



APPROVED



VOLUNTEERING

IN COUNTRIES OF THE WESTERN BALKANS

Guidelines for obtaining residence permits for volunteers within
Erasmus+: Youth in Action and the European Solidarity Corps

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OF THE PUBLICATION & SHORT OVERVIEW OF THE STRUCTURE

This publication is intended for all organizations from the Western Balkans, which are hosting volunteers from EU countries within the framework of the programmes Erasmus+:Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps, and are as such required to help them through the process of obtaining the residence permits for their stay during their volunteering period.

The main reason for creating this publication comes from the recurrent feedback from the hosting organizations in the WB on how difficult it is to get this procedure done in a timely and efficient way. These administrative processes are often costly, time consuming and frustrating in terms of the amount of bureaucracy there is for all sides: sending and receiving organizations, as well as the volunteer.

The purpose of this publication is to facilitate this process as much as possible, by providing all the relevant information to the stakeholders involved in this process in a clear, step-by-step manner.

The publication addresses the process of obtaining the residence permit for the volunteers staying in the countries of Western Balkans, namely Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro.

The creation of this publication would not have been possible, first without the valuable initial input coming from of our Contact Points for E+:YIA from all 4 respective countries, and second, without consultations with experienced hosting organizations which made sure that the gathered information is tested in reality. Thanks a lot to everyone; the list of contributors can be found in the acknowledgements at end of this publication.

The structure of the publication is simple and hopefully you will find it easy to use: the first part contains a set of general instructions relevant for all hosting organizations across the respective countries of the Western Balkans; this is followed by country specific information.

ABOUT

THE PROCEDURE IN GENERAL: USEFUL INSTRUCTIONS AND ADVICE

In this section, you can find a set of instructions and advice, relevant for all hosting organizations in the Western Balkans. Please have them in mind throughout the entire volunteering project cycle; from the very first phase of writing a project proposal (these costs need to be foreseen in the section - exceptional costs!) to the moment when the volunteer prepares to leave home for their volunteering project until the successful finalization of the process, resulting in obtaining a relevant residence permit.

- This publication is based on publically available information, as well as on the experience of the hosting organizations. The information should serve you as a guide, but should not be taken as officially legal guideline. Therefore, please note that the relevant state bodies have the right to ask for additional documents, the duration of the procedure may vary from case to case, as well as the costs incurred could be different in practice, just as they can also change over time. In addition, the procedures can slightly differ from region to region within the same country; therefore, it is best to check what is the actual procedure with the relevant authorities in their local communities.
- Although each country proscribes a specific timeframe in which the volunteer has to apply for the residence permit after his arrival in the hosting country, it is highly advised that the process starts as soon as possible.

- The mentor or somebody from the hosting organization should always accompany the volunteer when visiting institutions for obtaining the residence permit. This will prevent delays in the procedure and avoid potential misunderstandings because of the language barrier or ignorance of the local context. Because of the latter, we recommend you to accompany the volunteer, even if they speak the language of the hosting country.
- Many of the submitted documents must be originals or notarized copies, as well as translated officially in the local language. Alongside official translations, originals are often requested for viewing.
- When dealing with institutions, the volunteer should be ready to offer details such as the address in the volunteer's home country, parents' names, educational background and information about the tasks and responsibilities they will have in the hosting organization. It is advisable to prepare this information in advance.
- Organizations are highly advised to check the legal regulations for the cases when the volunteer is leaving the country while being in the process of acquisition of a residence permit. It is quite likely, that the volunteer will have to register at the relevant authority each time they leave and enter the country.
- In some countries, residence permits are given for a period of time which is shorter than the volunteer's stay in the country. Therefore, organizations are advised to keep track of the expiry date of the volunteer's residence permit and to start in good time with a request for its prolongation.

ALBANIA

Obtaining residence permits in Albania is regulated by the Law on Foreigners (National Gazette No. 74/16)



The Old Mes Bridge in Shkoder, Foto: adonis_abril, Fotolia

WHAT TO PREPARE BEFORE THE VOLUNTEER'S ARRIVAL?

