European Conference on Youth: Mobility of Young Volunteers across Europe
Prague, March 12 and 13, 2009

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Introductory statement

In the Czech Republic, volunteer work has a long tradition. Volunteering in communities and non-governmental/non-profit organisations has been developing since the 19th century; however, it especially experienced a revival in the 1920s and 30s, following the formation of Czechoslovakia. It is gratifying that this beneficial activity also plays a strong role in our current times. Thousands of youth leaders from various groups associated with children and youth organizations demonstrate a great example of volunteering, which results in a huge benefit to the younger generation per se, as well as to our society as a whole. Some organisations have adopted a system of preparation and education of volunteers, and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic now provides specifically targeted support for such initiatives. Every year, more and more young people get involved in volunteering both at home and abroad.

There are 3 basic forms of volunteering in the Czech Republic: regular volunteer activities in non-governmental/non-profit organisations, school institutions dedicated to leisure time education and other associations; broad activities within the overall Public Act on Volunteering; and last but not least, activities within the European Voluntary Service associated with the Youth in Action Programme. The Czech Republic has issued a Public Act on Volunteering which came into effect in 2002 and resolves security issues associated with volunteers who perform activities in compliance with this Act. Currently, an amendment to this Act is in preparation with the objective of adding issues particularly associated with ongoing volunteer activities by members of non-governmental/ non-profit organisations for children and youth for the benefit of these organisations, and to publicly acknowledge the skills and experience that young people systematically acquire during their volunteer work.

Considering our long-term tradition and the rich experience associated with volunteering, together with the importance of governmental support for young volunteers in a European context, the Czech Republic, on the occasion of its Presidency of the EU, has established volunteer work as an essential priority in the youth field. Consequently, the European Conference on Youth that focused on the mobility of young volunteers within the European Union has become the main tool to accomplish this priority.

We are glad that our invitation has been accepted by the majority of the EU countries and their experts involved in the area of volunteer work, including high-level representatives of

the European Commission. I believe that through newly established contacts, inspiring discussions, a broader exchange of experience and a clear definition of current problems and suggestions to resolve them, this will provide a strong stimulus for the further development of volunteer efforts among our youth throughout Europe. Therefore, I am convinced that through this Conference, the Presidency of the Czech Republic has made a remarkable contribution to the fulfilment of the objectives that had been set out for the youth field. This Conference has also confirmed the benefits of coordinating initiatives in the area of volunteer work on a European level. Besides launching the implementation of the Council's Recommendations on Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU, we can also be pleased that volunteer work will be back in the forefront of our attention in 2011 which has been declared the European Year of Volunteering. The Czech Presidency appreciates these activities and fully supports them.

Our sincere thanks goes out to all volunteers and their organisations, along with our very best wishes for their continued success in the future.

Jaroslav Tuček, Director General of the Department of Youth, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic

Introduction

By Jana Tikalova

Volunteering has been a dominant element in European youth work, on an institutional level, in many countries for many years. It also has been part of the personal lives of many people. It can be viewed as an approach necessary for learning, for gaining experiences and for personal development. It can also be viewed as a necessity for many NGOs and civic associations working with young people or children.

On the European level, volunteering became part of the objectives and criteria for European youth projects under the Youth in Action Programme of the European Union, which developed a conceptual framework for volunteering.

Within the Council of Europe and the European Union, volunteering is a youth work practice and cross-border volunteering was developed long-term in order to reach its recognition and quality standards. Many NGO's and young people themselves were consulted whilst improving the European system of volunteering, reaching high quality standards and international recognition on many a large scales.

The common aim of the European Union, the member states and the Council of Europe is to support, promote and provide standard quality volunteering schemes in each member state, recognised on the national and international levels, and in various fields; not only youth fields but the business sector too, and not only as *an* experience but as a *life long* experience impacting on the personal growth of a young person from whom society can and will benefit.

For this reason, key European documents and mechanisms promoting and supporting volunteering per se were developed by the European Union: the *Council Recommendation on Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU,* the *European Voluntary Service Charter* and the *Quality Charter for Mobility,* and the self-assessment tools, *Europass* and *Youthpass* recognising skills and knowledge learnt through volunteering experience.

Today volunteering and cross-border volunteering are still influenced by national policies and obstacles in national laws. Many youth NGOs and civic associations for whom volunteering is mainstream, as well as volunteers themselves, are very much affected and challenged.

Therefore this conference, estimated to bring together some 100 experts and specialists from the ministries, volunteers and NGO representatives, was set up and planned by, and as a part of, the Czech Presidency. The main idea was to review and find improvements to existing offers, analyse current needs, promote volunteering and cross-border volunteering on national and international levels and beyond the spheres of the non-profit sector, explore new opportunities for young people and volunteers, exchange and discuss projects for implementing volunteer programmes as good practices. Furthermore, it also aimed to develop concrete proposals to the European Commission on improvements to volunteering based on the key European instruments on volunteering. Five workshops running throughout the whole conference with the titles *New opportunities, Quality, Recognition, Promotion* and *Capacity-building* were developed and designed in a way to reach the Conference aims.

This report provides full information on the main elements of the conference, the process of work and the outcomes and results reached. It also describes some concrete follow-up actions and plans taken straight after the Conference.

Programme of the Conference

Wednesday
March 11, 2009

> Possible arrival of delegations, accommodation, dinner
> No organised evening programme

Thursday
March 12, 2009

9:00-10:30	Plenary session welcoming address: Czech Minister of Education, Youth and Sports, Mr. Ondřej Liška guest speeches : Director-General for Education and Culture of the EC, Mrs. Odile Quintin President of the European Youth Forum, Mr. Tine Radinja Director for Global Citizenship of HP Corp., Ms. Jeannette Weisschuh President of Czech Council of Children and Youth, Mr. Aleš Sedláček The European Youth Forum, Mr. Michal Kadera
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break
11:00-12:00	Introduction to the workshops in the plenary session, Ms. Karin Loibl-Lopatta, the European Commission
12:00-13:00	5 workshops, time for case studies and best practices presentations
13:00-14:30	Lunch *Prague Congress Centre – Restaurant ZOOM*
14:30–16:00	5 workshops
16:00-16:30	Coffee Break
16:30–18:00	5 workshops
18:30–21:00	Dinner together with a "fair" of youth volunteer projects *Prague Congress Centre*

Friday

March 13, 2009

9:00-10:30	"World cafe" – discussion about preliminary conclusions of individual workshops in plenum
10:30-11:00	Coffee Break
11:00-13:00	5 workshops
13:00-15:00	Lunch *Prague Congress Centre – Restaurant ZOOM*

15:00-17:00	Plenary session:
	  a) concluding statements of individual workshops
	  b) concluding speeches:
	Director of the National Institute of Children and Youth, Mr. Jiří Veverka
	Director for Youth, Sport and Citizenship of the EC, Mr. Pierre Mairesse
	Representative of Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Jan Kocourek

17:00-17:15	Group photo
19:00-23:00	Dinner and cultural programme

Saturday
March 14, 2009

Departures

SUMMARY OF KEY NOTE SPEAKERS

The European Conference on Youth, held in Prague between March 12ᵗʰ and 13ᵗʰ 2009, was opened by 5 speakers representing the governmental, non-governmental and corporate sectors:

Mr. Ondřej Liška, Minister of Education Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic

Mrs. Odile Quintin, General director of the European Commission

Mrs. Jeannette Weisschuh, Director of Global Citizenship, HP Europe

Mr. Michal Kadera, Board member of the European Youth Forum

Mr. Aleš Sedláček, President of the Czech National Youth Council of Children and Youth

This conference tackling the issues of volunteering and non-formal education was planned since the very first preparations of the Czech Presidency with the major aims of gathering experts and representatives of young people involved in volunteering and non-formal education in their countries, enhancing cooperation, improving the work conditions for volunteers in the area of youth, and attracting media attention.

Volunteering brings the European values of solidarity, non-discrimination and human rights into force from various aspects - for the volunteer him/her self and for society in general. It promotes mobility on all levels. Volunteering without barriers and as part of a lifestyle, as part of school curricula and further education, is a dream of many. It is for many organisations, which are the biggest promoters of volunteering, a corner stone. It is an investment in young people who today are the best educated and most technically advanced, as well as the most mobile.

In general, there are three major types of volunteering. Firstly, <u>regular voluntary activities in non-governmental organisations at local and national levels</u> running in accordance with national policies. In some national laws there are serious obstacles limiting the applicability of volunteering; i.e. obstacles in Czech law that does not apply to voluntary activities of members of the Czech non-governmental organisations working with children and youth. Secondly, the <u>European volunteer service within the Youth in Action Programme</u> provides benefits to young people travelling abroad not as tourists, but as young volunteers taking part in a European project promoting development in local communities. Through this programme, young people can develop their competencies, intercultural learning and personal growth. The evaluation of the Youth Programme 2000-2006 proves that the European

voluntary service was for many young people their first opportunity to travel abroad and participate in a youth project, to learn a new language and experience a new culture. It also proves that volunteer experiences have an impact on the future careers of 62% of young people. The third type of volunteering, are the <u>activities fostered by the law on the voluntary service.</u> I.e. the implementation of the *Council Recommendation on Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU* drafted in autumn 2008 during the French presidency. Two key European instruments, the *European Voluntary Service Charter* and the *Quality Charter for Mobility* are crucial legal documents for assuring the quality standards of volunteering. The European Commission's proposal of a European-wide effort to multiply youth volunteering opportunities across the EU, which was backed up by the member states, resulted in the *Resolution of the Council on the Recognition of the Value of Non-formal and Informal Learning in the European Youth Field.* The primary aim of this resolution, and a task of the EC, is to increase cross-border volunteering for young people and youth workers, including young people with fewer opportunities, and to ensure recognition of volunteers' skills and learning experiences. To reach this aim, self-assessment tools and instruments have been developed, *Europass* and *Youthpass,* were introduced by the European Commission, which facilitates the recognition of learning achievements of young people who have participated in the Youth in Action Programme.

Another key document developed by the Council of Europe is a *Portfolio for Youth Leaders and Youth Workers.* In June 2008 a group of experts on the recognition of non-formal education developed a revision of the joint working strategy of the European Commission and the Council of Europe, released in 2004 under the title *'Pathways towards validation and recognition of education, training and learning in the youth field'*. Governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions in the member states also play significant roles in the initiatives for the recognition of non-formal education.

In reality, the situation of young people is getting more serious. There is increased pressure from global competition requiring higher productivity and success in the global economy. The work of the non-profit and governmental sectors, and the role of formal and non-formal education, are crucial for success in the environment of global economic changes and challenges. Volunteer opportunities are not available to every young person. There are many vulnerable young people, especially in these current times of economic downturn, when unemployment has fallen below 7% to its lowest in decades. There is a high rate of unemployed youth compared to other age groups. I.e. Every year, 6 million young Europeans

leave school without any qualifications; young people are more than twice as likely to be unemployed; the demographic shift in European countries - falling birth rates combined with people living longer will itself shift a bigger burden of care onto young people. The priority should be to invest in young people and to ensure that they have the skills and resources to face the future as the greatest challenge is not only to survive the crisis, but to thrive once we leave the crisis behind. In the future there won't be any economic development and there will be a lack of jobs if there is no investment in young people. It is fundamental that not only governmental and non-governmental initiatives take part in supporting young people, but also businesses. Business companies do invest in young people by making available their means and resources, i.e. they support young entrepreneurs, usually a student team, to set up their enterprise by providing them Entrepreneur and Internship student programmes. They teach them to be socially and environmentally responsible, provide them soft skills training, and support their learning and the development of their competencies. In future, it will be skilled people who are the high tech innovators and entrepreneurs: the 20/20 generation (young people with the creativity and skills to become future employees). An example of a capacity-building initiative of young people is learning by using modern technology, such as web games where employees go to the NGOs and volunteer by teaching, expertise and/or consulting. Talented young people and future innovators often volunteer along side their jobs, work in very diverse intercultural teams, practice 'mobile working', network with other colleagues and employees, and develop their teamwork skills. Volunteering is the main tool to face these global challenges; it is a cornerstone of our society; it builds powerful networks and develops one's skills; it can significantly help young people with their careers, as it demonstrates their willingness to work for free, their experience living in foreign countries, and their language skills, competencies acquired and independence. The European Voluntary Service, engaging in cross-border volunteering, is a chance for young people to broaden their horizons, express their potential, and live as European citizens in the world.

The European Commission is ready to support initiatives to improve cross-border volunteering, its quality, networks and partnerships, by implementing the *Council Recommendation* of the 2009 European year of creativity and innovation. In 2008, it established a *High Level Expert Forum* in order to explore how to increase mobility for all young people, as the Erasmus and Youth in Action Programmes proved great tools for creating a generation of outward-looking, mobile, young people in Europe, with strong intercultural skills and a European perspective. In June in 2009, a *Green Paper* on promoting

the learning mobility of young people will be published. The Paper aims to encourage a new partnership for mobility, involving all stakeholders so that every young European has the opportunity to benefit from learning mobility. In April 2009, a proposal will be drafted for renewing the framework guiding the European Commission cooperation on youth policy with the member states. It will have a double approach: *Investing in youth* by assuring more resources and better coordination between policies and *empowering youth* by recognising that young people are an asset which can help to renew our societies and build a sustainable, innovative Europe. The new policy framework will aim to create more opportunities for young people in education and employment, improve young people's access to quality social services and civic participation, and foster youth solidarity with society and the world.

The European Commission has declared 2011 as *the European Year of volunteering,* which both contributes to volunteering activities and serves as a remarkable opportunity to raise awareness about volunteering, provide opportunities for self-education and personal development, and promote volunteer programmes and activities. The European Commission is ready to host a group of experts from member states and NGOs, and to launch a European Youth Volunteer Portal based on national portals.

