



European Year of Citizens 2013
www.europa.eu/citizens-2013

CEV Policy Conference “Cross-Border Volunteering - What is it for?” 3-4 October 2013 (Sarajevo, BiH)

Conference Report

CEV hosted the official launch of the European Volunteering Capital Competition in Sarajevo#EVCapital

Over 150 participants contributed to the success of the event.

“The initiative to designate a **European Capital of Volunteering** is an excellent way of keeping volunteering issues in the spotlight. It’s a tangible and visible follow-up to the European Year of Volunteering 2011, and is a valuable contribution to improving the world of volunteering. Our congratulations go to the Community of Barcelona for being the first recipient to receive this worthy distinction!”

John Macdonald, Team Leader for the European Year of Citizens 2013 at the European Commission

The policy conference was organised in partnership with SEEYN- South East European Youth Network

Supported by the European Commission, by the European Year of Citizens 2013 Alliance and by the Visegrad Fund.

"...volunteering is one of the key dimensions of active citizenship and democracy, putting European values such as solidarity and non-discrimination into action..."
(European Commission, 2009)

Recently a change in EU discourse can be noted in that the EU appears to be increasingly concerned with encouraging people to volunteer in order to gain skills, and increase their employability. For example, the reference to the European Voluntary Service (EVS) in the European Commission Communication "Youth Opportunities Initiative" (2012) rather than recalling the intercultural and solidarity dimension of the programme states that:

"...such work experience in another Member State can provide important skills and help young people enter the labour market..."

"Volunteering should not be exploited as a solution to Europe's challenges but be properly valued as an expression of European values, a legitimate counterbalance to injustice and an appropriate expression of solidarity amongst its citizens"
(Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe- P.A.V.E. 2011)

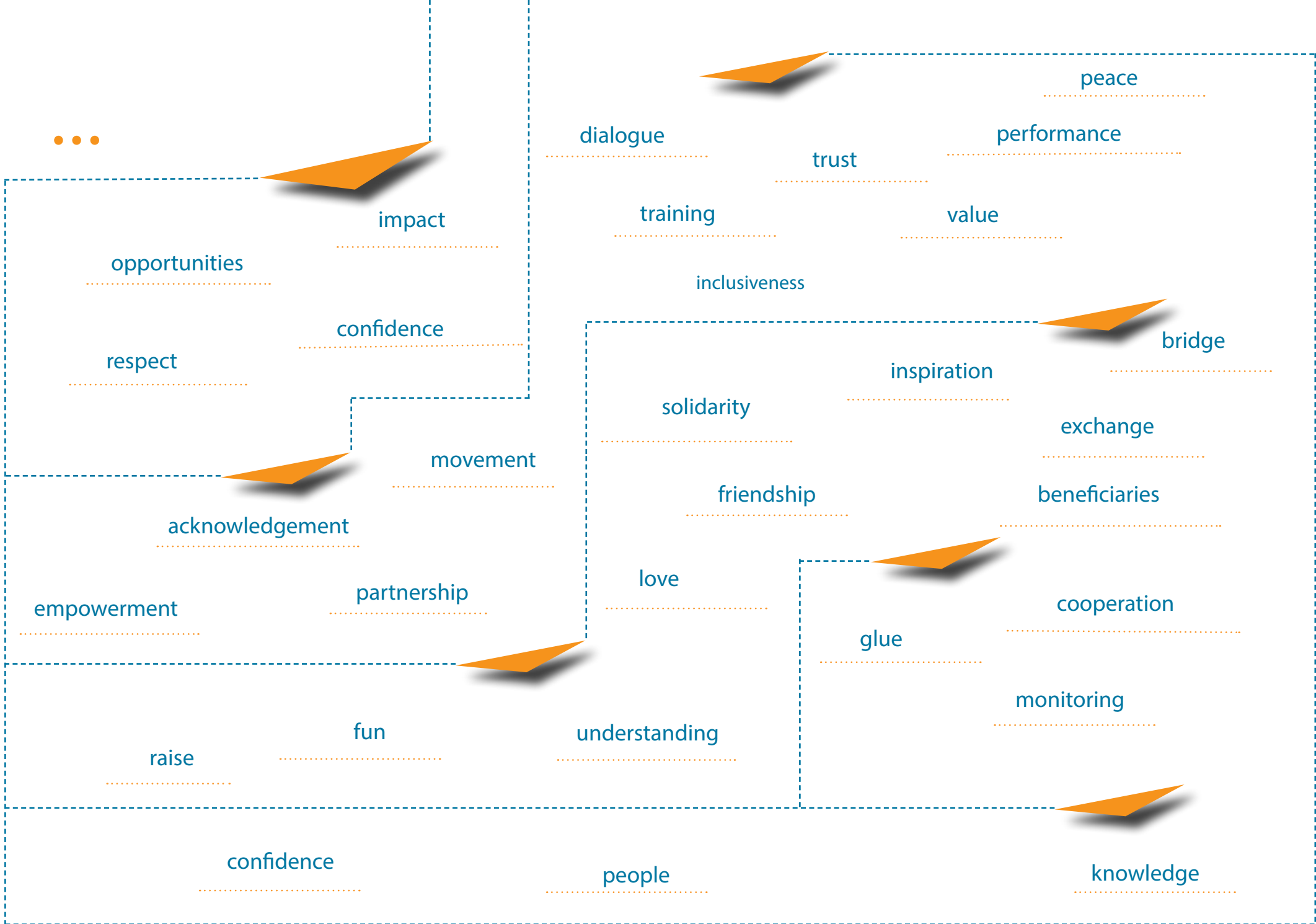
What is it for? Promoting European Citizenship or Increasing Employability?

On 3 October 2013 the conference was opened with welcome addresses by Mr. Adnan Husic, Assistant Minister of Education in the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ms. Branka Malešević, Assistant Minister for Youth of the Republic of Srpska and by Dr. Ranko Covic, Deputy Mayor of Sarajevo.

Key note addresses were delivered by CEV President Ms. Eva Hambach and Mr. John Macdonald, European Commission, European Year of Citizens 2013 Task-force / European Volunteering Capital Jury Member introducing the topic of cross-border volunteering in the current discourse.

