



EUROPEAN VOLUNTEER CENTRE

# “Volunteering in a Lifelong Learning Policy”

Rome, Italy  
28 April 2006

## Conference REPORT

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Lifelong Learning has become over the last 5 years a high priority topic at the European Policy Agenda. The European Union has “discovered” it in the context of the so-called “Lisbon Strategy” agreed in 2000 aiming at making the European economy *“the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, and respect for the environment by 2010”*.

The European institutions have acknowledged quite logically that education, training and learning are crucial when it comes to create a “knowledge-based” society. The European Commission has focused in its first Communication *“Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality”* [COM (2001) 678<sup>1</sup>] on Lifelong learning as an instrument of personal development – and underlined that learning happens in different settings, very often outside formal institutions such as schools and universities and outside formal curricula. These two types of learning are called “non-formal” and “informal”, and they are *“an integral part of a lifelong learning concept that allows young people and adults to acquire and maintain the skills, abilities and outlook needed to adapt to a continuously changing environment”*<sup>2</sup>.

As volunteering clearly is one of the means by which people participate in non-formal and informal learning it needs to be considered in the framework of lifelong learning. Each volunteer experience implies automatically a learning opportunity with a twofold effect: Firstly, new skills contribute to personal, social and cultural development Secondly, these skills can enhance employability as it often leads to paid work and career development through new skills and professional experience acquired. Obviously, volunteering is far more than just learning – but it clearly contributes to the **three main objectives of LLL: personal development, social cohesion and economic growth**.

## OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Very often, the potential of volunteering in terms of learning is not recognized, skills and competences that volunteers acquire are not measured or assessed and the role that volunteers can play to give people of different social backgrounds access to learning outside schools is more often than not neglected.

The General Assembly therefore aims in a **first step to give an overview of the policy landscape on Lifelong learning both at National and European level**: Representatives of the European Commission, the current Austrian Presidency of the EU, of Italian Regional and Local Government and of Volunteer organisations will speak of their perspectives to make Lifelong Learning accessible to all and how volunteering contributes to a LLL-Policy. In a **second step, CEV member organisations will present and discuss good practices** in the following fields:

- *Identifying, assessing and recognizing skills and competences learned through volunteering*
- *Common projects with schools, universities, business, etc. on the mutual recognition of these skills*
- *Project that opens alternative learning pathways to people that have not followed a formal education or that have difficulties to comply with the requisites of formal education in schools or of the labour market*
- *Efforts to influence the Life Long Learning Policy and to promote the role of non formal and informal learning within this policy*

The **Italian perspective** will be given a prominent place within our reflections: We will be very interested in getting to know more about our member organizations SPES and Centro Nazionale per il Volontariato and the “learning landscape” in our host country.

<sup>1</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lll/life/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lll/life/index_en.html)

<sup>2</sup> Recommendation 1437 (2000) Non-formal education, Council of Europe, Parliamentary Assembly.

## PROGRAMME

**VENUE:** Sala della Protomoteca, Campidoglio, Piazza del Campidoglio 1

### **10.30 – Registrations**

### **10:45 – Opening session**

- **Raffaella Milano**                      Rome City Hall, Responsible for Social Policy
- **Christopher Spence**                      CEV President

### **11:00 – Panel session: *Universal Access to Lifelong Learning*, Chair: Christopher Spence**

- [Dr. Erika Winkler](#)                      Austrian Government, Department responsible for volunteering, currently holding the EU Presidency
- **(Cécile Le Clercq**                      European Commission (DG EAC) on the EU's policy on life long learning)<sup>3</sup>
- [Silvia Costa](#)                              Lazio Region, Department for School, Right to Education and Vocational Training
- [Roberto Mosi](#)                              Auser – Italian Older People's Platform
- [Paolo Benesperi](#)                          "Idee in rete" (Ideas in the Network NGO) – President

### **12:15 – Panel session: *Non-formal and informal learning: Motivation, Assessment and Recognition* Chair: Renzo Razzano**

- [Roberto Giusti](#)                          ACRI: Association of Italian Bank Foundations
- [Andrea Beccari](#)                          Ministry for Education, University and Research
- [Michela Ricciardi](#)                      Ministry for Education, Regional School Office of Lazio
- [Rita Bergstein](#)                          Salto Youth (European Commission Agency on Youth non-formal learning)

### **13:15 – Conclusions, Renzo Razzano President SPES**

### **13:30 – Lunch break**

### **16:00 – 19.30**

**VENUE:** SPES Headquarters, Via dei Mille 6 (2<sup>nd</sup> floor) and Via dei Mille 36

### **16:00 Workshops I**

<a href="#">Workshop 1</a>	CNV (IT)	Riccardo Guidi	<b>School and volunteering in Tuscany Validation of Prior Learning in Voluntary work</b> "Lire et faire lire", Read and Make Read "Dossier Bénévolat", The Suisse Volunteer Pass Assessing volunteer competences SWITCH
<a href="#">Workshop 2</a>	CIVIQ (NL)	Saskia van Grinsven	
<a href="#">Workshop 3</a>	France Bénévolat	Colette Robert	
	and ICV Switzerland	Anna Hallen	
<a href="#">Workshop 4</a>	BBE (D)	Ute Bertel	

### **17.45 Workshops II**

<a href="#">Workshop 5</a>	Vlaams Steunpunt(B)	Eva Hambach	<b>Recognition of Volunteer's Competences</b> AVE Hungary: Assessing voluntary experiences in a professional perspective Assessing voluntary experiences – AVE UK Elderly and New Information Technologies
<a href="#">Workshop 6</a>	ÖKA (HU)	Borbala Hadrevy	
<a href="#">Workshop 7</a>	IVR (UK)	Nick Ockenden	
	and AUSER (IT)	Fabrizio Maddalena	

### **19.15 Final Plenary – Conclusions of the workshops; Chair: Christopher Spence**

21:00 Dinner

With the support of:



In collaboration  
with:



<sup>3</sup> Cécile Le Clercq apologized for not being able to attend the conference due to a havary at the Brussels airport.

### **List of CEV Participants**

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### **European speakers**

Cécile Le Clercq	EU Commission	EU
Erika Winkler	Austrian Government	AT
Rita Bergstein	Salto Youth Agency	DE

**Raffaella Milano** welcomes all participants on behalf of the Mayor of Rome and reminds that Rome is the first city in Italy for number of citizens engaged in social activities

**Christopher Spence** introduces to the audience CEV and its activities and gives the floor to the Speakers of the first Panel



## First Panel Session – “Universal Access to Lifelong Learning” Keynote speakers’ presentations

**Dr. Erika Winkler**  
Austrian Government, Department responsible for Volunteering

### The “Austrian Volunteer Pass”

The Austrian Minister of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection took the initiative to the follow-up of the International Year of Volunteers by establishing the Austrian Council for Voluntary Work in June 2003 with the aim of:

- Improving basic conditions of voluntary work;
- Counselling of the Federal Minister of Social Security, Generations and Consumer Protection in questions of volunteers issues;
- Lobbying and networking of volunteers and organisations.

The Austrian Council for Voluntary Work set up 4 Study Groups to develop ideas and solutions related to:

- Recognition, appreciation, offspring-promotion for voluntary work;
- Agencies for offer and demand, training of volunteers and coordinators;
- Legal protection of volunteers;

- Cooperation of private enterprises, state and NPOs.

In 2004 these the Study Groups presented an Action Program on Voluntary Work, which identified 3 different priorities (and actions to be taken under each priorities):

Priority 1: Legal Definition of honorary and voluntary commitment

Priority 2: Legal Protection of Voluntary Work

Priority 3: Image-campaign for Voluntary Work

The Austrian Volunteers Pass was set up in order to encourage volunteers to exhibit their voluntary commitment with self-confidence and in order to serve as objective documentary evidence for skills that were acquired in the process.