The conference also focuses on the issue of recognition of the value of non-formal education and the progress that has been done in this regard on various levels. It provides a forum in which to exchange good practices, deal with the issue of mobility and the topics of volunteer activities promoting social inclusion and solidarity that are particularly essential in today's economic downturn, map the diverse areas of opportunities for international voluntary work for young people, reflect on the effectiveness of various instruments to get young people involved, enhance the recognition of learning outcomes and reinforce the support for volunteering in a form of legal instruments and frameworks by assuring the quality of volunteering schemes and programmes.

The key working document of the conference is the *Council Recommendation on Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU* as a backbone of the 5 two-day workshops with specific topics: New opportunities, Quality, Recognition, Promotion and Capacity-building. It stresses the *European Year of volunteering2001*, its role in cross-border volunteer programmes and its contribution to the promotion of volunteering on local, national and international levels with current and future EU member states.

SUMMARY OF THE KEY NOTES BY THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Karin Loibl-Lopatta, the European Commission

Volunteering is an important form of non-formal learning helping one to acquire skills and competencies; it helps to build community development, solidarity and European citizenship. It is an expression of active participation and citizenship. It bridges education and work; it enhances employability and improves competitiveness.

The European Commission welcomed young people's ideas and suggestions when launching the *White Paper*. In this document, young people brought attention to volunteering per se. The Resolution was drafted and all member states set 4 common objectives for voluntary activities: to develop, facilitate, promote and recognise volunteering. The European Commission monitors and writes reports on the implementation of the Resolution in member states that agreed to establish national strategies for volunteering, to encourage enterprise and peer-learning among member states and consider practical means of measuring the progress.

Cross-border volunteering has added value because it is a tool to promote education, employment, regional and social cross-border cohesion; it helps to improve mutual understanding and active participation in society; and it is essential for young people in the labour market. The problem the young people are facing is lack of opportunities. The European Commission proposed a solution to increase opportunities for young people in the *"Renewed Social Agenda: Opportunities, Access and Solidarity in 21st century Europe"* aimed at the promotion of mobility of young volunteers across the EU through cooperation between organisers of voluntary activities in different countries, whether civil society or public authorities, and to create more opportunities for cross-border volunteering.

The main features of the *Council Recommendation on Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU* are the topics of this conference: Information and raising awareness of cross border volunteering; Increasing opportunities for cross-border volunteering; Assuring quality through the development of self-assessment tools; Recognising learning outcomes of voluntary activities through instruments such as *Europass* and *Youthpass*; Promoting cross-border mobility of youth workers and young people in youth organisations; Paying particular attention to young people with fewer opportunities.

The topic of <u>Information, raising awareness and promotion</u> focuses on the improvement of the level of knowledge about voluntary activities; easier accessibility of the information on opportunities for voluntary activities abroad; making information available to all the relevant parties on their rights and opportunities; and the promotion of the exchange of information on the opportunities for voluntary activities**.**

The topic of <u>Development of opportunities for cross-border volunteering</u> is aimed at supporting the development of hosting capacities; supporting the creation of contact points for young European volunteers (National Agencies); promoting the use of existing European mechanisms that can help youth mobility such as mobility cards; promoting cross-border mobility for those active in youth work and in youth organisations; supporting information and training

The topic of <u>Assurance of quality through the development of self-assessment tools</u> aims to encourage organisers of voluntary activities to develop elf-assessment tools, taking into account the EVS experience, in order to ensure the quality of the cross-border voluntary activities.

The two final significant topics to work with are the <u>Recognition</u> of the learning outcomes of voluntary activities through instruments such as *Europass* and *Youthpass* and the <u>Promotion</u> of the use of instruments at the EU level that can facilitate cross-border voluntary activities by ensuring the transparency of qualifications, such as *Europass, Youthpass* and the European Qualifications Framework.

The European Commission will assist in, and put its efforts into, reaching these aims by supporting the member states in their implementation of the Council Recommendation; by encouraging and organising the exchange of information and experiences and by developing a European Youth Volunteer Portal.

WORKSHOPS

Abstract of the workshops

The main method for reaching the Conference's aims was working in small groups. Participants were pre-divided into 5 workshops according to their personal and professional interests. The topics of the two-day workshops dealing with certain issues of volunteering focusing on cross-border volunteering were as follows:

- *New opportunities for cross border volunteering*
- *Quality aspects in cross border volunteering*
- *Recognition of volunteering and non-formal education and learning*
- *Promotion of cross-border volunteering*
- *Building capacity of, and bridges between the organisers of voluntary activities*

Each workshop gathered some 15 – 27 participants. The structure, methods used, time allocated and process were identical for each workshop.

Based on reflection and assessment, participants shared good practices, identified obstacles in the area of each workshop, analysed their causes and impact and elaborated on potential solutions.

In the first part, some participants presented their projects as good practices of volunteering of their NGO and institution. These participants had been approached by the facilitators, and had prepared their presentations well before the conference took place. The project presented, name and organisation are listed in this report, in the appendix *Good practice*.

The second part focused on identifying the barriers, benefits and challenges of a certain workshop topic. In smaller groups, the participants brainstormed on specific questions aimed at recognising and categorising what the barriers, challenges and benefits of volunteering are in the topic of their particular workshop.

In the third part, the participants moved from brainstorming to clustering their ideas onto the key messages on volunteer activities and cross-border volunteering to be presented to other working groups.

In the forth part, a 'World café' method was used, where all participants circulated in the open space of each workshop. The facilitator presented the key messages of his/her working group

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and everybody was invited to give their opinion, suggestions and ideas to extend, broaden, shorten or cut some key messages.

The final part was devoted to working further and in detail, back in the original working groups, on the key messages on volunteering, focusing on a topic of a specific workshop. The aim was to develop a final product consisting of a list of some 10 key messages for each working group to be presented at the end of the Conference to the European Commission.

The participants should also consider possible next steps in the implementation process following the given recommendations and commitments and propose their follow-up.

Who cares about the ones caring about volunteers?
Building the capacity of, and creating bridges among, the organisers of volunteer activities

Background

Developing a capacity-building system is a challenging task, especially in the field of cross-border volunteering. Specific skills, knowledge and attitudes are needed from the side of the youth workers and youth leaders to be able to support, appreciate and work with foreign volunteers. There have been a number of opportunities already created in terms of policy as well as practice. Based on this fact the workshop will explore the environment in which cross-border volunteering takes place, with specific attention to organisational development, youth workers and youth leaders. It seems clear that there is no need to ask the question why it is important to support this specific group; therefore, the discussions will take off from the current state of affairs, the challenges and the existing opportunities in the context of cross-border volunteering.

Aim and focus

The starting point of the debate can be marked with following questions:

➢ What is the quality of volunteering possibilities in organisations and programmes?

➢ What are the different forms of building the capacity of individuals and/or organisations responsible for volunteering?

- ➤ What key competences are needed from youth workers and youth leaders? Which skills, attitudes and knowledge?
- ➤ How can volunteer organisations further develop their training and capacity-building programmes? What are good practices that already exist?
- ➤ How can a Charter of the rights of the volunteer enhance the quality of mobility?
- ➤ How can quality assurance of non-formal education enhance the quality of the learning experience of the volunteer?
- ➤ How can the Charter on the quality of mobility be used in organisations and programmes?
- ➤ What do organisations and youth workers/leaders need from institutions/partners to develop or to keep their volunteering schemes SMART?
- ➤ What are the possibilities for common capacity building, especially the role of networking and partnerships?

While discussing these questions, special attention will be dedicated to the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities.

How to move ahead?
Creating new opportunities for cross-border volunteering

Background

The number of trans-national volunteer opportunities within the EU appears – compared to programmes oriented toward other non-member countries – rather limited. And even the few European-focused programmes, such as the European Voluntary Service within the Youth in Action Programme, can not – due to various legal, administrative and economic limitations – exploit their full potential and create a sufficient volume of good quality placements for young volunteers.

Aim and focus

The first aim of the workshop is to complement the mapping exercise on existing cross-border volunteer programmes and to assess how to fully exploit their potential in terms of quality and quantity. The second focus is to reflect on existing organisations and programmes on local, regional and national levels and discuss their potential to develop a cross-border dimension. Furthermore, when discussing the adaptation of existing, or creation of new, innovative

volunteer opportunities, special focus should be given to the needs of young people with fewer opportunities.

The starting point of the debate can be marked with following questions:

➢ How can the potential of existing cross-border volunteering programmes be fully used?

➢ How can local, regional and national volunteer programmes be converted into cross-border programmes?

➢ How can organisations be supported to develop mobility for their volunteers?

➢ How can existing networks of volunteer organisations be used to create new cross-border volunteer opportunities?

➢ How can the balance between the quality and quantity of cross-border volunteer opportunities be ensured?

➢ What is the added value of cross-border volunteer programmes for organisations and individuals and how can this value be promoted?

➢ How can innovation and creativity in cross-border volunteering be enhanced?

➢ How can the participation of young people with fewer opportunities be enhanced?

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How to get the message across?
Promotion of cross-border volunteering

Background

The field of information about existing opportunities for youth volunteering features a variety of modern, attractive and youth-friendly communication tools and channels. Schools and municipalities are getting more involved. Not only social and educational projects, but also major sport or cultural events promote opportunities for large-scale volunteer work. However, according to national reports, raising awareness about volunteering programmes and their image has – in general – remained an urgent challenge.

Aim and focus

The main aim of the workshop is to map the diverse landscape of cross-border volunteer opportunities for youth with its wide thematic range and reflect on the different ways and existing instruments to spread the message about cross-border volunteer schemes and about

their benefits among young people. Special focus will be given to assessing the user-friendliness and effectiveness of the different tools which would motivate young people for cross-border voluntary activities.

The starting point of the debate can be marked with following questions:

➢ How wide is the current range of cross-border volunteering opportunities? Who are the providers?

➢ What is the added value of cross-border volunteering for the personal development of young volunteers? What are the benefits for organisations?

➢ What are the motivational factors for young people to become volunteers and for organisations to host and work with volunteers (What should be promoted)?

➢ Who can and should promote cross-border volunteer opportunities? What is their motivation for it? (Who should promote it?)

➢ How can the added value of cross-border volunteering (intercultural competences, learning languages etc.) be promoted?

➢ What are effective ways and instruments of reaching prospective young volunteers, and specifically young people with fewer opportunities? (How to promote)?

➢ How can new technologies and the internet be used to promote volunteering and mobility?

➢ How can the potential of ex-volunteers in promoting volunteering (peer information) be utilized?

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What brings "the fruit" in volunteering programmes?
Quality aspects in cross-border volunteering

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Background

There is a wide range of volunteering programmes and activities which take place in a variety of contexts. Thus, it is complicated to set common quality. Quality assurance can enhance the recognition of both individual learning outcomes and the available volunteer schemes and can as well assure the support of volunteering by legal frameworks and instruments.

Concerning the quality of cross-border volunteer schemes, several quality standards have been put in place (e.g. the European Voluntary Service Charter or the Charter on the quality

of Mobility), some of them supported by suitable training opportunities. Nevertheless, there is no common approach that is being followed. Concerning the legal frameworks, there are different practices in various Member States.

Focus and aim

The workshop will focus on the development and assurance of quality in volunteer activities for young people in general, and in cross-border volunteering in particular. The starting point of the debate can be marked with following topics:

➢ What constitutes quality in volunteering in general and in cross-border volunteering in particular?

➢ What quality standards are available? Do they meet the expectations of all stakeholders? How are these standards assured?

➢ What further instruments and measures of quality assurance can be used / developed?

➢ What is the impact of the existing tools for the recognition of individual learning outcomes on the quality of cross-border volunteer activities?

➢ How accessible is cross-border volunteering for young people with fewer opportunities?

➢ How can appropriate quality assurance be transferred among different levels (local, regional, national, European)?

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Better volunteering through more recognition
Recognition of volunteering and non-formal education and learning

Background

The meaning and visibility of non-formal education have been significantly raised in recent years and this process has increased the need for recognition of its value for society as well as the recognition and validation of individual learning outcomes. Recently, there have been some important developments continued or initiated on different levels. On the European level, the EU Council Resolution on the recognition of the value of non-formal and informal learning within the European youth field has led to the creation of youth-specific elements in Europass. In the summer of 2007, Youthpass was launched by the European Commission to better recognise learning outcomes of young people who participated in the Youth in Action

programme. Along with this process, the Council of Europe has also worked on the issue of developing a Portfolio for youth workers and youth leaders and the European Youth Forum on quality assurance framework for non-formal education. In June 2008, a workshop of experts on the recognition of non-formal learning in the youth field brought together researchers, policy makers and practitioners to take stock of the achievements and work on new strategies and initiatives. As a result of the Workshop, the common working strategy of the European Commission and Council of Europe, first published in 2004 under the title *Pathways towards Validation and Recognition of Education, Training and Learning in the Youth Field,* is currently being revised to be better suited to the coming years. Many initiatives to recognise non-formal education and learning have also been initiated in Member States, by governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions.

Aim and focus

The workshop aims at reflecting on these developments, initiatives and instruments and at assessing their impact and potential, specifically in the area of cross-border volunteer activities for young people.

The starting point of the debate can be marked with following questions:

➢ What are the benefits of volunteering for communities/societies?

➢ What are the benefits for volunteers themselves? What are the learning outcomes?

➢ How do volunteer organisations support the learning process?

➢ How can these benefits to the individual, the organisation and society be made visible?

➢ Which stakeholders are/should be involved in the recognition? How can/should these stakeholders co-operate on recognition?

➢ What instruments are available to enable recognition? How widely used are they? How useful and suitable are these instruments when it comes to recognition of cross-border volunteering?

➢ To what extent are these instruments known, relevant and recognised beyond the youth field?

Specific questions related to cross-border volunteering for young people:

➢ What constitutes the added educational value of cross-border volunteering in comparison with volunteering on local, regional and national levels?

➢ To whom and how can this added value be promoted?

➢ What is the potential and what are the limits of the existing instruments for recognition of the educational aspect of cross-border volunteering?