On the second day of the conference the scene was set in a plenary session followed by six parallel workshops on: **humanitarian aid and development, civil protection, shared learning, European values and building citizenship, reconciliation/ building communities**, and **gaining skills/enhancing employability**. This report contains the poster presentations of the projects that were discussed during the parallel workshop and of organisations carrying out activities involving cross-border volunteering.

The conference was concluded with a reflective debate addressing the question of the ultimate purpose and value of cross-border volunteering beyond the broad themes focussed on in the parallel sessions. The following page illustrates the wide-range of outcomes and added-value offered by cross-border volunteering experiences as concluded by the conference participants.





Humanitarian Aid & Development

workshop posters

France Volontairs

VSO International

United Nations Volunteers

Fundacion "La Caixa"

Alianza por la Solidaridad

Key Features

www.unv.org

UNV's approach is to contribute to peace and development by (1) mobilizing an increasing number and diversity of volunteers, including experienced UN Volunteers, throughout the world. UNV embraces volunteerism as universal and inclusive, and recognizes volunteerism in its diversity as well as the values that sustain it: free will, commitment, engagement and solidarity. UNV works with partners to integrate volunteerism into development programming, and advocates for recognition of all volunteers.

Key Messages

UNV believes volunteerism benefits both society at large and the individual volunteer by strengthening trust, solidarity and reciprocity among citizens, and by purposefully creating opportunities for participation. Cross border volunteering is a key recognized global contribution to development and peace that complements local and national volunteering in its diverse forms

Financed by



Partner countries
Economic Community of West African States, the European Commission
UNDPKO, UNDP, UNHCR and UNICEF

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for UNV

- Citizen interface with the UN system through peoples participation
- A constructive interface with UN members states for development and peace
- The inspiration and experience of citizen action in solving global issues
- Diverse forms of volunteerism are encountered
- Volunteers learn themselves from local people and contexts
- Volunteers take back to their country of origin the insights and experiences they learn as volunteers

Extra effort

- International presence and partnerships with governments, UN agencies, private sector and civil society.
- Be guided by the needs of recipient countries
- Cross cultural sensitivity
- Neutrality
- Universal options for participation
- Provision of additional support e.g. airfares, insurance, living allowance

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for project partners

- Access to global expertise and solidarity in person and online
- Volunteer Infrastructure development through collaborative work on volunteer schemes and legislation and advocacy
- Capacity development
- Sustained Development outcomes particularly when cross border volunteers work with local citizens and volunteers
- Access to global networks
- For further examples see the Report of the UN Secretary General – July 2012 http://www.unv.org/fileadmin/docdb/pdf/2012/Resources/2012_SGR_Final

Side effects

- Potential tension between inclusive opportunities for volunteers and skills requested by local partners
- Dealing with misperceptions about cross border volunteers
- Difficulty at times gaining recognition for importance of local/national volunteer contributions and the complementarity between national volunteering and cross border volunteering

Key Features

Youth led active citizenship – developing networks of active citizens
 Working with a local partner – community led
 Livelihoods development outcomes for women led small businesses
 Strong focus on volunteer learning
 Cross-cultural team of young people from UK, Afghanistan and Tajikistan
 (including Afghan refugees living in Tajikistan)

Key Messages

Rich learning for young people
 Gaining skills, experience, cross-cultural dialogue
 Opportunities to marginalized/ geographically isolated groups
 Achievement of realistic development outcomes over time

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for VSO

- Enables VSO to work in fragile states
- Building links in Afghanistan supports regional strategy on Inclusive Economic Development e.g. Cross-border trading between Tajikistan and Afghanistan
- Enables VSO to engage marginalized people in our wider programmes (NEET groups)
- Enriches VSO and partner programmes with cross-cultural views and skills (multinational team)

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for project partners

- Builds the confidence of young volunteers
- Supports the development of women's small businesses (market research, needs analysis, awareness raising, resource development, training, marketing) in partnership with the National Association of Business Women in Tajikistan
- Increases understanding amongst young people of how volunteering in a development context can impact positively on livelihoods
- Increases awareness and understanding of volunteerism across communities
- Human resource to partners
- Breaks down stereotyped views of Afghanistan
- Provides respite from tension/conflict for young Afghans



Financed by
 The UK Department for
 International
 Development (DFID)

Extra effort

- Removing barriers to participation: young women, disadvantaged groups
- Logistical challenges: visas, recruitment, home actions post placement
- Additional support to enable inclusive cross-cultural dialogue
- Post programme support is challenging when done remotely in Afghanistan
- Recruitment in Afghanistan achieved in partnership with Mercy Corps
- Using technology for remote recruitment: facebook advertising, skype interviews

Side effects

- Sustainability beyond 3 month programme
- Volunteer skills and experience being well matched to placement needs
- Risk of volunteer cynicism if objectives not well designed or achieved
- Logistical challenges of remote recruitment and pre-departure training
- Significant additional costs (eg. Assessment days)
- Risk for young Afghans being seen as 'activists' when undertaking their action@home post placement and challenge in supporting this from a distance.

Key Features

In 2007, the Corporate Volunteering for Development Programme, CooperantesCaixa, was initiated as part of the Program for International Cooperation, and according to the principles of international cooperation.

Key Messages

The definition of "what for" (the objectives), both for the programme and for individual collaborations, strengthens the feeling of having been useful in a professional capacity, building confidence, strength, and giving more meaning to the collaboration than just personal experience.

The 'chain of volunteers' is a good strategy to achieve a genuine transfer of knowledge, and make an impact. It encourages teamwork and a sense of belonging that comes from having shared a common objective.

To go further than "what's the benefit for me?"



Obra Social "la Caixa"

Financed by
Fundación "la Caixa"

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for Obra Social "la Caixa"

Volunteers develop personal and professional skills: leadership, decision-making, teamwork, multiculturalism, creativity; They take pride in being part of the company; Transparency: they see where the resources are used.

The company:
Staff with more skills who are more motivated.
Improvement in the work environment.
Recognition of talent.

Extra effort

- Training of volunteers in international cooperation, and in volunteering for development cooperation.
- Screening of volunteers by human resources consultant.
- Selection of profiles that are suitable for the needs of the project.
- Detailed study of the projects that the volunteers will work on – case by case.
- Reach a consensus with the NGOs on the "what for" (the objective) of the collaboration.
- Provide guidance, advice and support to the volunteers in relation to the project.