The aim was above all, to improve the appreciation of “social skills”, which are becoming more and more important: being able to work in a team, being able to withstand stress, being able to communicate well and motivate others, being sensitive, convincing, having negotiation skills, being able to organise independently – these are skills that are learned day-to-day during voluntary work.

All these different skills can be associated to the following five **“Key Competences”**:

- Social competence and the ability to work under stress
- Commitment and enthusiasm
- Responsibility and self-discipline
- Motivation and power of persuasion
- Leadership and management skills

Before presenting the confirmation of voluntary work to the public, in order to know what enterprises, employers and personnel managers think about that initiative, a Telephone-survey was commissioned at Austrian enterprises about „Qualifications acquired during volunteering“ in October 2005. And the results were very positive and encouraging:

- 86% regard it as rather important, that people volunteer besides working-life – also the staff of the own enterprise
- 93% agree, that important experiences, skills and competencies for



**Markus Held (in place of Cécile Le Clercq)<sup>4</sup>**  
**CEV Director**

**“CEV relations with the European Commission”**

Markus Held gave a brief overview of the contacts developed between CEV and the European Commission in the last few months.

1. CEV has been especially in contact with DG Education and Culture (EAC), which is responsible for active citizenship, the Lifelong Learning Policy and for the relation with the civil society. At the Launch of the “Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe”<sup>5</sup>, on 28 March 2006, Risto Raivio, Acting Head of Unit of DG EAC D4, warmly welcomed the Manifesto and stressed the willingness of his unit to engage in a structured form with CEV and to give volunteering high priority over the months to come. The European Commission plans a big event around the European Volunteer Day 5 December to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary

<sup>4</sup> Cécile Le Clercq apologized for not being able to attend the conference due to a havarly at the Brussels airport.

<sup>5</sup> See [http://www.cev.be/manifesto\\_campaign.htm](http://www.cev.be/manifesto_campaign.htm) for further information.

working-life could be gained through volunteering

- 42% declare, that a confirmation of voluntary work about competencies gained through voluntary commitment would improve preferential hiring

The process moves onwards, not only in Austria, but in many EU-member states and the **Informal meeting of EU-Youth ministers and the Youth Event, 28 – 31 March 2006, in Vienna and Bad Ischl**, was dedicated to the recognition of the value of non-formal and informal learning.

At the time being, the Austrian EU-presidency is preparing a **„Draft Resolution of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States on the recognition of the value of non-formal and informal learning within the European youth field“**, which is to be adopted in June.

of the European Voluntary Service Programme.

2. DG EAC agreed with CEV on the necessity to develop a single access point to the European Commission that deals with the horizontal nature of volunteering;
3. Volunteering might get a special focus in the future action programmes on active European citizenship.

Overall there is a promising shift in the attention of the EC towards volunteering (outside the Voluntary Service Programme) that CEV is trying to push further.



**Silvia Costa**  
**Lazio Region, Department for school, right to education and vocational training**

Lazio Region is a region rich of organizations that belong to the so call Third Sector (NGOs, associations, not-for-profit organisations etc.). As regards Voluntary organisations, nowadays there are nearly 1000 organizations officially registered and many others working in the social sector without being registered.





## Second Panel Session – “Non-formal and informal learning: Motivation, Assessment and Recognition” Keynote speakers’ presentations

### Roberto Giusti

**ACRI: Association of Italian Bank Foundations**

Italian Bank Foundations were created in Italy after the legislative reform in the 90s. The previous public banks were thus divided into two different bodies: private banks that deal with the economic activities and the Bank foundations that deal with philanthropy and local development. They usually work as grant giving foundations. They manage an asset of 41 billions EUR and 5% of the profits gained from it each year is used for financing social and cultural activities/projects.

The main sectors of activities financed with these profits are: Culture (32%); Volunteering (13%); Education (12%); public health (12%) and Scientific Research (11%).

According to the national law on volunteering (1991), Volunteering Support Centers in Italy are financed by the Bank Foundations. They have the obligation to use 1/15 of their profits for this purpose. Very often representatives of the Bank Foundations have a position in the Volunteering Support Center management committee. Each foundation operates in an autonomous way, on a local base, but we can say that Bank Foundations too are playing great attention to the new topic of LLL and to the activities related to it.

### Andrea Beccari

**Member of one the 19 municipal administrations of the city of Rome**

Different issues were pointed out:

1. There has been an agreement between the Municipal Government No.11 of Rome, SPES and the Third Age University to further promote LLL policies;
2. A means that can be used to involve students in volunteering is to recognise “credits” in their academic curriculum if they participate in volunteer activities;
3. Volunteer organisations play a more and more important role in the organisation and implementation of social services. According to the law No. 328/2000, volunteer organisations, alongside with other third sector’s associations, can be a reliable partners of the public sector in formation of a new welfare system.

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### Micaela Ricciardi

**Ministry for Education, Regional School Office of Lazio**

The Regional School Office of Lazio, together with the Ministry of Education, is trying to promote a new culture of volunteering and solidarity. The respect of the civil cohabitation should be introduced as a subject in the school curriculum. Unfortunately, the imple-

mentation of policies is not always successful, and too often much depends on the will of the single individual or teacher.

Some of Ministry of Education priorities are:

1. Development of volunteering among the student population;
2. Taking measures to favor the integration of foreign students;
3. Inclusion of disabled people.

.....

### Rita Bergstein

#### Salto Youth (European Commission Agency on Youth Non-Formal Learning)

#### Youthpass - European strategy on validation and recognition of non-formal learning within the context of YOUTH Development and implementation of validation instruments for the different Actions of the programme *Youth in Action* and the current YOUTH programme.

Since October 2004 the development of a validation and recognition strategy is designated as an important part of the YOUTH programme. This development refers to the European strategy of Lifelong Learning and will give a good example and model for European and national youth policy development concerning recognition and validation of non-formal learning.

The development and implementation of the **Youthpass** will be realised through the SALTO Training and Cooperation Resource Centre (RC) located at the German National Agency JUGEND für Europa. The **Youthpass** development is accompanied by an Advisory Group, which includes members of the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe, different National Agencies, the European Youth Forum and experts from different backgrounds (academic, NFL - field experience). Needed adjustments of the planned **Youthpass** strategy are and will be decided upon in close communication with members of the European Commission.

#### 1. Links and current references of the YOUTHPASS

The content of the **Youthpass**...

- ... is mentioned in the draft as an important part of the new programme **Youth in Action**: One specific aim of the programme is *working for the recognition of young people's non-formal education* (Ar-

... ticle 3, 4.e), this will be part of the implementation of the programme through [...] *appropriate measures in order to promote the recognition of non-formal and informal education for young people, in particular via the issue of a national or European-level document or certificate recognising, in particular, the experience gained by the beneficiaries and attesting to the direct participation of young people or youth workers in an action...* (Article 8, 3.) and should be transferred to reality by [...] *the arrangements for certifying the participation of the young people concerned* (Article 9, 1. e).

- ... being a recognition tool was already recommended in the **Interim evaluation** of the current programme YOUTH: Recommendation 11 (page 43) [...] *a certificate be issued to young people a youth workers who have participated in a project, as is the case for EVS, recognising skills acquired during participation in a project.*

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/evaluation\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/program/evaluation_en.html).

- ... mentioned in the European Commission's **White Paper A new impetus on European Youth**: in chapter 4.2 *Taking more account of youth in other policies* it is highlighted that the youth field should continue being innovative and informal, but insist on the other hand on measure: [...] *this work would benefit from: [...] greater recognition of these activities.* (page 19).

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/whitepaper/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/whitepaper/index_en.html)

- ... is part of the **Education and Training Strategy 2010**. The strategy covers the idea of the Lifelong Learning Strategy and with that the strategy *to create a Europe that is the most dynamically, competitive, sustainable knowledge based economy in the world*. In 2002 the Education Council and the Commission endorsed a *10-year work programme* to realize the **Education and Training Strategy 2010** implemented through the *open method of co-ordination*. In this document the relevant actors already foresaw that [...] *holders of qualifications, knowledge and skills acquired anywhere in the EU will be able to get them effectively validated throughout the Union for the purpose of career and further learning* (p. 6)

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/10\\_year\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/2010/doc/10_year_en.pdf).