The hosting organization must ensure that the volunteer has a passport valid for the whole duration of their stay in Albania.

The volunteer must also get a certificate from their home country proving they had not been criminally prosecuted.



IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL

The volunteer is obliged to register at the local police unit immediately upon their arrival, within the first 24 hours. This is only an informative visit in order for the local authorities to be aware of the foreigner's stay in the country, but the volunteer needs to present their ID or passport as well as the details of their stay including their current address in Albania, contact details, details of the work they will be performing, etc.

PROCEDURE FOR THE RESIDENCE PERMIT APPLICATION

Step 1:

Within a maximum two weeks of their stay (although it is advised to do it sooner) the volunteer needs to go to the Regional Border and Migration Office where they are given an application form and the list of documents necessary for the residence permit.

Step 2:

After completing the form and collecting all the documents, the volunteer needs to file an official application containing:

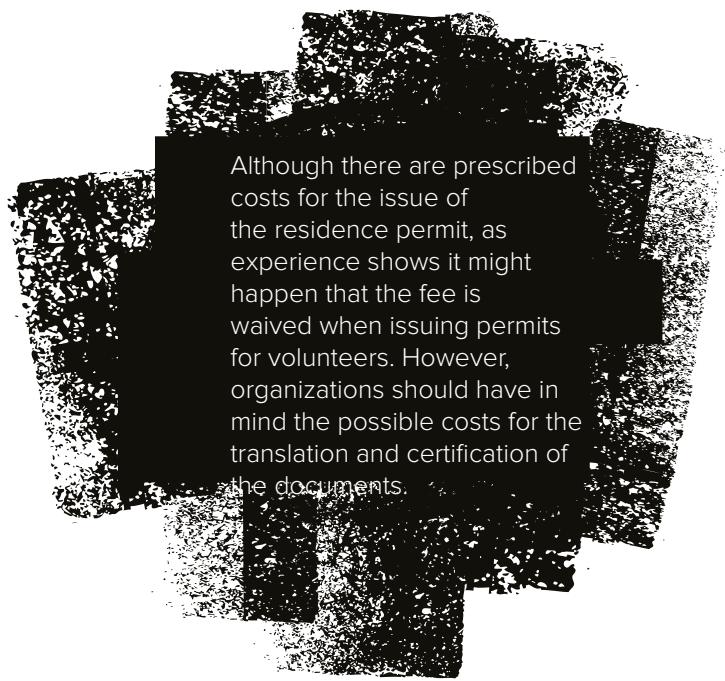
- Official filled-in application form;
- A copy of their passport;
- Two passport size photos;
- A confirmation that the volunteer has not been criminally prosecuted;
- An Activity Agreement containing the financial part, translated into Albanian and notarized,
- An Insurance Registration certificate, translated into Albanian and notarized;

- Confirmation of the residence (tenancy agreement containing the name of the volunteer, address, telephone bill, etc.);
- A document provided by the hosting organization certifying that the applicant is volunteering to work on a project supported by the European Union – indicating the exact key action;
- A document proving that the HO is eligible for participation in this programme, such as an EVS accreditation Certificate (also translated into the Albanian language);
- A copy of the legal registration certificate of the hosting organization;
- A copy of the “NIPT” certificate of the organization (proof of the registration within the Tax Administration Office).

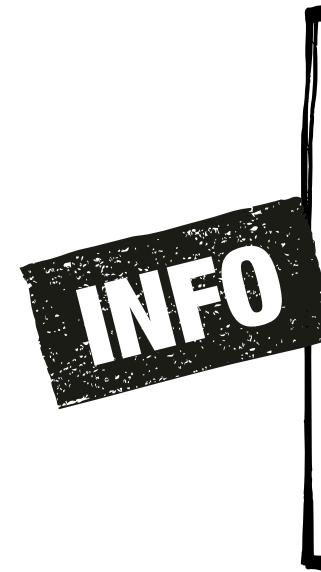
After completing the application process, a volunteer is issued with a temporary residence permit.

