



TRONDHEIM
KOMMUNE



Co-funded by
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Evaluation Trondheim European Volunteering Capital 2023

Background

In 2023, Trondheim was the European Volunteering Capital (EVC). According to the jury, Trondheim deserved this title because the municipality makes a unique effort to publicly recognize volunteers and their contribution to society (for example, giving out a yearly volunteering award), prioritizes the quality of volunteering, has a high proportion of voluntary involvement in the population and has established a strategic and regulatory framework that has been very effective. This title is a great recognition of the volunteerism in the city and the good cooperation between the municipality and the voluntary sector.

A healthy voluntary sector is essential for citizen involvement and democracy. The Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 mentions that politicians should protect and support volunteering as a transformative force to strengthen European values, ensure robust, sustainable and democratic societies and have a positive impact on future generations. In line with this, Trondheim must ensure that everyone, regardless of age, gender, functional level, cultural background, religion, social background, sexual orientation, interests, political position or education, can participate and get involved voluntarily to co-create and promote Trondheim as a culture - and the volunteer village, where everyone can contribute to good local communities.

After a decline during the pandemic, participation in volunteering has increased again also due to the positive impact of Norwegian's national year of volunteering 2022 and the European Capital of Volunteering title in 2023. It is difficult to present the figures for how EVC2023 has affected volunteering in the city. In any case, we experienced greater interest both from other departments within the municipality and from other municipalities in Norway. Being the European Capital of Volunteering has created great pride among voluntary organizations and it will only be shown in the years to come what this extra effort has delivered. It is important to realize that volunteering cannot be ordered or adopted, but that you have to build relationships over time, create trust and get to know each other. Challenges in the future require a close collaboration between the municipality and volunteering.

Relationship to Trondheim's community plan 202-2032 and volunteering policy plan 2023-2026

Trondheim municipality recognizes how important voluntary efforts are for both individuals, but also for society. In order to develop the best possible society with good health and welfare services, the municipality will strengthen interaction with volunteering, since volunteering is an important supplement to public services. Volunteering plays an important role in achieving the municipality's overall goals.

The municipal community plan 2020-2032 (Trondheimsløftet) was adopted by Trondheim city council on 17 November 2022. The vision in the Trondheimsløftet is "Together we create Trondheim". This vision emphasizes the interdependence between the municipality, the voluntary sector and a number of other environments in order to create the city we want to live in together. A good and clear volunteering policy is essential to create support for the vision, and not least to go beyond words and towards action. In October 2023, a new thematic plan for volunteering based on the Trondheimsløftet was adopted. An important sub-goal of the plan is to strengthen cooperation and co-creation for volunteering.

Input from both local and international voices has been incorporated into the thematic plan so that the municipality's volunteering policy reflects both local and international conditions to a greater extent.

Focus in 2023

In 2023, we focused on three key areas:

- Network building and new forms of collaboration (local, regional, national and international)
- Visibility and promotion of volunteering
- Doubling of the volunteering million (public funding of volunteer projects)

1) Network building and cooperation

1a) Local and regional cooperation - volunteering forum

In 2023, the municipality started regular volunteering forums in collaboration with NTNU. The aim of the volunteering forum is to create a formalized meeting place where all kinds of voluntary organizations, authorities and other actors (business, academia etc.) meet regularly to strengthen networks and cooperation, increase knowledge, create synergy and create plans and strategies to tackle major social and health challenges now and in the future.