- ... and the **Youthpass** itself is mentioned in the communication of the European Commission **European Youth Pact** in the field of education, training, and mobility as a specific tool for recognition of youth work (p. 7)

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/whitepaper/postlaunch/com\\_206\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/youth/whitepaper/postlaunch/com_206_en.pdf).

- ... is mentioned as strategic development tool within the *New start for the **Lisbon Strategy** - Jobs, growth, the environment, and a proper social network, July 2005* under position III. Policy development, Step 47:

[http://europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/growthandjobs/index_en.htm).

- ...is touched by the current development of the European Commission's **Key Qualification Framework** for the formal learning sector. Non-formal and informal learning will be touched as part of this Framework. Part of the European Key Qualification is the development of general **Key Competences** to describe a common understanding of life long learning in the context of Europe.

In a discussion process it will be important to clarify differences and to enrich the discussion.

Within the consultation and discussion around the development of the Framework we as part of the non-formal learning field are invited to take part. Within this process it is important to strengthen the meaning of YOUTH work and to get finally social recognition for the non-formal learning field.

- ... is a measure that follows the *NEED FOR A BETTER VALIDATION OF NON-FORMAL LEARNING. All initiatives in education and training underline the increasing role of lifelong and lifewide learning. They emphasize that learning must encompass the whole spectrum of formal, non-formal and informal learning for promoting personal fulfillment, active citizenship, social inclusion, and employability* (page 3). This is highlighted and described in the Common paper of the EC and the CoE **Pathway towards validation and recognition of education, training & learning in the youth field.**

[http://www.youthknowledge.net/system/galleries/download/research\\_reports/2004\\_validation\\_and\\_recognition.pdf](http://www.youthknowledge.net/system/galleries/download/research_reports/2004_validation_and_recognition.pdf)

## 2. The Youthpass strategy

The content of the current, committed work plan of the SALTO Training and Cooperation RC consists of the following elements: The aim of the Youthpass is the development and the implementation of a special European level *recognition* instrument for the programme YOUTH as a package of different instruments for the Actions *Youth exchange/encounter/initiatives (Actions 1 and 3)*, *European Voluntary Service (Action 2)* and *Support measures/Youth workers and support systems (Action 5)* and with this fostering the recognition of non-formal learning within the YOUTH and the *Youth in Action* programmes.

The **instruments** should be developed in a way that takes full account of three essential elements involved: 1. Employability of young people and youth workers; 2. Reflection upon the personal non-formal learning process and 3. Social recognition of youth work.

The European Commission committed the development of instruments, which will be tested at organisational level during the programme YOUTH and implemented with the new programme *Youth in Action*. Talking about instruments the following variety is foreseen:

1. Individualised Certificate (Project and individual process orientated) for all actions and therefore all participants in the programmes YOUTH/Youth in Action;

2. Validation instruments (to deepen the learning experience in a dialogue-process and with this to reach a wider recognition of the YOUTH/Youth in Action programmes and all their actions).

The instruments will be valuable and useful for young people, youth workers, and youth leaders.

Different stakeholders are integrated in the developing process through an Advisory group and different subgroups: esp. from the first and the second sector, National Agencies, EYF, CoE, Partnership, youth workers/organisers, and young people as main relevant actors. The **Youthpass** should cover different needs of young people moving "into their Lifelong Learning" - Life. The qualified certificates and validation instruments will be the important instruments with the highest impact, which describes the personal non-formal learning experience in two different approaches of recognition.

In the long-term **perspective**, the **Youthpass** will be linked with other European level initiatives, such as the *Europass (EC)*, the *Portfolio for youth workers and youth leaders (CoE)* and other initiatives and programmes

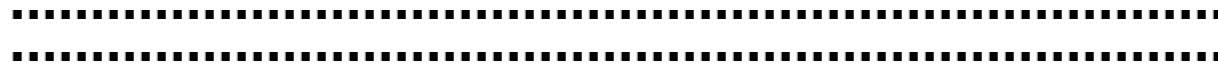
within the EU and the context of Active Citizenship.

The **Youthpass** and its detailed instruments and offers will be developed with regard to the *Common European principles for valida-*

*tion of non-formal and informal learning in Europe*

Further information about the YOUTHPASS will follow on

<http://www.salto-youth.net/youthpass/>.



# Workshops

## Workshop 1

**Schools and Volunteering in Tuscany**  
**Centro Nazionale del Volontariato (Italy)**

Chair: Ksenija Fonovic  
Note Taker: Nick Ockenden

### **Objectives of the projects**

To create structured opportunities for students /young people at school aged 14-19 to volunteer:

- To orientate and inform young people about volunteering opportunities
- To increase teachers' consciousness about volunteering
- To make young people more aware about social needs and social care
- To encourage students to be protagonists of their own lives
- To encourage a well-being representation founded on reciprocity

### **Title of the project:**

**"Schools and volunteering in Tuscany"**

### **Name and country of organisation promoting the project:**

**Centro Nazionale Per il Volontariato – Italy**

### **General area of the project:**

**Training young people to solidarity**

### Participants of the project (project partners and target groups):

#### Partners:

**At regional level: Regione Toscana (Tuscany Region), Tuscan School Bureau, CESVOT (Tuscan Volunteer Services' Centre).**

**At local level: 315 NGOs and 76 schools.**

**Students attending secondary school in Tuscany (currently about 11.000 involved), secondary Tuscan schools (currently 76), Tuscan NGOs (currently 315).**

### Reasons / Rationale for setting up this project (to respond to which societal needs?):

- **To train young people to an active citizenship**
- **To encourage NGO's generational turnover**
- **To qualify Tuscan secondary schools' openness to their country**
- **To aid young people to live better their free time**

The project was born out of consideration of school trends and volunteering trends. It comes out of the context of citizenship and developing a sense of belonging and a community. It recognised that in order to succeed with young people, it needed to be informal.

Volunteering with young people is challenging, and some organisations will need to be supported in this work.

In 2001-2002 they began the project in the Lucca district after some activities in Lombardy and Piedmont. In 2003-2008 they are concentrating in the Tuscan region.

The core idea came from the Centro Nazionale per il Volontario. Funding came from the Tuscan Volunteering Service Centre.

There are five people in the team, including four local coordinators. As part of this they have a video-maker, which is a very important part of the project and has proven to be an important activity for young people.

### Funding of the project:

**By CESVOT (Tuscan Volunteer Services' Centre)**

### Main activities of the project:

**Activity 1: Information points: Front office where students can find information about opportunities in charity sector in their city. The NGOs run the front office with the support of brochures targeted at and appealing to young people.**

There are 33 active information points in Tuscany, which give information about local voluntary organisations. Volunteers, usually two people, who are specifically trained for this job, run these points. 11 of the 33 information points have a PC with Internet access. These aim to give students an idea of what they can do. It is a network approach, and they will inform people about the full range of opportunities within all of the organisations they work with.

They are specific to the area of the city they are based in. they are available for all the students of the schools. One problem is that it is not that easy for Italian students to leave classes during lessons, and the information points are open in the morning during the lesson periods.

*Audience question: why do you not run the information points during the breaks?*

They have tried this but with poor results as the break period is only 10 minutes long and students commonly want to do other things in their break period. There is a problem in Italian schools in that teaching is not very interactive, and it can be hard to involve the students.

Information points are considered to be low intensive activities.

**Activity 2: Stop and Go!:** this activity is composed by a training in classroom (the volunteers run the meetings in an interactive way) and a brief stage in a local NGO. The students' stages are usually focused on a peculiar aim.