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for project partners

Local NGOs / beneficiaries

Acquiring new skills for the management of their businesses – viability
Capable of the putting in place and management of credit funds / savings and credit cooperatives.
Incorporation of an entrepreneurial vision.
Higher self-esteem.
The fact that volunteers go during their holidays increases the recognition of the work they are doing.

Side effects

- We substitute local consultants. If we do the work, local consultants aren't hired.
- Some volunteers have asked for leave or resigned on their return.

Project title

European Corps of Solidarity Volunteers

Geographical scope

Abroad-Colombia, Haiti, Palestine, Uganda, Tanzania, Peru and India
Europe: Spain, France and Germany

Cross-Border- Added Value

- Standardization of volunteer's management rules according to each country regulation.
- Standard training ensuring a minimum knowledge of humanitarian issues.
- Creation of multi country teams.
- Partner's expertise complementarity both in humanitarian Action and volunteering.
- Awareness rising in Europe through voluntary actions.
- Contribution to improve LRRD operations.

Objectives

- Elaborate a common frame (applicable to other volunteering programs and adaptable by any sending organisation) for the recruitment and preparation of volunteers who will be involved in local organisations on disaster risk reduction and post-crisis recovery activities;
- Define the conditions of intervention of volunteers in Southern countries to ensure the strengthening of local capacities to enable them to face future potential crises or to recover from past crises;
- Elaborate a frame of reference to evaluate the impact of such humanitarian volunteering projects on local communities and on volunteers in terms of development of competences.

Target Group

30 European volunteers (From France, Germany and Spain)
Local NGOs associates to this project
Partner's teams in the field



Financed by
DG ECHO, Directorate
General for Humanitarian
Aid and Civil Protection

Challenges

Coordination: e.g. standardize processes considering the different countries regulation on volunteering.
Volunteer's management: e.g. Identification of volunteer activities that do not replace a job/ deal with a big number of applicants/etc
Training: e.g. Define useful contents of training for all missions
Evaluation: e.g. To ensure that inputs for the definition of EU Aid Volunteers are given to DG ECHO

Conclusions/ Outputs

- A system to identify missions & to manage volunteers including training useful to define European policy on volunteering
- Second stage also funded by ECHO to improve some of the results & to include new modalities of volunteers and specific training addresses to experts.
- Participation in parallel initiatives that emerged
- Assessment of the circumstances that allow for volunteers to perform properly their assignment and to better achieve their results.
- Raise awareness in member states about Humanitarian issues and crisis and lobby decision makers to implement measures
- Provide learnt lessons that can be applicable to the EU Aid Volunteers.
- Common position on how the programme is going to be funded

Project title

Key actors for inclusive humanitarian information sharing in crisis preparedness

Geographical scope

Kenya, Burundi, Chad, CAR, Cameroon

Target Group

Project target in terms of volunteering: young professionals (up to 26 year old) from all over Europe and local African volunteers
Project target : Local and international humanitarian actors



*Financed by
DG ECHO and
co-financed by French
Agence du Service
Civique*

Cross-Border- Added Value

The cross-border aspect of project enriched everyone in terms of:

- New work approach
- Various perception of volunteering (role, conditions)
- Cultural skills
- Various perception of capacity building
- Teams' performance

Challenges

The same added values were challenges all along project :

- New work approach
- Various perception of volunteering (role, conditions)
- Various perception of capacity building
- Language barrier

Objectives

- Provide the humanitarian and volunteering community with tested standards for volunteer selection, training and deployment guaranteeing the added value and the security of European citizens' commitment to international humanitarian aid
- To enhance the crisis-response environment by contributing to effective humanitarian information-collection and sharing solutions, thereby increasing the mutual visibility and capacity to collaborate between local, national and international crisis-management actors in deployment countries in preparation to crisis
- To strengthen the capacity of disaster-management actors and mechanisms to be actors of humanitarian aid, by reinforcing capacity of locally-based actors to maintain and sustain open-source humanitarian information-management systems

Conclusions/ Outputs

1. To accomplish their mission, volunteers were deployed by team composed by EU and local young people, which brought complementarity in terms of project management and facilitated the work and the understanding of the country.
2. The project was leaded by a consortium of 9 European NGO, with different ways of working which enriched the project.
3. The local and international humanitarian stakeholders (direct project beneficiaries) appreciated to be united around the topic of "Humanitarian information management" by an intercultural volunteering team.
4. Volunteers come back from this experience with strong capacities of analysis, more flexible, and knowledge of several country contexts.



Civil Protection

workshop posters

BritishRedCross

SAMARITAN INTERNATIONAL

Cave Rescue Service- Speleological Association SL

Axencia Galega de Emerxencias

Key Features

The Volunteers in Capacity Building (VinCaB) project – a joint project between several Red Cross National Societies and Civil Protection Organisations – is a European Commission pilot project, under the EC Humanitarian Aid Department (DG ECHO). The aim of the project, in response to the development of a new EU initiative titled 'EU Aid Volunteers' (EUAV), was to develop a framework for the international deployment of volunteers from EU civil protection and humanitarian assistance organisations.

Key Messages

- Identifying and being clear about the objective for cross border working is essential.
- Success depends on the motivation of the volunteer, the sending organisation and the host organisation
- In the VinCaB evaluation, 92% of the volunteers said that, based on their experience with VinCaB, they intended to continue to volunteer.



Financed by
European Commission,
DG ECHO

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for the British Red Cross

- Opportunity to improve cross organizational cooperation and network with colleagues from other civil protection and humanitarian assistance agencies.
- Experience in the level of motivation volunteers had after working in a cross border context. This motivation translated back to their role with the Red Cross locally.
- An increase in the level of skills and experience of volunteers.

Extra effort

- To coordinate all the sending and host organisations to reach a consensus and, internally, to establish new systems of working to support volunteers deployed for the first time overseas.
- Common Recruitment Process: language skills assessed, skills carefully matched with the needs of the host national societies, bespoke application form and similar interview questions.

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for project partners

- The capacity building projects which took place were relevant (need assessed by host organisations and projects developed to address this need).
- Changes in practices, new ways of thinking, strengthening of partnerships, visibility, increase in capacity, increased motivations.
- Projects continue to exist and have been implemented.

