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## **Local Youth Pathways**

**Date:**

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# 1. Introduction

This document is the Manual “Local Youth Pathways” made for the project “Youth Agents of Change” implemented under the IPA Civil Society Facility and Media Programme 2020 with strategic statement to support to civic youth initiatives, activism and volunteering in local communities, Contract No. IPA/2021/430-647.

The purpose of this manual is to help the municipalities for involving youth in their work through volunteering. This manual presents introduction of the national law framework, good practices and instructions for the municipalities, in terms of volunteering options and will describe in details: definition of volunteering in the municipality, volunteer rights and responsibilities, municipalities’ rights and responsibilities; what volunteer opportunities will be available; how will the process of volunteering be organized in the municipalities; description of the application process; application form; selection criteria, selection process, volunteer positions descriptions etc. The document will give answer to following questions:

1. Why Involving Volunteers? Understanding why municipality involves volunteers.
2. What is need volunteering to happen: money, management, resources and keeping volunteers safe.
3. How to ensure volunteer inclusion? Obtain equal access to opportunities and fair recruitment.
4. How to welcome volunteers? Explaining roles, induction, training and support needs for volunteers.
5. How to value volunteers? Recognition for volunteers’ time, contribution, feedback and creating positive endings.
6. Why is important to mentor volunteers? What is the mentor role?

The Guide will help municipalities to recognize a range of volunteer opportunities with positions to suit different skill types, experience and commitment levels. Together with the municipalities, team will map the areas of municipalities work in which volunteering could be organized. For example, it will map and describe possibilities for volunteering in administrative services such as Mayor’s Office, Municipality Council, Finance Department or thematic sectors like environment, education, social protection, culture etc.

Each of the three municipalities Centar, Kumanovo and Strumica will have their own Youth Pathways Program, each depending on the specifics of the municipality. Once municipality have developed program, they will have a support from the action in implementation and running the first round of volunteering within the municipality (Activity 1.4). The support will include organizing a training for mentors in three municipalities.

## 2. Project background

Youth Agents of Change is implemented by partnership consisted of three partners: Center for intercultural dialogue from Kumanovo, Scout Association of Macedonia from Skopje and Association for research and analysis NOVUS from Strumica.

Youth initiatives, activism and volunteering are one of the key prerequisites for improving the local governance and strengthening all-inclusive and direct involvement of the citizens on local level. The action aims to increase the youth activism through volunteering for ensuring social inclusiveness of local communities. Final beneficiaries of the project are high schools students, university students, youth activists, young women, youth with disabilities, youth initiatives, Local Youth Councils and local community members of the municipalities of Centar, Kumanovo and Strumica.

Specific needs of the project:

- Lack of structured cooperation of youth activists and volunteers with municipalities.
- Lack of specific curricula and competences and skills of high school teachers to empower and foster youth activism for community-level outreach through non-formal learning.
- Lack of capacity of youth to impact the work of local governments directly and through LYC.
- Citizens are not aware of impact of youth initiatives, activism and volunteering in municipalities.

Overall objective of the project is to contribute to increased inclusiveness and society impact of youth for improving the local governance through civic youth initiatives, activism and volunteering in municipalities.

Specific objectives of the project:

- To strengthen informal networks of youth activists and volunteers, for their outreach capacity towards local governments and citizens, as well as in their monitoring and advocacy capacities.
- To build sustainable education system in high schools to empower and foster youth and youth activism for their outreach capacity towards local governments and citizens, as well as in their monitoring and advocacy capacities.

Estimated results of the project:

1. Established mechanisms for cooperating of youth activists and volunteers with “Municipalities – volunteers’ friends” for delivering change for citizens.
2. Developed competences and skills for high school teachers to empower and foster youth activism for community-level outreach through non-formal learning.
3. Youth are equipped to impact the work of local governments directly and through LYC.
4. Raised awareness for importance of youth initiatives, activism and volunteering in municipalities.

### 3. Background

Volunteering as a branch is woven into all social communities and is an expression of the values of solidarity, humanity, active citizenship and a way of identifying and responding to human, social and environmental challenges. Volunteers and volunteering in each country represent a huge human potential that is continuously mobilized and that possesses relevant knowledge and skills useful for the community. Through their work, volunteers contribute to the construction of social and human capital, increasing the involvement of citizens in social development, solving various problems and needs of people in their native communities. The value that the volunteers create and incorporate in their activities is "priceless", because it has a special quality that is enriched by the human dimension of goodwill and altruism. Global trends show that volunteering has significant scale and economic potential. During a year, on average, 971 million people in the world volunteer through organizations (36%) or directly for the benefit of people outside their family (64%). The total economic value of volunteers in is estimated at \$1.348 billion at 2.4% of the entire global economy.

Countries that have the ambition to make their societies humane, to have mobile and growing human capital, to have internal cohesion, but at the same time to be democratic-pluralistic and to strive for development, have a great interest in developing volunteering as a branch. All subjects and segments in society would have to be involved in this endeavor, in order for synchronized efforts to achieve visible results.<sup>1</sup>

The Republic of North Macedonia strives to promote volunteering. In 2007, the state adopted the Law on Volunteering, and in 2010, the first Strategy for the Promotion and Development of Volunteering 2010-2015, which, with the efforts of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, will further adopt the second strategic document of this kind, which builds on the strategic commitments and is developing a plan for the period from 2021-2025 that would enable further development of volunteerism.

Given these clarifications and introduction given in the Strategy for the Promotion and Development of Volunteering 2021-2025 we can conclude that the volunteerism can be one of the priorities and branch in each sphere of society and would have great potential to grow into an important sphere for the municipalities, as well from the perspective of developing not only the democratically participatory potentials of the municipalities, but also to contribute to the real development of the communities.

In this context local governments in North Macedonia can follow examples from around Europe and therefore the world, and may benefit in a very number of how once they make volunteering an element of their culture. Citizens provide a spread of important services that range from administrative support to emergency response to community beautification. When citizens take ownership in their communities, it creates a far better image for the municipality, people understand their regime better and a greater sense of advocacy is formed that results in further citizen involvement.

