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Seminar on the promotion of local and international volunteering for peace building and conflict resolution in Europe

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# "Government Perspective"

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How can governments foster and harness the role of volunteering and volunteer organizations in peace building and conflict resolution policies and programs?

# History (1991 -1998)

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- War and the post war period
    - National volunteers – professionals, peace and human rights activists
    - International volunteers – trainers, professionals
  - Only international support
  - Recognized needs on national level
    - volunteering in psychosocial support
    - volunteering in humanitarian aid actions
  - Peace building – no recognition of such organizations nor support
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# New winds (1999 – 2003)

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- ❑ Governmental Office for NGOs
  - ❑ Opening dialogue
  - ❑ For the first time asked - What do you need?
  - ❑ Program of Cooperation between the Croatian Government and the NGOs
  - ❑ International Year of Volunteers (2001)
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# Turning points (2004 - 2008)

\*recent improvements\*

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- Policy/ strategy
  - Legal framework
  - Institutional framework & infrastructure
  - Promotion & Recognition
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# Policy / strategy

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- National Strategy for Creation of Enabling Environment for Development of Civil Society (2006 - 2011)
  - Operational plan
    - objectives, responsibilities, measures, deadlines
  - Control mechanisms
    - Governmental Office for NGO's
    - Council for Development of Civil Society
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# Legal framework

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- Law on volunteering (2007)
    - Rights, responsibilities, penalties
  
  - Code of Ethics (2008)
    - Values, principles, standards
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# Institutional framework & infrastructure

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- National Foundation for development of Civil Society (2004)
  - Ministry of Family, Veterans' affairs and Intergenerational solidarity
    - Responsible for implementation of objectives in National Strategy
  - Network of Volunteer center's (2005)
  - National Council for Development of Volunteerism (2007)
  - Finally getting to start - matching recognition and financial support
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# Promotion & Recognition

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- 4 National conferences on volunteering (first one in 2001)
  - International Day of Volunteering – national, regional, local level
  - Awards for volunteering
    - national level - MFVAIS & NFDACS
    - regional level - VC's
  - Research, publication, education
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# Challenges / Open questions

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- ❑ Role of individual on leading positions
  - ❑ Political influence
  - ❑ Sustaining / improving gained positions
  - ❑ Still large dependence on international sources of funding
  - ❑ Measuring of economic value of volunteering
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# Peace building

\* today / tomorrow

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- Peace building – why? – war is over
  - Different needs in different parts of Croatia
  - Commonly recognized issue - prevention of violence – conflict resolution – mediation
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