Side effects

- Language barriers
- Cultural differences
- High costs

Project title

EU PROTEUS

Geographical scope

Slovenia, Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, France, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Turkey

Target Group

Cavers and cave rescuers from the South East Europe.

Financed by

EC - DG ECHO
 Speleological Association of Slovenia,
 Croatian Mountain Rescue Service,
 Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief.



Cross-Border- Added Value

- Improvement of cross-border cooperation between rescuers as well as raised level of preparedness for cave related emergencies.
- Attracting up to 40 participants from 10 European countries on the International Cave Rescue Training 2012.
- The organization of the new European Cave Rescue Association (ECRA) improved the cross-border cooperation of the cave rescuers and raised the level of preparedness for cave related emergencies.

Challenges

- Consider the interests of all involved parties when creating tasks.
- In the initial phase of the project we did not know exactly how cave rescue system works in Croatia.
- Problems with different languages, different equipment and rescue techniques and different knowledge stages.
- In the SE Europe countries there are a lot of caves and not so many local cavers. These caves are frequently visited and explored by foreign cavers and in case of an accident our trainees will be the only rescue service available in a short time.

Objectives

- Identification of all special dangers in caves.
- Preparation and verification of basic rules for safe entering and working in caves.
- Testing of caving equipment and standards for caving equipment.
- Preparation and verification of basic standards and procedures for the operation of cave rescue service at various types of interventions.
- Cave research and Rescue plans of selected caves.
- Preparation of a training programme and implementation of training.

Conclusions/ Outputs

- Develop a cave rescue module and to start a procedure for the registration of a multinational cave rescue module for rescue operations in cave related emergencies.
- By using the cave rescue organizations of both Slovenia and Croatia as a case study perform a risk assessment on cave related issues.
- A unique "train the trainers" programme and set standards for visiting caves, researching caves and cave rescue together with medical issues.
- A well-regulated system that allows for an effective response in case of emergency.

Key Features

- FOSEPOGA / ARIEM 112 projects (civil protection management)
- Form a cross-border emergency network between Spanish and Northern Portugal institutions.
- Share knowledge on how to work together in solving possible emergencies caused on both sides of the border & Create response protocols
- Training of trainers in emergency joint actions.
- Civil protection volunteers are an essential part of emergency response.

Key Messages

- Civil protection volunteers are essential in cross-border emergencies.
- Civil protection volunteers must be trained in cross-border emergencies operations jointly with professional emergency services.
- Civil protection volunteering must be adequately supported and sponsored to work with volunteers from other countries.
- Encouraging civil protection volunteering in major disasters is necessary because the professional emergency services are not enough to manage it exclusively from their own resources.

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for Axega

- Ability to work with other services that have their own organization, protocols, equipment, fosters cooperation,
- Learning new skills and flexibility to perform a mutual adaptation to achieve a common goal.
- Establish bonds, that must be maintained over time to ensure an effective response to any contingency that may arise in the future
- Encourages and facilitates the sharing of knowledge
- Volunteer and professional staff, get extra motivation when updating their knowledge and adapt it to other ways of working.



Financed by
EU Assembly of European
Regions

Extra effort

- Difficulties of bureaucratic-administrative nature.
- Differences in administrative structures and management in different countries.
- Language barriers.
- Variety of resources, tools, equipment, personnel and operating procedures of some emergency services.
- Difficulties to set schedules for meetings, trainings, etc.

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for project partners

As we are talking about similar services of different countries, we can say that added values brought to our partners are the same as ours:

Learning new skills
Flexibility of operating procedures
Knowledge sharing
Extra motivation
Training in different operation techniques

Side effects

- Some misunderstandings due to language and cultural differences.
- Bureaucratic problems, mainly in fund management.
- Coordination problems in command system.
- Problems in the communications system because of the different radio frequencies used by Spanish and Portuguese emergency services.

Key Features

Local volunteer management
Coordinative effort: joint projects / activities with our network's members
Standardisation of training: Enables cross-border volunteering in emergencies
Some projects also establish permanent cross-border volunteer services

Key Messages

- Cross-border volunteering in civil protection is beneficial to all involved:
- The volunteering organisations benefit, as it allows them to exchange experiences and practices and develop improved common standards for their work.
- The volunteers gain motivation and intercultural competences.
- The beneficiaries of the volunteer activities receive better aid, as many situations which involve voluntary services in civil protection practically benefit from a transnational approach.

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for Samaritan International

- If a region is struck by natural disaster, the effects do not stop at the border the ability to transnationally coordinate the aid efforts is therefore a vital tool to increase the efficiency and impact of the volunteers' work.
- Common standards in training and equipment also facilitate the practical collaboration of volunteers from different countries.
- Our international member organisations are currently pursuing two projects in the field: A project on emergency temporary shelters (SamETS) and another on cross-border disaster relief in cases of flood, which is in its early planning stages.



Financed by
EU funding (e.g. ECHO grants) or grants from national public entities. In addition, our member organisations contribute their own funds which generally come from member fees and donations.

Extra effort

- Travel costs
- Translation (two working languages)

Side effects

- No negative side effects that we are aware of.

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for project partners

- Members share our concern for improving the impact, efficiency and other practical aspects of volunteer work in civil protection.
- For their volunteer management, cross-border activities can pose a strong motivational factor. adding an even stronger civic component, as the advancement of international friendship and understanding is always a part of cross-border cooperation.
- Adds attractiveness to voluntary commitment in both recruitment and motivation of current volunteers.



Shared Learning

workshop posters

Udruga MI Split

EUROCLIO/EUCIS-LLL

Beyond Barriers Association Albania

Slovenska Filantropija

Youth Communication Centre

Project title

Volunteering values and practice in service of people with disabilities in Albania

Geographical scope

The project was implemented in Albania. Activities and study visits in Sarajevo BiH & Varese Italy. Macedonia was also included as a partner of the project.

Target Group

Civil society organizations & government representatives
Local authorities responsible for support of Local Voluntary Service (LVS)
Citizens of Tirana and surroundings

Financed by

IPA 2009 Civil Society Facility – Civic Initiative and Capacity Building- EU Delegation to Albania



Cross-Border- Added Value

- The cross border cooperation was one of the main focal point boosting the success.
- The partners transferred their knowledge and know-how to BBA staff.
- Thanks to their previous experience shared with BBA, we could foresee the risks and not repeat the mistakes.
- The challenges faced by the partners in implementing LVS, or the Law Drafting procedure, were minimized in our case through the advice and sharing of information and approach.