Two meetings with the class compose a training path. The volunteer proposes an organisation to get involved with, and the volunteers run the meetings. This activity is usually based around a specific activity, such as ecology, and they consider this to be a medium intensity activity.

They have found videos and support material to be very effective in this, and they have got a strong alliance with the teachers, and a good level of interaction with the students.

*Audience question: how strong is the linking with the schools and integration into the curriculum?*

The Stop and go! project creates a list of themes and local organisations offer their available services, which are then offered to the schools. It is important to have this kind of opportunity, and the students can benefit from this.

**Activity 3: School and volunteer animation staff:** The "staff" are students' group, who aid the NGOs to realize every kind of activities to promote solidarity values. The activity is oriented to support young skills to become active citizens.

This is a high intensive activity. A small student team will get involved and work with an organisation to promote their projects, both in and out of their schools. They are encouraged to organise real events. Volunteers do not manage them in this case. An example is an event in Luca where one group organised an event to fundraise for a project in Burkina Faso, in which 8,000 people attended a music festival.

*Audience question: do students follow through these three activities in order?*

They are all single projects, and students can choose one to get involved in. The projects are composed of very active students, and they do tend to feature on each type of project.

The weak point to this activity is that it requires a lot of work and support.

*Audience question: how do you work with these groups?*

The operators meet the staff once or twice a month, and they will work with them from the start of the school year.

**Activity 4: Stage / Training period:** A group of students spend time with an organisation in a training scheme for one or two weeks. It is important that the students learn something, and they need to do something specific. The students keep a record of what has happened.

This is a very high intensive activity. Some organisations don't know what to do with the organisations, and it is important that they plan their planning.

**Activity 5: Tuscan camping of solidarity:** organized every summer to end annual activities, to reward the students more active and to make the links with them stronger. The participants are usually 25-30, the camping is one week long and the camping-days unifies training moments and recreational moments.

The projects work in an active way with the teachers and NGOs too: every choice is shared with them and every actor runs the activities with a network philosophy. The NGOs are supported to improve their skills in relating young people, while the teachers are supported to connect their institutional tasks with the aim to train young people as common good builders.

*Audience question: how do you start the process, and when do you get the schools involved?*

It is not so easy to plan activities alongside the demands of the school. Usually they start planning in June to begin the activities at the start of the school year in September.

### Geographical scope of action (national / regional / local):

Regional

## EVALUATION

### Main results of the project:

Main results about NGOs: the project has created 25 NGOs' forum with a total of 315 NGOs involved.

Main results about schools: the project has involved 76 secondary schools (about 30% of Tuscan secondary schools).

### What problems were encountered during the project?

1. The project has been able to involve a big number of students, but the quality of involvement is generally low;
2. This problem depends on our actual availability of human resources (4 part-time operators and 1 coordinator), in other words, there is a clear incoherence between results, dissemination and human resources;
3. The action quality of NGOs in relating to young people is usually pretty low;
4. NGOs' volunteers are usually very busy and it's difficult to link schools' demands and NGOs' demands.

### What are the elements that made this project a success? (criteria of good practice)

Some criteria of good practice:

1. Network strategy:  
NGOs works together and they are really active in every strategic project's choice. CNV, with its local delegate, regulates the relations among NGOs, among schools and NGOs and among students and NGOs.
2. Activities:  
Even if the quality of involvement is not very high, the activities are built on the basis of a real knowledge of young people, especially on peer-to-peer strategies and young lead support strategies. Social life is used as a tool to promote the project (like amusement, desire to get new friends, etc.).
3. Human resources' skills:  
People who run the project have been accurately selected on the basis of young age, experience in group management, juvenile sector, residence and autonomy.
4. Use of digital technologies:  
The use of digital technologies in audio-video sector has allowed to gather a lot of students and to produce some nice products at low cost.

### What is innovative about this project?

For the first time in Tuscany secondary schools cooperated on a unique proposal delivered by a network of NGOs and not by a single NGO.

### In what way is this project transferable? (to other countries/regions, to other target groups?)

With a particular attention to local school system and to NGOs' identities and skills, this project seems to be highly transferable regarding target groups, main activities, action strategy and organizational scheme.

### **Main results**

The main results came from September 2003 to March 2006.

#### NGOS involved

Year 1: 180

Year 2: 245

Year 3: over 300

They have a wide variety of organisations involved. They work in a forum of organisations, which includes 26 voluntary organisations. They have found it to be very important to have a network approach.

#### Schools

They now have 77 secondary schools involved, which is 30% of the secondary schools in Tuscany, and there is a clear increasing trend. They work in 26 work areas, and they have chosen to be present in every area of Tuscany.

#### Students

The trend is clearly rising, and they now have approximately 13,000 students involved, and the school year is not finished yet, so it could get a great deal more.

### **Contact details of project leading organisation**

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## **Workshop 2**

**Development of a methodology of "Validation of Prior Learning" in voluntary work**  
**Saskia van Grinsven, CIVIQ, Netherlands**  
**Els Hofman, CIVIQ, the Netherlands**

Chair: Norrie Murray  
Note taker: Stuart Garland

### **Objectives of the projects**

Development of a methodology of VPL  
Providing opportunities for organizations and volunteers to recognize the competences that volunteers gain in their volunteer work

### **Participants**

Project Partners: NIZW, CIVIQ and IVIO  
Local Volunteer Centers, voluntary organizations, mixed group of volunteers.

**Title of the project:**

Development of a methodology of "Validation of Prior Learning" in voluntary work

**Name and country of organisation promoting the project:**

CIVIQ, the Netherlands

**General area of the project:**

Identifying, assessing and recognizing skills and competences learned through volunteering

**Participants of the project (number and type, e.g. unemployed, pupils, students, etc.):**

Direct target group: 8 persons (trained implementers of the methodology)

Indirect target group: 15 – 20 persons (volunteers)

**Reasons / Rationale for setting up this project (to respond to which societal needs?):**

- Recognition of voluntary work
- Volunteers and organisations expressed their interest
- It makes voluntary work attractive (e.g. for youngsters and unemployed)

**Funding of the project:**

Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport

**Description of main activities within the project:**

- Development of methodology by a specialised institute
- Tested in 3 pilot organisations in 2005 and in 5 in 2006
- Training of guiders who are responsible for the implementation of the methodology
- Trainers implement the methodology in their own organisations
- Finalising the training modules
- Insight in a way for further national implementation of the methodology

**Activities**

This methodology was developed by a specialised institute and tested in 3 pilot organizations in 2005 and in 5 ones in 2005. Trainers who are responsible for implementing the methodology are specifically prepared for the programme. The trainers implement the methodology in their own organization. The assessment is quite complicated but contained in information pack. Volunteers do not need all 12 competencies described. Volunteer does a self-assessment, which is reviewed with a trainer. Certificates can be used to get a job or to show volunteer experience.

**Geographical scope of action (national / regional / local):**

National

**EVALUATION**

**What problems were encountered during the project?**

- Time investment of the guider (costs a lot of time)
- Double role of trainer (both trainer and assessor)
- Implementation in the organisation

**What are the elements that made this project a success? (criteria of good practice)**

So far:

- Increased self-confidence and self-awareness from the volunteer
- Gives insight into what the organisation has to offer as learning environment

**What is innovative about this project?**

It is a new methodology to assess prior learning and it is a new concept in voluntary organisations.

**In what way is this project transferable? (to other countries/regions, to other target groups?)**

**Methodology is transferable when translated. Obviously, it needs to be adapted to the local context of the other country.**

*Audience question: Do you have any experience of this methodology / idea?*

- In France young people go through a non-formal practical and technical training, which is recognised.
- In Italy they are looking into life long learning and the Government does take this into consideration. Normally, organisations just want to use young people's energy
- ÖKA (Hungary) is looking at skills gained in volunteering in Leonard de Vinci funded programme.
- In Romania volunteer centres develop a set of instruments to work with volunteers. Instruments to work with organisations have also been developed. There are difficulties in evaluating contribution of volunteers. They just list time and work done in volunteering. The management of volunteer is an art.
- Volunteering England gave an example of a diploma course, which was designed by students, and was self-assessed and the standards of assessment were very high. We recommend that volunteers do their own self-assessment.