The EU country report claims that The European Solidarity Corps, as a programme that fosters youth involvement, social inclusion, and volunteering, was inaugurated in December 2019 by the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility. The regional youth cooperation office's

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<sup>1</sup> See: **Strategy for the Promotion and Development of Volunteering 2021-2025**, Ministry of Labor and Social Policy (Skopje, 2021), [https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/2021/trud/Volonterstvo\\_2021\\_2025.pdf](https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/2021/trud/Volonterstvo_2021_2025.pdf)

local branch continued to organize capacity-building activities and training for civil society organizations and schools, as well as taking part in the legislative reform on youth and student standards.

In North Macedonia, youth policy is outlined by the National Youth Strategy 2016-2025, which includes Youth Participation as one of nine theme areas. A new Law on Youth Participation and Youth Policies has been in effect since January 2020, providing municipalities with a set of competencies and obligations in the development of youth activism, youth participation in the community and youth policies, including the establishment of Youth Local Councils, Youth Development Strategies, and Youth Offices, among other things.

The law allows for the development of youth policies through a multi-sectoral approach and structural debate, as well as increasing young people's participation in decision-making and supporting youth activism, volunteering, and work. Several municipalities are now working on establishing Local Youth Councils. Municipalities must set aside at least 0.1% of their budget for the implementation of the law. It is critical to continue to promote youth civic engagement in North Macedonia's democratic life in order to provide young people with the resources they need to participate meaningfully in society. On the other hand, although the Volunteering Law was passed in 2007, it is extremely rare for municipalities to have ongoing volunteer programs.

However, there are challenges involved with attaining these benefits and making these programs work smoothly. Any organization including the governmental institutions both local and on central level, that relies on volunteers faces certain difficulties, and we must admit that there are challenges that make local government volunteering unique.

Retaining volunteers can be particularly difficult, especially since people have so many options competing for their free time. Because time and expense are invested in recruiting, training and overseeing volunteers, the municipalities need to make sure that their volunteers know they serve an important purpose and are valued by their community and the municipality itself.

Civic engagement and inclusivity are one of the most important elements to these programs. It means that the institution and or organization that is including volunteers in their work must keep connected with the volunteers year-round, not just when they need them. This relationship must contain inspired feeling, sense of purpose, knowing that the efforts of those who volunteer can have an impact on their community, as well as maintain a clear line of sight to that impact.

## 4. National law framework and context

A legal framework for volunteering was adopted in North Macedonia in 2007 (Official Gazette 85/07).

The legislation on volunteering establishes the essential framework for long-term organized volunteering, as well as the requirements for carrying out volunteer activities, the rights and obligations of volunteers and organizers of volunteer work programmes, the volunteering contract, and the proper recording of volunteer records. The national legal framework recognizes volunteering as a worthwhile activity in North Macedonia that improves people's lives and engages them in social activities, as well as a tool for the development of a democratic society based on equality.

Volunteering is defined as contributing services, knowledge, and talents for the benefit of other people or organizations without receiving monetary compensation. The law provides a clear distinction between ad hoc or accidental volunteer activities and so-called volunteering practice, which is governed by the Law on labor relations.

The Volunteering Law governs both domestic and international volunteers. The age limit is set at over 18, with the exception of under-aged volunteers aged 15 to 18, who must have parental permission to volunteer.

## II. Conditions and way of volunteering

### Article 5

A volunteer can be a domestic or foreign natural person.

A volunteer can also be a minor with the written consent of his parents or guardians.

A contract for volunteering with minors can only be concluded with the written consent of his parents or guardians.

The provisions of the Law on Labor Relations, which refer to protection of persons from 15 to 18 years, respectively apply to minors who volunteer.<sup>2</sup>

Non-profit, civil society organizations and institutions, such as citizen's associations and foundations, religious communities and religious groups, public institutions and state agencies, can serve as volunteer organizers. With the amendments from 2008 Municipalities and the City of Skopje are also included as volunteer organizers.

The Volunteering Law establishes the rights and obligations of volunteers and volunteer organizers, as well as the volunteering contract and volunteer book as official state papers for recording volunteer experiences. Volunteers are also eligible for tax-free reimbursement of costs associated with volunteering (food, transportation, and training) up to 15% of the country's gross average pay.

Volunteering is not overseen by a separate state entity. Volunteer organizers are entirely responsible for developing volunteer programs that serve as a solid foundation for volunteer participation. In this regard, CSOs as service providers to volunteer organizers have a lot of potential to help the municipalities adhere to a quality volunteer management system.

It is important to mention and raise the question of existence and regulating the issue of volunteering in other laws in the North Macedonia's legal system. Such examples can be found in the *Labor relations law*<sup>3</sup>, It is a question that needs to be raised in the programs for volunteering that the municipalities will

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<sup>2</sup> See: **Section II, Article 5, Volunteering Law**, Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 85/07 and 161/08

<sup>3</sup>**Article 16, paragraph 1, Labor relations law**: "If the volunteer experience/internship is a condition for taking a professional exam or for independent performance of an activity, in accordance with a special law, it should be done by concluding a contract for volunteer experience, between the employer and the volunteer."

[https://mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/trud\\_2017/pravilnici/16,11-](https://mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/trud_2017/pravilnici/16,11-)



create, if the volunteering in their municipalities will include just contracts that are regulated in the Law on volunteering or it will include practices from the Law of Labor relations.

Many of the providers of volunteer work as well as the organizers of volunteer work confuse the terms on the volunteerism with the job training and internship, even though they are regulated again with different Law (Law on labor relations).

