a CV - Things to consider: should volunteering be put under "hobby/free time" or under "work experience"? Can you describe the importance of the volunteering for the job you are applying for?

Competence profile - A competence profile is a list of competences that you can acquire by doing certain volunteering. It helps the volunteer to reflect on their own development. It also helps to "translate" the volunteering to the labour market or to vocational education.

Self assessment - Self assessment is done by the volunteer to get an impression of the competences they have acquired. It also helps them to explore how useful these competences are in other circumstances outside the volunteering. Self-assessment can be done in two ways. One way is to define on which level the competence is acquired - the other way is to compare the competence with an external standard.

Assessment by others - Assessment by others [360° feedback] can support and strengthen, but also nuance and relativise, the outcomes of the self-assessment. It can be done by other volunteers/team members the volunteer has worked with, the manager of the volunteer, the clients/members they has worked for.

Results of the work of the volunteer - One of the most important steps in the recognition process is that you are able to show examples of the work you have done as a volunteer. Here you can think of reports of activities, minutes of meetings, pictures/movies of things you have made or of activities you have performed. Also signed declarations from your manager, "thank you"-letters of participants, and your own written reflections on the job you have done can be useful. Be sure that it's clear what your role was: a general programme of a summer camp or a training course that you were responsible for is not enough.

Evidence - Criteria for evidence are:

- Authenticity (is it really about you),
- Relevance (does it really say something about the work process and your level of control),
- Topicality (how recent is it),
- Quantity (how often have you done it, how many things have you made)
- Variety (have you volunteered with different target groups and/or in different situations).

Portfolio for volunteers - A portfolio is an organised collection of everything you have learned and all the volunteering you have done. It can also contain personal information. The idea comes from the world of art, where artists use the portfolio to show examples of the work they have made. It can be digital, but also in the form of a case with everything on paper in it.

Agreement with institutes - for formal recognition. Institutes for formal recognition are different in each country. Some countries have award systems, in some countries you have to get in touch with schools for vocational education and/or employers institutes.

Top Tips on Thanking Volunteers

- Candlelight Dinner
- Send a thank you Postcard
- T shirts or mugs etc that are special and limited i.e. not available to everyone or even personalised
- Free or unique access to places or events. VIP access
- Special events for free but know what your volunteers interests are. This could range from training to parties
- Say thank you at the right time
- Put their stories on websites or in media stories if they are happy with this.
- Say thank you in a different and personalised way with your own spin such as Frozen Giraffes
- If volunteers do something well with others give them a bigger challenge as a team
- Give people opportunities to network at different levels from national to local
- Give feedback to volunteers
- Birthday Card
- The opportunity to appear on Film
- Surprises!

SECTION 6 Value of Volunteering

Conclusions Working Group 5 –Value of Volunteering

Introduction

The EYV Alliance believes that volunteering adds value at multiple levels and that, by valuing volunteering itself, we can strengthen individuals, communities, societies and economies.

The Working group on the Value of Volunteering started the reflection process by collecting evidence in the form of studies and publications about the different aspects of value. During this stage of the process we started to structure the notion of value into four dimensions:

- Value of volunteering to the individual
- Value of volunteering to the community
- Value of volunteering to society as a whole
- The economic aspect of volunteering – which is currently the least researched and demonstrated subject

Value to individuals

Through volunteering people can gain self-confidence and acquire an important feeling of self-worth. They can gain skills and competences, and develop personally and professionally. Volunteering can contribute to the development of people's social values, increase their sense of belonging and create space for a wide range of people to work together to participate, thus enhancing social inclusion. Through volunteering, citizens can identify problems or gaps, organise themselves and come up with creative solutions, often introducing innovation within the social sector and beyond.

Value to communities

Volunteering has the capacity to transform communities. It can build solidarity between people of different ages, economic, ethnic and social backgrounds, education and abilities, enhancing trust and mutual understanding between people. Volunteering can develop support networks and provide opportunities to contribute to decision-making and policy, encouraging the development of a thriving and healthy civil society. In all of these ways, volunteering contributes to healthy communities, which are essential building blocks of a prosperous European Union.

Value to society

Volunteering can offer a counter-balance to a global society that's increasingly focused on economic, financial and material gain. As a highly visible expression of solidarity, volunteering can build social capital, promote social cohesion and facilitate the inclusion of marginalised groups. In countries with a history of oppression, conflict, and hardship in general, effective volunteering programmes can have a transformative effect on society by bringing people together to work on shared objectives.

Economic value

The economic value of volunteering is an important factor, and key in giving visibility and enhancing the credibility of the sector. Measuring the economic and financial value of volunteering is important. Measuring the economic value of volunteering however always has to go hand in hand with measuring all other aspects and values of volunteering as discussed above to form the full picture.

Once we structure the value dimensions, we are able to also locate the most appropriate level of policy and decision making to target with our recommendations and suggestions.

In order to contribute to the understanding of the value of volunteering, as well as to progress in terms of measuring it, we **call on the European Institutions to** recognise and harness the **innovative responses** to problems that can be offered through the engagement of volunteers to recognise the intrinsic and sustainable value of **social capital** and functioning as an essential driver of a **healthy civil society** enabling people from **excluded groups** to participate through the promotion of **equal access** and by increasing **accessible funding** for volunteering especially through the mandatory acceptance of in-kind contributions, including volunteer time as co-funding as recommended by the EC Structured Dialogue Group in 2009³³, further supported by the European Parliament through their amendments to the financial rules applicable to the annual budget of the Union (2010/0395(COD)) and described in practice in the "Paper on the economic value of volunteering and contribution-in-kind - Roundtable discussion on European financial regulation review and civil society"³⁴.

We **call on Member States governments** and authorities to promote volunteering as a **necessary social activity** that adds value to society and set clear **targets for the inclusion of people from excluded groups**, recognise a **link between volunteering and employability** and **provide financial support** to volunteering and voluntary activities through accessible funding mechanisms (especially through the mandatory acceptance of in-kind contributions, including volunteer time as co-funding) and ensuring they **value of the role of volunteers** and volunteering in the development of all related policies to actively promote the contribution that volunteering can make in **fostering solidarity** in society.