**Main Results**

Methodology with a handbook and training folders for guiders and participants. Increased self-confidence and self awareness of the volunteers.

**Contact details of project leading organisation**

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**Web Page:** - [www.civiq.nl](http://www.civiq.nl)

**Workshop 3**

**a) "Lire and faire lire" / "Read and make read"**  
**Colette Robert, France Bénévolat, France**

Chair: Markus Held  
Note taker: Silvia Rapizza

**Objectives of the project**

To give children the taste of reading

**Participants**

National Federation on Teaching Associat  
National Federation of Families associations  
All primary schools  
Ministry of national education  
Ministry of youth and sports

**Title of the project:**

"Lire et faire lire" ("Read and Make Read")

**Number of the participants:**

10 000 volunteers (mostly retired people)

**Reasons / Rationale for setting up this project (to respond to which societal need?):**

Let the children discover the pleasure of reading

**Funding of the project:**

Ministry of National Education through la Ligue de l'Enseignement

**Main activities of the project:**

Retired persons go to mostly primary schools during all the free times (not during the teaching time); they read appropriate books to small groups of 5-6 children. They can begin reading and ask a child to continue. They ask questions to judge the comprehension of the children. They also may go everywhere children gather (cultural centres, sport clubs, etc.)

**Geographical scope of action (national / regional / local):**

All over France, Switzerland, Monaco, Quebec (Canada).  
It is very difficult to evaluate; but there are more and more demands from the schools.

**EVALUATION**

**What problems were encountered during the project?**

In the beginning we had to convince the schoolteachers, who are reluctant to receive support from "outside".

**What are the elements that made this project a success? (criteria of good practice)**

- Children and retired people enjoy sharing the same pleasure.
- The reputation of the success of this experience is expanding among teachers and parents.
- This project has been launched by Alexandre JARDIN, a very well known French writer, and has obtained the patronage about 50 very well known French writers
- It has been supported by a national structure (La ligue de l'Enseignement, which has branches in every department of France)

**What is innovative about this project?**

To mix generations in the project, which has never been done before.

**In what way is this project transferable? (to other countries/regions, to other target groups?)**

This project is transferable to any other country.

**Contact details of project leading organisation**

Lire et Faire Lire  
Ligue de l'Enseignement  
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Web Page - [www.lireetfairelire.org](http://www.lireetfairelire.org)

*Audience question: How do you get retired people to involve in the project? How do you prepare them?*

The association promoting the project is very well known; retired people freely and spontaneously apply. The National Federation of Teaching Associations trains them.

*Audience question: How old are the children? Is it possible for them to repeat the experience?*

Children are from 5 to 10 years old and can repeat the experiences for two or three years if they want. They might be in a different group with a different adult reader.

*Audience question: Are Volunteers retired teachers? What do they read to children?*

It is not compulsory to be a retired teacher to get involved in the project. Nevertheless, it is true that they have often been teachers. Volunteers read different books, not the same the children deal with at school.

### **Main results**

The motivation of the children to read is increasing.  
Reading well and enjoying the pleasure of reading are key elements to learn.  
This project creates connections and exchange between different generations; children and retired people enjoy the same pleasure.  
Ordinary citizens can help schools to face the new problem arising.  
Reading gives vocabulary and improves the skill to express one's ideas: when a child can express himself it can prevent violent behavior.



**b) Dossier Bénévolat**  
**Anna Hallen, ICVolunteers, Switzerland**

Chair: Markus Held  
Note Takers: Silvia Rapizza

### **Objectives of the project**

Creating a dossier for recognition of volunteers  
See if the "Dossier bénévolat" to be used in all parts of Switzerland; It is based on self-evaluation and an evaluation of a volunteer mentor

### **Participants**

A committee from all three linguistic parts of Switzerland (12 people)  
Volunteers, organizations, associations etc.

**Title of the project:**

Swiss Social Time Registry (Dossier Bénévolat Suisse)

**Name and country of organisation promoting the project:**

ICVolunteers-Switzerland

**General area of the project:**

Identifying, assessing and recognizing skills and competences learned through volunteering

**Costs involved in the project:**

Cost per folder: CHF 5.00

**Geographical scope of action (national / regional / local):**

Switzerland (available in French, German and Italian)

**Reasons / Rationale for setting up this project (to respond to which societal need?):**

The project was set up to better understand what volunteering means, to promote volunteer work and enhance the recognition of volunteers. It should be used as a model to take inspiration from, in particular, the self-evaluation form.

**Main activities of the project:**

The Volunteer orders the folder and pays 5 CHF for it. Someone who works with the volunteer fills in the sheets. There is not a standard way of filling in, but there is a guide that gives some advises and contains documents for volunteers on how to document their work. It explains how the forms should be completed, especially volunteering certificate. There is also a part for self-evaluations. Training sessions are organised on how to do it. ICV and Red Cross organised information and training session for local organizations.

**Funding:**

The project was funded by the Office Fédéral de la Formation Professionnelle et de la Technologie and by Société Suisse d'utile Publique.

**EVALUATION**

**Main results of the project:**

Standardized tool at the national level, use of it is optional

**What problems were encountered during the project?**

Swiss national compromise... meaning that the language translations were a real issue, as they also showed cultural differences within the country in terms of how volunteering is being perceived and implemented.

**What are the elements that made this project a success? (criteria of good practice)**

The persistence of all partners to get to a compromise for the various language communities. The international year of volunteers offered a good opportunity for such a project, as it was the first time in history that volunteer organizations from the various linguistic regions decided to work together on a national project. It was therefore also a precedent for new other initiatives and teamwork.

**What is innovative about this project?**

National approach for a federalist country with different language regions and cultures.

**In what way is this project transferable? (to other countries/regions, to other target groups?)**

The folder is a modular document that can serve as a good example to other countries where such folders may not yet exist. In fact, the Austrians for example took some inspiration from the Swiss model.

*Audience question: What are the elements that made this project unique?*

The strength of this registry is the self-evaluation form. It provides the volunteer with recognition and self-evaluation that is of great value for the volunteer. Ideally the coordinator and the volunteer should do some parts of the self-evaluation together.

*Audience question: Can it be useful to find a job?*

The Dossier Bénévolat might be added to the CV and give other information to the employers. It can be especially useful to young people who are approaching for the first time the labor market. It is also a matter of culture and use. In France and in Italy employers seem not to be interested in having such a dossier. In Switzerland things are changing, there is a more positive attitude.

### **Main results**

The dossier was completed but it took a long time (2 years). Now they are publishing the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. It helps to better understand what volunteering means, to promote volunteer work, and enhance the recognition of volunteers

### **Contact details of project leading organisation**

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## **Workshop 4**

**Switch – die andere Seite** ®  
**Ute Bertel, BBE, Germany**

Chair: Mary McNeil  
Note Takers: Karl Monsen-Elvik

### **Objectives of the project**

- To initiate a thinking process in managers and leading employees to broaden their horizon and reevaluate their own values and prejudices
- To gain competence in dealing with human problems and become more efficient in their leadership.
- To waken the interest in voluntary social involvement.

### **Participants**

Department of Social Affairs, Munich  
Companies (Microsoft, Philip Morris)  
Social Institutions

**Title of the project:**

Switch – die andere Seite®

**Name and country of organisation promoting the project:**

BBE - Germany

**General area of the project:**

Efforts to influence the Life Long Learning Policy and to promote the role of non-formal and informal learning within this policy

**Number of the participants (number and type, e.g. unemployed, pupils, students, etc.):**

10 managers, who have a minimum of app. 6 months of experience in leadership

**Reasons / Rationale for setting up this project (to respond to which societal need?)**

The social administration benefits from the educational programme if its results are multiplied. A society of a big city is anonymous, singular and dominated by individual interests. Therefore "switch" can help to increase solidarity within the society of the city. Moreover, it can contribute not just to gaining theoretical knowledge, but a real experience and inside impressions gained by participants during their involvement. Thus, professional social work is generally more accepted. Knowledge contributed by all sides leads to synergic profit. The perception of social problems is greatly enhanced by direct contact and active work with people in real problem situations.