#### 4.1. Key differences in the concepts: volunteering, job training and internship

For an easier overview and easier understanding of the essential differences in the concepts of volunteering, job training and internship, the table below provides a description of the main characteristics of these terms:

	<b>Volunteering</b>	<b>Job training</b>	<b>Internship</b>
Main goal	Helping other people, organizations and local communities	Acquiring the right to take a professional exam or to perform an activity independently	Work through learning and acquiring practical work skills
Compensation	Volunteer costs for food, transportation and training in the maximum amount of MKD 6,433 for 2022	It is not provided	For the first 3 months from 42% to 74% of the minimum wage. From the 4th to the 6th month minimum salary - 18,000 MKD, according to the latest changes from 2022.
Type of education	There is no limit	Higher education – student or apprentice	At least completed secondary education
Age	No restriction (from 15 years old exceptions made by law)	Students or unemployed persons	From 15 to 34 years
Is it mandatory?	NO	YES	YES
Where is the engagement?	At all organizers of volunteer work	In health and judicial institutions, Domestic legal and natural persons (private companies)	Domestic legal and natural persons (private companies), state administration bodies, local governments
Recognition is given by	Volunteer book	Certificate of completed internship	Recommendation from an employer

Engagement period	There is no limit	From 6 months to 2 years	Up to 6 months with the same employer
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## 4.2. Implementation of the legal framework

In 2007, the Law on volunteering in North Macedonia was passed. Rules on volunteer books, documentation for keeping track of volunteers, and the procedure for engaging international volunteers were all adopted three months after the law was passed. Amendments to the Law on Volunteering were made in 2008, involving municipalities and the City of Skopje as volunteer organizers. In terms of the law's execution, there is no current information on the overall number of people who volunteer in North Macedonia. The Ministry of Labor and Social Policy is in charge of overseeing the Law on Volunteering's implementation in North Macedonia.

The government in October 2010 announced a policy for the promotion and development of volunteering from 2010 to 2015, together with an action plan for its implementation. The establishment of the National Council for Volunteering Development (NCDV), an inter-sectoral council with five members from government agencies and four members from civil society organizations (CSOs), is a key aspect of this inter-sectoral approach. The members of the NCDV were appointed by the government on 6 February 2012, almost a year after the open call after conducting a lengthy and opaque process. The strategy was backed by an implementation plan that includes dates and accountable bodies for carrying out the actions.

The following period after this Strategy ended, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies did not have active strategic document regarding this issue. After a lengthy process that involved consultation with all relevant stakeholders, the Ministry has announced and in September of 2021 has adopted the revised Strategy for Promotion and Development of Volunteerism with action plan for the period 2021 – 2025.

Within the Strategy there are foreseen four main strategic fields as a priority regarding the volunteerism in the country:

1. Promotion of volunteering in the wider public;
2. Increased culture of volunteering in the educational system;
3. Increased level of volunteering in the civic sector and social enterprises;
4. Established system of institutional support for volunteering.

In the revised National Strategy for Promotion and Development of Volunteering (2021 – 2025) and its action plan, adopted by the North Macedonia's government in September of 2021, the following institutions are listed as part of volunteering infrastructure:

- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Education and Science

- Agency of Youth and Sport
- Department for Cooperation with the NGO sector in the General Secretariat of Government of North Macedonia
- National Council for Development of Volunteering
- Local governments
- Civil society organisations
- Religious communities and religious groups
- Educational institutions on all levels, and
- Media

### 4.3. The rights and obligations of volunteers during their volunteering in the municipalities

In the previous paragraphs there were mentioned few of the legal regulations regarding the volunteerism in North Macedonia. Recognizing the public bodies as organizers of volunteer work same as other entities, it is clear that there are no special regulations regarding the volunteers' rights and obligations towards the municipalities if they decide to do their volunteering work there.

In section III. ***"Rights and obligations of the volunteer"***, the following notions were given in the national Law for volunteerism:

#### Article 10

The volunteer has the right:

- To receive in written form the description of the rights and obligations that he has to fulfill and to be familiar with the conditions and dangers associated during volunteering, before starting the volunteering;
- To be familiar with the general acts of the organizer of the services, that is, those parts that refer to the volunteer services, for which he is hired;
- To use means of protection at work in accordance with the regulations on protection at work;
- For training, if it is needed to provide the service that is the subject of the contract;
- On leave during volunteering, if they exist for that justified reasons;
- On a daily break;
- To be consulted and informed when deciding on the method of providing the services;
- For reimbursement of pre-agreed costs related to volunteering (food expenses, transportation expenses to and from the place of volunteering, business travel expenses and training costs) and
- On the protection of privacy and personal data.

Reimbursement for food expenses and transportation expenses to and from the place of volunteering is paid at most up to 15% of the average monthly salary in the Republic paid for the previous year, and expenses for business trips and training expenses are paid in the same amount as for the employees of the volunteer work organizer

A volunteer - a foreign natural person, in addition to the rights from paragraph 1 of this article, has the right to stay expenses, health insurance and round trip expenses.

#### Article 11

The volunteer is obliged to:

- inform the organizer of the volunteering about the illness or other reasons for the impossibility of providing the services;
- provides a service in accordance with the law, the volunteering agreement and the general acts of the volunteering organizer with which he is previously familiar;
- provides service personally and immediately;
- participates in training, in order to ensure the quality of providing the service;
- Keeps confidential data, i.e. classified data information of the organizer of the volunteer work, with which he is familiar before providing the service and
- Inform the organizer of the volunteer work about harmful consequences of which he is aware that may arise for the organizer for himself or for third parties.

If the volunteer has previously notified the organizer of the harmful consequences in relation to paragraph 1, paragraph 6 of this article, he is not responsible for the damage done.

#### Article 12

The volunteer who during the provision of the volunteer service willfully or through gross negligence causes damage to the organizer of the volunteer work, he is obliged to compensate the damage to the organizer of the volunteer work, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Obligation Relations.

The organizer of the volunteer work is obliged to give it to him compensate the damage to the volunteer caused during or in connection with the provision of the volunteer service, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Obligation Relations.

The volunteer who, during or in connection with the provision of the volunteer service, causes damage to third parties, is obliged to compensate it in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Obligation Relations.<sup>4</sup>

### 4.4. The rights and obligations of the municipalities during the volunteering period

Same as the legal obligations that the volunteers have, the municipalities that will engage volunteers and will run a volunteering programme are a subject to the values, rights and obligations as the other organizers of volunteer work.

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<sup>4</sup> See: **Section III, Articles 10 - 12, from Volunteering Law**, Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 85/07 and 161/08

In this context the following articles excerpts from the Law on volunteering describe the regulations that the municipalities need to follow during the volunteer programme.