We **call on the social partners** to recognise and publish their position on the **value of volunteering for the triple bottom line**, collaborate with civil society to recognise the value of volunteering generating **social capital and job creation** taking into account the **impact on volunteering** when developing internal policies and programmes, recognise the contribution to **skills development** made by employees and members through volunteering.

We **call on Civil Society** to contribute towards an **accurate measure** of the value of volunteering, foster a sense of belonging for the volunteer to the organisation and **celebrate their value** through facilitating the involvement of volunteers in **decision making at every level** and finding ways to **document and demonstrate** the contribution that volunteering makes to solidarity in community and society, sharing with / through national bodies.

SECTION 7 Employee Volunteering

Conclusions Working Group 6 – Employee Volunteering

The conclusions of the EYV 2011 Alliance WG 6 on Employee Volunteering show that employee volunteering (see glossary definition) is an integral part of wider volunteering activities and can contribute towards the Europe 2020 goals for skills development and social cohesion through partnerships with all stakeholders including community organisations, public sector and private sector organisations.

Introduction

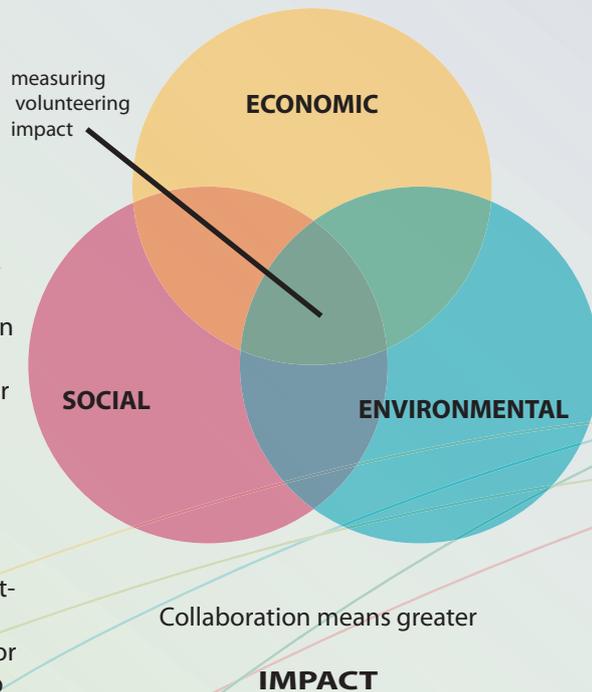
Employee Volunteering (EV) is a growing phenomenon in Europe. The opportunities connected to volunteering as a valuable source of contribution towards the Europe 2020 – Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth are up to now, often ignored and not echoed appropriately in the manifold European policies and programmes. The fact that employee volunteering was a main theme of the 2nd EYV 2011 thematic conference hosted at the EESC is encouraging as is the commitment to developing employee volunteering for employers in the European Institutions as described in the EC Communication on Volunteering (2011) and it is hoped that this trend will be developed and strengthened.

Employee volunteering is a sector-wide cross-cutting opportunity and relates to a wide range of EU policy areas and programmes such as Active Citizenship, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainable Development, Employability, Local Employment Development, European Social Fund, Regional Cohesion, Active Ageing, Life Long Learning, Social Innovation and so on.

Employee volunteering is a concept that applies to all employers regardless of sector be that profit, non-profit, public or private. We welcome and endorse the statement of the EC in its communication on Volunteering which regards “Employee volunteering as an expression of corporate social responsibility”. We are asking the European institutions and the EU member states to follow this route, to foster an enabling environment for employee volunteering and to include employee volunteering as an integral part of their CSR policies and programmes.

Whilst the private sector may have been seen to be leading the way to date, the applications and benefits can be applied and learnt immaterial of the nature of the employer. In addition it must be recognised that like the public and civil society sector, business is part of the community and not a sector that sits outside of it. Therefore the private sector has a responsibility to understand their core business impacts and to manage them responsibly, recognising that one way in which they can do this is through employee volunteering.

Employee volunteering has shifted from being a discreet set of philanthropic activities, from a ‘nice to do’ community relations tool into a recognised asset that benefits society, the employees who volunteer and the employers including board level that encourage and support their work as an



integral part of CSR and sustainability strategies and policies. Therefore employee volunteering and employer supported volunteering, be it time, gifts in kind or donations must be an explicit component. Furthermore it should be recognised that employers who encourage their employees to volunteer may lead to wider expansions of volunteering when that individual introduces volunteering to their families, friends and colleagues.

80% of those surveyed* said the term Corporate/Employee Volunteering is known in the business community.

The opportunity is now...

While some may view the credit crisis as a hindrance to volunteering, it may indeed, in the long-term, have far more positive benefits for our local communities than previously anticipated. This is because forward-looking employers are focusing more attention on how to leverage volunteering to maximise the benefit to the local community, the employers and the employees. All things being equal, the volunteering opportunities that produce a positive local community benefit as well as developing employees' skills and core competencies is a formula that should produce even greater benefits for communities than ever before. The ideal situation would be that employers and volunteer-involving organisations would work together to ensure that volunteers can use their specialist skills rather than be limited to generic volunteering which can often be the case.

It is clearly recognisable that none of the big challenges we face today – the consequences of globalisation, individualisation, exclusion, the widening gap between rich and poor, the demographic change, migration/integration and others – will be properly addressed or solved without an appropriate cooperation between all stakeholders in society including policy makers, , business and civil society. To achieve the goal of a sustainable, cross-sector partnerships with new roles and responsibilities, different stakeholders must acknowledge the assets and values of the other and accept the fact that none of the mentioned challenges can be tackled by stakeholders acting alone. All stakeholders must work together, collaborating for the common good.