COSTS & DURATION

Typically, the process lasts between two and three weeks after which the volunteer is given a Residence Permit. The cost of the process depends on the period the permit is issued for. For the six-month-long permits, the cost is 5,000 AL (approximately EUR 36) and for the twelve-month-long residence permit the cost is around 10,000 AL (approximately EUR 76). These are only estimations, which means they can change over time.



Although there are prescribed costs for the issue of the residence permit, as experience shows it might happen that the fee is waived when issuing permits for volunteers. However, organizations should have in mind the possible costs for the translation and certification of the documents.



Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs,
Government of Albania
Address: Boulevard Gjerg Fishta 6, Tirana
Telephone: +355 (0) 42364090
Web: www.punetejashtme.gov.al

Ministry of Internal Affairs
Address: Bulevardi Dëshmorët e Kombit, Tiranë 1000
Telephone: +355 800 9090
Web: www.mb.gov.al



City of Mostar and Neretva River, Foto: Alexey Stiop, Fotolia

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The area of issuing residence permits in Bosnia and Herzegovina is regulated by the Law on Foreigners (National Gazette No. 88/15)



WHAT TO PREPARE BEFORE THE VOLUNTEER'S ARRIVAL?

The volunteer must obtain attestation of the competent authority in their country of origin confirming that no criminal proceedings and penalties for criminal acts have been imposed against them. Such certification shall not be issued later than six months prior to the date of the submitted residence application. The document must be original or a notarized copy because the document will have to be translated into one of the official languages in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It must be assured that the volunteer's passport is valid at least three months after the termination of their voluntary service, that is three months after leaving Bosnia and Herzegovina.



The volunteer needs to ensure that they get an entry stamp in their passport, which is often an issue when travelling by bus.

IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL

The volunteer must register at the nearest police station or the Foreigner's office within the first 24 hours of their stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The volunteer will need to present their passport (together with a copy of the first page and the page with the entry stamp), the document explaining that the volunteer is volunteering on a project supported by the European Union, as well as a tenancy agreement, which is a notarized contract between hosting organization and the owner of the apartment stating that the apartment is being rented for the purpose of the volunteer's stay. The volunteer will have to fill out a so-called white card which serves as a registration of residence.

The fee that needs to be paid for this is 10 KM (EUR 5).



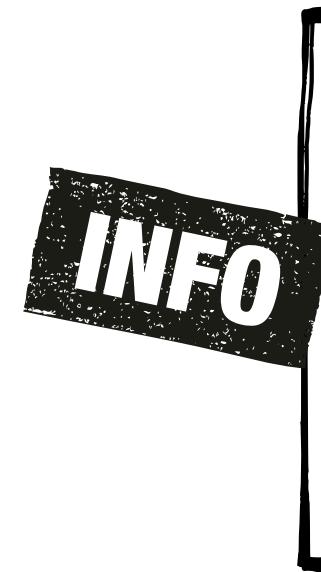
PROCEDURE FOR THE RESIDENCE PERMIT APPLICATION

The Service for Foreigner's Affairs is the body in charge of the process of issuing a temporary resident permit. The volunteer must apply within the first 75 days of their stay in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but it is advised to do it as soon as possible. The volunteer must submit the following documents:

- **Copy of a white card;**
- **Filled request for the approval of the temporary residence permit** (Forms can be found on the spot, but also on the website of the Administration for Foreigners, on the following link: <http://sps.gov.ba/elektronski-obrasci/?lang=hr>);
- **Attestation of the competent authority in their country of origin confirming that no criminal proceedings and penalty for criminal acts have been imposed against them.** This document must be officially translated into one of the languages in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- **Two copies of the first page in the passport, as well as the page with the entry stamp.** One copy needs to be notarized by the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- **A copy of the volunteer's health insurance documents** (CIGNA certificate) **and a medical certificate** stating that the volunteer does not pose a threat to the health of B&H citizens. In some parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the volunteer also needs to have a local Accident insurance that can be obtained by the Hosting organization for a group of volunteers;
- **A copy of the volunteer's agreement** (Activity Agreement) containing the financial part, translated into the official language in Bosnia and Herzegovina languages by a certificated translator;
- **A copy of a document issued by a hosting organization certifying that a volunteer is volunteering within a project financed by the European Union** – indicating the exact key action and that organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina can be part of this programme;
- **A notarized copy of a tenancy agreement** (containing the name of the volunteer);
- **A notarized copy of the registration certificate of the organization;**
- **A notarized copy of the ID of the organization** (registration with the Tax Administration);
- **A copy of the confirmation that the organization is solvent** (a proof from the bank stating that the organization has funds on its account);
- **Proof of the paid administrative fee.**