Challenges

Managing the cooperation with CESVOV, Italy which for us was a new partner and we had no previous cooperation.

Thanks to the consolidated partnership of the partners involved in the project, being members of SEEYN and having a longer cooperation before the project start, there were few challenges to face during the project.

Objectives

- Build a sustainable volunteering structure & develop volunteering programs to support people with disabilities in Tirana and its surroundings;
- Build the capacities of CSO-s, public institutions and volunteers in work with people with disabilities
- Transfer know-how on working with people with disabilities, share best practices in volunteer management and development of local voluntary service (LVS) and promote European cooperation among organisations;
- Promote rights of people with disabilities and reduce prejudices
- Provide support and experience for the Ministry of Tourism, Youth, Culture and Sports, in drafting the National Law on Voluntarism and in further implementing the National Youth Strategy in the voluntarism field

Conclusions/ Outputs

- Break the stereotypes and scepticism about Volunteering, mainly in Tirana but not only.
- Raising awareness on rights and possibilities of disabled people
- Setting up cooperation bridges with other CSO, Local Authorities, and strengthening the partnership with the SEEYN members
- Promoting LVS as best example in the SEE region and among European networks.
- 503 people with disabilities and 216 people with fewer opportunities benefitted from the services (6 different programs) of LVS during 2011
- 1200 students of high schools and participated in the seminars about volunteering and inclusion in 2011 and 3300 others during 2012-2013.

Project title

What History Educators can do beyond their classrooms and borders as volunteers

Geographical scope

Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia core participant countries. Extended relations to South Africa, Northern-Ireland, Albania, Bulgaria, Italy, Hungary, Greece, Turkey, Israel and Japan.

Cross-Border- Added Value

- Work on the development of more inclusive and multi-perspective history educational materials.
- Provide a profound and unique professional training to educators.
- Gain insights into comparative history curricula from a bottom-up perspective.
- Reach out and inspire and empower history educators in the region to act as agents of change in their countries, drawing courage from their regional and international basis.
- Those active within the project as volunteers found to have been able to make upward career moves and become teacher leaders.

Objectives

- Share the experiences and achievements of volunteering history educators as active citizens
- Discuss some of the challenges for Educators to be volunteers and lifelong learners
- Present the results of the EUROCLIO Programme "History that Connects the Western Balkan" and focus on the unique character of volunteering/civil society

Target Group

Educators (Formal and Non-Formal), History, Heritage and Citizenship Educators, Historians, Curriculum Developers, anyone working on "Dealing with the Past" in the Western Balkan / South East Europe context.



Financed by
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Open Society Foundations Education Support Programme and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Belgium

Challenges

- Inter-cultural communication challenges become extra visible when working on cross-border projects.
- When working on history, it is a challenge for people to look beyond their own perspective.
- In the implementation phase the key challenge is how to make sure the volunteer educators take full ownership of the project.

Conclusions/ Outputs

Organisation of over 50 training seminars and workshops in Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia;
Organisation of roundtable discussions for history and citizenship educators from the region on how to develop and implement innovative history curricula;
Over 100 education leaders have been facilitated through participation in international trainings and study visits in various countries across Europe and beyond;
Re-ignition of the regional cooperation among History Teachers' Association in the region.

Project title

NET-Age

Geographical scope

Italy- Marche Region, Emilia Romagna Region;
Croatia- City of Split; **Albania**- Region of Lezha; **Montenegro**; Serbia: Province of Vojvodina; **Slovenia**-Municipality of Kanal ob Soci, Region of Severna Primorska;

Target Group

Local/regional public – private stakeholders active in social and health services and policies for ageing population; public through media; direct elderly beneficiaries through implementation of local pilot projects



Financed by
 EU IPA Adriatic Cooperation Programme

Cross-Border- Added Value

- Ability to share experiences and find the optimal approach to elderly care and to meet the challenges all Adriatic societies are facing as a result of demographic change.
- Gather resources and find common solutions in the field of active ageing and elderly assistance-home care.
- Volunteer work and voluntary organizations has been emphasized as important local/regional resource that in cooperation with other sectors contributes to the solution of one of social priorities.
- Enable building of the platform for creative and effective solutions at policy level and service provision.

Challenges

- Variety of specific local/regional conditions and legislations related to ageing and health-social services requires flexibility and investment in development of the common framework.
- Communication between 13 partners from 6 countries representing public and private non-profit sector requires on-going facilitation and monitoring.
- The focus on coordination and development of the common platform for social innovation rather than on local changes/improvements require careful communication with public & with relevant stakeholders.

Objectives

- To strengthen sustainable development capabilities of the Adriatic region involved in demographic process focusing on innovative social and health services to favour active ageing and independent living of elderly by:
- Improving coordination among public-private stakeholders
- Increasing the sustainability of social-health systems
- Strengthening at local level democratic process, capacity of institutional building, through the development of new institutional framework
- Increasing the development of capacities, competences and skills of public institution and of volunteering staff
- Enhancing the level of awareness about the services and policies for elderly

Conclusions/ Outputs

- Wide dissemination of the project information to policy makers, volunteering and private stakeholders and to other EU Regions to capitalize results and create new strategic partnerships at cross-border level
- Enhanced regional policymakers knowledge on volunteering and other stakeholders involved in the home care and social services to elderly and on synergies among Net-Age regions
- Increased knowledge, skills and capacities of civil servants and within volunteering; more integration and collaboration among regions involved.
- Enhanced regional policymakers abilities to coordinate private stakeholders (volunteering, NGOs etc).

Project title

City volunteers

Geographical scope

Slovenia and Croatia

Target Group

Main target groups were:

- volunteers, voluntary organisations, potential volunteers



Financed by
IPA Operational Programme
Slovenia-Croatia 2007-2013

Cross-Border- Added Value

- The re-opening of general questions about volunteering.
- Opening doors for collaboration with partner organizations in other fields and activities.
- Information sharing about each other activities
- Making the common regional strategy for development of voluntary work.
- Increased understanding of the situation of volunteering in regions on both sides of border.
- Involved organizations got a better look in everyday function of voluntary organization and live promoters and ambassadors.

