

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT GUIDE

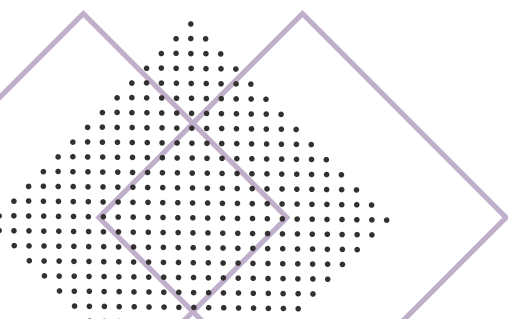
Active Citizenship through Volunteering

10 - 18 December 2022
Bucharest, Romania



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ABOUT ACV

FIND OUT
MORE



The Active Citizenship through Volunteering project took place from 10th to 18th December 2022 in Bucharest and brought together 29 youth workers from Romania, Bulgaria, Spain, Greece, Italy, Hungary, Croatia, Portugal and the Netherlands.

By implementing the project, we:

- Improved the communication skills of 29 youth workers to promote the importance and the benefits of volunteering and to attract new volunteers.
- Developed a common perspective for the 9 NGOs on the selection process of new volunteers by sharing best practices and examples and by finding common solutions.
- Increased the understanding of active citizenship by promoting volunteering opportunities, Erasmus+ and ESC as tools for youth participation and social inclusion.
- Built new partnerships within the participating NGOs for future projects about active citizenship through volunteering.

“ The fact that disparities in political involvement are so substantial and that so many citizens are not active at all potentially compromises democracy ”



PARTNERS



COSI, Romania



INTERNATIONAL YOUTH COMMITTEE, Bulgaria



Geoclube - Associação Juvenil, Portugal



UNITED SOCIETIES OF BALKANS, Greece



AETF, Hungary



Kreaktiva, Croatia



Amaita Intercultura, Italy



Kaebnai, Spain



Drawing to Health, Netherlands



Click on the
partners' names

Nowadays the participation and involvement of the citizens in the society is facilitated by multiple opportunities. Nevertheless, according to a study carried by Eurostat, **only 10.28% of the adult population in the European Union consider themselves as being active citizens.**

There are 7 countries, almost a quarter of the member states of the EU, with less than 5% of the population practicing active citizenship: Belgium (4,9%), Hungary (4,7%), Czech Republic (4,2%), Bulgaria (3,7%), Romania (3,7%), Slovakia (2,8%) and Cyprus (2,1%).

Following the idea that “**Citizenship involves volunteering but not all volunteering involves citizenship**”, social participation is closely linked with volunteering. According to Eurostat, **only 20.7% of the population over 16 in EU are taking part in volunteering activities** (an average calculated between formal and informal voluntary activities). Cyprus and Romania are again on the bottom of the list, with only 4,9% and 3,2% of the population volunteering. The other countries are not in a better position either, almost a half of the EU member states (14 countries) having less than 15% of the population involved in volunteering.

Most common reasons/barriers for the low civic engagement (active citizenship, voluntary activities) are: lack of time and lack of interest. Moreover, solutions for increasing the numbers of volunteers are: more efficient recognition of the volunteering activities as work experience (37%), a better promotion of volunteering possibilities (31%) and of its benefits (25%).

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP IN THE EU



WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING?

"Volunteering - either through individual or group action - is a way in which: Human values of community, caring, and serving can be sustained and strengthened; Individuals can exercise their rights and responsibilities as members of communities, while learning and growing throughout their lives, realising their full human potential; and Connections can be made across differences that push us apart so that we can live together in healthy, sustainable communities, working together to provide innovative solutions to our shared challenges and to shape our collective destinies. [...] It turns into practical, effective action the declaration of the United Nations that "We, the Peoples" have the power to change the world."

Universal Declaration on Volunteering

BENEFITS

- It challenges you to get out of your comfort zone;
- It gives you purpose;
- It provides sense of community;
- It helps you to reflect upon yourself and your goals;
- It gives you perspective about your future steps;
- It builds self-esteem and self-confidence;
- It helps you to gain useful skills for your career;
- It gives you chances to meet people and improve your social skills;
- It gives you network;
- IT IS FUN!

VOL·UN·TEER

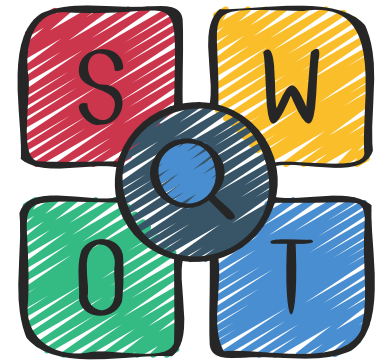
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AGENT OF CHANGE

DO YOU NEED VOLUNTEERS?

Before starting the recruitment process, ask yourself 'Do I really need volunteers?' If yes, for what?

In order to assess whether your decision to recruit new volunteers is relevant for your organisation, you can conduct a SWOT or needs analysis. By identifying your needs, you will be able to better understand why you need volunteers and which tasks you need them to carry out.



Now it's time to plan who, how and for what purpose to recruit!

- What kind of job I need to be done?
- What type of volunteer do I need ?/ Who could carry out this task?
- Am I looking for specific skills, knowledge, attitude? Which ones?
- How long do I need volunteers for?
- What do I have to offer in return?
- Where do I find them?
- How can I attract them?
- Do I have enough capacity/resources to keep them involved and motivated?