**Funding of the project:**

The companies of the participants pay a fee of 1.430 Euro for each participant

**Main activities:**

Participants work in a social institution for one week, meaning that they "switch" their working place to a new surrounding. During this week, important qualifications and experiences are gained and further developed:

- Tolerance for the new and unknown
- Social competence
- Communication, creativity, and flexibility in unknown and difficult situations
- Teamwork ability
- Experiencing the value of voluntary social work
- Getting to know and to evaluate common points between profit oriented companies and non-profit organisations
- Efficiency and performance expectation in a social work environment

**Geographical scope of action (national / regional / local):**

It's a local program in Munich and in Berlin.

**EVALUATION****Main results of the project:**

Companies depend on leading personnel with the ability to quickly and flexibly adjust to new situations and to develop efficient forms of teamwork. Responsible behaviour towards their employees has an immediate positive influence on the employee's motivation and their identification with the company they are working for. Leading personnel is required not only to have knowledge in their field of expertise, but to show social competence that allows them to judge, act, and communicate competently in their professional and social surroundings.

Through "switch" leading personnel gets the possibility to strengthen their social competence. With hands-on experience on „the other side“, they get the chance to utilize this knowledge for everyday decisions in their working environment. E.g., a manager who has to lay off employees has some degree of freedom in his decision. This degree of freedom can be used to make a decision that makes professional sense, but as well is socially responsible. Enhanced awareness of social problems of „the other side“ is an important prerequisite of a constructive leadership style.

### What problems were encountered during the project?

Problems are seen in getting popular to companies to participate, to get the right contact to the companies.

### What are the elements that made this project a success? (criteria of good practice)

The concept is praxis-oriented and starts a process of real confrontation with social life and work. All sides, the companies, the participants, the social institutions and the Department of Social Affairs benefit from it.

### What is innovative about this project?

The concept was created by a company (Siemens AG) and the Department of Social Affairs. The participants were from companies and from the City Administration. They got an insight into an unfamiliar culture of working together.

### In what way is this project transferable? (to other countries/regions, to other target groups?)

This program is transferable to other countries and regions, because everywhere it is possible to work in an institution, which has experiences with volunteering work. It is important that the participants can work, not only have a look at the work.

- The project started in 1999 with 4 SIEMENS managers in 4 social institutions as a pilot project for 1 person week each.
- First issue was to meet and to match each participant with the social institution.
- Immediately after there was a feedback session with the managers.
- Important to ensure the institution already has experience of involving volunteers.
- Look at the role, but also the management, the structure, etc.
- Challenge to get people to focus on the volunteering role. Difficult to get them not to use mobile phones or be involved at their workplaces at night, etc.
- One participant, whose role was to live in the same accommodation as drug addicts, had a special difficulty.
- Reflections included recognition of the scale of social need in their "rich city".
- The project made sure that there was a link between the support functions of the social institution – similarities and differences such as goal setting, report writing, planning, etc.
- Project was designed to involve senior and project managers.
- Project was to develop "soft" skills, and have people experience the difficulties, f. ex., in getting money from public agencies.
- Project suited small/medium size enterprises.
- In Berlin, the volunteering agency managed the programme; in Munich it was the public body.
- Benefits included a chance for these managers to contribute to the development and business management of the social institutions.
- The businesses saw the development of their managers by getting more "soft" skills, motivation and social awareness.
- People continued in the same or other institutions.
- BBE ensures that they track/follow-up on participants after their involvement.
- In 2005, 31 people were involved in the project, e.g. 12 Microsoft, 9 Philip Morris, other from the public administration.
- 3 participants participated on own initiative.
- 20 men, 11 women (maybe because there are more male managers).
- Projects included involving participants in picking up syringes used by drug addicts from the public park.
- Others involved serving refreshments and speaking to service users.
- Others offered support to people dying of AIDS.
- Also social service access point at stations (rail) – anything like helping someone with luggage, helping with lost children.
- Also, helping women who are being abused by their husband/partner.

### Audience question: Who recruits the volunteers and matches them?

- In Berlin - BBE staff
- In Munich – Public Agency

Support before and after. Also, there is a telephone number to call while they are on their placement.

Each match is designed around a goal to be achieved and there is a review process to check achievement of the goal.

*Audience question: What kind of professional support/training is in place for the special goals?*

- Each institution provides someone named to train/support/coach the participant.
- There is no formed training to prepare them for the role.
- There is a day before starting to ensure the person and the institution understand the role and what the person is going to do.

*Audience question: Do the participants have to participate / does their employer send them?*

No, it is totally voluntary.

*Audience question: Any other examples around the countries represented?*

In England, business in the community provides a less structured programme.

*Audience question: Is there any tool/document to record the development of "soft"/other skills?*

BBE can give specific examples of transferring skills developed while volunteering back to their work as managers. No written document.

*Audience question: Is there something to "sell"/promote the programme to others?*

Mostly involves giving specific examples that might meet the needs of the companies.

*Audience question: Who gets the 1.430 Euro?*

In Munich, EUR 500 go to the institution taking the volunteers, the rest goes to the intermediary, who arranges the placement.

*Audience question: What else is a benefit to the institution?*

They get access to skilled managers and some specialised skills such as marketing and planning

*Audience question: Do the participants get involved in more than 1 placement?*

No, general not. It is a great deal of commitment of the company already to give up there time of their manager(s) just for the one week.

*Audience question: Do they volunteer afterwards?*

Yes, these are examples of individual participants continuing to volunteer at the original placements or at other institutions.

#### **Main results**

The businesses welcomed the development of their managers' soft skills, motivation, and social awareness.

Leadership personnel is required not only to have knowledge in their field of expertise, but to show social competence that allows them to judge, act and communicate competently in their professional and social surroundings.

Responsible behavior towards employees has an immediate positive influence on the employees Motivation and their identification with the company they are working for.

## Contact details of project leading organisation

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## Workshop 5<sup>6</sup>

Recognition of Volunteer Competences  
Vlaams Steunpunt Vrijwilligerswerk, Belgium  
Eva Hambach

### Title of the project:

Recognition of Volunteer's Competences

### Name and country of organisation promoting the project:

Vlaams Steunpunt Vrijwilligerswerk vzw, Belgium

### General area of the project:

Identifying, assessing and recognizing skills and competences learned through volunteering

### Objectives of the project:

To develop a tool, which enables volunteers in leading positions within an organisation to detect their skills, attitudes and competences

### Participants of the project (project partners and target groups)

Volunteers, volunteer organisations, and third parties (employers, labour market oriented actors, companies)

### Number of the participants (appreciate number and type, e.g. unemployed, pupils, students, etc.):

All volunteers in leading positions

### Reasons / Rationale for setting up this project (to respond to which societal needs?):

To detect and to prove that volunteering is a learning environment for persons and that everybody gains skills and competences through volunteering. Volunteering as an informal way of learning.

### Funding of the project:

Flemish Community

### Main activities of the project:

Development of a instrument, by which volunteers can on their own discover their competences. Descriptive study on attitudes on "Recognition of Volunteers' Competences" from different points of view: volunteers, organisations and supporting structures. We also made about 20 individual interviews with individuals from business, administration, etc. to discover their opinion on volunteers' competences.

### Geographical scope of action (national / regional / local):

Flanders (Belgium)

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<sup>6</sup> Due to a havary at Brussels airport, the workshop presenter Eva Hambach could unfortunately not present her good practice example. The report s based on the information sent to us as preparation for the conference.