Challenges

- Understanding the concept of volunteering in details.
- What is the difference between membership and voluntary work?
- Difference in expectations of volunteers from Slovenia and Croatia, so we had to facilitate the mentorship program.
- Achieving a balance between promotional materials with detailed information's and general ones.
- Integrating the project into the regular activities.

Objectives

- Strengthen the relationship between the two countries, between regions, between the cities involved in the project, organizations and individuals involved in the project,
- Further develop human resources,
- Implementation of joint activities,
- Strengthen horizontal cooperation between organizations,
- Strengthening the common identity,
- Impact on the economic, social and environmental development of the Slovenian-Croatian border regions.

Conclusions/ Outputs

- Each side created promotional events, trainings to strengthen the voice of volunteering, but there were also study visits, volunteer exchanges and common events.
- We have to headline the involvement of Croatians volunteer into European capital of culture.
- Slovene Philanthropy at Slovene side and ACT in Croatia during the project opened local/regional volunteer offices.
- They represent info points for potential volunteers, and organizers, provide trainings and other support.



European Values and Building Citizenship

workshop posters

Talentum Foundation (HU)

Association of Voluntary Service Organisations

Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations

Key Features

Short Term International Projects (Workcamps)
 Involvement of Local Communities
 Inclusion Policy
 Concept of "Volunteering" as an educational tool to active participation

Key Messages

Volunteering is not about "lifestyle", it is about lifetime!



Financed by
 Local partners
 Regional Authorities
 European Grants

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for the Alliance

- Alliance has been focusing on short term international voluntary projects for the past 31 years.
- The 'multiplication' and the 'impact' of the effect of volunteering
- The bridging between local and global - Every single volunteer is locally based but globally connected with their participation.
- The new experience gained is then brought back to the local level upon return of volunteer to their original destinations

Extra effort

- Development of feeling of 'ownership' of the project by all stakeholders
- Preparation of youth leaders for international activities
- Preparation and involvement of local community
- Funding

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for project partners

- It brings diversity,
- It brings innovation in terms of new practices,
- It creates a very stable basis for networking
- Special dynamics

Side effects

- Difficulties with VISA issues on certain occasions
- Because of limited budget non possibility of travel support to volunteers
- Extra charge necessary for health and safety insurance

Project title

TOgether is BETter!

Geographical scope

The project is achieved across the Danube - Kris - Mures - Tisza euroregion: Hungary - the Southern -Plains region (Csongrád, Bács-Kiskun and Békés county) Serbia - Vojvodina (North Bácska and North Bánát)

Target Group

CORPORATIONS and NGO-s



Financed by
European Union IPA Hungarian-Serbian Cross-Border Programme

Cross-Border- Added Value

- The development of common civil and corporate culture will aid the improvement of Vojvodinian-Hungarian connections
- The cross-border programs (12 events) strengthen personal relationship between participants
- Through corporate volunteering, employees can familiarize themselves with the working environment of others
- Cross-border initiatives provide better reputation and media coverage for corporations, new connections for NGOs and more effective solutions of social issues.

Challenges

- Create real partnership between project partners
- Achieve openness and confidence among the target groups
- Motivate corporations toward CSR activities, to determine them to participate, Explore common interests – CSR among smaller corporation is new field in both countries
- Make a balance between Hungarian and Serbian partners and participants – In Vojvodina live a bigger population of Hungarian contact building with Hungarian speaking was easier, but involvement of Serbian speaking partners give several new task and extra effort.

Objectives

- **DIALOGUE:** To strengthen the corporate social responsibility (CSR) and to enhance the collaboration as well as to create a dialogue between for profit and nonprofit sectors.
- **CROSS-BORDER:** To let the actors experience the good effects of a CSR activity, to give an opportunity to start cross-border cooperation.
- **VOLUNTEERING:** To familiarize the participants of given forms of social responsibility, to motivate them to try some forms of it, especially corporate volunteering. To sensitize NGO-s and corporations to the euro regional social problems through volunteering.

Conclusions/ Outputs

- Involvement of 50-60 small and middle small corporation furthermore 80-90 NGO-s in both countries
- Cross border events: conferences (2) and CSR activities (6)
- Development of CSR strategy for the future at corporations (12)
- Common bilingual webpage (www.togetherisbetter.com)
- Throughout the realisation of the project strengthen the responsibility for cross border cooperations, the products of the project are all bilingual; therefore a Serbian-Hungarian co-operation is secured on both sides of the border.



Reconciliation/ Building Communities

workshop posters

Volunteer Ireland

Volunteer NOW

NGO Support Centre Cyprus

SEEYN

DFJW



Key Features

International Voluntary Workcamps
 International Long Term Exchanges
 International Trainings for Quality Volunteer Service
 Networking

Key Messages

Learn, volunteer, share

Financed by

European Commission,
 International Visegrad Fund,
 Council of Europe; previously
 Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Cross-Border- Added Value ...for SEEYN

- The vision of SEEYN is to achieve a stable region with developed mutual understanding without prejudices among young people achieved through mobility, co-operation, and active role in society.
- SEEYN supports and promotes volunteering as powerful mean for development of peace and stability in the South East Europe (SEE) region.

Extra effort

- Intercultural Exchange
- Recognition
- Reconciliation
- Long Term Partnerships
- Communication
- Security

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for project partners

- Cross border context brings volunteers, people with ideas, learning, intercultural understanding, image, long term partnerships, friendships, entrepreneurship, change.

Side effects

- Constant challenge to secure funding
- Lack of support from national governments
- Poor partnerships
- Various mobility obstacles (travel, visa, economy...)
- Time consuming
- Challenge local VS international volunteers

Key Features

Trilateral or multilateral exchange projects for young people (15 – 29 y.o.)
 Each project has 3 one-week-parts: one in France, one in Germany and one in the partner-country in SEE
 Different target groups, different topics (politics/ history / participation in political processes / protection of environment)

Key Messages

- Learning about / from another culture means also to learn about your own culture
- To question national thinking is an important issue & challenge in 21 century
- To cross a border is not only physical but much more a very strong mental challenge

Financed by



The annual budget of 22.000.000 Euro is financed 50% by the French state and 50% by the German state.