#### Article 13

The organizer of the volunteer work is obliged to:

- Provide conditions for performing volunteer work in accordance with the Law and the contract for volunteer work;
- Issue to the volunteer a volunteer booklet for the volunteer work and to state in it the data prescribed by this law;
- Provide materials and means for volunteering work;
- Ensure timely payment of pre-agreed costs;
- Ensure confidentiality of data and protection of privacy;
- Provide other conditions prescribed by this law or for which they mutually agreed and
- Provide insurance against occupational diseases and injury work during volunteering, in accordance with the regulations for pension and disability insurance and health insurance regulations, if so agreed.

Based on expenses related to volunteer work established in the contract, no personal income tax is paid in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Personal Income Tax.<sup>5</sup>

## 5. Why Involving Volunteers? Understanding why municipality involves volunteers

Before we dive further into the specifics and the legal framework, the recruiting, management and facilitating one volunteering programme in the municipalities, we first must address what volunteering means and all of the misconceptions about volunteering efforts and labor.

A positive step has been taken by some of the local self-government units that increasingly recognize volunteering as a necessary value and activity at the local level that contributes to social cohesion, local development and an active civil society. So far, several municipalities such as Bitola, Tetovo and Kavadarci have started with the development and adoption of Strategies for the development of volunteering in the municipality. The Municipality of Bitola also established a Local Council for volunteering and partnership with civil society organizations as an advisory body to the Council of the Municipality. What is expressed as a need and addressed to the municipalities, is the support from the

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<sup>5</sup> See: **Section III, Articles 13, from Volunteering Law**, Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" no. 85/07 and 161/08

municipalities to recognize the opportunities for volunteering in their municipalities and with the help of civil society organizations to create programs for the promotion and encouragement of volunteering, but also to invest in the local infrastructure for volunteering.

Volunteerism is a form of helping in which people actively seek out opportunities to assist others in need, make considerable and continuing commitments to provide assistance, and sustain these commitments over extended periods of time, often at considerable personal cost.

## Characteristics

- The activity should not be undertaken for the purpose of obtaining a financial reward.
- The activity is voluntary and depends only on the free will of the volunteer.
- The activity should benefit other people, the local community or society in general, and not for the personal benefit of the volunteer.

## Deviation (clarification)

- Reimbursement of volunteer expenses or some pocket money is allowed under the conditions of the organizer of the volunteer work, contract and agreement beforehand that are in accordance to national legislation
- Volunteering programs in municipalities and organizations encourage volunteering among young people and citizens
- The volunteering is done for the purpose of the volunteer's personal development and will.

A volunteer is someone who contributes their time, skills and experience to an organisation or group and gives their time for free. In return, a volunteer may gain work experience, broaden their own skills, develop new interests and become more involved with the community.

Volunteering is a voluntary act of an individual or group freely giving time and labor for community service. Many volunteers are specifically trained in the areas they work, such as medicine, education, or emergency rescue. Others serve on an as-needed basis, such as in response to a natural disaster.

Local governments, like most governments, need volunteers so as to stay everything running swimmingly. Volunteering is interdependent for each native governments and also the volunteers. Volunteers are required for emergency response, administrative tasks, among other things. By tapping into a volunteer base, the municipality can save money by reducing the cost of services. Volunteers will also benefit from this experience because these activities are a great way to learn new skills, meet new people, and feel pride in their local communities.

In larger municipalities, it may be difficult to manage municipality volunteers, particularly once there's a bigger vary of services required. By taking advantage of additional volunteer management tools, municipalities are going to be ready to additional expeditiously utilize their volunteer efforts.

## 5.1. What opportunities will be available to the volunteers?

The volunteers who decide to donate their free time in volunteering in their municipality, will have the opportunity to firsthand learn how their municipality works and functions, be involved in its work and contribute to the development of the community and municipality that they live in.

When determine the opportunities that the volunteers will have in the municipality (each municipality for itself) needs to think about the kind of workplace experience it's going to offer to the volunteers. Different departments such as Local Economic Development unit or the registry office of the municipality offer different set of skills that the volunteers can gain like administrative working, project cycle management, providing public services, while if we are talking about the affiliated enterprises of the municipalities, such as for example the Public Utility Company or Stationary for stray animals the volunteers can learn more practical and organizational skills. For some cases the volunteering opportunities can be given for a short period of time such as: preparation for events that the municipality is organizing, such as happenings, festivals etc., where in these instances the municipality should require to publish a call for volunteer/s that have event management and logistic organization skills.

***The opportunities available for the volunteers and its engagement depend solely on the municipality and its needs.***

If the municipality has the aim to help to improve its citizen's skills and with that contribute to the increase of qualified personnel who will continue to be active in the labor market and local economy, it need to think on answering the following questions:

- What skills does the municipality want to use or develop in their volunteers?
- Which volunteer positions will further persons career goals?
- How much time the volunteer can/must contribute to achieve municipalities and personal goals?
- Does the volunteering position endure flexible hours?
- What experiences and features the municipality is looking for?
- What are the must-haves and the nice-to-haves for the specific volunteering position?
- What kind of profile can the local economy and the municipality benefit from?

For the volunteers who will be involved in this process speaking about their personal benefit and skillset that it's going to be gained it is important to note to them that they will have the opportunity to advance their work skills and the benefits that can be seen from volunteering in the municipalities are the following:

### **1. Building up the volunteers resumé**

This process shows that the volunteer is committed to its community, that the volunteer has gained relevant skills needed for the labor market, have initiative, and experience needed to cope in the workplace

**2. Volunteering gives specific and valuable experience**

It shows that the volunteer can get along with others, make commitment, and that the volunteer have the attitude and skills that any potential employer wants. It also shows that the person can manage their time and complete their work tasks efficiently.

**3. Volunteering lets a person practise it's work search skills**

Finding and applying for a volunteer position is a lot like finding and applying for a job. The candidates that will apply can even use their volunteer search to refine their work search skills.

**4. Volunteering teaches a person how to apply and interview for jobs**

The process of applying for volunteering position requires process of preparation of application and attending an interview, soft skills that can be practiced and improved with this process.