COSTS & DURATION

The duration of the whole process can vary depending on the part of the Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also on the country the volunteer is coming from. The process can take from 10 days to three months. The estimated costs are around 150 KM (around EUR 76). However, the organization should bear in mind that they will also need to cover the costs of translation and certification of the documents.



Service for Foreigner's Affairs
Address: Brace Mulica 38, Sarajevo
Telephone: +387 (0)33772950
Web: www.sps.gov.ba

Ministry of Interior,
Government of the Republic of Srpska
Adress: Boraca sroskih, Mrkonjic Grad,
79260 Bosnia and Herzegovina
Telephone: +387 (0)50211042
Web: www.mup.vladars.net



KOSOVO

This area is regulated by the Law on Foreigners (National Gazette No. 04/ L 219, Government of Kosovo.



Aerial View of Durdevica Tara Arc Bridge in the Mountains,
Foto: ronedya, Fotolia



WHAT TO PREPARE BEFORE THE VOLUNTEER'S ARRIVAL?

The volunteer must also get a certificate from their home country proving they had not been criminally prosecuted. The certificate is obtained from the relevant bodies within their home country. The certificate should be translated into Serbian or Albanian which can be done in Kosovo.

IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL

A volunteer is obliged to register at the local police station immediately upon their arrival. This is the informative meeting serving the purpose of informing the police that the foreigner is residing in their territory. The volunteer should have their passport and should inform the police about the purpose of their stay as well as the address they will be staying at. It is highly recommended that the volunteer is accompanied by someone from the hosting organization for ease of communication.



PROCEDURE FOR THE RESIDENCE PERMIT APPLICATION

Volunteers coming from EU countries have a visa free regime with Kosovo, which actually means that the process is initiated upon the volunteer's arrival and it is processed by the Division of Foreign Nationals at the Department for Citizenship, Asylum and Migration (DCAM) - Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The documents necessary for this process are:

- A valid travel document (passport or biometric ID);
- Copy of the travel document;
- A valid health insurance;
- A document issued by the host organization stating the purpose of the volunteer's stay, dates, his duties and tasks, costs, etc.;
- A document stating that the volunteer has not been criminally charged and is not under investigation, obtained from the volunteer's home country. This document needs to be officially translated;
- A notarized copy of the proof of the registration of the host organization;

- A letter of confirmation from the Ministry of Public Administration for the host organization stating that the HO is active (This can be obtained online by the HO);
- A tenancy agreement containing the volunteer's name (original or notarized copy);
- A proof of vaccination (in case the volunteer is coming from a country with an epidemic situation);

COSTS & DURATION

The relevant Ministry is obliged to respond to the request within 30 days of the submission of the documents. Persons applying for a temporary residence permit for the purpose of performing volunteer work are exempt from paying the administrative fee. However, the organization should bear in mind that they will have to cover the costs for the translation and certification of the documents.

INFO

**Division of Foreign Nationals
- Department of Citizenship, Asylum and
Migration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs**
Address: Luan Haradinaj n.n. 10000 Prishtina,
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Web: www.mpb-ks.org

**Directorate of Migration and Foreign
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MONTENEGRO

The area of the conditions for a foreigner's stay in Montenegro is regulated by the Law on Foreigners (National Gazette No. 012/18.)



*Beautiful romantic old town of Kotor during sunset,
Foto: rudi1976, Fotolia*



WHAT TO PREPARE BEFORE THE VOLUNTEER'S ARRIVAL?