## EVALUATION

### Main results of the project:

Good result, but we discovered that a lot of resistance remains within all sector towards recognition of volunteers' competences.

### What problems were encountered during the project?

- Not enough knowledge on the concept itself, so there were quite a lot of misunderstandings;
- Different views on Volunteers' competences: positive: as an asset for volunteering, negative: volunteering should not be 'misused' for economical reasons.

### What are the elements that made this project a success? (criteria of good practice)

- Cross-sectoral approach: a lot of sectors agreed to cooperate in the project.
- We could count on volunteers for the evaluation of the instrument we made, volunteers helped to establish a list with competences.
- Working within a network meant that we had access to relevant sources of information and contacts.
- Partnership with the cultural sector was an asset.

### What is innovative about this project?

Development of a tool that can be used by volunteers themselves.

### In what way is this project transferable? (to other countries/regions, to other target groups?)

It is well transferable. Methods, which are used, can be applied and adapted into other situations.

### Food for thought / questions to discuss:

1. How do you feel about Recognition of Volunteers' Competences: is it useful or not? And, do you have experiences in this field and in the way enterprises and the economic sector looks at the volunteer's competences?

2. In our project we had a target group 'volunteers' in leading positions': do you think this was wise? Or should the 'recognition of volunteers' competences' be a subject for special target groups as unemployed, less educated persons, etc.?

3. Do you have in your country developed a similar instrument or tool to measure volunteers' competences?

### Contact details of project leading organisation

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## Workshop 6

**AVE Hungary: Assessing voluntary experiences in a professional perspective**  
**Borbala Hadrevy ÖKA, Hungary**

Chair: Saskia van Grinsven

Note Takers: Sarah Williams

### **Objectives of the projects**

Assessing voluntary experience (AVE) aim to identify and evaluate skills and qualifications acquired through informal learning within volunteer activities for a professional purpose. Identifying and evaluating the skills and qualifications acquired through volunteering in associations can be a viable way to recognize and validate this informal learning.

### **Participants**

15 partners from 7 countries: France, Hungary, Italy, Poland, UK Austria, Germany

### **Title of the project:**

A project of the European Committee's Leonardo da Vinci program: "AVE Hungary: Assessing voluntary experiences in a professional perspective"

### **Name and country of organisation promoting the project:**

Önkéntes Központ Alapítvány - National Volunteer Centre Hungary

### **General area of the project:**

Identifying, assessing and recognizing skills and competences gained through volunteering

### **Participating organisations:**

#### In France:

- Institut de Recherche et d'Information sur le Volontariat (IRIV)
- Institute for professional training (Institut Universitaire Professionnalisé) (IUP)
- Centre for Information and Social Communication (Centre d'Information et de communication sociale, CICOS)
- Association for Students in the City (Association pour la Fondation Etudiante pour la Ville, AFEV)
- Regional Council in Champagne Ardenne (Conseil régional de Champagne Ardenne)
- Regional Direction for Youth and Sports in Champagne Ardenne (Direction régionale de la Jeunesse et des Sports de Champagne Ardenne)

#### In Germany:

- INBAS-Sozialforschung
- Deutscher Paritätischer Wohlfahrtsverband (DPWV)

#### In Austria:

- European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research
- Verband Österreichischer Volksbildungswerke

#### In Hungary:

- Önkéntes Központ Alapítvány (ÖKA)

#### In Italy:

- Fondazione Italiana per il Volontariato (FIVOL)

#### In Poland:

- Centrum Wolontariatu

#### In the United Kingdom:

- Institute for Volunteering Research

The target group is mostly young people, who have had no professional experience and who volunteer as one of their first experiences in an organised (quasi) work setting outside of school, as well as for those, who have been away from the labour market and would like to take up paid work (parents, who have raised their children; long-term unemployed people).

#### Number of participants:

Each country had different numbers of participants.  
In Hungary we had feedback from 56 organisations and 15 volunteers.

#### Funding of the project:

The European Committee's Leonardo da Vinci program

#### Main activities of the project:

- A statement of the recognition of voluntary work in each of the 7 countries and the kind of training proposed by professionals to volunteers and the qualifications they require;
- A consultation among associations on the basis of a questionnaire to test the benefit of the AVE process.
- A synthesis of the main skills and qualifications developed in the voluntary activities and the ways and tools to identify them for professionals;
- A proposal and experimentation of assessment/validation for these skills and qualifications in the short term for the associations, in the long term for their partners (public and private sectors).

#### Geographical scope of action:

European

*Audience question: If the European Pass is only for Volunteers who have actively volunteered for one year in one organisation, is this not limiting to other volunteers?*

Maybe I wasn't clear. The requirements are that the individual should be a volunteer for a period of at least a year, and that they have a professional aim in mind. If a volunteer wants to change their voluntary activity, and do something else, that's ok.

*Audience question: How do you prove that they have been volunteering for one year?*

We had the same question. We had to set some requirements, but this was difficult to do. In Hungary, there is a new law stating that Volunteers should be registered by the organisation they volunteer with, to prove that they have been there.

*Audience question: Have you tested this already with Volunteers, or is it theoretical at this stage?*

To date, there has been no feedback on how the tool has impacted the labour market. HR managers have been interviewed, but they were dubious. The feeling is that the labour market is not open to Volunteers.

*Audience question: Who are the people who can be coached to use this tool?*

Any organisation that has anything to do with volunteers can use the tool. The profile of the coach is different in Hungary. There are certain requirements, for example, the person must have a few years experience in Volunteer Management. The method is that the coaches give workshops and the Volunteers fill it in themselves.

*Audience question: Are the organisations asked to write about the competence of the Volunteer?*

Yes, the organisations are asked to outline the responsibilities and tasks of the volunteer, and to reference the work that they did in the organisation. The tool can also be used as a kind of reference for a job application.

*Audience question: But in the self-assessment, you have the possibility of evaluating all your experiences and can build a very big portfolio?*

The organisations can only give reference for the work and individual has done within their own organization.

*Audience question: Is there a time/date when the 7 countries will complete their training for coaches?*

The project finished in March. Currently, we are looking for funding to develop the training for Coaches.

*Audience question: How was the development of the tool funded?*

It was funded through the European Commission. We represent National Volunteer Center, and we, with other countries, came together and decided to make this project happen.

*Audience question: How can people with perhaps a lower level of education use it? It seems to be a very academic tool. Is it the right tool to use for all volunteers?*

There may be limitations, but the idea is to promote what the tool is good for, and that is to assist the volunteer who uses it.

*Audience question: What is the next step of this?*

At the moment, all of the feedback is being disseminated, and with more funding, training for coaches will be developed.

*Comment: What I would like to say is that, it's not only something useful for returning to labor, but also for the education sector. With this tool, a person can recognize their competencies for education, through formal and informal learning.*

**All the tools will be made available on the website [www.onkentes.hu](http://www.onkentes.hu) in different languages.**

*Audience question: Volunteering is informal. Are we making it too formal? What is your opinion?*

Volunteering is informal, but it's important. There is no other way of personally recording volunteering experience at such a high standard. This tool is necessary.