**5. Volunteering helps practicing and developing skills**

It gives a chance to build on skills that the candidate may already have and learn new ones. For example, the volunteers might be able to use and improve second language or public speaking skills, learn a new computer program or develop new customer service skills.

**6. Volunteering expands your network**

Volunteering gives the chance to meet new people and expand person's network.

**7. Volunteering can help find a mentor**

A mentor is someone who can guide and encourage you in someone's career. This can be an experienced staff person or another volunteer who can help you succeed, not just in the current volunteer position, but with achieving volunteers long-term career goals as well.

**8. Volunteering can provide references for the future**

The volunteering in the municipality can help giving new references to the dedicated and effective volunteers, so in future they can use this reference to apply for a paid job or a other program.

**9. Volunteering can help in choosing career path**

When volunteering in the municipality, the people can chose and do a job shadowing in different departments that include people working in different professions. This could be very helpful in the process of career direction or a career change, volunteering allows exploring different occupations and industries.



## 5.2. How the volunteering process will be organized in the municipalities

Each municipality should create volunteering programme according the needs of the community, municipality administration, the type of management and organizational structure and the planned period that is assessed that the administration will accept volunteers. For some positions and needs the municipality can publish ongoing call for longer period of time, or it can publish a call for periodic engagement of volunteers according to the needs of the municipality and local community.

At its most important is to explain that the volunteering process and the assessments related to it starts with publishing a call for acceptance of volunteers in the institution. Here it should be given clear instructions of the volunteer position descriptions, what departments or what opportunities are available for the volunteers to apply for, and what are the tasks that these positions require.

After publishing the call online and in the other outlets that the municipality has, we need an apparent interest on the part of the volunteer candidates, the municipality is now open to accept the applications. Here in this phase of the process itself, some of the candidates might submit their application without other information needed, or if there are some needs for additional information, the municipality should comply to send additional information about the call itself to all interested parties that might require these information, and continue with the period of acceptance of applications within the deadline that the municipality has noted.

The procedure that follows is screening of the candidates that have submitted applications. Screening volunteer applicants helps to confirm that the position of a volunteer meets the wants of that volunteer, as well as the municipality and the community that represents that municipality. The appointed Volunteer manager should have a knowledge of the municipality departments needs and volunteer opportunities in that departments so candidates can be observed for the program that most suits their skills and desires. In many instances, applicants seeking a selected position or activity is redirected to a foothold where their skills and background are in greater demand, or where the volunteer would be a higher fit supported interest, qualifications, and desires.

All screenings for the candidates must be conducted in an exceedingly manner in order to protect and meet all civil rights and social action requirements as well as be in alliance with the national or local legislation and other strategic documents that the municipality might have. Legal counsel and the legal department of the municipality as well as the department of Human resources should also review the complete volunteer selection process. This this multi-sectoral consultation will aim to protect the best interests not only of the municipality and its departments, but also of the volunteers themselves.

The screening process has two outcomes: “The candidate is a MATCH for the needed profile” or “The candidate is NOT A MATCH” for the required position.

If the candidate is not a match for the volunteering position he or she is in a timely manner notified about the outcome of the screening and selection process.

If the candidate is a match then the municipality is proceeding to the next phase of the selection process which is an interview. Although the interview is analogous there to of employment interview, there are important differences that the interviewer should target so as to create a more successful volunteer base. The most difference between a volunteer interview and employment interview is that the

applicant isn't being evaluated on how well he or she can do a specific job, but rather how well the potential volunteer fits into the program, and whether or not the volunteer has the motivation and skill to form the program better.

Two main goals of the interview are: determining whether or not the candidate “fits” into the program and to answer any questions or comments that the applicant may have about the program.

Before the interview begins, some preparation is required to confirm that the applicant is comfortable, which can help in building a rapport with potential volunteers.

The interview isn't only focused on evaluating the applicant, but also on selling the program to the candidate. During the interview, it's important to recollect that volunteers are donating their time to the program, and that the interviewer should promote the position and consider the interview as a time for recruitment. The interviewer should make sure that background is given on the municipality and also the program, additionally as describe the structure of the program.

Major points that ought to be discussed are:

- The necessities of the volunteer position;
- The various possibilities of how the candidate can get entangled within the municipality or with a selected program;
- The importance of every role within the program;
- The candidate’s abilities and interests
- Where the volunteer would love to be placed; and
- Whether or not the candidate can meet the wants to be a volunteer.

In many instances, applicants seeking a particular position or activity can be redirected to a position where their skills and background are in greater demand, or where the volunteer would be a better fit based on interest, qualifications, and desires.

When this process is finished and the administration is continuing with the next phase of this process which is notifying all of the candidates about the outcome of the interview and selection process. For those candidates that were denied during this process, the municipality must in a timely manner notify them and give them explanation on what were the reasons that this specific candidate is denied the position. For the candidates that are accepted the next steps can vary regarding the reliability of the candidate.