The hosting organization must ensure that the volunteer has a passport valid for at least three months after the termination of their stay in Montenegro. The volunteer needs to obtain a certificate that they have not been criminally prosecuted in his/her home country.



IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL

The volunteer should register at the Local Tourist Office within first 24 hours after their arrival. At this initial meeting, the volunteer needs to present the following documents:

- Passport (or other ID document the volunteer used to get into the country);
- A tenancy agreement (notarized contact between the HO and the apartment owner stating that the apartment is rented for the volunteer's stay);
- A document issued by the hosting organization certifying that the volunteer is volunteering in a project supported by the European Union.

After this process, the volunteer is legally registered for their stay in Montenegro, but only for the period of three months.

PROCEDURE FOR THE RESIDENCE PERMIT APPLICATION

In order to get the residence permit for a longer period of stay, the volunteer, sending organization and hosting organization need to prepare a set of documents and annex them to the residence permit application.

Step 1:

The volunteer must submit the following documents:

- A copy of the whole passport (not only the first page but pages with all of the stamps, containing the proof of the date that the volunteer last time entered the country);
- A copy of the volunteer's health insurance (CIGNA certificate);
- A copy of the Activity Agreement (containing the financial part). This Agreement needs to be presented in its original form as well as the official translation into the Montenegrin language;
- The document issued by the hosting organization certifying that the volunteer is volunteering within a project financed by the European Union and indicating the exact key action, and that organizations from Montenegro can be part of this programme;

- The original or a notarized copy of the tenancy agreement containing the volunteer's name;
- A document certifying that the volunteer has not been criminally prosecuted issued by the relevant authority in their home country. This document needs to be officially translated into the Montenegrin language;
- A document issued by the Montenegrin Ministry of Education certifying that Montenegro is participating in the Erasmus+ programme.

Step 2:

The volunteer is then given a document stating when the procedure will be finished. In the meantime, they are obliged to have this document as well as their passport with them at all times.

Step 3:

After the procedure is finished, the volunteer is obliged to pick up their residence permit and pay the fee for obtaining the permit.

COSTS & DURATION

The procedure usually does not take any longer than two weeks to be completed (bearing in mind the national holidays) and it costs around EUR 15. Organizations should also have in mind that they will have to cover the translation and certification costs that will depend on the body who is performing the service.

National Tourism Organization of Montenegro

Address: Marka Miljanova 17, 81000 Podgorica
Telephone: +382 (0)77 100001
Web: www.montenegro.travel

Administration for Diaspora

Address: Boulevard Sveti Petar Cetinjski 9, 81000 Podgorica, Montenegro
Telephone: +382 (0)20416391
Web: www.dijaspora.mvpei.gov.me

Ministry of Interior Section for Foreigners, Migration and Readmission

Address: Bulevar Sveti Petar Cetinjski 22, 81000 Podgorica
Telephone: 020 224 806
Web: www.mup.gov.me
E-mail: mupmigracije@t-com.me

Apart from these documents, the volunteer should be ready to provide other details, such as his/her address in his/her home country, details on their education, names of their parents. It can also be expected that the volunteer will need to describe the activities he/she will be performing as a volunteer in this hosting organization.

SERBIA

This area is regulated by the Law on Foreigners. According to the Law, the temporary residence permit can be issued for a period from 90 days to one year and can be extended for the same period.



Kalemegdan Fortress, Foto: cge2010, Fotolia

WHAT TO PREPARE BEFORE THE VOLUNTEER'S ARRIVAL?

The volunteer must possess a passport that is valid for at least six months longer than the duration of the service.