EV – making sure it matters to the community and material to the business sector

An increasing number of companies are focussing on the opportunities that responsible business delivers, social and environmental factors are increasingly implicit in materiality assessments (for example the increasing number of sustainability reports that are now being produced by employers in all sectors but especially business demonstrating that both social and environmental indicators are as important as economic). Employee volunteering is a tool for employers to contribute locally, nationally and internationally to make an impact and contribute to alleviating the social issues that affect their stakeholders including their people, customers, suppliers and communities.

Increasingly companies are focusing their employee volunteering on specific priorities and are leveraging all their resources to increase their impact across a range of social and environmental problems such as working with young people to gain greater literacy and numeracy skills, supporting those furthest from the workplace to increase their readiness for work and to gain and sustain employment, and educating communities about energy conservation. These activities not only engage the workforce but also can put a face on CSR programmes.

When employees use their skills to support the local community, it would be helpful if employers recognised that it also develops core competencies and specialist skills. Both are equally important, however, their application will have varying degrees of positive social impact. For example, if you look at a professional services firm, such as KPMG, programmes that target core competencies, such as building relationships or developing people, are far simpler to implement at scale than specialist skills based volunteering programmes. Where there are common specialist skill and

competency frameworks there is an enormous advantage to share volunteering programmes that utilise expertise across borders.

KPMG's BRIGHT programme 'BRIGHT minds helping to create a BRIGHTer world' this year has delivered skills-based volunteering opportunities for their people who are sent out in multi-national (Germany, UK, Luxembourg, Belgium, Russia, Norway) and multi-disciplinary teams (audit, tax and management consulting) to provide pro bono for their civil society partners in developing countries supporting the Millennium Development Goals.

Working in partnership with Fair Trade Africa, Restless Development and Child Helpline International KPMG has provided more than 2400 hours of capacity building work valued at around €500K through 58 volunteering placements.

Key focuses include: NGO capacity building; supporting young entrepreneurs with core business management training; employability skills for unemployed youth and financial training for Fair Trade producers.

Furthermore, if more employee volunteering programmes were designed in such a way that there were mutual benefits to both the employer and to the NGO, there would be greater incentives for an organisation to provide their specialist skills to the NGO on a pro bono basis. Ideally both employers and NGOs organisations would have an ethical responsibility to deploy volunteering skill-based programmes in the right way. This principle of maximising impact needs to be applied to every employers' CSR programmes, but of course it is far easier said than done.

OCTINK is an SME who have integrated their CSR policy into staff appraisals to ensure that every employee is aware of the company's activities in this area and how staff can get involved. An employee survey was carried out in early 2008 to identify if staff understood what CSR was and if they were aware of the company's activities - OCTINK has been actively working on improving employee awareness and the annual staff survey enables them to identify any new ideas their employees have for CSR and areas which can be improved.

When considering reciprocity, in a research study³⁵ that drew on the experience of employees in 16 businesses operating in the City of London," the majority of respondents reported that volunteering had developed their skills and competencies across a broad range of business relevant areas. These competencies were strongly related to an individual's personal effectiveness in their work role and include communication skills, coaching, adaptability and influencing and negotiating.

Partnerships

To achieve true social cohesion, multi-stakeholder partnerships will need to evolve and stakeholders must work together for the sake of the common good. Employee volunteering is an excellent means to give this partnership a face and can complement existing partnerships by adding a new dimension. Partnering is easy to talk about but invariably somewhat harder to undertake. It requires courage, patience and determination over time. It is rarely a 'quick fix' solution to a problem and mounting evidence from many partnership initiatives under development in different parts of the world that such cross-sector collaboration can be highly effective and sustainable when it is designed, developed and managed in a systematic way.

Employee volunteering is an excellent means to bring together multi-sector partnerships by helping employers – be it in the profit, non-profit, public or private, sectors – to sharpen its contours as responsible employers that integrate social responsibility into the core business. Employee volunteering has more to offer and the opportunities for maximising employee volunteering are arguably underutilised. This is because skills gained by individuals through volunteering are not always clearly articulated.

The OnRoute Partnership is a business and voluntary sector partnership whose focus is resourcing mobile youth provision in poor areas across England. The strategic leadership of the programme comes through Business in the Community, the ASDA Foundation and National Children's Bureau. Working with 16 local partners and by engaging volunteers from the police, local charities and small businesses, differences have been made to the lives of over 35,000 young people who use the facilities and have included local impacts including (in London) 75% of the young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) go into employment, education and training; and led to a 35% decrease in youth anti-social behaviour.

By working together employee volunteering in partnerships includes some of the following benefits:

- A way of sharing skills, competencies and capacities in order to achieve goals more effectively
- Dynamic new networks offering each sector better channels of engagement with the wider community and greater capacity to influence the policy agenda
- Greater understanding of the value, values and attributes of each sector thereby building a more integrated and a more stable society
- Development of new and innovative approaches

Employers who take part in partnerships have the opportunity to inspire other employers to support them through volunteering – there are opportunities to engage clients, suppliers and customers to collaborate and through collaboration maximise the social impact of the initiatives and further strengthen valuable relationships.

Business in the Community developed the ENGAGE Key Cities programme in 2005 in order to increase the quality and amount of employee volunteering. It comprises of 20 Employee Volunteering projects across 26 Key Cities internationally. The unique characteristic of the ENGAGE model is that each project has a group of companies working together in collaboration.

ENGAGE Valencia brings together organisations including KPMG, Barclays, Cap Gemini, IBM, Telefonica, Tempe (Zara Group), Valencian Port.

647 volunteers from 30 companies contributed 3513 hours through the ENGAGE programme.

1500 have benefitted from a total of 7 organisations including 3 prisons and 2 NGOs. Projects have been shared and replicated from Paris to Milan and Valencia to Bucharest.

Measurement

Only what is measured can be managed. Increasingly companies and employers in other sectors are looking beyond the traditional annual report and including financial, social and environmental indicators to measure overall performance and sustainability. To ensure that the quality of volunteering improves necessary measurement frameworks are required to constantly scrutinise and improve impact.