*Comment: Volunteering is about creativity, and creativity comes from chaos!*

*Comment:*

- *It is important that those who want it for professional purposes only use this tool. The idea is not to have every volunteer using it.*
- *The tool's purpose can be expanded. The key is, it's based in Volunteering. If a person does use it, the whole idea of reflecting on what you do as a volunteer is so important.*
- *In this age of technology, once you have a core group, this tool can be used on-line.*
- *We also need to keep in mind the Social Inclusion aspect of those who want to use the tool. A person, who wants to use this, may not have the skills to use it on line.*

### **Main results**

A network of experts has been built  
A tool and a method have been elaborated  
A website: [www.eEuropeassociations.net](http://www.eEuropeassociations.net)

## Contact details of project leading organisation

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Web Site: - [www.onkentes.hu](http://www.onkentes.hu)

## Workshop 7

a) **Assessing voluntary experiences in a professional perspective, AVE UK**  
Nick Ockenden, IVR, UK

Chair: Christopher Spence  
Minute Taker (minutes not returned)

### Title of the project:

Assessing Voluntary Experiences (AVE)

### Name and country of organisation promoting the project:

Institute for Volunteering Research, United Kingdom

### General area of the project:

Identifying, assessing and recognizing skills and competences learned through volunteering

### Objectives of the project:

Within each of the 7 partner countries:

- Generate a statement on the recognition of voluntary work in each participating country;
- Undertake a consultation with organisations and associations in each country to explore ways in which voluntary experiences are assessed;
- Produce a synthesis of the main skills and qualifications developed through voluntary activities, and the ways in which these skills are identified and assessed;
- Develop a proposal for a new tool/method to assess voluntary experiences;
- Pilot the new voluntary assessment tool.

### Participants of the project (project partners and target groups):

Austria: European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research; OEVBW

Germany: INBAS Sozialforschung; DPVW

France: Institut de recherche et d'information sur le volontariat ; Université du Maine – IUP de Gestion de l'économie sociale; CICOS; AFEV, France ; Conseil régional de Champagne Ardenne ; Direction régionale de la Jeunesse et des Sports.

Hungary: ÖKA

Italy: Fondazione Italiana per il Volontariato

Poland: Centrum Wolontariatu

UK: Institute for Volunteering Research

#### Number of participants:

Survey returned from 59 organisations across the UK that involved volunteers.

In-depth interviews with 9 of the above organisations.

Consultation with 10 key stakeholders in the UK that involved the assessment of volunteer experiences.

Piloting of the tool with Kew Gardens, London.

#### Reasons / Rationale for setting up this project (to respond to which societal need?):

Volunteers want to be developed while managers want to manage more effectively. Policy makers want to make the link between volunteering and employability. There is therefore a need for a tool to connect volunteering with employability.

The project focused on volunteers who were seeking paid employment either for the first time, after a career break or period of unemployment, or because they are changing careers. It sought to help volunteers obtain employment by equipping them with ability to identify skills gained through volunteering and to present these to employers.

#### Funding of the project:

Leonardo da Vinci Agency, European Commission

#### Main activities of the project:

- A review of the literature on assessing voluntary experiences and accreditation in the UK.
- An exploration of the ways in which organisations in the UK currently assess their volunteer experiences and identification of potential partners to pilot the toolkit to be designed in the final stage of the research (a survey of volunteer involving organisations).
- Consultation with key stakeholders involved in the assessment of volunteer experiences and in-depth interviews with organisations.
- Development of a new voluntary assessment tool and piloting with volunteers from Kew Gardens (a botanical garden on the outskirts of London that involves around 300 volunteers).

#### Geographical scope of action (national / regional / local):

UK-wide, but part of a project within 7 European countries.

## EVALUATION

#### Main results of the project:

A number of perceived problems with assessing and accrediting voluntary experiences were identified (including a lack of knowledge and awareness on the part of the organisations, problems arising from a lack of resources and staff time or expertise, and problems of transferability of awards and certificates).

There remains a gap for a self-assessment tool that would be useful for volunteers as well as providing a mechanism for organisations to assess progress. While there are some mechanisms in place (e.g. exit interviews or questionnaires), they remain unsatisfactory to both the volunteer and the organisation.

### What problems were encountered during the project?

The project highlighted the difficulty of trying to do a genuinely cross-European project; what was appropriate in some countries was not in others. In France, for example, there was a very clear recognition that the project need to tie in with formal demands for certification in the labour market, whereas organisations in the UK found the work much more useful in helping volunteers think through what they were learning from their volunteering. The UK experience showed value in have a flexible tool that volunteers could use the highlight their skill gains, which they may, or may not, take forward for validation and certification.

### What are the elements that made this project a success? (criteria of good practice)

- Leadership from one partner;
- Good communication;
- Project meetings based around stages of the process and organised to achieve particular outcomes (f. ex. the Austrian meeting had workshops planned to get all countries to plan what their outputs for the project would look like).

### What is innovative about this project?

It followed up on something that has been regularly asserted about volunteering and allowed an outcome that provides:

- the tools to show how volunteering can add to learning and skills gains;
- a process (the tool and guidelines) to help volunteers and their organisations think through these skills gains;
- a practical tool which can also motivate volunteers (they can see what they are learning), but also helps them see what else they would like to learn;
- a tool that helps organisations better manage volunteers by reviewing volunteer experiences and learning and thus planning better how volunteers can be involved to increase their learning.

### In what way is this project transferable? (to other countries/regions, to other target groups?)

Each country has produced its own version of the tool which should reflect national volunteering and volunteer management preferences, the Austrian/German version for example is based more on a narrative history of volunteer engagement than the UK version which basis evaluation on dissecting volunteer experiences for skill gains.

### Food for thought / questions to discuss:

1. What do you feel is the connection between volunteering and lifelong learning? Lifelong learning is a broad definition of the learning process, how can volunteering highlight the connection and use it to enhance volunteers' experiences?

2. What place do you feel formality and management have in volunteering experiences and their assessment? How can volunteering incorporate ideas of lifelong learning while still keeping volunteering flexible, and while ensuring diverse volunteers with diverse learning styles benefit?

3. How does the diversity of volunteering experiences across Europe affect the development of generic accreditation schemes, and are they appropriate?

#### Contact details of project leading organisation

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**b) Elderly and New Information Technologies**  
AUSER, Italy  
Fabrizio Maddalena

#### **Title of the project:**

Elderly and New Information Technologies  
Nonno-Point (Grandfather-Point) and other local projects

#### **Name and country of organisation promoting the project:**

Auser –Italy

#### **General area of the project:**

New learning pathways to retired people

#### **Objectives of the project:**

Allow to people access new ways to express their "capability of relationship".

#### **Participants of the project (project partners and target groups):**

Target groups: retired people who want to learn the use of information technologies or want to improve their know-how

#### **Number of participants:**

Approx. from 5 to 20 persons in each course

#### **Reasons / Rationale for setting up this project (to respond to which societal needs?):**

Try to diminish the distance between the young and the older generations in their ways of being active society members

#### **Funding of the project:**

Mixed funding, by Auser and some local and/or regional institutions

#### **Main activities of the project:**

- Management of the internet-centres (like internet-points...)
- Management of the courses about new information technologies
- Management of the courses in schools where students "teach" to adults

#### **Geographical scope of action (national / regional / local):**

Local scope of action

## EVALUATION

### Main results of the project:

- Involving of the local institutions;
- Changing and improving co-operation between the association and the institutions;
- Appreciation of participants.

### What were encountered during the project?

- Shortage of funding;
- At national level of the association: difficulty in connecting different good experiences with many others similar in others regions.

### What are the elements that made this project a success? (criteria of good practice)

Capability to change the 'offer' of services (from a sort of 'internet point' to a real course) according to the perception of the demand and the available resources, especially in terms of volunteers.

### What is innovative about this project?

In some geographical area it was the first service of this kind managed by volunteers, and it was appreciated by the local institution and re-proposed by it, in cooperation with our association, letting to us the managements of new centres and allowing us to dedicate ourselves to open new courses.

### In what way is this project transferable? (to other countries/regions, to other target groups?)

The key-idea is to increase confidence with new information technologies as a way to establishing a new kind of relationships; it is highly transferable.  
The potential transferability is linked to the availability of resources, especially in terms of locations and equipment.

### Food for thought / questions to discuss:

1. 'Unexpressed-demand' of educating initiatives: how to indicate it and how to reach it?

2. Internet is often seen as a way to reach more information but at the same time to reduce the so-called 'human-touch'. We think that it could be different...

3. Relation between Education, Quality, Certification

### Contact details of project leading organisation

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