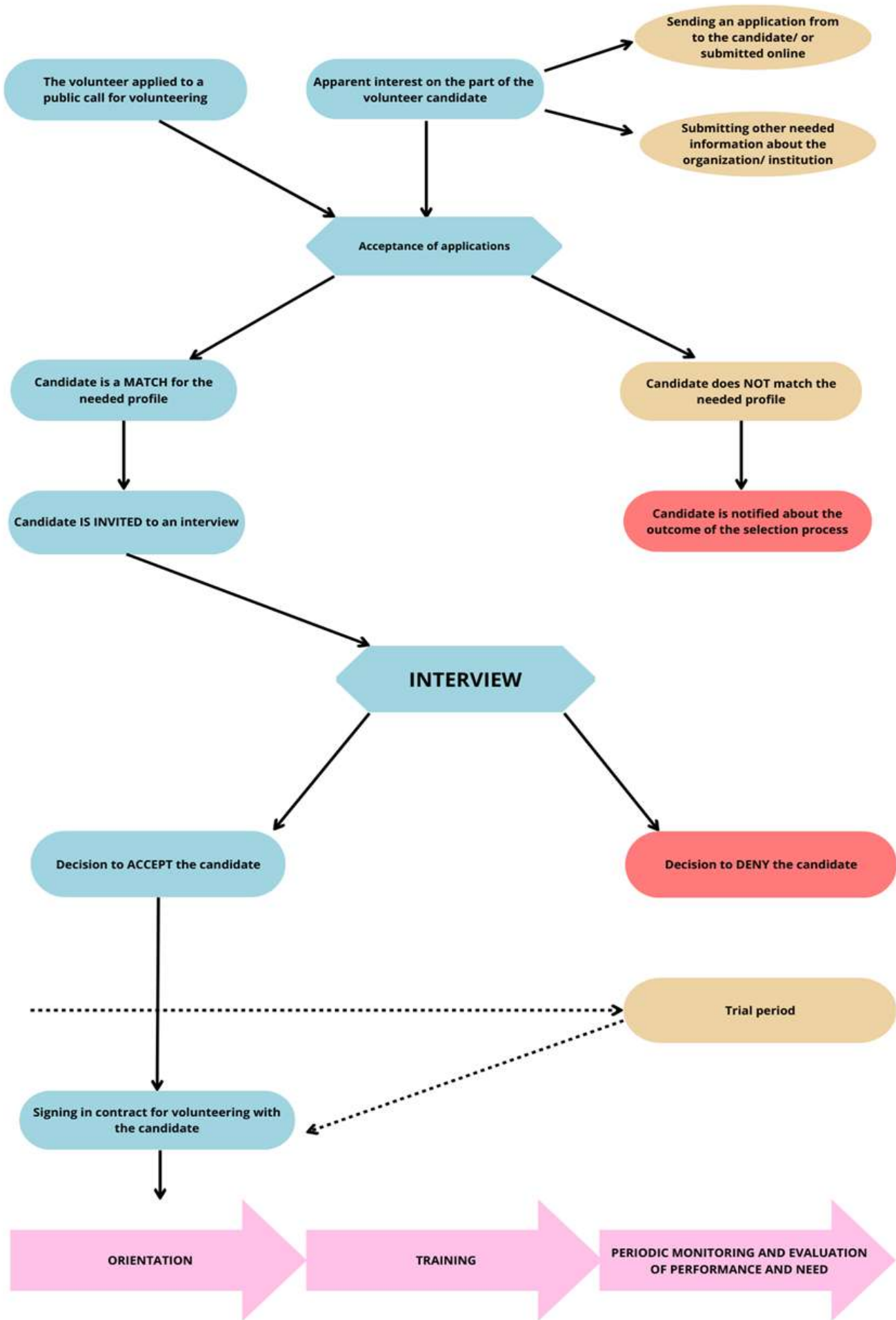
The two scenarios in this case are trial period for the candidate or directly proceeding in signing in the contract for volunteering between the volunteer and the municipality.

The trial period is recommended for instances where the administration and the appointed volunteer manager are unsure of the reliability of the volunteer. This period can vary from three days up to a week, and it depends on the free will and agreement on the both contracting party. If this trial period is successful the candidate and the municipality then proceed with the signing on the contract for volunteering and follow the other needed steps for successful integration of the volunteer in the work organization and its duties.

The second scenario, directly signing the contract for volunteering with the candidate after the selection and interview phase is done only if the candidate “ticks every box” in the requirements and has the foreknowledge for the position.

After the legal procedures are finished, before the volunteer starts its program it is at most importance not to miss the steps of orientation, then training for insuring successful integration of the volunteer in the work process, as well as performing periodic monitoring and evaluation of the performance of the volunteer and his or her needs within the work organization.

For better understanding of this process please see the scheme on the next page.



### 5.3. Process of application and application form

The when the public call is published, the applicants should follow the instructions given in the call for submitting their resume for the wanted volunteering position, submitting the printed or online application form (depending from the municipality) and other required documents that the municipality might need such as cover letter or motivational letter.

The application form should always include questions such as:

- Personal information (Name, surname, age and address...);
- Contact details (email, phone number, emergency contact (optional));
- Information about the skills and education level of the candidate;
- Availability regarding time investment in the programme;
- What position or program they are applying from;
- Other volunteering experiences or job/internship experience related to the position/program;
- Interests of the volunteer;
- Other questions relevant to the municipality;
- Method of submitting the application (in person, by post etc...)

#### Online application form example:

The image shows a screenshot of an online application form with a light blue background. The form is divided into two main columns. The left column contains the following sections:

- Your Name \***: Two input fields for First Name and Last Name.
- Parent/Guardian Name \***: Two input fields for First Name and Last Name.
- Address \***: Three input fields for Street Address, Street Address Line 2, and City. A dropdown menu for State / Province is also present.
- Postal / Zip Code**: One input field.
- Email \***: One input field with a placeholder example: example@example.com.
- Phone Number \***: Two input fields for Area Code and Phone Number.

The right column contains the following sections:

- Do you need accommodation services in order to perform your duties? \***: Two radio buttons for Yes and No.
- Emergency Contacts \***: A table with columns for Name, Phone Number, and Relationship. It includes a '+' button to add more contacts.
- Education Level \***: A dropdown menu.
- School Name \***: One input field.
- Birth Date \***: One input field with a date format (mm-dd-yyyy) and a calendar icon.
- How did you find this volunteering program? \***: A dropdown menu.

How did you find this volunteering program? \*

Availability Information \*

	From	To
Sunday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Monday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Tuesday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Wednesday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Thursday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Friday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Saturday	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Why do you want to be a volunteer in this program? \*

Please tell us your other volunteering experiences. \*

What are your interests? \*

What are your skills? \*

ie. Graphic Design, Social Media

## 5.4. Volunteer Position Description

Volunteer position descriptions are one in every of the foremost important management tools to make sure an efficient volunteer program. The volunteer position description should be a useful tool with simple language and answer the question "What should the person in this role do?"

An effectively written position description strikes a balance between providing sufficient detail and brevity in the descriptions. *It is important to note that providing a position description is not the same as an engagement announcement.* Volunteer position description should be written for every volunteer position, and also the descriptions should be utilized in the recruitment, assignment, and evaluation of volunteers. The descriptions may also function a legal document between the volunteer, the supervisor, the volunteer manager, and therefore the municipality.