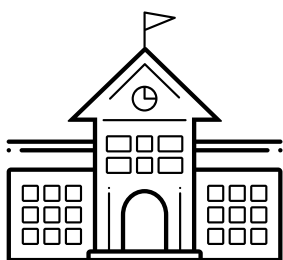




HOW TO ATTRACT VOLUNTEERS

Young people want to be active in the community, make a change in the world and to develop as humans and professionals. They have plenty of opportunities to get involved in society, that's why you need to stand out.

Faculties/schools



Student volunteers, as any other volunteers, want to carry out meaningful work and receive benefits for giving their time. Besides, many consider volunteering not only as a worthwhile experience, but also as a chance of developing their skills for their future careers.

Universities often offer volunteering opportunities and organise fairs within the campus. Get informed about open days and events to interact with the students and find out what are their needs, which skills they want to develop and try to get to know them. Also don't forget free gadgets!

Former participants

Keep in touch with the people who took part in your projects or events in the past. You can create a newsletter to inform them about new opportunities, a group chat or contact them personally.

Not only might they be interested in working with you on a more regular basis, but also to reach out to their friends and colleagues.





HOW TO ATTRACT VOLUNTEERS

Former ESC volunteers

ESC can be a great hub where to recruit volunteers. Your previous volunteers know already what you do and how, have experience to share with new volunteers and might be looking for a working experience after their volunteering.

Keeping a regular communication to follow up on their lives and their projects might help you to easily find what you are looking for.



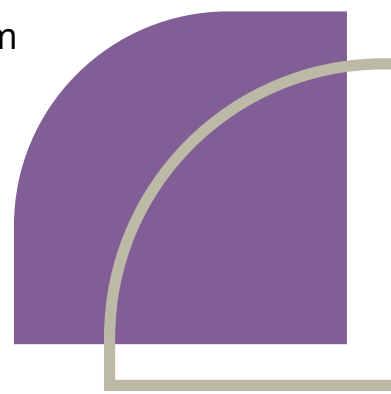
Social media

Social media provides great potential to reach a considerable number of people, especially young people., but to attract them might be trickier. The platforms are fast-changing and the content is continuously updated so it's difficult to stand out. Try to keep up with the most recent trends and changes in order to know what young people are attracted to. You can share an open call for volunteers and



post a report of your previous activities or an info-pack about the activities you are planning to implement. Keep the application simple and clear.

Create content that speaks to the volunteers-to-be, make sure they understand what you have to offer, show them what you do and how much fun you have in your activities.





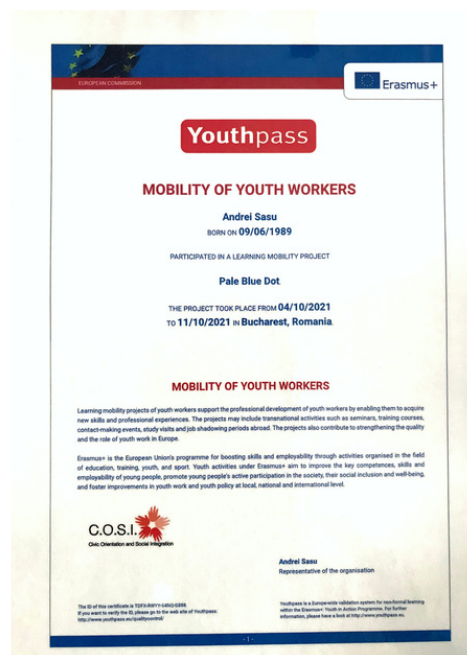
HOW TO KEEP VOLUNTEERS

Once your volunteers are on board, you need to keep them motivated and engaged. Their work is unpaid so it's important to reward them in different ways.

Keep an open and clear communication with them, be flexible, welcome their ideas and make sure their needs are met. Volunteers' situation might change over time so try to understand how to keep them involved.

Recognition

In order to keep the volunteers motivated and make them feel valued, you can issue one or more certificates which recognize their contribution to your work.

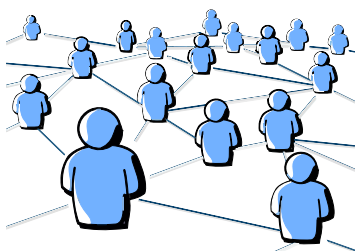


References

Volunteering can be recognized as extracurricular activity in schools and universities and make the difference in a job interview. Be ready to support your volunteers in the opportunities they want to apply for and offer your help to revise motivation letters, job applications and to be contacted as reference person.

Networking

Having a network is probably one of the most useful resources one can have, especially when you are young.



Share your network with your volunteers, provide the resources they need to achieve their goals and inform them about the opportunities you are aware of.





HOW TO KEEP VOLUNTEERS

Events

Invite your volunteers to your upcoming events or the ones you are invited to. Celebrate the common achievements, but don't keep it only professional: birthdays and celebrations are good occasions to keep in touch with the volunteers in an informal way and to make them feel part of a team.



Mentoring

Having a mentor can help the volunteers to understand and fit in in the organisation. Besides, mentoring meetings are a way to get to know each other better, build the team spirit and learn from each other.



Merch

Gadgets, stickers, t-shirts, tote bags, mugs...the more the better! Recruit your volunteers as your brand ambassadors, they will love to represent you and show off that they are part of your community!

Appreciation

Show your gratitude to the volunteers for their work through thank-you notes, small gifts or simply by texting them and showing an interest for their well-being.





TIPS



- Be active and consistent on social media, create attractive content and keep them updated.**
- Create a positive, comfortable and fun environment, celebrate achievements and show appreciation.**
- Emphasize the learning component of a volunteering experience.**
- Involve the volunteers in the decision making process of the organisation, value their opinion and their feedback.**
- Be ready to invest in your volunteers.**





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