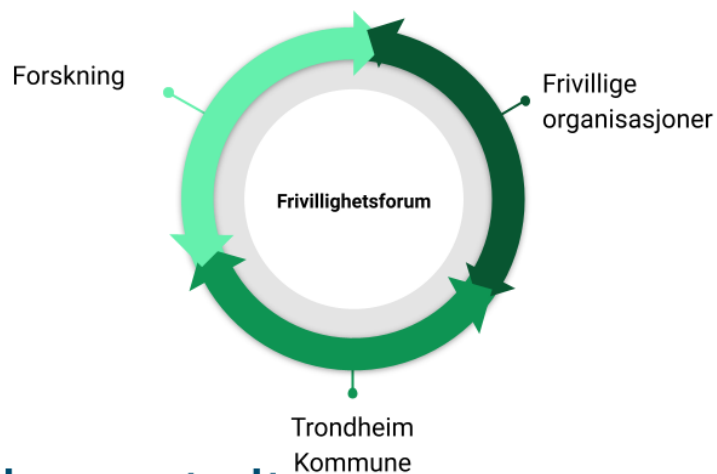
The purpose is to provide volunteers with frameworks and knowledge to carry out their activities both independently and in collaboration with the public sector. Via the volunteering forum, the municipality can also get input on plans directly from organizations that work closely with social issues and that are close to end-users. Those who are closest to the challenges know best where action is needed and volunteering forums can therefore be used to collect input and concrete ideas related to volunteering and civil society, social sustainability and physical and mental public health. Voluntary forums are more flexible than traditional input from councils (for example diversity council, elderly council, student council), but at the same time more structured and less random than questionnaires. Via the volunteering forum, the municipality can get input on plans and measures directly from organizations that work closely with social issues and that are close to users.

At the same time, the volunteering forum is an important meeting place for volunteering across sectors and a place where organizations can gain new knowledge that they can use in their daily work with volunteers.

In order to involve others from the region more in volunteering forums, one forum was organized by the Trøndelag province and two forums were digital.

Part of each volunteering forum is a presentation or workshop so that voluntary organizations can gain knowledge about a relevant topic (see overview of topics and number of participants below). The volunteering forum is a good arena for both knowledge acquisition and sharing. Knowledge exchange takes place on three levels:

- Academia accumulates knowledge about volunteering and cooperation between the voluntary sector and the municipality
- Voluntary organizations gain new knowledge during the volunteering forum
- The municipality gains knowledge about the voluntary sector, social and health conditions and challenges in the city



Kunnskap sentralt

Overview topics and number of participants

Date	Topic	Location	Partners and number of participants
30th jan	International conference	Scandic Nidelven	CEV, diverse enheter TK, frivilligsentraler (90)
15th feb	Diversity and inclusion	K.U.K.	JM Norge (25)
23rd march	Input to volunteer policy of province and information about provincial support schemes	Stor Sal Rådhus	Trøndelag Fylkeskommune (75)
29th march	Support schemes Department of	Webinar	Buudir og Imdi (40)

	immigration and Department of children and young people		
25th april	How to involve more young people in volunteering	Røde Kors Fellesverket	Røde Kors, NTNU (70)
4th may	Professionalisation in volunteering - workshop on leadership and recruitment strategies	K.U.K.	Frivillighet Norge (25)
14th june	Business and volunteering - how to work together	Banksalen Sparebank	Sparebank, Næringsforeninga (70)
30th aug	Together for sustainable projects	Reppe Søndre Gård	Dype Røtter, Reppe Søndre, Klima og miljøenheten (30)
15th sept	Student volunteering and democracy	Sosiologisk poliklinikk	Studentersamfundet, SosPol, Velferdstinget, Study Trondheim etc. (100)
28th oct	Digital skills: safe and smart use of social media	Webinar	Fylkeskommune og Trøbu (20 digital, 12 i et møterom)
13th nov	Live home longer - how do we create neighbourhoods that allow people to live in their own home as long as possible?	Østbyen frivilligsentrale	Ergoterapitjeneste, TOBB, SIT labs (26)
5th dec	From Trondheim to Trento - closing ceremony EVC 2023 and volunteer award 2023	E.C. Dahls Tapperiet	Diverse (600)