Steps in developing a volunteer position description:

Analysis of the need consists of collecting and analyzing the work position (interviews, questionnaires, observing how the tasks are performed) as well as an analysis of the necessary qualifications for performing those tasks. Then the necessary functions are determined, i.e. what is required for the position, with what frequency the tasks are performed and how long it takes to perform those tasks as well as the consequences if they are not completed and finally the organization of the data from these two elements.

From these indicators, it is further determined which qualifications the volunteer should have in order to be an acceptable profile for the program. This includes characteristics such as: education and

certifications, references from a previous employer or volunteer work organizer, skills and abilities, and so on.

Formulation of volunteer position description:

- Name-title of the position
- Purpose of the position
- Tasks and responsibilities
- Qualifications Required
- Desired/preferred qualifications
- Working conditions

The description should detail the work that has to be done by the volunteer, yet as define the qualifications that are necessary for the volunteer, like abilities, skills, and interests. An honest description serves several purposes:

- Involves paid staff in describing the tasks to be performed by volunteers;
- Communicates the municipality’s expectation of the volunteer;
- Sets forth the experience, skills, and extent of the hassle required for the position; and
- Outlines the advantages that accompany the position and any particular requirement or limitation imposed by the national law.

***Proposal form to define the***  
**DESCRIPTION OF VOLUNTEERING POSITION**

<b><i>Name of the volunteer position:</i></b>	
<b><i>Number of volunteers:</i></b>	
<b><i>Project/programme/ /department for which:</i></b>	Name of project/programme....
<b><i>Brief description (or purpose/purpose) of the project/ /program:</i></b>	Give the information in 1 to 2 paragraphs.
<b><i>Time commitment:</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long (from – to) does the engagement last?</li> <li>• How many volunteer hours per week/month?</li> <li>• If important, and other details - at what time of day? Is weekend/non-working days expected?</li> </ul>
<b><i>Liability and reporting:</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is the volunteer's direct supervisor/respondent to?</li> <li>• How will he report on his work? (Time sheets, reports – with what frequency....?)</li> </ul>

<b>Description of tasks and results to be achieved by the volunteer:</b>	To state as specifically as possible /list, eg. To help organize 5 meetings with representatives from XXX, to provide logistical support for the volunteers of environmental action XXX, to coordinate activities in a stationary centre for homeless animals...
<b>Qualifications required</b>	to state (at least) the minimum necessary qualifications/abilities/skills that the volunteer is expected to have in order to adequately respond to the requirements above

<b>Benefits for the volunteer:</b>	<p>To state what the volunteer will receive from the organizer of the volunteer work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical and technical working conditions;</li> <li>• reimbursement of expenses (for what) and in what amount on a monthly basis (if applicable);</li> <li>• other fees and/or benefits;</li> <li>• Training to be received for...;</li> <li>• opportunity to serve the community;</li> <li>• recommendation for future employments;</li> <li>• improving one's knowledge and skills, gaining new experiences in certain skills</li> </ul>
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***Paid staff participation in this process is crucial in developing volunteer position descriptions.*** Paid staff are experts in their field, and know what tasks must be performed, and also the obstacles and limitations that may affect the volunteers' ability to perform the specified tasks. Paid staff involvement will offer the volunteer manager a chance to debate training, supervision, and recognition issues.

**The following elements should be included during a volunteer position description:**

- Job Title

The title should be specific in order that the volunteer clearly understands what the character of the task are going to be. Additionally, a decent job title will help paid staff in recognizing volunteers and understanding the role that they play within the program.

- Purpose of Position

Defining the aim of the position not only shows volunteers what to expect and appearance forward to, but illustrates what a difference they're making by volunteering. A well-written purpose statement makes volunteers responsive to how important their work is within the program.



- Tasks and Duties

All tasks and duties that the volunteer will conduct during the period of engagement should be detailed and clearly defined

- Required/Desired Qualifications

All qualifications required for the position should be listed. Qualifications could include, but aren't limited to, education, skills, abilities, interests, and skill.

- Training

Describe the training process that the volunteer must bear. The training must start before engaging the volunteer in the programme, and should be done by the organizer of volunteer work, in this case the municipalities.

- Commitment Required

Detail the minimum commitment that the volunteer must make to the program, which include length of service and hours per week/month.

- Work Location

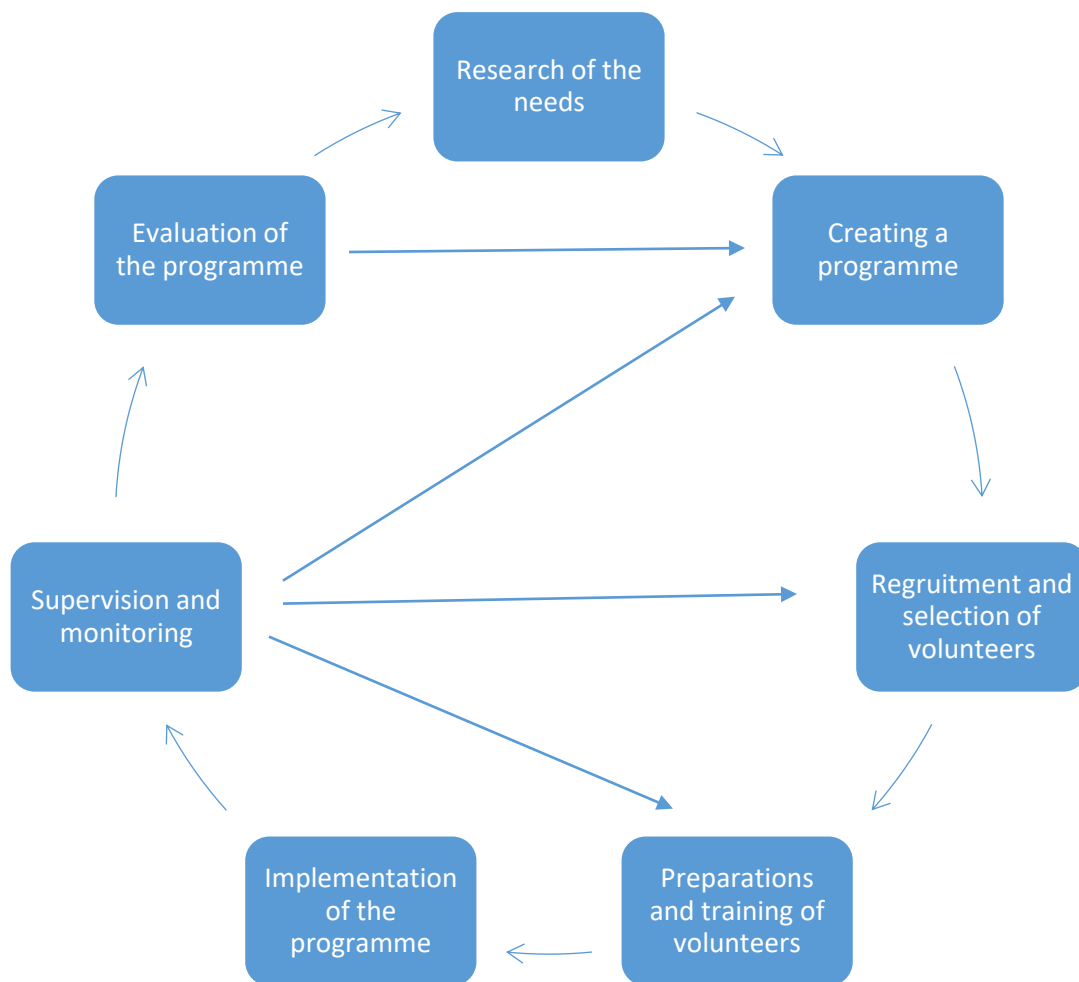
Detail the situation where the volunteer will complete his or her work. Confirm to incorporate directions and knowledge about public transportation if it's available.