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for the French-German Youth Office

- Since 1963 French-German Youth office supported exchange programs for nearly 8 Million citizens.
- Annually supports more than 7000 exchange programs for around 200.000 young people .
- Increases knowledge and understanding about: society, values, the priorities of values, history, the realities of everyday-life of the neighbours, the cultural differences and their own cultural influences.

Extra effort

- Our programs support intercultural learning processes
- Support of the regional cooperation in SEE
- Sensibilisation for the political situation in See-countries in France and Germany
- Waking interest to learn the other languages
- Building European networks
- Support for the stability of the civil society in SEE
- Promoting the European idea

Cross-Border- Added Value ...for project partners

For our partner-organisations in the civil society:

- working in a European network makes them stronger
- more intercultural competence
- higher level of professional competence
- more attractiveness in their offers
- better access to European funds

For our participants:

- more intercultural competence
- opportunity to know more about the neighbour- country or European Union
- better understanding of the own culture
- support of mobility

Side effects

- Bureaucracy
- Misunderstandings
- Problems to deal the budget due to difficulties in the communication

Project title

ENGAGE- Do your part for peace

Geographical scope

Greek Cypriot Community and Turkish Cypriot Community

Target Group

Youth and retired people



Financed by
UNDP-ACT

Cross-Border- Added Value

The project's outcome calls for an active civil society that has to inform and encourage the public to step up and become involved. According to the CIV-ICUS 2011 research study on the state of Civil Society in Cyprus, the attitudes of civil society and external stakeholders on bi-communal activities and the reconciliation process deviate significantly from that of the society at large. By involving volunteers in peace building activities, we aimed to change perception and bridge the divide.

Challenges

The main challenge is the border crossing issue of volunteers:

- Many volunteers from the Greek Cypriot Community are hesitant to cross to the other community as they need to show their passport and also they are still afraid.
- Volunteers from the Turkish Cypriot Community might not have all the documents that allow them to cross to the Greek Cypriot community.

Language is an issue as well as the issue of recognition of the volunteerism.

Objectives

- Support for civil society's participation in peace-building initiatives & builds partnership with a variety of stakeholders across the island to provide a platform for dialogue and increased citizen involvement in reconciliation efforts.
- New opportunities for active involvement in reconciliation and peace-building Promote a culture of active civic participation.
- By building the capacity of civil society, the Engage project expands the space for a more inclusive reconciliation process by building relationships and supporting dialogue and participation in joint initiatives for the greater good of all Cypriots.

Conclusions/ Outputs

Output 1: Outreaching and engaging more people in reconciliation refers to diverse sections of the wider public including youth, students, civil servants, private sector employees, civil society activists etc.

Output 2: Networking with key actors focuses on influential people from the technical committees and key representatives of the two leaders, the local authorities, the business and international communities in Cyprus, academia and civil society

Key Features

- Commitment to building good relations and cross border co-operation.
- Understanding of historical and/or cultural contexts.
- Focus on common agenda/interests.
- Willingness to share and learn from the experience.



Financed by
Government (UK &
Republic of Ireland),
European Funding and/or
Philanthropic Trusts.

Key Messages

- When cross border work does not fit within a good relations or peace building plan the outcomes are often less meaningful and connections made will not be sustained.
- Lack of clear aims and objectives for cross border work can result in a mis-match of expectations of participants leading to ineffective dialogue/engagement and tension.
- Clear continuation or exit strategies need to be in place to avoid issues of sustainability for the project /activity once funding is finished.
- Meaningful preparation for cross border work with all those involved contributes to delivering success.
- Cross border work is vitally important to delivering peace building.

Extra effort

- Preparation before cross border engagement begins, including single identity work where appropriate to build understanding of different communities.
- Clear understanding and effective management of the expectations of those involved in cross border projects.

Side effects

- No clear aims and objectives and lack of preparation with those involved before cross border engagement begins can result in tension and a poor experience.
- No commitment to good relations/lack of respect for others/different understanding of the conflict can potentially lead to inappropriate attitude/behaviour resulting in ineffective participation and possible conflict within the group/project.

Cross-Border- Added Value ...

- Enabling attitudinal change and intercultural awareness raising.
- Allows individuals and organizations to find common ground, share experiences, network together and seek to establish respect and trust which are vital to developing good relations and constructive peace building.
- Provides opportunities to share experience and expertise.
- Gain a greater insight into collaborative working and get a better understanding of political and cultural differences.
- Develop relationships that can lead to further shared work.



Gaining Skills/ Enhancing Employability

workshop posters

European Trade Union Confederation

Volunteer Development Scotland

CSV Chieti

Platform of Volunteer Centres and Organisations Slovakia

Generalitat de Catalunya



Statements on Cross-Border Volunteering:

- Voluntary work is crucial and important part of every democratic society!
- Voluntary work enables different form of appreciation and esteem which hired labour cannot reach.
- Social integration requires a population fully aware of its responsibility for itself and other members of the society – volunteering can provide such preconditions.
- Social Europe without active, democratic and voluntary based structures is an incomplete entity!
- Volunteering work generates priceless experiences lasting for an entire lifetime - not only the profits of enterprises and an economical usability!
- Cross-border volunteering in particular is a great chance for young people to broaden their intercultural horizons!

- The ability for voluntary engagement must not depend on the social and monetary background or income!
- Volunteering should never replace regular work!
- There is a fine line between volunteering and regular work for some branches (like the health sector, care sector and social work in general).
- Volunteering should never mean “cheap labor” – relevant stakeholders have to avoid this!
- Therefore volunteering is in particular effective within the non-profit sphere.
- Young volunteers need support (both financially and organizationally).
- Voluntary work must be better acknowledged by the EU states and by enterprises.
- Volunteering in this sense means much more than “employability and gaining skills”!
- Volunteering is too valuable to misuse it only for economical reasons!
- It is an acceptable and pleasant side effect if volunteering leads to positive impetuses on employment and economy but this should not be the only reason for volunteering!
- Volunteering won’t bear down the crisis of the young generation in Europe. Employability and missing skills are not the core problem of the crisis. The mayor problem is the wrong austerity policy and the structural dysfunction of the European fiscal, economic and social policy.
- Every approach to solve these problems which ignore this causality is doomed to fail!

Project title

Volunteering – Way to Employment or to Employability?