Evaluation

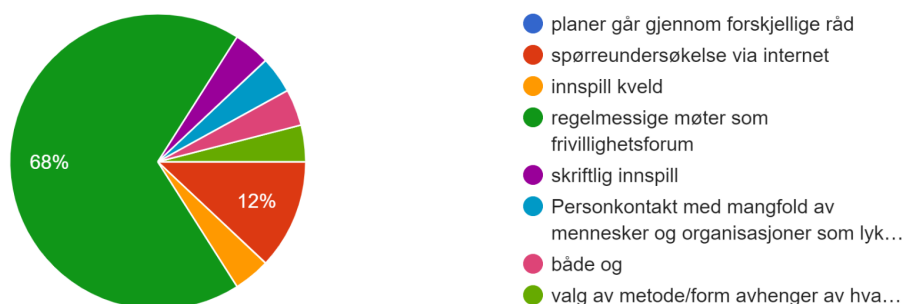
In collaboration with *NTNU WellFare, The Nordic research center for quality of life and social sustainability*, we have carried out an evaluation of the volunteering forums. In November 2023, we had two focus group interviews (n=10) and an internet survey (n=25). Most (84%) participated in volunteering forums to gain more knowledge, while 80% wanted to develop networks and 52% wanted to give input to the municipality. During the focus group interview, we heard that the topics were well chosen, relevant and interesting, but also received input for new topics in 2024 (see recommendations). 92% gained new knowledge and say that they can use this knowledge in everyday work and pass this knowledge on to their own volunteers.

96% have made new contacts, some even arranged specific agreements on cooperation. Most emphasized how important it was to meet each other across sectors and that the volunteering forum has given an opportunity to meet actors that you would never have met otherwise. For some, the volunteering forum was an eye-opener about what is out there in the world of volunteering, while at the same time it was an excellent opportunity to talk to others from the same "business".

Alongside the transfer of knowledge, dialogue and input were central during the volunteering forum. 90.9% of participants found the round-table discussion and dialogue part valuable and 68% think the volunteer forum is a good way to give input to the municipality. During the focus group interviews, several people highlighted how important the volunteering forum was to change ideas about their cooperation with the municipality, how important it was to find out that the municipality needs the volunteer sector to solve tasks and that organizations can actively give input and be heard during the forum.

Hva tenker du fungerer best når kommunen trenger innspill?

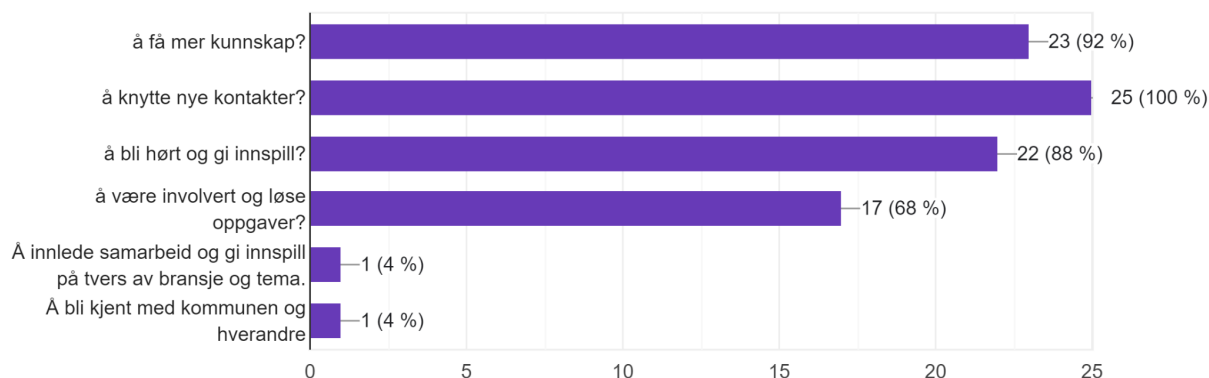
25 svar



The evaluation also showed that organizations think that the volunteering forums are a good working method for both the municipality and the volunteering community. The opportunity to gain more knowledge, to make new contacts and to be heard was most important for organizations, while they thought that for the municipality the volunteering forum was a method to involve volunteering more actively and to improve interaction and cooperation with volunteering as well as to gather more knowledge from and about volunteering. Some called it a "shift in intention", where it is no longer the case that the municipality is one entity and the volunteering sector another one; but one can use the forum to solve problems and create the future together (to see where the municipality's mandate stops and where the volunteer sector could contribute) - it opens up collaboration in a new way that fits perfectly into the goals of the Trondheimpløftet.

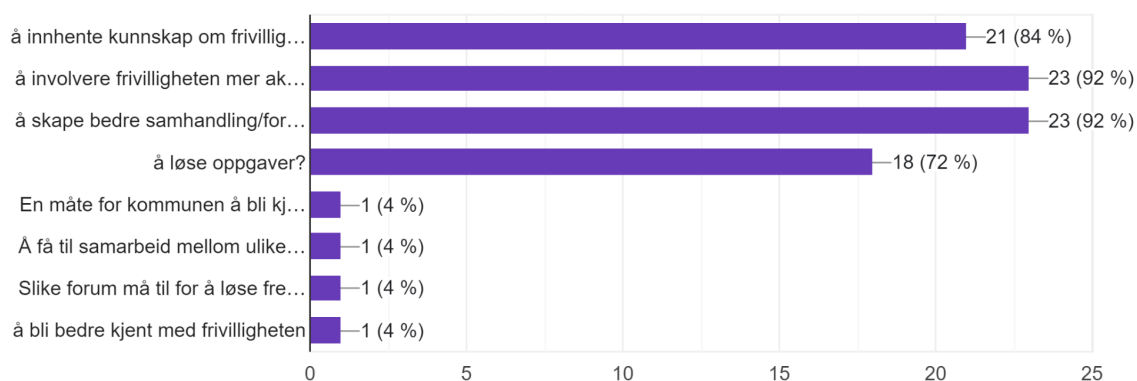
Tenker du at forum kan være en god måte for frivillige organisasjoner

25 svar



Tenker du at forum kan være en god måte for kommunen

25 svar



1b) International cooperation

Study trip and conference January

In January 2023, we organized a study tour for organizations connected to CEV (Center for European Volunteering). 45 participants from 14 different countries took part in this 3-day event. Local organizations were given the opportunity to present their activities and projects. We visited: Ila volunteering center, Sjiraffen Cultural Center, Lamoløype, Svartlamon housing foundation, Trikkestallen, Credo Geitmyra, Vår Frue Kirke, Mangfoldhuset, Natteravnene, Paraidrettsenter, Reppe Søndre Gård and Klæbu volunteering center at Gjenvollhytta. We also organized a conference with the 45 international guests and 45 local participants. During the conference, we had 10 round-tables where different topics were discussed (e.g. diversity, cooperation with business, social media, crisis volunteering etc.). Based on these discussions, we have put together the program for the volunteer forum.

Congresses and international network

We participated in three international congresses organized by CEV (Gdansk October 2022, Brussels March 2023 and Dubrovnik October 2023). The topic we presented can be found

under the presentation overview. In addition to sharing and gathering knowledge, these congresses were important in building up an international network that also benefited other organizations in Norway. So, for example, we translated a guideline for creating an organizational strategy and action plan from the Amsterdam volunteering center and made this information available via our Facebook page. In Portugal, they have worked with a program for the certification of voluntary organizations - we shared this information with the Norwegian Welfare Agency, which was very interested in this.

European Solidarity Corps

The European Solidarity Corps is an EU program that gives young people aged 18-30 the opportunity to volunteer in an EU country or partner country. The voluntary participation can last from one month to one year. The purpose of the program is to increase the participation of young people and organizations and to contribute to strengthening cohesion, solidarity and democracy in and outside the EU. The projects will help to deal with social and humanitarian challenges, and make a special effort for social inclusion.

In 2019, an overall review and assessment of Norway's participation in EU programs for the period 2021-2027 was carried out. The government then decided that participation in the European Solidarity Corps program should not be a priority. In practice, this means that Norwegian actors cannot act as applicants and initiators of projects.

Both in order to be able to send out and receive volunteers, it is necessary to have the European Solidarity Corps Quality Label. The Quality Label is an approval that can be applied for regardless of membership in the European Solidarity Corps, and which confirms that the applicant organization has the necessary prerequisites to be able to accept young people as volunteers.