Summary of the working process in the workshops

<mark>**Who cares about the ones caring about volunteers?**
Building capacity of and creating bridges among the organisers of volunteer activities</mark>

Facilitator: Tibor Škrabský
Reporter: Petr Syruček

There were 15 participants taking part in the workshop, out of whom 3 participants presented good practices of their organisation / project.

Anca David, VIEWS (Belgium)
Topic: Work with visually impaired (VIP) youth

Emanuela Patrono, Giovanni delle Acl (Italy)
Topic: work with socially excluded young people

Viliam Michalovič, IUVENTA, Slovak Youth Institute (Slovakia)
Topic: Slovak model of increasing abilities of the coordinators of volunteers 'Apetiser'

Key questions to identify benefits, barriers and challenges in building capacity of and creating bridges among the organisers of the CBV

1. Why do organizations not use cross-border volunteering?
2. What might the organisations need to implement cross-border volunteering in their programmes?

Barriers of CBV programmes:

- administrative obstacles + visa issues
- expensive CBV programmes and lack of financial resources
- xenophobia and fear of others and of the new
- lack of trust in the CBV programmes and negative attitude towards volunteering
- language barrier
- lack of internal structures, policies, guidelines, human resources
- lack of information
- waste of the organisations' energy – volunteer gets experience and leaves

Challenges of CBV programmes:

- personal growth of volunteers and programme providers
- interaction between different policies and programmes
- more mobility among Member states
- greater visibility of the CBV programmes in public
- trained staff of CBV providers

How to move ahead.
Creating new opportunities for cross-border volunteering

Facilitator: Ondrej Lochman

Reporter: Jana Tikalová

There were 22 participants taking part in the workshop, out of whom 5 participants presented good practices of their organisation / project.

Catherine Pfeifer, SCI - Service Civil International (Switzerland)

Topic: Workcamps as a key: Swiss-Bulgarian example

Gerda Van Roelen, Agentschap Sociaal-Cultureel Werkvoor Jeugd en Volwassenen (The Netherlands)

Topic: Using the potential of EVS program

Zuzana Poláčková, UNDP Europe and the CIS Bratislava Regional Centre (Slovakia)

Topic: On-line volunteering

Amandine Hubert, High Commission for Youth, Department of youth, non-formal education and volunteer organisations (France)

Topic: Cross border volunteering in France

Kamil Zeman, Together (Czech Republic)

Topic: Junior Internet

Key questions to identify benefits, barriers and challenges of creating new opportunities in CBV

1. What is the potential of existing cross-border volunteering programmes?

CBV programmes:

➢ promote intercultural competencies

➢ help to better understand the European and other countries

➢ help to gain new perspectives

➢ give expertise to organisations (CBV programmes have impact on local level)

➢ provide education for future leaders

➢ give recognition to volunteers (youngsters, unemployed)

➢ run workcamp programmes, which function as an opportunity to have a first experience

2. Why and how can local, regional and international volunteer programmes be developed into cross-border programmes?

Reasons for CBV programmes:

➢ need to promote the intercultural learning and raise awareness of global issues

➢ need to provide volunteer positions in new fields

➢ need to strengthen civil society

➢ need to make public opinion more visible

Ways to develop volunteer programmes into cross-border programmes:

➢ enable greater and more effective exchange of information and experience

➢ enable the comparison of the status and material conditions of organisations

- ➢ enable the use of existing networks
- ➢ create conditions to easily find NGOs that already have experience with international programmes
- ➢ fulfil the needs of organisations which host volunteers
- ➢ propose short- and long-term volunteer programmes and especially include young people with fewer opportunities.

Barriers of CBV programmes:

- ➢ lack of finances and resources
- ➢ poor level of language competence
- ➢ cultural and geographical differences
- ➢ lack of information
- ➢ lack of quality standards and ability to be open to new things
- ➢ legislative, administrative, economic and political barriers
- ➢ not enough possibilities to take risks with experience
- ➢ lack of cooperation with schools
- ➢ administrative obstacles for volunteers and organisations (i.e. visa issues)
- ➢ Rigid criteria for a volunteer to be a volunteer

Challenges to the CBV programmes:

- ➢ find synergies between existing structures
- ➢ open programmes to non-EU citizens and migrants
- ➢ Increase the visibility of volunteer programmes through PR activities

How to get the message across.
Promotion of cross-border volunteering

Facilitator: Jana Bělohlávková
Reporter: Eva Hloužková

There were 23 participants taking part in the workshop, out of whom 3 participants presented good practices of their organisation / project.

Kathrin Balmer, Swiss National Youth Council (Switzerland)
Topic: East project

Petr Vaněk, Czech-German Youth Exchange Coordination Centre TANDEM (Czech Republic)

Topic: Tandem

Agnieszka Moskwiak, The Polish National Agency of the Youth in Action Programme (Poland)

Topic: Mixer

Key questions to identify benefits, barriers and challenges relating to promotion of CBV

The group focused on:

➢ young people

➢ non-governmental youth organisations

➢ the general public

➢ public authorities (including institutions of formal education)

➢ the business sector

➢ the media

1. <u>What are the incentives for the target group to be interested in the topic of promotion?</u>

The incentives for young people are:

➢ gaining new experience

➢ going abroad and travelling is "cool"

➢ living independently

➢ learning and using (a) foreign language(s)

➢ making a difference

➢ being different (not everyone becomes a volunteer)

➢ meeting new people and discovering new cultures

➢ personal development

➢ gaining skills for work

The incentives for non-governmental youth organizations are:

➢ status, good reputation as an "international" organization

➢ sharing experience

- ➢ exchange of youth workers
- ➢ learning from international volunteer and his or her experience
- ➢ valuable contribution to the work of the organization from volunteers
- ➢ foreign volunteers as a motivation for minorities and other young people with fewer opportunities

The incentives for the general public are:
- ➢ new insight into other cultures
- ➢ promotion of intercultural exchange or multicultural society
- ➢ concrete benefits for local community
- ➢ increase of cultural sensitivity

The incentives for public authorities are:
- ➢ in some countries there is an "obligatory mission" – public authorities are expected to be actively involved in the community development
- ➢ volunteering helps lower the unemployment rate
- ➢ possibility of contact with public authorities in foreign countries (part of foreign policy)
- ➢ better relationships with businesses (offer of better qualified and more competent workers)
- ➢ schools open to intercultural experience therefore the schools as well as volunteering gain prestige and good reputations

The incentives for the business sector are:
- ➢ good reputation
- ➢ volunteering provides young people with new competencies, thus helping to decrease unemployment
- ➢ free advertising
- ➢ volunteers gain valuable skills (intercultural competence, mobility, openness, confronting difficult circumstances, self-confidence)

The incentives for the media are:
- ➢ research results on the value of volunteering
- ➢ human interest stories
- ➢ ability to reach young people (new readers)

1. <u>Who should promote to the target groups?</u>

Who should promote to young people:

➢ schools
➢ non-governmental organizations
➢ media
➢ business people
➢ churches
➢ ex-volunteers
➢ peers
➢ everyone

Who should promote to non-governmental youth organisations:

➢ youth councils

➢ public institutions (including schools)

➢ European Youth Forum

➢ ex-volunteers

Who should promote to the general public:

➢ national agencies

➢ ministries of education (at a formal level – e.g. by creation of brochures)

➢ ex-volunteers (sharing experiences)

➢ sending and hosting organizations (organizing workshops and conferences, participating in festivals)

➢ local authorities (networking, connecting with other European programmes)

➢ libraries

Who should promote to public authorities:

➢ Possible propagators differ depending on the society and culture.

Who should promote to the business sector:

➢ ex-volunteers working in business

➢ marketing people

➢ coalitions of volunteer organizations (umbrella organizations)

➢ mentors (because they see the results of volunteering)

Who should promote to the media:

➤ volunteer organizations (they can offer stories about the added value of volunteering)

➤ host organizations can promote volunteering at the local level in the local media

➤ providers of cross-border volunteering

➤ the state

1. <u>How to promote. (tools and ways to reach the target group)</u>

How to promote to young people:

➤ public meetings with ex-volunteers

➤ websites, blogs, facebook

➤ formal education (schools should inform students about volunteering and recognize it – e.g. universities might award students credits for volunteer activities)

➤ local actors, stakeholders

➤ leaflets, stickers, promotional materials

➤ computer games about volunteering

➤ young people with less access to information can be accessed via youth organizations

How to promote to non-governmental youth organisations:

➤ international gatherings, fairs

➤ publications, handbooks

➤ websites, information portals

➤ as a part of educational programmes for youth workers

How to promote to the general public:

➤ social campaigns

➤ *other tips are included in the previous section*

How to promote to public authorities:

➤ public events

➤ EU campaign(s)

➤ information about volunteering should be part of public officials' curricula

➤ ex-volunteers

How to promote to the business sector:

- ➢ websites
- ➢ newsletters
- ➢ student conferences
- ➢ face to face
- ➢ provide opportunities for employees to volunteer (employees could become cross-border volunteers; it would be good for the image of the company and the employees can gain intercultural competences)
- ➢ other:
    - ▪ youth organizations are not used to working with businesses

How to promote to the media:

- ➢ summer festivals
- ➢ campaigns
- ➢ international volunteering day
- ➢ volunteer week
- ➢ youth events
- ➢ famous people (they can become symbols of volunteering)
- ➢ contacts with young journalists (create personal connections, educate young journalists)

Obstacles to the promotion of CBV identified by the group

Young people

- ➢ fear of going abroad
- ➢ too big a challenge for young people
- ➢ volunteering is a waste of time for young people
- ➢ young people do not have time for cross-border volunteering; they are concentrated on school, their job and/or their family
- ➢ boring image of volunteering; volunteers can only do the easy work
- ➢ How to reach young people outside 'the system' (schools, non-governmental organisations)?
- ➢ "Social security" obstacles (unemployment benefits, insurance, etc.)
- ➢ spending time in formal education is more recognised by future employers
- ➢ programme guides, leaflets etc. have "strange" language for young people

Non-governmental youth organizations

➢ Lack of resources (financial, human)

➢ Reaching the more deprived (how to overcome social exclusion?)

➢ Administrative obstacles for organizations applying for funding

➢ national agencies do not provide sufficient support in the administration procedures.

➢ Getting in touch with small non-governmental organizations.

➢ Getting in touch with non-governmental organizations in rural areas.

➢ It is time consuming to apply for grants, inform young people and send and host volunteers. Non-governmental organizations do not have enough capacity.

➢ The structure of non-governmental organizations is not adapted to host foreign volunteers.

General public

➢ Getting noticed between all the advertising and diverse information. Make a difference.

➢ Demonstrating that cross border volunteering is beneficial to society as a whole.

➢ Lack of cooperation with other stakeholders

Public authorities

➢ Promotion is time consuming.

➢ Very few people from the ministries of education promote the Youth in Action

➢ Programme.

➢ Schools are locked in formal education, not open to non-formal education.

➢ Public authorities hardly accept activities or projects which are not anchored in some type of legislation.

Business sector

➢ Convincing businesses that cross-border volunteering increases competences of young people.

➢ Non-formal learning is difficult to measure.

➢ Not enough knowledge about providers of volunteering.

➢ Is volunteering in the business sector really a volunteering – giving time to society without ulterior motives?

Media

➢ Media often focus only on large events.

➢ Media prefer negative messages.

➢ Access to media can be difficult.

➢ Journalists are not interested in volunteer topics.

<mark>**What brings "the fruit" in volunteer programmes?**</mark>
<mark>**Quality aspects in cross-border volunteering**</mark>

Facilitator: Tomáš Pešek

Reporter: Marek Bindr

There were 17 participants taking part in the workshop, out of whom 3 participants presented good practices of their organisation / project.

At the beginning of the workshop it was made clear that we are talking about cross-border volunteering among EU countries.

Michaela Hlavica, ICYE, the Q-Label (Switzerland)

Topic: Quality standards in Switzerland - Intermundo

Uffe Sveegaard, Danish Ministry of Education (Denmark)

Topic: Quality Reform Programme in Denmark

Maarten Coertjens, European Youth Forum (Belgium)

Topic: Quality Assurance Framework

Key questions to identify the benefits, barriers and challenges of the quality aspects in CBV

1. How broad can the area of quality assurance be? What constitutes quality?

Quality supports; when and where:

➢ Providing safety to individuals (not only to volunteers but also to a group)

➢ Assuring quality in learning, maintaining individual learning

- ➢ Assuring quality systems of each individual state, i.e. training courses
- ➢ Having a clear aim for a programme
- ➢ During and volunteer's preparation and evaluation phases
- ➢ During the evaluation processes (before, mid-term, after)
- ➢ In role descriptions
- ➢ Quality is an element of enjoyment
- ➢ Transparency of the quality process
- ➢ In communication assuring effectiveness
- ➢ Financial aspect - contribution (the organization should be prepared for the unexpected)
- ➢ Assuring learning of the language and history of the country
- ➢ Positive experience (no adverse impact)
- ➢ Providing self-development
- ➢ In an area of social protection (i.e. health insurance)
- ➢ Providing good living conditions

2. The group agreed that there are different tools/ways of assuring quality (i.e. EVS charter, different levels – regional, national). Participants in groups tried to find, choose and identify existing and potential ways and tools to assure quality. Each group picked up one topic for discussion. The key messages come from the detailed process of each group.

The main topics are:

- ➢ Providing training to organizations and volunteers
- ➢ Security of volunteers and of the organization
- ➢ Monitoring (of the processes and evaluation – external and internal)
- ➢ Communication
- ➢ Finance (relevant financial support)
- ➢ Human resources
- ➢ Clear objectives in the quality assurance
- ➢ Satisfaction
- ➢ Supervision
- ➢ Benchmarking (to have a list of mistakes, best practices, examples of how other organizations work, get in spite of the good practice, learning from mistakes of others)

- ➢ Recognition of the EU Quality charter
- ➢ Diverse sources of finance
- ➢ Appropriate conditions for becoming a volunteer, clear description of the role of volunteer
- ➢ External accreditation
- ➢ Specification of quality indicators
- ➢ Legislation (stating quality standards)
- ➢ Self-assessments tools (focus on learning and developing)
- ➢ ECTS – European Credit Training System (credits from the university)
- ➢ Peer support (to learn from each other, to be honest – i.e. these are aims we are not reaching, mutual learning between different organizations)
- ➢ Agreement with stakeholders
- ➢ Quality Label (i.e. trade mark, logo)
- ➢ Certification agency – to focus on learning and self-development, not only on awarding a certificate

Better volunteering through increased recognition
Recognition of volunteering and non-formal education and learning

Facilitator: Monika Novosádová
Reporter: Šárka Václavíková

There were 23-27 participants taking part in the workshop, out of whom 4 participants presented good practices of their organisation / project.

Lorraine Tansey, Student Volunteer Coordinator from the National University of Ireland (The Republic of Ireland)
Topic: NUI Galway Student Volunteering Programme ALIVE

Magnus Anclair, Swedish Centre for International Youth Exchange 'CIU' (Sweden) Topic: ELD (Experience, Learning, Description) – a method for validation used in order to recognize learning experience.

Elena Dikaczova, the National Youth Council (Slovakia)

Topic: European Volunteering Forum: Strengthening of cross-sectoral dialogue in policy-making in the area of volunteering

Manfred von Hebel, Jugend für Europa (Germany) - German National Agency Youth in Action Topic: Youthpass – European Strategy on the validation and recognition of non-formal learning within the context of Youth in Action.

Key questions to identify benefits, barriers and challenges in recognition of volunteering and non-formal education and learning in CBV

1. What are three most important themes / issues to be recognized in cross-border youth volunteering?

Common most important themes are:

➢ Working time for society
➢ Personal development
➢ Self assessment
➢ Acquired skills and competencies
➢ Added value of volunteering – *what volunteering brings to different stakeholders (local community, employers, volunteers, hosting and sending organisations)*
➢ Ways of learning and new skills
➢ Comparability of acceptance – *how different tools for recognition can be compared and how to make sure they are accepted by different actors (society, employers, formal education)*
➢ International dimension
➢ Intercultural learning and understanding
➢ Duration of time
➢ Handling situations *(e.g. living in a different culture, being self-dependent, not speaking the language)*
➢ Actual work
➢ Informal learning
➢ Mind opener

➢ Multicultural aspect

➢ Specific training

➢ Facing challenges, personality development

➢ Experience

➢ Competences and new skills (i.e. language)

➢ Framework (cooperation, organization, training)

The most important issues to be recognized in CBV are grouped thus:

➢ <u>Contribution to society</u> (the work you do, engagement, usefulness, experience, added value of volunteering, type of experience, training for work, intercultural understanding, mobility, adaptability, intercultural + multicultural aspect)

➢ <u>Personal development + social skills</u> (handling situations, independence, language, ability to face challenges and deal with unexpected situations, independence, non-formal intercultural learning, communication, mind-opener, mobility, way of learning – new skills, self-reliability, acquired skills & competences, intercultural understanding, intercultural informal learning, intercultural competences, self-assessment)

➢ <u>Framework</u> (international dimension, assessment, comparability of acceptance, providers, duration)

According to this grouping, the participants looked more in depth at benefits, obstacles and challenges of promoting volunteering and non-formal education and learning in CBV.

2. What is the obstacle for the "ideal" situation for the "topic" being recognized?

Benefits of volunteering to the society – profit to the outside world:
➢ Lack of awareness of society
➢ Bad training of volunteers
➢ Lack of preparation of the hosting organization
➢ Lack of evidence, research
➢ Lack of common understanding

Individual learning outcomes - advantages to the volunteer:
➢ Inability to communicate soft skills

➤ Lack of awareness in a society

➤ Measurability of soft skills

➤ Lack of common framework

➤ *Why get the recognition?*

Framework - all conditions under which volunteering takes place:

➤ Comprehension (different perspective about it in different countries, lack of knowledge)

➤ Comparability (different ways to recognize)

➤ Quality assurance (how quality should be measured)

➤ Lack of resources (financial, human resources…)

➤ Lack of dialogue (networking and cooperation on different levels)

3. What should/can be done to overcome these obstacles?

Societal benefits of volunteering:

➤ Promote awareness at different levels by

    a)   using the European year 2011 to promote the recognition of learning outcomes

    b)   youth organizations have to promote the importance and the benefits of NFL among their members

➤   Open the debate to all stakeholders (including labour market) in order to increase mutual understanding. Bridge formal and non-formal education.

➤   Increase research in the field of non-formal learning at all levels. Generate comprehensive & comparable knowledge.

➤   Share good practices in the training of volunteers and improve this training according to the needs of the volunteers.

➤   Develop training for hosting organizations.

Individual learning outcomes:

➤   Develop and improve training within volunteering (all forms)

    a)   to help identify one's learning

b)   for example, EVS 2-day de-briefing

➢   Promote through campaigns the individual learning that comes from volunteering. (Especially with employers).

➢   Develop understanding within the formal education systems of volunteering and its benefits.

➢   Develop a common framework. Provide time, space, opportunities to develop soft skills through volunteering.

➢   Bring people together to discuss measurability. Create vocabulary/definitions and examples. Develop scales to measure improvement from the beginning to the end of the experience.

Framework:

➢   To create better understanding of the impact and "image" of cross-border volunteering through research and peer-learning activities.

➢   To promote the results of the research, to spread it widely and to use it.

➢   To create a space for dialogue between different stakeholders on the impact, importance, recognition, especially on the national level (and local level).

➢   To share experiences, talk about it to establish quality (assurance) based more on "output", not "structure" – in order to respect variety and diversity.

Summary of the outcomes of the workshops – Key messages

<mark>**Who cares about the ones caring about volunteers?**

Building the capacity of, and creating bridges among, the organisers of volunteer activities</mark>

1. To support the financial and organisational capacities of organisations by involving businesses and support them building up their Corporate Social Responsibility strategy around cross-border volunteering.

2. To make grant schemes less restricted in terms of variety and possibilities of volunteer activities and the use of grants, etc.

3. To simplify the administration procedures and application forms of the grant programmes.

4. To encourage local governments to support volunteer activities financially as well as through non-financial contributions.

5. To improve the compatibility of cross-border volunteering grant schemes (allowing co-financing from several programmes) maintaining the diversity of the programmes.

6. To support cross-border volunteers in organisations by other, experienced volunteers (using f. e. ex-volunteer structures in a greater way).

7. To establish support centres in order to increase the capacity building of providers at national or regional levels. They should serve as consultants, advisers and as resources of information on what measures are needed to support organisations in their cross-border volunteer work.

8. To create or use existing networks at international, national, regional and local levels to create a space for volunteer organisations to share practices (portals, exchange of good practice). This might help smaller organisations to host volunteers with the help of the network (administration, mentoring, training, applying for funding). Networks should be

supported by more diverse means, i.e. they should be able to apply for grants at all levels (European, national or local) regardless of their official location.

9. To use the results of projects´ evaluations. The potential for capacity building based on the previous experience of others is limited today.

10. To provide training on all relevant aspects of work with volunteers (e.g. soft skills, co-ordination, people management, conflict resolution, etc.).

11. To use existing grant programmes for language training of youth workers and members of organisations to enable them to communicate in other languages as it brings new opportunities to their work (i.e. by involving skilled youth workers in peer education).

12. To draw attention to the recognition of the work of leaders, youth workers and organisations and value their work.

13. To compare the legal basis of volunteering in different countries in order to obtain a better understanding of the volunteering field in Europe.

How to move ahead.

Creating new opportunities for cross-border volunteering

1. To identify the opportunities provided by the existing instruments (such as volunteer placements, programmes, schemes etc.) and to make the best possible use of them for setting up new opportunities for cross-borer volunteering. This can be reached by the sharing of information, good practices and bilateral cooperation.

2. To support the networking and sharing of good practices in the volunteer field in Europe (and beyond) by providing and promoting, for example, study visits, job shadowing and/or new technologies.

3. To support cooperation with non-EU countries and to lobby for the removal of any administrative obstacles (i.e. visa, taxes...) where appropriate.

4. To encourage local, regional and national policy makers and other relevant partners to create non-financial and financial incentives in order to encourage young volunteers to participate in volunteer programmes (i.e. free public transport, lower travel fares...).

5. To support young people, especially those with fewer opportunities; as they create new opportunities themselves.

6. To encourage local authorities and other relevant actors to facilitate cross-border volunteering.

7. To develop common short and long-term volunteering guidelines in order to clarify which benefits volunteers could benefit from and which responsibilities volunteers and volunteering organisations should care for.

8. To support and further promote flagship projects and/or pilot projects in order to enhance innovation and creativity in volunteering. Rather than on the achievement of pre-defined goals, the emphasis should be placed on the organisational learning process resulting from these projects.

How to get the message across.
Promotion of cross-border volunteering

1. Results of existing research of cross-border volunteering (consolidation of existing academic research and possible new research on the benefits (individual, organization, society) is instrumental to promote cross-border volunteering towards businesses, public authorities, media, non-governmental organizations and individuals), good practices and individual testimonies should be used in order to name and promote positive aspects and outcomes of cross-border volunteering.

2. The application process and reporting process should be simplified (less paper work, youth friendly language) and training tools for volunteers and organizations working with volunteers should be developed.

3. Ex-volunteers should be supported in becoming messengers, mentors or trainers and best practices should be promoted to attract media to disseminate these pieces of information to a wider public.

4. Trainings should be organized for youth workers and community leaders in order to inform them about cross-border volunteering and to enable them to promote cross-border volunteering to young people with fewer opportunities.

5. Cooperation among non-governmental organizations working on cross-border volunteering should be stimulated and the network should be visible, in order to promote together all the different possibilities and outcomes of cross-border volunteering.

6. The recognition of learning outcomes of cross-border volunteering is an important tool in order to promote the cross-border volunteering.

7. The awareness of common fields of interest between businesses and the volunteer sector should be increased through the creation of a common language on, and understanding of, skills and competences acquired during cross-border volunteering and required by the global business environment.

8. The language used should be clear an adapted to the target group, when promoting cross-border volunteering.

9. The promotion of cross-border volunteering has to be adapted to the daily life of young people in order to make it more appealing.

The group focused on 3 cornerstone topics and 1 general aspect of quality assurance in CBV:

➢ Security

➢ Internal and external quality assurance

➢ Peer review - an external quality assurance process (QAP), which complements the internal QAP with peer organisations (with similar backgrounds, fields of activities, etc.) aiming at mutual learning and the building of trust in the internal quality assurance process.

1.   To ensure the same health insurance and social security conditions for incoming volunteers as have other volunteers in that country.

2.   To ensure that there is a contact person(s), both in the host country and country of origin of the volunteer, providing volunteers with all necessary support and remaining in personal contact with them (i.e. mentoring).

3.   To create the tools for ensuring all necessary information and legal requirements for living in a new environment, respecting the specificity of each programme (i.e. by information package in shorter volunteer programmes or on-arrival training or seminars in longer volunteer programmes).

4.   To identify the quality indicators with the common basis but also respecting different realities (in legislation, culture and volunteer programmes) in each member state/ region/communities.

5.   People/institutions should be trained in common ways of supervising/assessing/evaluating based on identified quality indicators (both for internal and external supervision).

6.   External supervision can be performed in different ways:

a) Special NGO – watching processes in CBYVP

b) Peer review

7.   Official structure under the state (official inspection)

8.   To create tools for match-making in order to find appropriate peer partner.

9.   Peer reviews should be voluntary.

10.   To build "fair play" and a trustful environment between different organisations involved in mutual peer reviewing:
   a) by encouraging mobility of volunteers/employees/youth leaders between organisations with the aim of sharing experiences and to promoting job shadowing in mutual cooperation.
   b) by publishing the feedback/results/outcome of realized peer reviews in order to assure quality to the public (and other stake holders).

11.   To allow peer reviews not only among cross-border partners, but also among organisations from the same country. That means peer reviews can be done on different levels (regional, national, international).

12.   The system should be provided with relevant funding opportunities.

13.   To ensure equal opportunities (accessibility) for every volunteer to participate in the programme irrespective of social, cultural, geographical, physical … background and ensure appropriate additional support and funding for disadvantaged groups if necessary.

Better volunteering through higher recognition
Recognition of volunteering and non-formal education and learning

1.   Use the European year 2011 to promote the recognition of non-formal learning outcomes of volunteering, including cross-border volunteering, at all different levels.

2.   Youth organizations have to promote the importance and the benefits of non-formal learning within volunteering among their members and the people they work with.

3.   Promote individual learning that comes from volunteering (especially with the employers) by means of campaigns.

4.   Increase recognition of cross-border volunteering through the creation of mutual understanding of the impact and benefits of its outcomes, within:

- the formal education systems
- the labour market

   using specifically tailored processes which include all stakeholders.

5.   Increase research in the field of non-formal education and learning at all levels, ensure comparability of data and use it to promote better understanding of the impact and image of cross-border volunteering.

6.   Share good practices in the training of volunteers, improve training according to volunteers' needs and focus it on the benefits of all types of learning outcomes. Specific attention should be paid to the support of host organizations in those efforts.

7.   Create vocabulary, definitions and examples in the field of cross-border youth volunteering.

8.   Employers and formal education systems, as avenues of recognition, should facilitate opportunities and provide time to enable young people to develop skills within cross-border volunteering through existing frameworks.

9.   Develop and describe instruments to show, measure and prove improvement from the beginning to the end of the volunteering experience.

10.   To create space to share experiences to establish quality based more on the output than on structure in order to respect the variety and diversity of cross-border volunteering opportunities.

11.   To broaden the concept of Youth- and Euro-pass to open it up to all cross-border volunteer activities and at the same time to develop common recognition strategy (for volunteering).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This conference was organised by the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and the National Institute of Children and Youth, on the occasion of the Czech Presidency of Council of the European Union. The European Commission was an important partner in both setting objectives and providing the financial support of the conference. It brought together 125 specialists, politicians, non-profit and non-governmental organisations, governmental organisations and bodies, volunteers and young people working in the field of non-formal education and volunteering, with the concept of volunteering and cross-border cooperation in 29 countries in order to:

➢ Review existing offers and opportunities for young people to volunteer on national and international levels, with a special focus on cross-border volunteering within the Youth in Action programme of the European Union;

➢ Analyse existing needs for further development and improvement of volunteering for young people and volunteer programmes in terms of quality and recognition;

➢ Find ways of promoting volunteering beyond the spheres of the non-profit sector, at the national and international levels and explore new opportunities for young people and volunteers;

➢ Review non-formal education and its value within the context of volunteering;

➢ Discuss ways of supporting cross-border volunteering and increasing participation of young people in volunteer programmes;

➢ Formulate opinions on the challenges of and for the European documents and instruments on volunteering and draw up concrete key messages suggesting further improvement and development of volunteer programmes;

➢ Exchange and discuss projects implementing volunteer programmes as good practices.

The key working document was the *Council Recommendation on Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU.* The structure of the conference in order to reach its aims was stretched into 5 two-day workshops with specific topics: New opportunities, Quality, Recognition, Promotion and Capacity-building. The working groups of the workshops drew

up some 55 key messages that were presented to the European Commission, the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports and to all stakeholders and participants in the conference. The European Commission will establish a special working group for monitoring the results and the key findings of the conference. The European Union and the member states will be working further with the key findings in order to implement them in the European instruments promoting non-formal education and volunteering.

Results and conclusions

1.   The conference analysed past and current offers for volunteering across Europe on the basis of evaluation of the Youth in Action Programme 2000 – 2006, and its impact on young people, looking into the Youth in Action Programme for the period 2007 - 2013. The year 2011 has been declared by the European Parliament as the European Year of volunteering. It is a remarkable opportunity to raise awareness about volunteering, provide opportunities for self-education and personal development, and promote volunteer programmes and activities.

2.   Obstacles in national laws limit the applicability and recognition of European volunteer programmes. National policy-makers should put all their efforts into promoting volunteer programmes to all, and making them accessible to everybody. It is not the responsibility of the European Union to change national policies, visa relations between states, or social security for young volunteers. This is the duty of each member state.

3.   Young people are vulnerable, especially at this time of the global economic downturn; they are more than twice as likely to be unemployed. The challenge is to succeed once the crisis is past. Therefore, we need to keep investing, and invest even more in young people to support them in developing their skills and competences through non-formal education and volunteer programmes.

4.   Volunteering builds networks and supports collaboration and cross-border cooperation, which is one of the strongest elements in bringing about respect, tolerance, support and cooperation among different states and cultures. The European Commission is planning to launch the European Youth Volunteer Portal in order to support cross-border cooperation and volunteering *per se*.

5.   The European instruments, the *European Voluntary Service Charter* and the *Quality Charter for Mobility,* are crucial legal documents assuring the quality standards of volunteering, and recognition of volunteering at the European level. The European-wide effort is to multiply youth volunteering opportunities, increase cross-border volunteering, and ensure recognition of volunteers' skills and learning experience. The *Europass* and *Youthpass* are essential self-assessment tools recognising skills and learning experience. Hence, these instruments should be widely promoted and implemented in all member states.

6.   Support for the mobility of young volunteers across Europe and across borders is explicitly stated in the *Council Recommendation on Mobility of Young Volunteers across the EU* with the vision that all member states continue the implementation of the Recommendation. The European Commission will assist and support the implementation of the Council Recommendation in member states. In June 2009, a *Green Paper* on promoting the learning mobility of young people will be published. The Paper aims to encourage a new partnership for mobility, involving all stakeholders so that every young European has the opportunity to benefit from learning mobility. The new policy framework will aim to create more opportunities for young people in education and employment; improve young people's access to quality social services and civic participation; and foster youth solidarity with society and the world.

APPENDIX - GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<u>VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES/SERVICES</u>

1. Cross-border volunteer activities
2. Civic service
3. Civilian service
4. Volunteer service
5. Volunteer activities
6. European Voluntary Service

<u>EDUCATION</u>

1. Non-formal education
2. Non-formal learning
3. Informal learning

<u>COMPETENCES</u>

1. Competences
2. Key competences
3. Real competences

<u>OTHER</u>

1. Tools for recognition of individual learning outcomes (Youthpass, Europass, Youth worker portfolio)
2. Children
3. Young people / Youth
4. Mobility
5. Social inclusion
6. Open method of coordination
7. Young people with fewer opportunities

VOLUNTEER ACTIVIES/SERVICES

1. **Cross-border voluntary activities** (Council Recommendation on the Mobility of Young Volunteers Across the European Union)
    Open to all young people, undertaken by their own free will in the general interest, for a sustained period, within a clear framework and in a country other than the country of residence, unpaid or with token payment for, and/or coverage of expenses. Volunteer activities should not have an adverse effect on potential or existing paid employment, nor should they be seen as a substitute for it.

2. **Civic service** (REF: Analysis of national reports from Member States of the European Union concerning the implementation of the common objectives for voluntary activities of young people, 2007)
    Civic service is a volunteer service managed by the State or on behalf of the State, e.g. in the social sector or in civil protection.

3. **Civilian service** (REF: Analysis of national reports from the Member States of the European Union concerning the implementation of the common objectives for voluntary activities of young people, 2007)
    Civilian service is an alternative to compulsory military service in some countries, but not voluntary.

4. **Voluntary service** (REF: Analysis of national reports from the Member States of the European Union concerning the implementation of the common objectives for voluntary activities of young people, 2007)
    Voluntary service is part of voluntary activities and is characterized by the following additional aspects: fixed period; clear objectives, content, tasks, structure and framework; appropriate support and legal and social protection.

5. **Voluntary activities** (REF: Analysis of national reports from the Member States of the European Union concerning the implementation of the common objectives for voluntary activities of young people, 2007)
    Voluntary activities are all kinds of voluntary engagement. They are characterized by the following aspects: open to all, unpaid, undertaken by one's own free will, educational (non-formal learning aspect) and added social value.

6.   **European Voluntary Service** (REF: Youth in Action Programme Guide 2009)

The European Voluntary Service (EVS) enables young people to carry out volunteer service for up to 12 months in a country other than their country of residence. EVS is part of the Youth in Action Programme, which is the Programme the European Union has set up to support non-formal learning activities for young people.

EDUCATION

1.   **Non-formal education** (REF: COMPASS - Manual on Human Rights Education for Young People)

Non-formal education refers to any planned programme of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competencies outside the formal educational curriculum.

Non-formal education as practiced by many youth organizations and groups is:

➢   voluntary;

➢   accessible to everyone (ideally);

➢   an organized process with educational objectives;

➢   participatory and learner-centered;

➢   about learning life skills and preparing for active citizenship;

➢   based on involving both individual and group learning through a collective approach;

➢   holistic and process-oriented;

➢   based on experience and action, and stemming from the needs of the participants.

Non-formal education (REF: Policy Paper on Non-Formal Education: A framework for indicating and assuring quality, YFJ 2008)

Non-Formal Education is defined by the European Youth Forum as: an organized educational process taking place alongside mainstream systems of education and training, and does not typically lead to certification. Individuals participate on a voluntary basis, and as a result the individual takes an active role in the learning process. Unlike informal learning, where learning happens less consciously, in non-formal education the individual is usually aware of the fact that s/he is learning.

2. **Non-formal learning** (REF: Chisholm, L. (2005) Bridges for Recognition Cheat Sheet)

   Non-formal learning is purposeful but voluntary and takes place in a diverse range of environments and situations in which teaching/training and learning is not necessarily their sole or main activity. These environments and situations may be intermittent or transitory, and the activities or courses that take place may be staffed by professional learning facilitators (such as youth trainers) or by volunteers (such as youth leaders). Such activities and courses are planned, but are seldom structured by conventional rhythms or curriculum subjects. They usually address specific target groups, but rarely document or assess learning outcomes or achievements in conventionally visible ways.

3. **Informal learning** (REF: Chisholm, L. (2005) Bridges for Recognition Cheat Sheet)

   Informal learning, at least from the learner's standpoint, is non-purposeful learning which takes place in everyday life contexts: in the family, at work, during leisure and in the community. It does have outcomes, but these are seldom recorded, virtually never certified and typically neither immediately visible the learner nor intrinsically valid for education, training or employment purposes. APEL systems are one way in which the outcomes of such learning can be made more visible and hence open to greater recognition.

COMPETENCES

1. **Competence** (Key competences for lifelong learning, European reference framework, Nov 2004)

'Competence' is considered to refer to a combination of skills, knowledge, aptitudes and attitudes, and to include the disposition to learn in addition to know-how.

Competence (REF: Chisholm, L. (2005) Bridges for Recognition Cheat Sheet)

Competence is often used interchangeably with the term skill, but they do not mean exactly the same thing. Competence means the ability to apply knowledge, know-how and skills in a stable/recurring or changing situation. Two elements are crucial: applying what one knows and what one can do to a specific task or problem, and being able to transfer this ability between different situations.

2. **Key competences** (REF: Key competences for lifelong learning, European reference framework, Nov 2004)

Key competences represent a transferable, multifunctional package of knowledge, skills and attitudes that all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, inclusion and employment. These should have been developed by the end of compulsory schooling or training, and should act as a foundation for further learning as part of lifelong learning.

3. **Real competences** (REF: Policy paper on: Recognition of non-formal education: Confirming the real competencies of young people in the knowledge society, YFJ 2005)

Real competencies are understood broadly as encompassing all competences acquired through formal education, non-formal education and informal learning. Thus, this is a combined concept for those values, skills, qualifications and abilities - regardless of learning setting – which a person is able and motivated to apply.

OTHERS

1. **Tools for recognition of individual learning outcomes** (Youthpass, Europass, Youth worker portfolio)

Youthpass (REF: Youth in Action Programme Guide 2009)

Every person who has taken part in a Youth in Action project under Action 1.1, Action 2, and Action 4.3 (Training Courses) is entitled to receive a *Youthpass* certificate, which describes and validates the non-formal and informal learning experience acquired during the project.

All Youthpass certificates have a common structure, coherent layout, and contain the following information:

➢ personal details about the participant

➢ general description of the relevant Activity of the Programme

➢ key information concerning the project and the activities realized by the participant

➢ description and assessment of the participant's learning outcome during the project.

Through the Youthpass, the European Commission ensures that participation in the Programme is recognized as an educational experience and a period of non-formal learning and informal learning. This document can be of great benefit for the future educational or professional pathway of the participant.

Europass

(REF: http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/europass/home/hornav/Introduction.csp)

Europass is a tool helping people to make their skills and qualifications clearly and easily understood in Europe (European Union, EFTA/EEA and candidate countries). Europass consists of 5 documents where two documents ([Europass curriculum vitae (CV)](#) and [Europass Language Passport](#)) are filled in by the recipient; and three other documents ([Europass Certificate Supplement](#), [Europass Diploma Supplement](#) and [Europass Mobility](#)) filled in and issued by competent organizations.

Europass was established by the [Decision No 2241/2004/EC](#) of the European Parliament and the Council of 15 December, 2004 on a single transparency framework for qualifications and competences.

Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers (REF: [http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/Resources/Portfolio/Portfolio_en.asp](#))

The European *Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers* is an initiative of the Council of Europe in cooperation with experts and partners such as the European Commission and the European Youth Forum. It provides youth leaders and youth workers in Europe, volunteers or professionals, with a tool which can help them identify, assess and describe their competencies based on European quality standards. In using this portfolio, youth leaders and youth workers will not only contribute to the recognition of their experience and skills but also to efforts to increase the recognition of youth work and non-formal education and learning.

2. **Children** (REF: The Convention of the Rights of the Child, Article 1)

For the purpose of the prevent Convention, a *child* means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, adulthood is attained at an earlier age.

3. **Young people / Youth**

Youth (REF: United Nations, [http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/qanda.htm](#))

The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines *youth*, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by Member States. This definition was made during preparations for the International Youth Year (1985), and endorsed by the

General Assembly (see A/36/215 and resolution 36/28, 1981). All United Nations statistics on youth are based on this definition, as illustrated by the annual statistics published by the United Nations Statistics Division on demographics, education, employment and health.

Youth (REF: African Youth Charter, http://www.africa-union.org/root/au/Documents/Treaties/Text/African_Youth_Charter.pdf)
For the purposes of this Charter, *youth* or *young people* shall refer to every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years

Young people (REF: Youth in Action Programme Guide 2009)
Young people aged between 13 and 30.

4. **Social Inclusion** (REF: Policy Paper on Social Inclusion through Youth Participation, YFJ 2006)

Social inclusion is a term with no generally universally accepted definition and one which can be used to express a variety of ideas. As a process, social inclusion seeks to ensure that everyone, regardless of their circumstances and background, has the opportunity and means to participate more fully in society (e.g. commonplace economic, civic and cultural activities). As a result, social inclusion policies or strategies are commonly designed to prevent or reverse the marginalization and/or exclusion of individuals and communities, particularly members of the most vulnerable groups in society. If successful, such processes should lead to a more inclusive society: a society characterized by open and accessible structures and services; reduced inequality; respect for human rights; and increased social cohesion. "Feeling" included is as important as "being" included and social inclusion is necessarily concerned with the way in which individuals and communities can relate to their society more positively. In this light, social inclusion is strongly linked to the promotion of active citizenship.

5. **Mobility** (REF: Recommendation on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: European Quality Charter for Mobility, 2006)

Mobility in education and training is an integral part of the freedom of movement of persons — a fundamental freedom protected by the Treaty — and one of the main objectives of the European Union's action in the field of education and training, based both on common values and on respect for diversity. It is an essential tool for creating a genuine European space of

lifelong learning, promoting employment and reducing poverty, and helping to promote active European citizenship.

Mobility brings citizens closer to one another and improves mutual understanding. It promotes solidarity, the Exchange of ideas and a better knowledge of the different cultures which make up Europe; thus, mobility furthers economic, social and regional cohesion.

Intensifying European mobility and exchanges for education and training purposes, as well as events such as the 2006 European Year of Workers' Mobility, have a key role to play in achieving the Lisbon goal of making Europe the most innovative and competitive knowledge-based economy by 2010.

 Providing a better framework for mobility for education and training purposes within the EU will help to contribute to the achievement of a knowledge-based economy central to the creation of employment, sustainable development, research and innovation in the Member States.

6. **Open method of coordination** (REF: http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/index_en.htm)

The open method of coordination (OMC), created as part of employment policy and the Luxembourg process, has been defined as an instrument of the Lisbon strategy (2000).

The OMC provides a new framework for cooperation between Member States, whose national policies can thus be directed towards certain common objectives. Through this intergovernmental method, the Member States are evaluated by one another (peer pressure), with the Commission's role being limited to observation. The European Parliament and the Court of Justice play virtually no part in the OMC process.

The open method of coordination takes place in areas which fall within the competence of the Member States, such as employment, social protection, social inclusion, education, youth and training.

It is based principally on:

➢ jointly identifying and defining objectives to be achieved (adopted by the Council);

➢ jointly established measuring instruments (statistics, indicators, guidelines);

➢ benchmarking, i.e. comparison of the Member States' performance and exchange of best practices (monitored by the Commission).

Depending on the areas concerned, the OMC involves so-called "soft law" measures which are binding on the Member States in varying degrees but which never take the form of directives, regulations or decisions. Thus, in the context of the Lisbon strategy, the OMC

requires the Member States to draw up national reform plans and to forward them to the Commission. However, youth policy does not entail the setting of targets, and it is up to the Member States to decide on objectives without the need for any European-level coordination of national action plans.

7. **Young people with fewer opportunities** (REF: Chisholm, L. (2005) Bridges for Recognition Cheat Sheet)

Young people with fewer opportunities are young people from a less-privileged cultural, geographical or socio-economic background, or with disabilities.

Young people with fewer opportunities (REF: Youth in Action Programme Guide 2009)

Young people with fewer opportunities are young people that are at a disadvantage compared to their peers because they face one or more of the situations and obstacles mentioned in the non-exhaustive list below. In certain contexts, these situations or obstacles prevent young people from having effective access to formal and non-formal education, trans-national mobility and participation, active citizenship, empowerment and inclusion in society at large.

➢ Social obstacles
➢ Economic obstacles
➢ Disability
➢ Educational difficulties
➢ Cultural differences
➢ Health problems
➢ Geographical obstacles

APPENDIX - GOOD PRACTICES

Introduction

One of the conference aims was to actively involve the participants and give them a chance to make their contributions before, during and after the conference. Before the conference took place, the participants were informed about the opportunity to present and share positive experiences from their work. They were invited to contribute a project they had organised and/or run within their NGO and/or institution as part of the so called 'good practice' project to share it during a workshop or fair, or as part of the final report of the conference.

The template of the 'good practice' project was developed and sent to the participants in order to ensure a common format of all contributions. The questions in the format were rather guiding questions and it was purely up to each individual which aspects of good practice he/she would decide to describe. One condition was to keep comprehension, straight to the point of description, not presenting projects/initiatives that are well known and keep the recommended length of one A4 page, or a maximum of two A4 pages. Those good practice projects that did not fulfil given criteria were modified by the general reporter. The full versions are available on the web site of the conference http://www.msmt.cz/mladez/akce-k-predsednictvi-presidency-events

Altogether there are 10 descriptions of 'good practice' projects on volunteering in this part of the report, and six examples of projects on volunteering downloaded on the web site of the conference. During the workshops, there were altogether 18 presentations of projects focusing on volunteering and cross-border volunteering. The list of presenters and their projects are in the section 'workshops' of the report.

List of good practices
Name of the project/initiative:
ALIVE (A Learning Initiative and the Volunteer Experience) - The student volunteering Programme of the National University of Ireland, Galway
Ireland

Topic:

Student Volunteering in Higher Education Institutions in Ireland

Target group/s:

The ALIVE programme enables young people and students, aged 17-25, to volunteer locally, nationally and internationally. The majority of activities is centred in local organisations within the City of Galway and surrounding suburbs. Particular pockets of Galway city are considered disadvantaged and the volunteer programmes in these areas are extensive, including schools, homeless services, and youth-based programmes, refugee and asylum seeker centres, community gardens, and resource centres. International volunteering takes place in India, Africa and throughout Europe through Irish based sending organisations, like Suas and Habitat for Humanity.

Aim:

The ALIVE programme was established in 2003. Its goals are to:

➢ Increase the academic, personal & professional capacities of students through volunteering;

➢ Enhance partnerships between the University and the wider community through provision of a supportive environment in which students and the community can interact;

➢ Harness and promote volunteering on & off campus through public recognition of the commitment made by students to their communities.

Overall, ALIVE seeks to educate students for civic engagement and to harness and promote partnerships with communities.

Date:

Pilot year 2003-2004, currently in its sixth academic year (2008-2009)

Main partners (NGO, public authority, company, youth group, etc.):

Over 79 community-based organisations, schools, charities and non-governmental organisations.

Contact person/s:

Lorraine Tansey, Student Volunteer Coordinator

Website of the project/initiative: www.nuigalway.ie/alive

What was the impulse for your project/initiative?

NUI Galway's ALIVE programme was established by the Community Knowledge Initiative (CKI). Established in 2001 with the support of philanthropic donors, the CKI builds on the University's historical tradition of partnerships with communities. The vision of the CKI is to provide a framework for students, the community and the University to engage fully with each other, so that all become teachers and learners, and share in the vision of democratic collaboration both nationally and internationally.

What was the topic and how did you work with it?

Student volunteering is promoted and supported through an integrated programme including:

➤ volunteer opportunities website database with over 120 volunteer opportunities,

➤ series of volunteer training workshops,

➤ peer support reflection sessions and social gatherings,

➤ recognition through the NUI Galway ALIVE Certificate

Other:

➤ Reward students' volunteering efforts with the NUI Galway ALIVE Certificate for Volunteering.

➤ The ALIVE Volunteering Guide and Handbook were created as a resource to support students and community in effecting change through volunteering.

➤ ALIVE annual Volunteer Fair and Community Showcase through which NUI Galway students and staff can learn more about the community and voluntary sector.

What did you achieve? (Tangible outcomes, learning outcomes for your target groups/s, etc.)

➤ Increasing partnerships

➤ Effecting Change

➤ Alzheimer Society of Ireland

➤ Teddy Bear Hospital

➤ Road Safety Awareness

➤ Voter registration drive-Students

➤ Over 25 homework clubs in the city and suburbs

➤ Community Capacity Building

- ➢ Student Capacity Building
- ➢ Leading the Way - a national model assisting other institutions with advice and support

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

Consultation – facing time and development of volunteers overcome by a model that allow students to volunteer as much or as little time as they can, and to attend the optional training if they need more support.

Support Resources – facing different methods of recruiting, training and supporting student volunteers overcome by ALIVE Student Handbook for Volunteering with Children and Young People.

Partnership – facing a variety of reasons for volunteering overcome by maintaining good community partnerships

What further steps did your project/initiative initiate?

"The ALIVE Civic Engagement Fund" - projects managed by the students and mentored by a staff member of NUI Galway.

Name of the project/initiative:

Insurance in the field of volunteer work with children and youth in the Czech Republic

Czech Republic

Topic:

Framework of volunteer work

Target group/s:

Volunteers in children's' and youth associations

Aim:

Safety base for voluntary work

Date: since 1999

Main partners (NGO, public authority, company, youth group, etc.):

Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic

Contact person/s:

Ms. Michaela Prilepkova, Executive Manager of the Czech Council of Children and Youth

What was the impulse for your project/initiative?

Need of the member organizations for their stability and development.

What was the topic and how did you work with it?

How to insure volunteer work with children and youth and to address the interest of the organizations and parents in the same time. We found a relevant partner for this aim: the Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth.

What did you achieve? (Tangible outcomes, learning outcomes for your target groups/s, etc.)

A long term tool for the support of volunteer work in the youth field with more than two hundred thousand insured volunteers every year.

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

To respect the diversity of the children and youth associations and cover the essential activities and learning methods of all with one general insurance policy.

What further steps has your project/initiative initiated?

We could offer it as an impetus and know-how for other fields of volunteer work (social services, charity).

Any other comments?

Insurance in the field of volunteer work with children and youth in the Czech Republic

➢ as part of the service activities of the Czech Council of Children and Youth, it has created the basic framework of confidence and safety for participating organizations in their work with children and youth since 1999;

➢ at the same time it fulfils the public dimension of this service towards underage children and their parents;

➢ insurance of children and youth associations includes accident insurance and, since 2000, liability insurance as well;

- support of volunteer work in the youth field is a permanent priority of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, which covers 100% of the costs of the accident insurance policy and a fundamental part of the liability insurance policy (intended specifically for youth leaders and statutory representatives) from state subsidies;

- every year, more than two hundred thousand people (individual members of organizations) are directly covered by the accident insurance policy and at the same time, indirectly, all participants of the benefiting organization's activities as well, whereas just the biggest national event "Bambiriáda" itself has regularly more than two hundred thousand participants (visitors);

- tender for the insurance company is regulated by relevant Czech law. The contracting authority is the Czech Council of Children and Youth, which oversees the whole process up to the signing of the contract and registration of the insurance policy;

- it represents a system where the government sector (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports), non-governmental sector (Czech Council of Children and Youth, associations of children and youth) and business sector (insurance contractor) cooperate in such a way that volunteers benefit from the results.

Figures of the year 2008 (part funded by the state)

Number of insured in the accident insurance policy: 209 227 → state funding in the amount of 3 138 405 CZK

Number of insured in the liability insurance policy: 13 027 → state funding in the amount of 1 107 295 CZK

Name of the project/initiative:

Doduhy - Reach the Rainbow

Czech Republic

Topic:

Youth work, volunteering for foreigners in the Czech Republic, EVS

Target group/s:

Young people aged 18-30; young people with fewer opportunities from the age of 16

Aims:

➢ to give the chance to the international volunteers to discover the field of youth work in the Czech Republic

➢ to help Duha's local groups understand the benefits of international youthwork

➢ to connect the central Duha, the local groups and the international level

Date: 15.6.2007 – 15.10.2007; 15.6.2009 – 15.10.2009

Main partners (NGO, public authority, company, youth group, etc.):

Duha's local groups from 9 different cities in the Czech Republic, Duha central office, CNA and foreign partners

Contact person/s:

Marta Školkayová and Jana Šoupalová

Website of the project/initiative: www.duha.cz

What was the impulse for your project/initiative?

This project was developed based on the need of Duha to help the local groups understand the benefits of the international youth work and open themselves and their members for the international opportunities within the European Union.

What was the topic and how did you work with it?

In the first phase of the project (July-August), 9international volunteers were hosted by local groups of Duha. They participated actively in the daily life and work of these organizations, contributing with their previous experiences and fresh ideas.

Over the following 2 months, the volunteers came together again in the central office of Duha in Prague and summed up their investigative work in an attractive and informative material about Duha. In addition, the volunteers joined the preparation and running of two international workcamps and a weekend meeting of Duha' s local groups. The volunteers were coordinated by a team of people in Duha, consisting of an EVS volunteer, a local group coordinator and the EVS coordinator.

What did you achieve? (Tangible outcomes, learning outcomes for your target groups/s, etc.)

The project was beneficial both to the volunteers and to Duha. On the one hand, the volunteers had the possibility:

➢ to gain insight into other cultures, as well as

➢ the reality of Duha's local organizations

➢ to build friendships.

On the other hand, their work enabled Duha to spread out the awareness of Duha's values into the local groups and also to a broader public. Besides, the volunteers collected the needs of the local groups on central and international levels. They really brought a new colourful experience and contributed to the growth of our local groups.

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

In the beginning there were some small problems due to the lack of information about Czech children's camps on the side of volunteers, and also some linguistic and cultural misunderstanding on the Czech side. This year we are planning more detailed training for mentors and also a person to serve as an "ombudsman" for volunteers.

What further steps your project/initiative initiated?

Thanks to its success, the project was chosen as the best project of the Youth in Action initiative in 2007. Moreover, we got the opportunity to present the project at the Youth week in Brussels in November, 2008. Duha decided to repeat the project and our grant application has recently been approved for the year 2009. So, we are looking forward "to reach the rainbow" again this year! :)

Name of the project/initiative:

"Volunteering in NGOs" and the specific example of the "Franco-German Volunteering"

France

Topic:

Description of the French volunteering framework and how this existing framework and the German one came together to foster cross-border volunteering between France and Germany.

Target group/s:

Any individual from Europe can apply to "volunteering in NGOs" but the State offers special support for young volunteers between 18 and 25: it takes charge of the major part of the costs related to financial compensation and insurance, and it takes charge of special training intended to foster social and professional integration.

Aim:

"Volunteering in NGOs" is a framework dedicated to developing the social and professional integration of youth through missions operated in areas of general interest. This aim is complemented by intercultural learning for those who get involved through Franco-German Volunteering.

Date: Since the end of 2006, the beginning of 2007

Main partners (NGO, public authority, company, youth group, etc.):

In the main framework of Volunteering in NGOs, NGOs propose and settle volunteering missions. The State offers its support when volunteers are between 18 and 25.

In the specific case of France-German Volunteering, the German and French States, the Franco-German Youth Office and NGOs are the main partners.

Contact person/s:

Mr Bernard SAIGNE, High Commissioner for Youth, Department of Youth, Non-formal Education and Volunteer organisations

Website of the project/initiative: http://www.volontariat.gouv.fr http://www.ofaj.org

What was the impulse for your project/initiative?

The impulses of the Volunteering in NGOs were:

➢ to foster involvement in a mission of general interest, in particular the involvement of young people in order to develop their sense of citizenship and the social integration;

➢ to reinforce volunteering in NGOs.

The extra impulse of the Franco-German Volunteering was to foster intercultural exchanges between French and German young people, based on existing possibilities to get volunteer.

What was the topic and how did you work with it?

The aim of Franco-German Volunteering was to foster relationships between young people in France and Germany and to develop intercultural learning (language, professional skills). It has been settled by both governments on the basis of existing national volunteering frameworks and with the support of the Franco-German Youth Office which puts French and German NGOs in touch with each other.

What did you achieve? (Tangible outcomes, learning outcomes for your target groups/s, etc.)

On the basis of what NGOs initiated and proposed, the French State, through the legal framework "volunteering in NGOs":

➢ brings a legal status of volunteer which gives several guarantees to the volunteer : an activity taken into account for social insurance and pension, possible financial compensation;

➢ Takes charge of financial costs for young volunteers in order to promote their volunteering and takes charge of training and provides a personal tutor to foster the social and professional integration of youths through volunteering;

Moreover, through the Franco-German Volunteering,

➢ French and German national volunteering frameworks came together to foster relationships between the youth of both countries.

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

Franco-German Volunteering is based on national frameworks. The main challenge was therefore to manage to bring together two already-existing frameworks.

What further steps has your project/initiative initiated?

In France, before this summer, a commission should be invited to reflect to the possibility and feasibility of a single organization managing a common volunteering framework for France, which may include all the frameworks now existing, and improve the homogeneity the of volunteer's status.

Another prospect is to increase the number of "Franco-German Volunteers".

Name of the project/initiative:

Forest Care Youth Volunteer Program

Portugal

Topic:

Developing youth volunteering in nature conservation and forest fire protection.

Target group/s:

Public entities or private concerns, non-profitable organisations and young people, aged between 18 and 30 years.

Aim:

Promote volunteering activities in the field of nature preservation and conservation in different ways:

1. Inventory, signage, and maintenance of forest paths and access routes to water sources;
2. Cleaning and maintenance of picnic spots;
3. Fixed and mobile surveillance;
4. Logistical support for Forest Fire Hazard Prevention and Detection Centres.

Date: Since 2004, from 1 June to 30 September.

Main partners (NGOs, public authorities, companies, youth groups, etc.):

585 entities, mainly municipalities.

Contact person/s:

José Murta Rosa (programmes department director)

Website of the project/initiative: http://juventude.gov.pt

What was the impulse for your project/initiative?

The project has developed mainly because of two factors:

- In 2003 Portugal was devastated by forest fires;

- Number of young volunteers, who participate in volunteering projects, promote different entities in partnership with the IPJ in 2003 and 2004 (almost 9.000).

What was the topic and how did you work with it?

Developing youth volunteering in nature conservation and forest fire protection was the topic. In 2004, IPJ launched a pilot project in two different areas (Castelo Branco e Coimbra) with 120 volunteers. Concerning this pilot project, In 2005 the "Forest Care Youth Volunteer

Program" was launched under the provisions of Council of Ministers Resolution no. 63/2005, of 14 March. The program became a national project.

What did you achieve? (Tangible outcomes, learning outcomes for your target groups/s, etc.).

In the years since 2005 we have achieved a participation of 26,290 young volunteers. These young volunteers issued 2,967 fire warnings, cleaned 15,315 hectares of forest and collected 6,275 bags of garbage (50 liters each) .

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

The main challenge was to contact different entities to coordinate volunteer activities at the local level and organize all the necessary procedures and material logistics and distribution. We overcame this challenge with the development of contact networks (established between IPJ local services and local entities).

What further steps has your project/initiative initiated?

In resolution n°63/2005 preview the existence of entities that coordinate (promoters) volunteer work at the local level, and also entities that host volunteers.

Since the beginning of the project, the number of hosting entities was smaller than the number of promoters. So one of the further steps will be increasing the number of hosting entities as his role is very important for the mobility of volunteers in this project.

Name of the project/initiative:

Q-Label

Switzerland

Topic:

Quality Standards, Certification process, Quality Assurance

Target group/s:

All Swiss non-profit youth exchange organisations

Aim:

Setting common quality standards for Swiss non-profit youth exchange organizations in order to satisfy all stakeholders of youth exchange. Certified high standards for the quality of the exchange enables the member organization to demonstrate to possible volunteers, exchange students and host families the serious work and service they provide.

Date: Starting June 2000. Projected termination of first certification phase is June 2009.

Main partners (NGO, public authority, company, youth group, etc.): Intermundo, ICYE and others.

Contact person/s: Regula Häberli

Website of the project/initiative: www.intermundo.ch

What was the impulse for your project/initiative?

We believe that it is most important for young people to have profound experiences during their exchange. Therefore, the exchange/volunteering requires good preparation rather than chance. The belief that such quality standards raise our stakeholder's trust in our organization was the main drive.

What was the topic and how did you work with it?

Setting common quality standards. These were established over a long period in collaboration with all member organization as well as an external quality assurance company.

What did you achieve? (Tangible outcomes, learning outcomes for your target groups/s, etc.)

We achieved a common understanding of the importance of quality standards. This resulted in common quality standards which every member organization has to fulfill in order to be certified.

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

To get all the many different organizations on board. They all have different backgrounds and different procedures which makes coordination difficult. Therefore, it was a challenge to achieve a common set of understandings and acceptance of the Q-Label. The common quality standards required quite significant restructuring of the organizations.

What further steps has your project/initiative initiated?

To insure every member organisation's certification and for the future that every member organization achieves recertification (which is required every three years)

Name of the project/initiative:

Peace messengers

Belgium

Topic:

Promoting of a culture of peace through volunteering

Target group/s:

Young people (16-30 years old) around the world getting involved in SCI Programs

Aim:

To teach young people about a culture of peace and let them experience it by volunteering in an environmental or social project with other volunteers from different countries.

Date: year round

Main partners (NGO, public authority, company, youth group, etc.):

Youth groups and NGOs in various countries where SCI is active as well as experienced trainers

Contact person/s:

Catherine Pfeifer

Website of the project/initiative: www.sciint.org, www.spaceforpeace.net

What was the impulse for your project/initiative?

To train young people to become peace messengers. Peace messengers join work camps, which are social and environmental projects organized by SCI where young people (16-30 years old) from different countries volunteer, and organize workshops and games connected to a culture of peace.

The promotion of a culture of peace is the main aim of SCI. Therefore, this topic is also discussed in international meetings from which initiatives emerge.

What was the topic and how did you work with it?

The topic is a positive approach to peace (as opposed to the definition of peace as a state of non-war). A culture of peace can be defined as a set of values, attitudes, modes of behaviour and ways of life that reject violence and prevent conflict by tackling root causes to solve problems through dialogue and negotiation among individuals, groups and nations. (UN resolution)

It promotes

➢ sustainable economic and social development

➢ Respect for Human Rights

➢ Equality between women and men

➢ Democratic participation

➢ Understanding, tolerance and solidarity

➢ International peace and security

Trainers organize workshop and games on the topic connected to a culture of peace in SCI workcamps. Volunteers taking part in work camps can then learn about these issues and directly apply those concepts to solve problems that may emerge: volunteers learn to recognize and accept cultural differences, and to solve problems with other people in a non violent way.

Volunteers become conscious that they are part of the world and that they can contribute positively to society.

International seminars targeting trainers try to spread knowledge about a culture of peace available across all the organizations affiliated with SCI. In some countries, this knowledge is acquired by visiting workshops of other organization or hiring an expert.

What did you achieve? (Tangible outcomes, learning outcomes for your target groups/s, etc.)

More and more work camps and projects get are receiving visits by peace messengers. Therefore more young people taking part in SCI programs become empowered and realize

that they can make a positive contribution to society. Furthermore, increasing attention is given to the quality of informal education within SCI programs.

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

The major challenge is to find enough experienced trainers that can act as peace messenger. To overcome this we organize national peace education seminars aimed at training people to become peace messengers. International seminars on peace education are held in order to spread best practice and knowledge across the different countries where SCI is active.

What further steps has your project/initiative initiated?

The elaboration of a more professional tool box for trainers is under discussion in order to guarantee a better standard of quality for the workshops. Probably an international seminar will be held to spread knowledge to the various countries offering workcamps.

Name of the project/initiative:

Workcamps (organising and coordinating by Duha)
Czech Republic

Topic:

Volunteering

Target group/s:

Young people, NGOs and everyone interested in volunteering in projects with a public interest.

Aim:

To promote good practices, multiculturalism, tolerance towards different cultures and individuals, active citizenship, and the will to be helpful.

Date:

Most common during the summer, possible all year

Main partners (NGO, public authority, company, youth group, etc.):

SCI (as an international umbrella organisation), Ministry of internal affairs, Duha's local groups and other international organization (mostly NGOs)

Contact person/s:

Pedro Pires Henriques

Website of the project/initiative: http://www.trochujinak.cz/cz/workcampy

What was the impulse for your project/initiative?

To motivate young people to be responsible and participate in public interest projects, give them the chance to travel and be a part of the fulfilment of the needs of a community, international cooperation and collaboration, new experience for young people, international understanding. Duha has been organising work camps for more then ten years.

What was the topic and how did you work with it?

The topics vary between working with the international groups of young people, giving them the possibility to travel and explore the world of volunteering and understand the public interest; helping NGOs, environmental activities... As long as the aim is to fulfil some community needs.

What did you achieve? (Tangible outcomes, learning outcomes for your target groups/s, etc.)

Young people are repeating the experience and recommending the workcamps to their friends. It is a great opportunity for young people to discover something about themselves, new skills are constantly being tested in an intercultural environment, and even their language levels improve. The number of applicants is growing every year.

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

There were some minor complications, based on the volunteer status and cultural differences. The tool for solving this is to communicate and explain.

What further steps has your project/initiative initiated?

New projects abroad, new partnerships within and beyond our borders.

Any other comments?

It is a mix between fun, learning, and helping.

Name of the project/initiative:

"EVS of Sainte-Marguerite with young, visually impaired persons"

Belgium

Topic:

Coordinated EVS for visually impaired persons (VIP) in Liège, Belgium.

Target group/s:

VIPs from 18 to 30 years of age.

Aim:

To encourage mobility of young, visually impaired persons (VIP) through EVS in the framework of the Youth in Action Programme.

Date: From March 2007 to the present, there have been different projects taking place.

Main partners (NGO, public authority, company, youth group, etc.):

NGO's (North-South Health NGO, The social and cultural coordination of the Saint-Marguerite District NGO, Pink Orchid NGO …) & a public body (Royal Institute for blind and deaf persons)

Contact person/s: Anca David

Website of the project/initiative: www.views.be

http://www.views.be/english/SVE_coord_2006_EN.html

What was the impulse for your project/initiative?

We wanted to adapt EVS for persons with visual impairment.

What was the topic and how did you work with it?

All adapted EVS projects take place in different organisations in the neighbourhood of Sainte Marguerite in Liège, Belgium.

What did you achieve? (Tangible outcomes, learning outcomes for your target groups/s, etc.)

Increase of self confidence and autonomy skills for young VIPs. The young volunteers had better social and professional insertion after they got back home.

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

The main challenges concerned the young VIPs ability to live independently and work as volunteers in a different environment to their own.

What further steps has your project/initiative initiated?

More hosting organizations have asked to join this coordinated project. We are having more and more demands of young VIPs to join this EVS project. We are also diversifying the network of sending organizations abroad.

Any other comments?

This EVS project consists in 3 phases:

2005-2006: testing phase by VIEWS of 2 young persons (1 seeing, 1 VIP) for 6 moths of volunteering

2006: created a network of Sending Organisations in different European countries and of a network of 8 Hosting Organisations in Belgium. These 2 networks met during a Feasibility Visit in order to get to know each other better and to better adapt projects to the EVS rules in general and to VIP needs in particular

2007&2008: realisation of the coordinated EVS's of 4-an-a-half months, for 3 VIPs in the spring and 3 other VIPs in the autumn

Adapted EVS by VIEWS

The first 2 weeks of the EVS are dedicated to acquiring autonomy and to deepen the contact with the hosting association's activities and daily tasks for the volunteer

Sessions for organising mobility and daily living skills according to the needs of the volunteer to encourage him/her to be more independent

Volunteers are required to have a basic knowledge of French; they will also take French classes during their EVS period

Limited working time to 20 or 22 hours / week

Providing a reinforced mentorship during the EVS period

Adapting the workplace and providing volunteers with the necessary training to use the adapted materials (computers, etc…)

Assistance at the workplace and for leisure activities, if needed

Organising specially adapted training to improve communication and active listening

Organising 3 adapted cultural visits (city outings, exhibitions, etc…) during the EVS

Security: list of emergency contacts in Braille & large print, smoke and CO_2 detectors installed, land line in the apartment, possibility of taking specially adapted first aid classes

Name of the project/initiative:

BORN-FREE SCHOOL IN BANJARPALYA

Topic:

In the name of fighting illiteracy-linked child labor, the first Born Free School was built by 1000 children and young people from schools and colleges and with young volunteers from over 15 countries over the world. This school is located 20kms from Bangalore in Banjarapalya on the Kanakapura road and it has became a successful model education center…

Target group/s:

Children and Young Volunteers

Aim:

The aim of the project, which originated within the local Indian NGO, was to educate all those involved about the necessity of simplifying buildings – so that anyone could do it- about cost effective structures, about saving fossil fuels in the transportation of material, mobilizing children and young people from India to associate education with fun and make them see its importance for their future lives and to educate volunteers from overseas about the current situation in the educational sector in India and about the life of the street kids and child-

labourers. Every brick in the was put in place by a child or young person, not as a labourer, but in order to enrich his/her experience and contribute to his/her very own magnificent edifice.

Date: December 2000 – August 2002

Main partners (NGO, public authority, company, youth group, etc.):

United Games of Nations, Modellschule Graz, Janothsava, Gondwanaland Foundation

Contact person/s:

Werner Greis

Website of the project/initiative: www.unitedgames.org

What was the impulse for your project/initiative?