Geographical scope

Slovakia/ United Kingdom/ Czech Republic

Target Group

Unemployed and employed volunteers/ Employers / HR Specialists / Job Centres/Labour offices/ Formal education institutions/ Volunteer involving organisations



Financed by
European Commission

Cross-Border- Added Value

- Knowledge and experience from different countries on cooperation with unemployed volunteers, employers and job centres
- Advice on how to work with target groups in the project and how to avoid some difficulties that might occur
- Knowledge of methods successful in other countries or need some change and update in order to have better impact on volunteers
- Deeper knowledge on many tools of validation of non-formal learning
- Understanding the differences and common features of work with (unemployed) volunteers and issues they face in other countries

Challenges

- Different conditions for volunteers and unemployed people among the partner countries
- Different systems of accreditation of non formal learning – in Slovakia
- V-skills is focused mainly on learning specific for the employability area (e.g. preparation of a CV, for an interview, etc.) – the adapted method in Slovakia will be more about the recognition and the validation of the skills gained in volunteering

Objectives

- Transfer and adapt the system of validation of non-formal learning known in Scotland as V-Skills for Employability (online tool) from UK to Slovakia (in Slovakia it will be a pilot project tested in the cooperation with the Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica)
- Transfer and adapt the system of cooperation with unemployed volunteers/ cooperation with Job Centres (Labour Offices) and volunteer centres from Czech republic to Slovakia
- Make Job Centres aware about volunteering
- Teach volunteer centres how to educate volunteer involving organizations in specifics of work with unemployed volunteers

Conclusions/ Outputs

- V skills for Employment online tool in Slovakia
- Training for Job Officers and VIOs
- Manual on How to work with jobcentres and unemployed volunteers (for VIO and VCs)
- Certification/accreditation of non- formal learning in volunteering
- We will consider the project to be a success when all target groups (formal educational institutions, employers, volunteers and jobcentres) will start to recognise the skills enhanced in volunteering.
- The end of project is planned for September 2014

Project title

REVEAL – Raising Effectiveness of Volunteering in Europe through Adult Learning www.revealvolunteering.eu

Geographical scope

The project is implemented by a consortium of 8 partners from 6 European countries: Italy/ UK (England)/ Sweden/ Romania/ Croatia/ Spain.

Target Group

Volunteers and volunteers manager that wish to improve their skills and competences in managerial domains



Financed by
European Commission – DG
Education and Culture &
EACEA
Lifelong Learning Programme

Cross-Border- Added Value

- Learning solutions (tools, studies, training courses) in different language versions based on European-level approach and applicable to users everywhere
- Common training content (both web-based and interactive face to face courses), representing different and diverse cultural approaches to the third sector features.
- Multicultural and linguistic aspects represented the most stimulating part of the work and enriched the project as a whole with the added value of a Cross-national debate on volunteering related issues.
- Sharing perspectives and expertise, strengthening and improving cultural sensitivity and empathy.
- Contributes to enhanced EU cooperation and integration.

Challenges

Working in a multicultural dimension aiming to deliver, disseminate and exploit products beyond national borders.

Objectives

REVEAL aims to contribute to increase the efficiency and impact of volunteering in Europe by developing learning tools and training courses to strengthen the capacity of volunteers and volunteer managers in relation to four areas of knowledge/skills:

- Project management
- Financial Management
- Human resources/ Volunteers management
- Communication and public speaking

Conclusions/ Outputs

REVEAL has developed and validated three major results, all in 6 languages (English, Italian, Spanish, Rumanian, Swedish, Croatian):

1. Multilingual web-based self assessment tool
2. Multilingual web-based multilingual training courses
3. Multilingual interactive training modules.

The exploitation of results will continue beyond the project’s end, as the web-based training materials will be kept available on line on the e-platform for free for at least two years after the end of the project, scheduled by December 2013.

The interactive training content and material, partners involved in training activities will integrate the courses into their regular training offer. The project partners have been carrying out activities to ensure the sustainable visibility of project activities and results also beyond its lifetime.

Project title

VERSO (Volunteers for European Unemployment)

Geographical scope

Bulgaria, Catalonia, Denmark, England, Greece, Germany, Hungary, The Netherlands.

Target Group

This Project focuses on unemployed people . It pays special attention to unemployed women and young people.



Financed by
European Regional Development
Fund, INTERREG IVC.

Cross-Border- Added Value

- Regional political authorities have a wide knowledge about regional situation, real needs for getting better and making progress, and the capacity to implement the best strategies by means of local legislation.
- Research institutions offer scientific data that allows working on a unified criteria and laying down indicators that afford to share experiences and good practices

Challenges

- One of the challenges is how the public sector can co-develop new, flexible and cost-effective employment services together with civic society and to become transferable. As well as the worth of volunteering will be recognized to overcome unemployment situation.
- VERSO will develop a best good practices catalogue to be used by the participating regions, and will elaborate policy recommendations in 2014, at the end of the project, based on the results of the research. These recommendations must be able to be implemented and adapted to each particular national, social, legal and cultural context.

Objectives

- Enhance experiences focused on job skills for unemployed people as well as job skills for people at risk of social exclusion with long term unemployment.
- Enhance experiences focused on skills and capacities of volunteers across Europe by means of learning and working in voluntary activities.
- Publish a best practices catalogue to be used by EU members and to be able to be transferred to other contexts across Europe.
- Elaborate policy recommendations that will identify effective forms of volunteerism that contributes to rise employment.

Conclusions/ Outputs

- Unemployment is increasing all over Europe and it is becoming a severe obstacle to European growth, to citizens' well-being, as well as to cohesion and equal opportunities. The problems cannot be solved within the frameworks provided by the traditional systems.
- Volunteering can provide a pathway to new skills and eventually a paid job and become instrumental in creating new types of social spaces capable of including or connecting with excluded groups whose employment needs are not currently met by the established employment systems.

Conference organisers:



The European Volunteer Centre (CEV) is the European network of over 80 national, regional and local volunteer centres and volunteer support agencies across Europe working together to promote and support volunteering through advocacy, knowledge sharing and capacity building.

CEV member organisation, the South East European Youth Network (SEEYN) is a network of organisations from the Western Balkans, involving young people in global issues, as a means of reconciliation in the region and promotion of respect for differences among societies.

Supported by:

