



SALTO YOUTH Good Practices Newsletter

Focus on “Volunteering”

“It is no exaggeration to affirm that volunteers are one of the most valuable assets of any country. There is ample evidence that volunteering builds social and human capital, it enhances social inclusion, it is a proven source of reconciliation and reconstruction in divided societies, of empowerment of the disenfranchised and a means of life long learning. It constitutes an enormous reservoir of skills, energy and local knowledge, an important wealth of human experience and social view.”¹

“Volunteering is a fundamental building block of civil society. It brings to life the noblest aspirations of humankind – the pursuit of peace, freedom, opportunity, safety, and justice for all people.”²

□ INITIATIVES

“Citizens for Europe” 2007 - 2013

The European Commission has adopted the proposal on 6th of April 2005 for a new programme which will take over the current programme coming to an end in 2006. It is a contribution to addressing a major challenge of the European Union, namely how to **bridge the gap between citizens and the European Union**.

This new programme will provide the Union with instruments to **promote active European citizenship**, put citizens in the centre and offers them the opportunity to fully assume their responsibility as European citizens. It responds to the need to **improve their participation in the construction of Europe** and will encourage **cooperation between citizens** and their organisations from different countries in order to meet, act together and develop their own ideas in a European environment which goes beyond a national vision, respecting their diversity. Mutual understanding, solidarity and the feeling of belonging to Europe are the building blocks for the involvement of citizens and are reflected by the three different programme’s actions: **Action I** “Active citizens for Europe” involves citizens directly, either through activities linked to **town-twinning** or through other kinds of citizens’ projects.

Action II “Active civil society for Europe” is targeted to Europe-wide civil society organisations, receiving either structural support on the basis of their work programme or support to **trans-national projects**.

Action III “Together for Europe” supports high visibility **events, studies and information tools**, addressing the widest possible audience across frontiers and making Europe more tangible for its citizens. “Volunteerism” is explicitly mentioned as a field of general interest to be supported!

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education_culture/activecitizenship/index_en.htm

□ INSTITUTIONS

United Nation Volunteers

The United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) is the volunteer arm of the United Nations. It was created by the UN in 1970 to serve as an operational partner in development cooperation at the request of UN member states. By clicking on “Activities” you will have access to a thematic classification including news releases, articles published in UNVNews, stories from volunteers and general information about programmes. www.unv.org/about/index.htm.

The website offers some links to read documents about the world of international volunteering and development from many perspectives. www.unv.org/publications/on_volunteerism/index.htm

European Youth Portal

Volunteering gives the opportunity to meet new people and sometimes even new cultures while gaining invaluable experience for the future. These pages will propose many existing European voluntary opportunities as: European Voluntary Service, Youth Exchanges and Work Camps. http://europa.eu.int/youth/volunteering_-_exchanges/index_eu_en.html

¹ The International Year of the Volunteers 2001 “A Catalyst for Pro-volunteer Policies and Legislation” by Diane Perez-Buck SEAL - Autumn 2001, Column 4, Number 2

² “The Universal Declaration on Volunteering” adopted by the international board of directors of IAVE – The International Association for Volunteer Effort at its 16th World Volunteer Conference, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, January 2001, the International Year of Volunteers.

□ RESOURCES

○ WEBSITES

SALTO: Linking further: Volunteering and Voluntary Service

Useful links to **actors in the field of non-formal European youth work** on this topic.

www.salto-youth.net/links/volunteering.html

SALTO: Toolbox for Training: Voluntary service

The **Toolbox for Training** is like an on-line bookshelf, from which you can pull different training tools according to your needs. The “**search function**” allows looking for individual training methods, reference texts or manuals or presentations, without needing to know in which course report they were used. Simply select the topic “**Voluntary service**” and go through the list of proposed tools . www.salto-youth.net/find-a-tool/

Council of Europe: Resources

An impressive **bibliography** (documents, books and articles) dealing with this theme edited by the Council of Europe

www.coe.int/T/E/Cultural_Co-operation/Youth/5._Information_services/Resources_by_topic/VOLUNTEER.asp

People in action

This website proposes a selection of resources dealing with many **possibilities to get involved in voluntary activities** all over the planet and in several different sectors. <http://peopleinaction.info/volunteering/>

Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations

AVSO is an international youth NGO which promotes **intercultural education, understanding and peace through voluntary service**. Each member organisation runs an annual programme of international volunteer projects in their own country and exchanges volunteers with each other to **create an international group of volunteer workers on each project**. The projects generally last 2 - 3 weeks and consist of about 10 - 20 volunteers drawn from a number of countries. Projects are often in remote areas, in regions where local people may have minimal opportunity for meeting others from different countries. www.alliance-network.org/

The European Volunteer Centre

CEV is a European umbrella association of 35 National and Regional Volunteer Centres across Europe, that together work to **strengthen the infrastructure for volunteering in Europe**, promote volunteering and make it more effective.

The website is rich in information, publication, EU and international documents. www.cev.be

World Volunteer Web

This portal, offering information about **volunteerism worldwide**, is coordinated by the UN Volunteers programme. To provide news, events and resources related to volunteerism it proposes a free, monthly email newsletter is available in English, French or Spanish. www.worldvolunteerweb.org/getnews/news2.cfm?ArticlesID=724

World Wide Volunteer

This website offers an online library about volunteering **and the information society**. www.isv2001.org/en/welcome/

Idealist

This impressive database included over 46,000 non-profit organisations and thousands of volunteer **opportunities** around the world. www.idealists.org/

○ READINGS

Report: Volunteering in Eastern Europe: one of the missing links? (PDF version)

The paper focuses on **volunteering behaviours**, as expression of a participative culture and analyses the main features of volunteering. www.iccv.ro/romana/conf/conf.sibiu.2003/pdf/04.%20Bogdan%20&%20Malina%20Voicu.pdf

Report: How does the voluntary engagement of young people enhance their active citizenship and solidarity?

This research seminar within the framework of the “**Council of Europe & European Commission Youth Research Partnership**” took place in July 2004. It brought together researchers from across the wider Europe with practitioners and policy makers in order to develop a better understanding of **volunteering at a European level** and to help provide policy makers with a guide to implementing youth policy on voluntary activities, namely the implementation of European Common Objectives on voluntary activities. <http://documents.youth-knowledge.net/documents/38.pdf>

T-Kit on International Voluntary Service (Issue n°5)

The training kits are thematic publications written by experienced youth trainers. This “T-Kit” is intended for trainers and young people interested and/or involved in **international voluntary service activities and projects**.

Now available in English, Turkish and Polish. www.training-youth.net/INTEGRATION/TY/Publications/T_Kits.html