There are 333 million children in India, who make up one third of the population. Out of this, 150 million are in schools. A hundred million are either primary school dropouts or working and living on the streets. The local organization in India had already been working with quite a number of these children within the scope of their other projects. And they have realized the importance of the promotion of education among them, and decided to join the promotional campaign with the actually building of the school in a remote area where children normally had to travel long distances, which sometimes discouraged them or even their parents. The concrete project idea was conceived during the United Games International youth exchange "Oceans of Joy" in Bangalore in the year 2000 and later it was spread to all the different member countries of the organisation – partners of the local Indian NGO and also to other countries.

What did you achieve? (Tangible outcomes, learning outcomes for your target groups/s, etc.)

The primary school building in the rural area was raised by over a thousand young people from 35 other Indian schools and colleges and from Austria, Germany, Hungary, Switzerland, Japan, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Nepal, Bangladesh, Slovenia, USA, UK, the Czech Republic, China and Singapore. This was the first hands-on experience for many in

construction, but also in learning interactively about the education problems and issues of prevailing child labour and the lives of street children right in the location. Many of those who volunteered for this project or helped to fundraise for it back in their home countries became inspired by actually seeing the results of their work and fundraising campaigns and later applied for volunteer placements in many other local projects in India itself or in other countries.

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them?

The major challenge was that the main construction part of the project coincided with the terrorist attacks in the, which paralyzed many of the interested volunteers from overseas to fly in.

What further steps has your project/initiative initiated?

The school was built cost-effectively at Rs 200 per sq foot. Many people came to request a school in their own villages. It is a replicable model. The education department has taken a keen interest in the school and desires to emulate it in other centres. The issue of education can be resolved through active community participation. Not so much money as imagination and commitment are needed to overcome illiteracy.

APPENDIX - KEY WORKING DOCUMENTS

Draft Proposal of a framework for the rights of the volunteer: April 2008, *Youth Forum Jeunesse*

Charting the landscape of European youth voluntary activities: Edited by *Howard Williamson and Bryony Hoskins with Philipp Boetzelen*. This edited collection is the outcome of the Research Seminar on Voluntary Activities under the Partnership Programme on Youth Research 2003-05 between the European Commission and the Council of Europe held in Budapest in July 2004. Council of Europe Publishing.

Commission staff working document *accompanying document to the Communiqué from the Commission to the Council, the European parliament, the European economic and social committee and the committee of the regions:* Analysis of national reports from Member States of the European Union concerning the implementation of the common objectives for voluntary activities of young people, Brussels 5.9.2007, COM(2007) 498 final

Consultation on Youth Action and Engagement Analysis of Findings: Analysis Conducted for The Russell Commission, January 2005

Council Recommendation on the Mobility of Young Volunteers Across the European Union: *Council of the European Union*, 2905th Education, youth and culture, Council meeting Brussels, 20 November 2008

Council Resolution on voluntary activities of young people: *Council of the European Union*, Brussels, 19 November 2007

European Quality Charter for Mobility: Recommendation (EC) No 2006/961 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on transnational mobility within the Community for education and training purposes: European Quality Charter for Mobility [Official Journal L 394 of 30.12.2006].

European Parliament resolution of 22 April 2008 on the role of volunteering in contributing to economic and social cohesion

Expert Seminar report "Young People with Fewer Opportunities and Volunteering": Strasbourg, 11-12 December, 2006

Policy paper on Recognition of non-formal education: Confirming the real competencies of young people in the knowledge society: 11-12 November 2005, *Youth Forum Jeunesse*, COMEM 0716-0

Policy Paper on Non-Formal Education: A framework for indicating and assuring duality: *Youth Forum Jeunesse*, COMEM 0009-08-FINAL

Resolution of the Council and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council of 16 May 2007 on implementing the common objectives for volunteer activities for young people. *Official Journal C 241 , 20/09/2008 P. 0001 - 0006*

Shadow report on the implementation of the third priority of the Open Method of Coordination in the youth field: Voluntary Activities, *Youth Forum Jeunesse*, 5th December 2006

The Russell Commission of Youth Action and Engagement Consultation document: *Russell Commission*, October 2004

Evaluation by the participants

Summary of the Evaluation Questionnaire

The conference was evaluated by the participants via an electronic questionnaire on http://www.surveymonkey.com that was opened after the conference until 17ᵗʰ April. The questionnaire, consisting of 12 questions, was answered by 43 out of 129 participants. Some questions, however, were skipped and left unanswered.

Note: some answers are summarised and not written out in this summary. Some repetitive or similar answers are clustered and listed only once.

1. To what extent were you satisfied with the communication and information provided before the Conference?

Satisfied **……………………………………………………..**53.5% (23 participants)

Reasonably Satisfied …………………………………………..30.2% (13 participants)

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied……………………………4.7% (2 participants)

Slightly dissatisfied……………………………………………9.3% (4 participants)

Dissatisfied…………………………………………………… 2.3% (1 participant)

Answered question……………..   **43**

Skipped question……………….   **0**

2. To what extent were you satisfied with the communication with the organisers during the Conference?

Satisfied……………………………………………………….67.4% (29 participants)

Reasonably Satisfied…………………………………………….23.3% (10 participants)

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied………………………………….4.7% (2 participants)

Slightly dissatisfied…………………………………………..2.3% (1 participants)

Dissatisfied…………………………………………………….2.3% (1 participant)

Answered question……………..   **43**

Skipped question……………….   **0**

3. To what extent were you satisfied with the organisational support during the Conference?

	Satisfied	Reasonably Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Response Count
Accommodation	92.9% (39)	2.4% (1)	2.4% (1)	2.4% (1)	0.0% (0)	42
Food	79.1% (34)	16.3% (7)	0.0% (0)	4.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	43
Support materials (folders, etc...)	72.1% (31)	16.3% (7)	9.3% (4)	0.0% (0)	2.3% (1)	43
Conference spaces	48.8% (21)	34.9% (15)	2.3% (1)	11.6% (5)	2.3% (1)	43
Additional programme	59.5% (25)	26.2% (11)	11.9% (5)	0.0% (0)	2.4% (1)	42

Answered question……………... **43**

Skipped question………………. **0**

4. To what extent were you satisfied with the content parts of the Conference?

	Satisfied	Reasonably Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Response Count
Opening sessions of the Conference	45.2% (19)	35.7% (15)	2.4% (1)	2.4% (1)	2.4% (1)	42
Closing sessions of the Conference	34.9% (15)	32.6% (14)	23.3% (10)	4.7% (2)	4.7% (2)	43
Workshops	53.5% (23)	23.3% (10)	16.3% (7)	7.0% (3)	0.0% (0)	43
Methodology/approach of the Conference	23.3% (10)	39.5% (17)	30.2% (13)	4.7% (2)	2.3% (1)	43
Fair	59.5% (25)	26.2% (11)	11.9% (5)	0.0% (0)	2.4% (1)	43

Outcomes-results	26.2% (11)	38.1% (16)	26.2% (11)	7.1% (3)	2.4% (1)	42

Answered question……………..   **43**

Skipped question……………….   **0**

5. Please choose the workshop in which you took part.

Building capacity of and creating bridges among the organisers of voluntary activities…….
14.0% (6 participants)

Creating new opportunities for cross-border volunteering ……………………… 23.3% (10 participants)

Promotion of cross-border volunteering……………………………………………. 18.6% (8 participants)

Quality aspects in cross-border volunteering…………………………………….. 9.3% (4 participants)

Recognition of volunteering and non-formal education and learning………….. 34.9% (15 participants)

Answered question……………..   **43**

Skipped question……………….   **0**

6. To what extent were you satisfied with the course of the workshops?

	Satisfied	Reasonably Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor	Slightly dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Response Count

		dissatisfied				
Methodology / flow of the workshop	48.8% (21)	41.9% (18)	7.0% (3)	2.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	43
Approach of facilitator	67.4% (29)	30.2% (13)	2.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	43
Good practice presentations	40.5% (17)	35.7% (15)	14.3% (6)	4.8% (2)	4.8% (2)	42
Time management during workshops	48.8% (21)	39.5% (17)	7.0% (3)	4.7% (2)	0.0% (0)	43
Possibility to comment draft outcomes of other workshops	39.5% (17)	37.2% (16)	14.0% (6)	2.3% (1)	7.0% (3)	43
Outcomes/results	38.1% (16)	35.7% (15)	21.4% (9)	4.8% (2)	0.0% (0)	42

Answered question……………..   **43**

Skipped question……………….   **0**

7.   What were your expectations?

➢ To get some information about how other NGO's promote cross-border volunteering

➢ To get contacts for future collaboration

➢ To meet experts of certain topics, to share good practice relating to cross-border volunteering for young people, discuss and reach a conclusion on it; and to exchange schemes of volunteering in different countries.

➢ To discuss with local volunteer organisations and the Commission and national ministry officials the possibilities to implement the recommendation and to go 'further' with the European cooperation in the youth field; and to improve EU policies concerning the cross-border volunteering

➢ To get a concrete recommendation on a topic: who could strengthen the field of cross-border volunteering and how?

➢ To discuss the promotion of volunteering with various actors

➢ To know more about all types of cross-border volunteer systems

➢ To meet new potential project partners

➢ To contribute the vision on volunteering of my association and provide ideas to work on to the Presidency and the EC

➢ To get new ideas of projects and ways to stimulate youngsters

- To exchange of good practices and to have open discussion around general issues rather than just those affecting youth organisations
- To give advice on volunteering based on the needs of youth
- To get feedback from the Commission and Council what they think to do (a working plan)
- To compare different approaches of cross-border volunteering and see what model might be applicable to my country for networking, finding potential partners for CBV.
- To develop a platform of experts and people involved in volunteering, to see more exchange.
- To learn more about EU priorities in the field of volunteering (as a non-member-state)
- I was hoping that we would have facilitators who work with methods and not only let people talk and then write things down. I also was hoping that the outcome would be as clear and precise as possible.

Answered question……………..   **30**
Skipped question……………….   **13**

8. To what extent were your expectations realised?

Satisfied	Reasonably Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Dissatisfied
32.6% (14)	39.5% (17)	18.6% (8)	9.3% (4)	0.0% (0)

Answered question……………..   **43**
Skipped question……………….   **0**

9. Do you plan to follow the outcomes of the Conference in your work?

Yes …………….. 95.0% (38)
NO……………….. 5.0% (2)

Answered question……………..   **40**
Skipped question……………….   **3**

10. Any further comments?

Answered question…………….. **12**
Skipped question……………….   **31**

11. I am going to use...

Contacts, the world café method, new perspectives on the issue in my work ….

Answered question…………….. **8**
Skipped question……………….   **35**

Team of facilitators

Tibor Škrabský

Tibor works as a free-lance trainer and consultant and is active on the international level. He currently works for the Slovak Youth institute implementing legislation in the youth field (Act on youth, State Conception towards children and youth). He has 10 years' work experience in the Slovak National agency for the Youth programme and he serves as a consultant to the Slovak and Czech National agencies in evaluating systems, concepts of training for project evaluators and training strategy. Tibor is also involved in project management training and works with municipalities to help them to build local youth policies based on European and national priorities with the involvement of young people.

Jana Bělohlávková

Jana currently studies Civil Sector Studies at the Charles University in Prague and works for the Czech Council of Children and Youth as a project manager for the Czech EU Presidency. Jana works as a trainer for the AFS Intercultural Programmes and runs training programmes for young people taking part in the European Voluntary Service within the programme of the European Commission Youth in Action.

Tomáš Pešek

Tomas has been active in youth work since 1999 with extensive international experience (mostly with the programmes Youth and Youth in Action). Since 2003 he has been a free-lance trainer in non-formal education on the national and international levels. For the last few years, he has been a member of various teams developing training programmes for trainers, as well as being involved in the development of youth policy in Slovakia.

Ondřej Lochman

Ondrej works as a free-lance trainer, consultant and youth worker of the non-formal education projects organized by the Czech National Agency of the Youth in Action Programme and the UNESCO Initiatives Centre from Wroclaw or Eurodesk. Ondrej is the chairman and initiator of the NGO LOS - Liberecka Obcanska Spolecnost. His main fields of interests are citizenship education, intercultural learning and the European dimension in education.

Monika Novosádová

Monika studies social work and social policy and currently works as a social worker with mentally challenged people. She has been active in youth work since 1996. She has worked on the local, national, European and global levels, in different roles, working with different target groups and themes. She works as a free-lance trainer mostly in non-formal education. During her involvement in youth work she has gained experience in its organisational, educational, political and policy-related aspects.

List of participants

Name	Organization	Country
Romed Felderer	Youth delegates pool of the Federal Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth	Austria
Maria Wolf	Ministry of Economy, Family and Youth	Austria
Marie-Luise Auer	Katholische Jugend Österreich	Austria
Nicolas Puvis	World Organisation of the Scout Movement (Europe Region)	Belgium
Gerda Van Roelen	Agency Social-Cultural Work, division Youth	Belgium
Stéphane Culot	CJEF	Belgium
Anne Marie Le Claire	European Commission	Belgium
Pierre Mairesse	European Commission	Belgium
Sergej Koperdák	European Commission	Belgium
Candida Salgado Silva	European Volunteer Centre - CEV	Belgium
Kamila Czerwinska	CEV - European Volunteer Centre	Belgium
Odile Quintin	EUuropean Commission	Belgium
Maarten Coertjens	European Youth Forum	Belgium
Pieter Lietaer	Flemish Youth Council	Belgium
Elisa Chiodi	World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts	Belgium
Anca David	Visually Impaired Educational World Support (VIEWS)	Belgium

David Rockoff	Permanent Representation of Germany to the EU	Belgium
Karin Lopatta-Loibl	European Commission	Belgium
Nikolay Ivanov	State agency for youth and sports	Bulgaria
Radostina Radanova	National centre Youth programmes and initiatives	Bulgaria
Elena Hadjigeorgiou	evyouth	Cyprus
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