Guidelines and measurement frameworks are essential in order to evaluate and report on their Community Investment initiatives. This is because resources spent developing and managing community initiatives are often not tracked properly. Inadequate monitoring leads to a major loss of strategic information. Some of the benefits of measuring volunteering include:

1. Improved measurement and management of community contributions.
2. Enhanced communication and reporting on community involvement.
3. Improved internal management.
4. More effective benchmarking.
 - Through business indicators
 - Employees - contribution per head
 - Sales - percentage of turnover
 - New capital investment
 - Assets
 - Between companies

Companies surveyed* found that 75% of respondents felt there were no existing methodologies to help measure impact. Of the 25% who said there were, the London Benchmarking Group was referenced as a tool to do this.

Measurement helps volunteering practitioner's advance their understanding of what their employers' community involvement implies. It can be used to compare potential new projects, assess on going ones and consider alternative options and scenarios for the future.

Mid-Counties Co-operative: Its Community Investment programme uses funding, company-led volunteering and project work to make a difference to its community. In colleagues that have participated in volunteering, HR turnover fell from 31% to 3.4%.

The London Benchmarking Group community investment reporting tool was developed in line with the LBG model (<http://www.lbg-online.net/>) and is recognised across Europe as a way of measuring the actual contribution of Community Investment initiatives, i.e. on inputs as well as outputs. To measure this properly a baseline should be set.

Communication and sharing best practice

One of the most important aspects for any CSR programme is communication. All volunteering programmes should have a communication plan. In addition, every CSR function should have an overarching communication plan setting out what they want to achieve. This is essential so that volunteering opportunities can be easily accessed by employees in an organisation. Communicating the impact of a volunteering programme helps encourage others to participate and share best practice. It is necessary that the impact plan must be developed in conjunction with the communication plan. This also helps celebrate successes and find new ways to innovate and improve.

Give & Gain Day, managed by Business in the Community, is the UK's only national day of employee volunteering. Critical to the programme's success is communication. In 2011 working alongside CSR360 GPN Partners and international companies the day took place in 16 countries resulting in 535 companies and 27,530 employee volunteers working on 422 projects around the world. This resulted in over 330,000 individuals in those communities most in need receiving over £3m worth of support.

Conclusion

Community Investment is an important part of CSR and it is more than just philanthropy - it focuses on how employers manage their activities in the community and creates a positive impact and mutual value for both society and business – and employee volunteering is a key part of this since its inception around fifteen years ago.

Employee volunteering is not only an effective and powerful way for employers to invest in their people and local communities, but it is also a highly effective way to make a difference and positively support EU policy areas and programmes such as Active Citizenship, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainable Development, Employability, Local Employment Development, European Social Fund, Regional Cohesion, Active Ageing, Life Long Learning, and Social Innovation.

Golden Rules for Employee Volunteering

1. The economic climate is an ideal opportunity to bring sectors together in sharing resources, skills, funds and creativity. Seize it.
2. Use an internal CSR framework to maximise impact.
3. The benefits of specialist skill-based volunteering are greater than generic volunteering.
4. Stakeholders from across the different sectors need to work together.
5. HR + CSR = much more than PR.
6. To manage volunteering impacts they must first be measured.
7. Communication plans are critical.

Glossary

This glossary gives the meanings of some of the terms used in P.A.V.E to aid in the understanding and implementation of P.A.V.E and does not form part of the Policy Agenda as such. The terms have been selected because they meet one or more of the following criteria: They may be unfamiliar; used with a specific meaning that is not directly described in P.A.V.E itself; have different meanings in different contexts, or be at risk of narrow interpretation. Other terms which are commonly used in volunteering policy have not been included in the glossary. Their meaning can be found in any English dictionary or encyclopaedia. The EYV 2011 Alliance online resources library is an additional unique source of reference material. <http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library>

Volunteering (FR: bénévolat & volontariat): Refers to all forms of voluntary activity in any location, whether formal or informal, full-time or part-time, occurring regularly or sporadically.

Volunteers: Are people of diverse groups including all races or ethnicity, gender, age, disability and religion undertaking a wide range of tasks in conditions meeting the following principles:

- Undertaken of a person's own free-will, choice and motivation.
- Without seeking financial gain i.e. Financial gain being neither the objective, nor the way to recognise the contribution or the achievement.
- Is a journey of solidarity and provides a way to address human, social or environmental needs and concerns.
- Is often carried out in support of a non-profit organisation or community-based initiative.

Volunteer-involving organisations: Includes all organisations that involve and/or provide opportunities for volunteers and can include those that are volunteer-led, offer support to volunteers or those that rely on volunteers to deliver their objectives.

Stakeholders: Volunteering stakeholders are people or formal or informal groups of people from the public or private sector who affect or can be affected by volunteering. That is to say that they have an interest in volunteering. For the purpose of P.A.V.E these people and groups of people are understood to fall under different stakeholder groups. P.A.V.E does not make direct recommendations to the media but instead calls on all stakeholders and especially civil society to engage with the media and gives specific recommendations concerning this. Beneficiaries of volunteering, whilst obviously stakeholders in volunteering, are not given specific recommendations but P.A.V.E reflects the fact that the needs and interests of beneficiaries of volunteering should be a central feature of all volunteering policies and programmes.

European Institutions: This includes all EU institutions involved in policy development and implementation as listed http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/index_en.htm but especially:

- EU legislative bodies: The European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission
- EU Consultative bodies: The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

Member States: Countries that are full member members of the European Union and their policy/legislative structures at all levels be that national, regional or local level. Since education policy is a member state competence recommendations concerning education providers are included in this section.

Social Partners: Trade unions and employers from any sector: profit; non-profit; public or private. Recommendations to the social partners imply action from members of both these sub groups.

Civil Society: P.A.V.E uses the CIVICUS definition: “the arena, outside of the family, the state, and the market where people associate to advance common interests.” Volunteer-involving organisations are the main grouping of civil society organisations focussed on in P.A.V.E.

Civil society organisations: The wide range of citizens’ associations existing to provide benefits, services, or political influence to specific groups within society. CSOs include: business forums, faith-based associations, local community groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), philanthropic foundations, and think tanks.

Social capital: Social relations that have productive benefits and can solve common problems. Social capital is about the value of social networks, bonding similar people and bridging between diverse people, with norms of reciprocity (Dekker and Uslaner 2001; Uslaner 2001).

Employee Volunteering:

- Applies to all employers regardless of sector be that profit, non-profit, public or private.
- Is carried out in work time/hours.
- Is employer enabled / induced.
- Has to have a social benefit.
- Is not unpaid work.
- Is voluntary and not enforced by employer.
- Is not employer supported volunteering outside working hours.

Brokers: People or organisations who are experts in the mechanics of brokering strategic partnerships between actors from different stakeholder groups, for example, private companies, government authorities and volunteer-involving organisations.

Working Groups recruitment and working process

The EYV 2011 Alliance Steering Group (SG) established 6 Working Groups (WG). The purpose of the WGs was to provide expertise and to develop and formulate recommendations to be included in the EYV 2011 Alliance Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe (P.A.V.E.).

Organisations were invited to submit nominations for the WGs in August 2010 and members were selected by the SG in September 2010 according to the criteria. The SG aimed to compose WGs of experts in volunteering which were gender and geographically balanced, representative of the member organisations of the EYV 2011 Alliance, and where both volunteers and professional staff were represented.

In order to allow for a maximum number of organisations and representatives to participate, organisations could nominate two candidates for each place in the WG who, if selected, would then share the attendance at WG meetings between them. If neither selected participants were able to attend a meeting then their nominating organisation could also send a substitute.

Eight places in each WG were available to member organisations belonging to the SG of the EYV Alliance, and 2 places in each WG were open to members of organisations belonging to the wider Alliance at that time. Travel and accommodation costs for the participants from the SG members were covered by the EYV 2011 Alliance grant and for participants from the wider Alliance by the organisations themselves.

Each WG met 5 times during 2011 and the WG members continued the work by e-mail or other communication methods in-between these meetings. The work of each WG was co-ordinated by two Co-Chairs, nominated by members of the SG. The working language of the Working Groups was English and the WGs were able to invite external experts to support their discussions with the participations costs being covered under the Alliance grant.

A full list of the WG participants and invited external experts is available as an annex.

WG Members criteria:

1. Working Group members should be interested in developing policy recommendations which support the development of volunteering in Europe to maximise the opportunities presented by the European Year of Volunteering.
2. Experience of the topic of the Working Group at national and/or local level.
3. Ability to communicate fluently in English.
4. Availability and commitment to participate at the 5 meetings or share participation at the 5 meetings of the Working Groups (attendance to between 2 and 3 meetings) and to work in-between meetings.

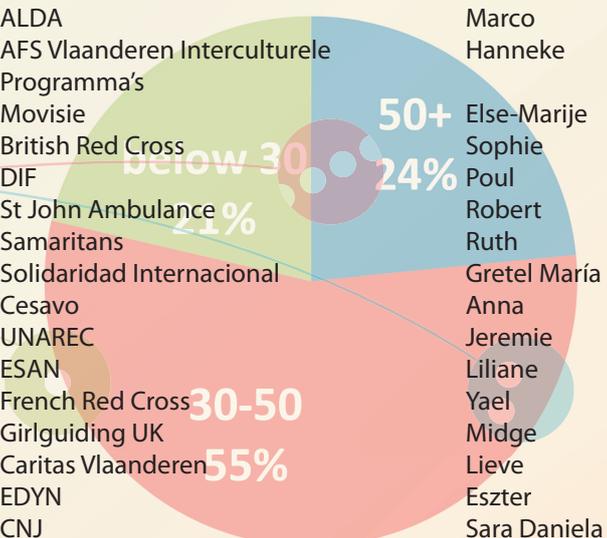
WG Co-chairs criteria:

1. Be a member of a member organisation belonging to the Steering Group of the EYV Alliance.
2. Have significant knowledge of the topic of the Working Group they will be chairing and experience of the topics at national and/or local level.
3. Have experience of chairing meetings and leading group discussion and team work.
4. Be prepared to develop the work programme of each Working Group, plan the meetings, co-ordinate the work with other Working Group Chairs, prepare reports for the EYV Steering Group and ensure the outcomes are achieved.
5. Be committed to attend each Working Group meeting.
6. Able to communicate fluently in English.

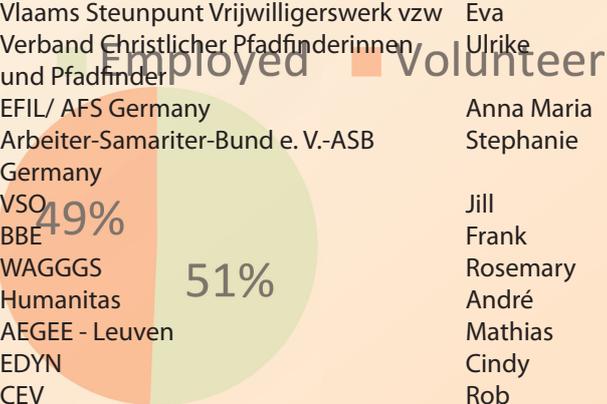
Working Group Participants

Nominating Org.	Full name of Local Organisation	Name	Surname
Euclid	Euclid	Filippo	Addarii
Red Cross/EU Office	Hellenic Red Cross	Olga	Antoniou
AGE	TAEN	Chris	Ball
CSR Europe	Forética	Beatriz	Berruga Garcia
Eurodiaconia	Diakoniewerk Gallneukirchen	Isabel	Beuchel
DG Enterprise		Susan	Bird
ALDA	ALDA	Marco	Boaria
YFJ	AFS Vlaanderen Interculturele Programma's	Hanneke	Boode
CEV	Movisie	Else-Marije	Boss
Red Cross/EU Office	British Red Cross	Sophie	Boullin
ENGSO	DIF	Poul	Broberg
JOIN	St John Ambulance	Robert	Broughton
Volonteurope	Samaritans	Ruth	Buchanan
Solidar	Solidaridad Internacional	Gretel María	Cabrera Galich
Volonteurope	Cesavo	Anna	Camposeragna
CVA	UNAREC	Jeremie	Chomette
ESAN	ESAN	Liliane	Cocozza
Red Cross/EU Office	French Red Cross	Yael	Collet
WAGGGS	Girlguiding UK	Midge	Coombs
Caritas	Caritas Vlaanderen	Lieve	Coorevits
AVSO	EDYN	Eszter	Csorba
YFJ	CNJ	Sara Daniela	de Barros e Castro
CEV	France Bénévolat	Michel	De Tapol
CSR Europe	CSR Europe	Sarah	Dekkiche
WOSM	Scouts et guides de France	Elise	Drouet
ISGF	ISGF	Anne	Dupont
AVSO	CSV	Steve	Egan
Volonteurope	LPCC	Margarida	Fernandes
Volonteurope	CSV	Tamara	Flanagan
Volonteurope	Itineraire International	Olivier	Flury
European Lotteries		Patricia	Foito e Camisao
CEV	SMART	Gordana	Forcic
ENGAGE	BITC	Gennie	Franklin
WOSM	Les Scouts	Anne	Gabriel
ESAN	Secours Populaire Français	Christian	Glenat
CEV	Vlaams Steunpunt Vrijwilligerswerk vzw	Eva	Hambach
WOSM	Verband Christlicher Pfadfinderinnen und Pfadfinder	Ulrike	Hanebeck
YFJ	EFIL/ AFS Germany	Anna Maria	Hass
Solidar	Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund e. V.-ASB Germany	Stephanie	Havekost
Volonteurope	VSO	Jill	Healey
CEV	BBE	Frank	Heuberger
WAGGGS	WAGGGS	Rosemary	Hindle
Solidar	Humanitas	André	Hudepohl
AEGEE	AEGEE - Leuven	Mathias	Ingelbeen
AVSO	EDYN	Cindy	Ippel
CEV	CEV	Rob	Jackson
ENGSO	ENGSO Youth	Natasa	Jankovic

Age of WG Participants



WG Participant's Status



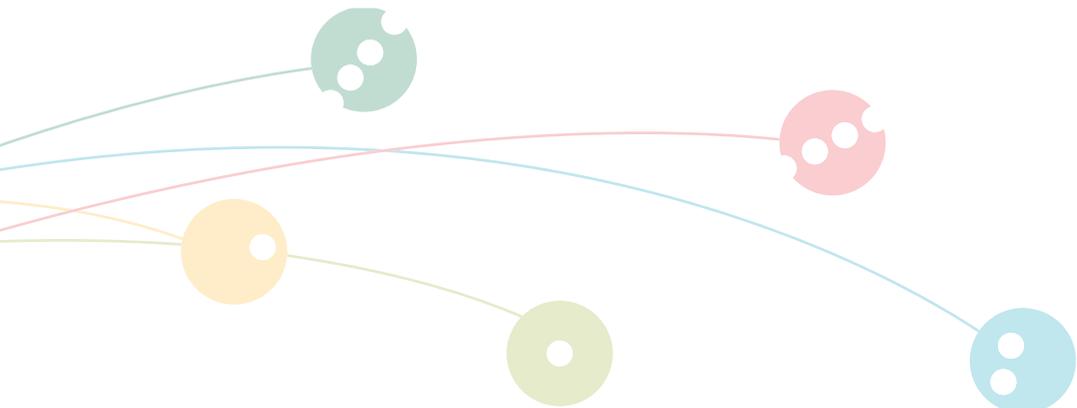
Volonteuropé	Youth Communication Centre	Jugoslav	Jevdjic
Red Cross/EU Office	Lithuanian Red Cross	Vaida	Kaduškevičiūtė
ENGSO	Finnish Youth committee of sport	Kristiina	Kangas
YFJ	CYC	Margarita	Kapsou
Volonteuropé	CSV	Veronika	Kasparova
AVSO	EDYN	Boglárka	Kertész-Farkas
AVSO	Experiment e.V	Ana Laura	Klaehn
IBLF		Elena	Korf
Alliance	Citizens in Action	Xenia	Koutentaki
CSR Europe	Randstad	Eveline	Kramers
ENGAGE	UPJ	Peter	Kromminga
YFJ	YFJ	Magdalena	Kurz
ESAN	ESAN	Christoph	Kusche
Volonteuropé	Itineraire International	Clémentine	Laforet
AGE	AGE	Nicole	Legrain
ENGSO	DIF	Niels Cristian	Levin Hansen
WAGGGS	The Green Girl Guides	Iben	Lindemark
CSR Europe	CSR Europe	Laura	Maanavilja
ENGSO	CCPR / SRA	James	MacDougall
YFJ	LIJOT	Arnas	Marcinkus
Solidar	Solidaridad Internacional	Ana Maria	Martin
Volonteuropé	KPMG	Roisin	Murphy
Volonteuropé	European Civic Forum	Alexandrina	Najmowicz
AVSO	EDYN	Anne Marie	Nielsen
		Boile	
WAGGGS	Greek Guiding Association	Christianna	Papailia
YFJ	Hellenic National Youth Council	María	Paschou
YFJ	Allianssi	Silja	Pietikäinen
CEV	AVM-CSV Marche	Benedetta	Polini
CEV	PILnet	Atanas	Politov
CEV	FUNDAR	Juan	Poyatos
CVA	BTCV	Anita	Prosser
Solidar	Solidaridad Internacional	Marcos	Ramirez Berceo
Red Cross/EU Office	Finnish Red Cross	Erja-Riitta	Reinikainen
CEV	Pro Vobis	Cristina	Rigman
Progress Works		Tamsin	Rose
Red Cross/EU Office	Slovak Red Cross	Zuzana	Rosiarova
			Kesegova
Solidar	Solidaridad Internacional	Sandra Victoria	Salazar Victoria
Red Cross/EU Office	Croix-Rouge de Belgique	Eline	Sauvage
Solidar	Humanitas	Bart	Schenke
Red Cross/EU Office	Austrian Red Cross	Bernhard	Schneider
Eurodiaconia	Diakonisches Werk der EKD	Stephanie	Scholz
Volonteuropé	Hammersmith & Fulham Volunteer Centre	Marion	Schumann
	St John Cymru-Wales	James	Shaughnessy
JOIN	ASB Deutschland e.V.	Doris	Siebolds
Solidar	EFIL/ AFS Finland	Anni	Siltanen
YFJ	Slovak Red Cross	Sona	Sladeczkova
Red Cross/EU Office	NOC Serbia	Damir	Štajner
ENGSO		Olja	Stojanovic
Coca-Cola Hellenic Bottling Company AD Zemun			
WOSM	ZTS	Tomaz	Strajnar
CEV	SOS Malta	Claudia	Taylor-East
AGE	BAGSO	Elke	Tippelmann
YFJ	ČRD M	Pavel	Trantina

Gender of WG

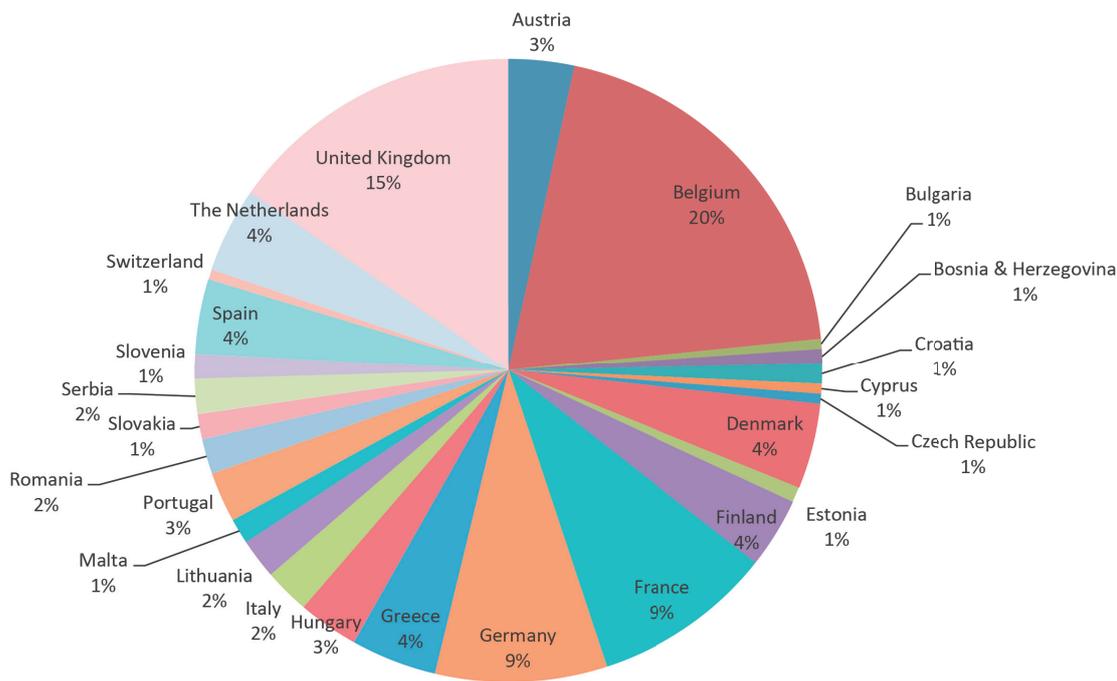
Male
%

Female
66%

AVSO	EDYN	Ferenc	Turcsik
Volonteurope	TSEN	Sandra	Turner
Solidar	Solidaridad Internacional	Katarzyna	Tusiewicz
AVSO	AVSO	Agnes	Uherezky
Eurodiaconia	Diakonie Österreich	Clemens	Unterberger
ENGSO	LUNK	Hanna	Vaininen
ENGSO	NOC Estonia	Priit	Vene
Red Cross/EU Office	German Red Cross	Robin	Wagener
WOSM	Scouts en Gidsen Vlaanderen	Pieter	Willems
Red Cross/EU Office	Bulgarian Red Cross	Dimitar	Zafirov
Red Cross/EU Office	French Red Cross	Maurice	Zouaghi



WG Participant's countries of residence



Endnotes

- 1 http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/124863.pdf
- 2 http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/reding/pdf/news/20110920_en.pdf
- 3 http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/emu_history/documents/treaties/rometreaty2.pdf,
http://www.eu2007.de/de/News/download_docs/Maerz/0324-RAA/English.pdf
- 4 <http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library/item/39-the-european-year-of-volunteering-eyv-2011-discussion-paper>, <http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library/item/40-eyv-2011-alliance-position-paper-available-in-different-language-versions-2008>
- 5 http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/focuson/crisis/index_en.htm
- 6 <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/document/activities/cont/201109/20110901ATT25750/20110901ATT25750EN.pdf>
- 7 http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/124863.pdf
- 8 <http://www.nfenetwork.eu/>
- 9 <http://www.euro26.org/> <http://www.isic.org/>
- 10 <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/ekcyp/index>; www.ivr.org.uk
- 11 http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/reding/pdf/news/20110920_en.pdf
- 12 http://consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/124863.pdf
- 13 For example, in the policies of CSR, sports, education, civil protection, health and social care, inclusion, employment and combating poverty, lifelong learning, immigration and integration as well as environment and foreign affairs with EHVS etc.
- 14 <http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library/item/395-better-return-on-investment>
- 15 <http://www.easea.eu/>
- 16 See definition in glossary
- 17 <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/lifelong+learning>
- 18 <http://evmp.eu/>
- 19 <http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library/item/32-csr-laboratories-bringing-the-european-alliance-on-corporate-social-responsibility-to-life-engage-2008>
- 20 <http://www.economist.com/node/14301663>
- 21 Following the same basic principles: Validity – evidence submitted should be appropriate to the learning claimed; Reliability – the extent to which there is inter-assessor agreement or consistency; Sufficiency – the quantity and range of evidence should be sufficient to determine competence across the full range of learning outcomes; Authenticity – the evidence must be verifiable; Recency – the activities should have taken place within a certain time-frame.
- 22 <http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library/itemlist/tag/Quality%20of%20volunteering>
- 23 Country examples were drafted with the help of several law firms. Please note that the text provides general information and/or examples of the subject matter(s) covered and is not a comprehensive treatment of those subjects. It is not intended to provide legal advice, and readers should not rely on it but seek specific legal advice before taking any legal action with respect to the matters covered. Other examples may be found in the The “Legal Status of Volunteers in Europe” research study, carried out jointly by the European Volunteer Centre (CEV) and the Association of Voluntary Service Organisations (AVSO).
- 24 Such as the Draft European Charter on the rights of volunteers developed by the European Youth Forum and supported by the Stakeholder Conference held in September 2011 in Brussels. Another example from national level is Charte du Benevolat from Luxembourg from 2001.

- 25 A rights-based approach towards volunteering integrates the norms, principles, standards and goals of volunteering, acknowledging the specific context and different forms of volunteering as the point of departure. It establishes volunteers as active rights-holders and creates corresponding duties for responsibility-holders. Furthermore a rights based approach aims to empower and enable the rights holder to claim their rights.
- 26 Including supporting structures.
- 27 http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news/news1015_en.htm
- 28 http://www.ilo.org/global/statistics-and-databases/meetings-and-events/international-conference-of-labour-statisticians/WCMS_100574/lang--en/index.htm
- 29 Volunteer Management Manual JINT vzw p32

- 30 Value: thoughts on recognition of competences in voluntary work produced in the framework of the Grundtvig Learning Partnership Project "Recognition of non formal learning in voluntary work".
- 31 Based on questions developed by World Organisation of the Scout Movement
- 32 Produced in the framework of the Grundtvig Learning Partnership Project "Recognition of non formal learning in voluntary work".
- 33 <http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library/item/395-better-return-on-investment>
- 34 <http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library/item/382-paper-on-the-economic-value-of-volunteering-and-contribution-in-kind-euclid-volonteupe-2011>
- 35 http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/3B227B67-63F5-4D18-A406-57BE8B04DD0F/0/Volunteering_The_business_case.pdf

Chronology of European legislation and key policies on volunteering

- 1983 – European Parliament Resolution on Voluntary Work
<http://www.eyv2011.eu/resources-library/item/436-resolution-on-voluntary-work-european-parliament-1983>
- 1992 – The Maastricht Treaty: Established the concept of European citizenship.
<http://www.eurotreaties.com/maastrichtec.pdf>
- 1997 – Treaty of Amsterdam: Recognised the contribution of volunteering and encouraged the European dimension of voluntary organisations.
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/topics/treaty/pdf/amst-en.pdf>
- 2001 – White Paper on European Governance: Stresses the importance of the active involvement and participation of the EU.
http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/com/2001/com2001_0428en01.pdf
- 2000 – Council of Europe, Convention on the Promotion of a Transnational Long-term Voluntary Service for Young People
<http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/175.htm>
- 2001 – White Paper on Youth: Volunteering recognised as a key element of youth policy.
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2001:0681:FIN:EN:PDF>
- 2006 – EESC Opinion on Voluntary activity: its role in European society and its impact
http://eescopinions.eesc.europa.eu/EESCopinionDocument.aspx?identifier=ces\soc\soc243\ces1575-2006_ac.doc&language=EN
- 2007 – White paper on sport called for the promotion of volunteering and active citizenship through sport.
http://ec.europa.eu/sport/white-paper/doc/wp_on_sport_en.pdf
- 2008 – EP report on the role of volunteering in contributing to economic and social cohesion
http://www.cev.be/data/File/EP_ReportVolunteeringSocialCohesion08.pdf
- 2009 – Council of Europe Conference of INGOs recommend a joint CoE/EU EYV 2011.
http://www.coe.int/t/ngo/Articles/CONF_PLE_2009_REC3_voluntary_action_en.asp
- 2009 – EESC opinion on European Year of Volunteering 2011
http://eescopinions.eesc.europa.eu/EESCopinionDocument.aspx?identifier=ces\soc\soc366\ces1716-2009_ac.doc&language=EN
- 2009 – Treaty of Lisbon: New legal basis for volunteering: article 149(1) concerning sports, article 149(2) concerning participation of young people in democratic life in Europe and article 188(5) on the Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps.
<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cmsUpload/cg00014.en07.pdf>
- 2010 – PACE Resolution 1778
<http://assembly.coe.int/main.asp?Link=/documents/adoptedtext/ta10/eres1778.htm>
- 2010 – PACE recommendation 1948
<http://assembly.coe.int/main.asp?Link=/documents/adoptedtext/ta10/erec1948.htm>
- 2010 – Committee of the Regions opinion on the European Year of Volunteering 2011
http://coropinions.cor.europa.eu/CORopinionDocument.aspx?identifier=cdr\ecos-iv\dossiers\ecos-iv-039\cdr273-2009_fin_ac.doc&language=EN
- 2011 – EC Communication on EU Policies and Volunteering: Recognising and Promoting Crossborder Voluntary Activities in the EU
http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc1311_en.pdf
- 2011 – Council of Europe Committee of Ministers response to recommendation
<http://assembly.coe.int/Documents/WorkingDocs/Doc11/EDOC12723.pdf>
- 2011 – Council Conclusions on Volunteering and social policy
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lisa/124863.pdf
- 2011 – Council conclusions on the role of voluntary activities in sport in promoting active citizenship
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/126411.pdf
- 2011 – EYV 2011 Alliance Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe (P.A.V.E)
- 2011 – UN Resolutions leading to IYV+10
<http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org/iyv-10/resources/doc/resolutions-leading-to-iyv-10.html>

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