On the initiative of EVC2023, in collaboration with the department of children and young people, it was decided that Trondheim should apply for the quality label in order to be able to both send out and receive volunteers in the future. These volunteers could, for example, contribute to the Ski WC 2025.

2) Visibility and promotion

Being the European Volunteering Capital has led to more attention and interest in volunteering, both in Trondheim municipality itself (several departments showed interest in cooperation with volunteering, e.g. ergotherapy or the department of climate and environment), from other municipalities (we got invited to Tromsø and received visits from Lørenskog, Oslo, Asker, Lillestrøm) and Trøndelag province (Steinkjer Festival), from the state (visits from KS, BufDir) and from various organizations and networks.

Here are examples of presentations that we were asked to do:

- 4th of October 2022, Center for European Volunteering Annual Congress, Gdansk (focus on resilience)
- 3rd of November 2022, Volunteer Conference, Tromsø
- 24th of November 2022, Assembly of Trøndelag Province, Trondheim
- 5th of December 2022, Public Health Conference, Stjørdal
- 31st of January 2023, Opening ceremony, Nidaros Cathedral, Trondheim

- 20th of March 2023, Center for European Volunteering Annual Congress, Brussels (focus on policy)
- 17th of April 2023, KS Large City Network, Trondheim
- 18th of April, Delegation of eight Polish mayors, Trondheim
- 23rd of June 2023, Day of the future Steinskjer Festival, Steinkjer
- 7th of September, Museums in Sør-Trøndelag, Trondheim
- 2nd October, Center for European Volunteering Annual Autumn Congress, Dubrovnik (focus on co-creation)
- 15th of November, Delegation from Oslo, Trondheim
- 21st of November, Webinar on Measuring Volunteer Impact

Other activities to highlight volunteering in the city and to inform about volunteering

In January 2023, we had the big opening ceremony in Nidaros Cathedral for 600 volunteers. The ceremony included a concert, volunteering award 2022 and official opening of EVC2023. All participants received an exclusive chocolate made by Nidar Chocolate.

A promotion film was shown in all cinemas in Trondheim and Stjørdal in the spring and autumn of 2023. The purpose was to get the message out to people in the city and the surrounding area, and to motivate new people to become volunteers. The short movie was seen by at least 75000 in the cinema and has been watched 49645 times on the internet.

Social media was used to showcase events during EVC 2023, to share different stories of volunteers, share practical information about volunteering, as well as to highlight the awareness of volunteering that was shown throughout Norway using advertising tools. Our facebook page had 369 followers.

Every month Trondheim municipality presented a story of a volunteer on its social media pages (examples were language and culture festival, youth volunteering, queer volunteering, TV campaign or summer camp for children).

EVC 2023's profiling materials were also used by various voluntary organizations in social media, presentations and seminars to highlight that Trondheim is the European Volunteering Capital in 2023.

In collaboration with George Thompson, we produced an exhibition called *Trondheim Faces and Voices* which showed portraits and stories of 12 volunteers in Trondheim. The exhibition was located at Nordre Gate and Elsa Laula Renberg Plass (more than half of the participants in the interview/survey had seen the exhibition).

EVC 2023 supported FinnFramFest, a fair for children and young people where volunteer organizations, sport clubs and associations presented diverse possible leisure activities in culture, sports, outdoor life and volunteering. The event was attended by approximately 6,000 spectators.

EVC 2023 and FinnFramFest were published in The List, Trøndelag's only cultural magazine in English. The magazine was distributed in libraries, cinemas, museums, hotels, restaurants

and cafes, shopping centres, universities and much more in Trondheim and the surrounding area.

3) Doubling of the volunteering million (public funding of volunteer projects)

In connection with Trondheim being the European Capital of Volunteering 2023, the city council in Trondheim chose to double the municipal support for volunteer organizations. Two million Norwegian crowns were allocated in 2023 for a wide range of activities carried out by volunteers: from food distribution, community gardens and beach clean-up to neighborhood events, intergenerational games and bicycle workshops. This enabled volunteer organizations to strengthen motivation and keep voluntary involvement alive.