RIGHT UPON ARRIVAL

The volunteer is obliged to report their stay at the local police department within the first 24 hours. The volunteer must provide information about the purpose of their stay as well as the address they will be staying at. It is highly recommended that the volunteer is accompanied by a person from the hosting organization. The volunteer will need to present:



- A correctly filled in white card (can be found on the spot);
- The original or a notarized copy of the tenancy agreement containing the name of the volunteer;
- A copy of the volunteer's ID, as well as a copy of the ID of the legal representative of the hosting organization;
- The volunteer's passport;
- An Activity Agreement (the original as well as a certified Serbian translation);

PROCEDURE FOR THE RESIDENCE PERMIT APPLICATION

If the voluntary service lasts longer than 90 days, the volunteer is obliged to apply for a temporary residence permit. That must be done within the first 60 days of them entering the country. They must submit the following documents:

- A request for the temporary residence permit (can be found on the website of the Ministry of Interior, Republic of Serbia, at the following link: <https://goo.gl/WvfhI>);
- Two photographs;
- A passport and a copy of the passport (the first page as well as the page with the stamp as a proof of the date of entering the country);
- A valid SIGMA health insurance certificate;
- Proof that they have sufficient funds to sustain themselves;
- A document explaining the purpose of the stay of the volunteer;
- A copy of the proof of the registration of the organization within the Serbian

Business Registers Agency, Tax Identification Number proof and the permit issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy for receiving volunteers;

- A copy of the volunteers' bank statement, officially translated;
- A notarized copy of the Activity Agreement with the financial part;
- The original or a notarized copy of the tenancy agreement containing the name of the volunteer;
- Copy of the ID of the apartments' owner.

COSTS & DURATION

According to The Law on the Republic Administrative Fees, the fee which needs to be paid for obtaining the temporary residence permit is 16 760 RSD. In addition to this, an applicant is required to pay the fee for the issuance of residence permit tags (400 RSD) and the Republic administrative fee (300 RSD), which makes it 17, 460 RSD altogether, or around EUR 148. These are the amounts without the cost for certification and translation of the documents, which can get up to 30,000 RSD (EUR 250).

Although the official procedure does not require the submission of proof that the volunteer has not been criminally charged, it is advisable that the volunteer obtains this document from their home country prior to their arrival. It can always happen that the authorities in some cities ask for this document. In addition, this document might be required depending on the tasks the volunteer will be performing during their work, which is another reason it should be obtained by the volunteer.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia

Address: Kneza Milosa 24-26, 11000 Beograd, Republic of Serbia

Telephone: +381 (0)11 3616 333

Visa Policy Department
+381 (0)11 3068585

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Ministry of Interior

Address: Bulevar Mihaila Pupina 2, Novi Beograd, 11 070 Beograd

Telephone: +381 11 306 2000

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Web: <http://www.mup.rs/>

INFO

Special thanks goes to all five Contact points of E+:YIA in the Western Balkans (<https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/contactpoints/>) who compiled the information for each country, and to the following accredited organizations which we consulted to make sure the document reflects normal practice. Due to their contribution, the publication is not a mere replication of the publically available information, but contains experience-based information, which can be of great value for all stakeholders having to go through the process of obtaining the residence permits.

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CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS:

- Qendra per Progres Rinor (Centre for Youth Progress), Kukes, Albania, <http://cyp.al/>
- Snaga Mladih (Youth Power), Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, <http://www.youth-power.org/>
- SOS Dječje selo, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, <http://www.sos-ds.ba/>
- Fondacija Krila nade (Wings of Hope Foundation), Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, <https://wings-of-hope.ba/>
- Qendra Rinore "Ardhmëria-Klinë", Klinë, Kosovo, <https://www.facebook.com/qendrarinore.kline/>
- GAIA SCI, Kosovo, <https://www.facebook.com/gaiakosovo/>
- Agencija za demokratski prosperitet (Agency for Democratic Prosperity Zid)- ADP Zid, Podgorica, Montenegro, <http://www.zid.org.me/>
- Don Bosco, Podgorica, Montenegro, <http://www.donbosko.me/>
- Centar "Žil Vern" (Jules Verne Centre), Novi Sad, Serbia, <http://julesverne.edu.rs/fr>

The SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre promotes cooperation with the Western Balkan countries within the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth and the European Solidarity Corps through training and partner-finding activities and various other support measures, tools and resources. It aims to contribute to youth work and youth policy development in the Western Balkan region, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and with the help of pools of trainers and accreditors as well as Contact Points located in Erasmus+ Partner countries of the region.

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Volunteering in countries of the Western Balkans: Guidelines for obtaining residence permits for volunteers within Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps

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