- Volunteer Supervisor

Provide contact information to the volunteer supervisor or manager just in case of any questions that potential volunteers may have about the program.

## 6. Volunteer management cycle

For a successful volunteer program and successful management of volunteers, there are certain management rules that should be followed, rules that give the highest success rate. This cycle is a closed repeating process that is repeated and to be learned from.

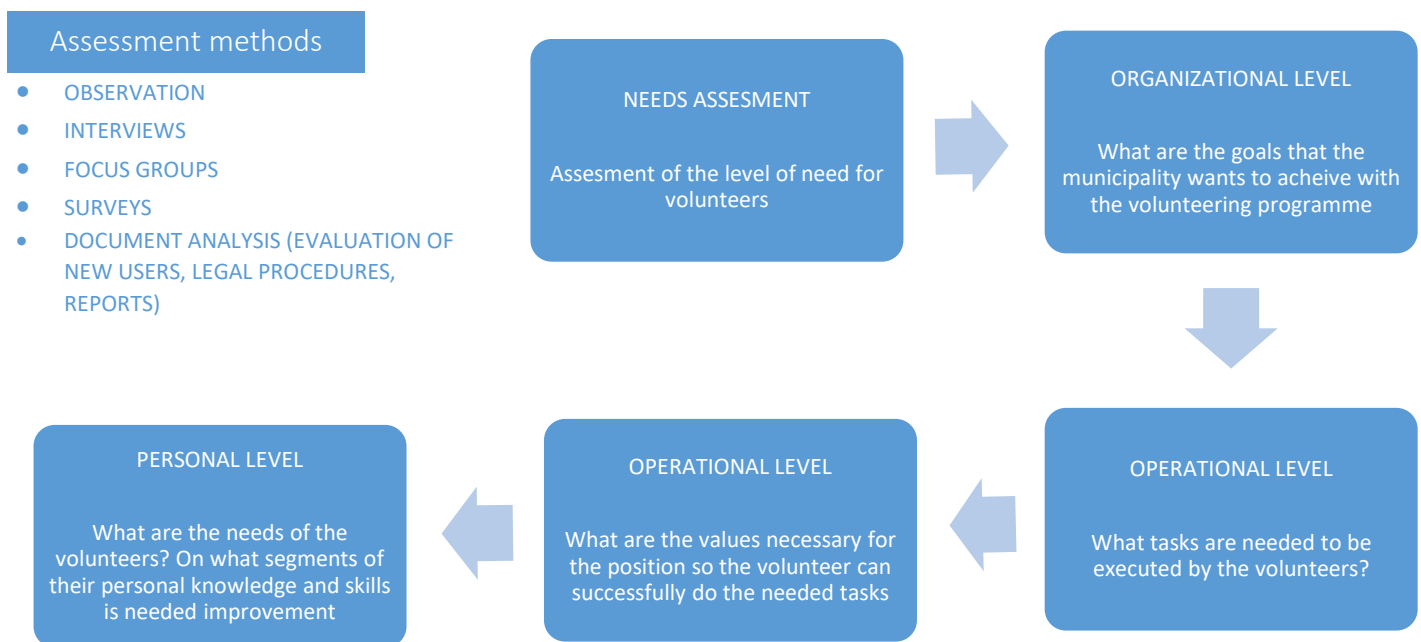


### 6.1. Research of needs

The first step to be taken in order to organize and create a successful volunteer cycle and program is to research the needs of the municipality and its departments. In this step, we recommend using various methods of gathering information, such as: focus groups with employees and heads of departments in the municipalities, interviews, questionnaires, etc.

After the needs have been determined and investigated in the institution itself, the step of creating a program that will reflect all the needs that were addressed in the previous preparatory step is approached.

Methods that can be used for needs assessment can be focus groups with the departments in the municipality, surveys in the administration, document analysis, observations and interviews and other methods that the municipality may find fit or thinks that it will give the best results for the needs assessment.



## 6.2. Public call

When the municipality is satisfied with the preparation of the final volunteering program, public calls for volunteers will be published. It is important to note that the calls that will be published must contain all the necessary information about the positions, job duties and eligibility criteria of the applicants.

This part of the implementation process is particularly important, because the municipality or the institution that acts as the organizer of the volunteer work must carefully prepare the profiles of

volunteers who will be included in the program itself and will volunteer in the municipality for a certain period of time. An important step here is to think carefully about the availability of application forms and the way of disseminating information about the active volunteer program of the municipality.

After the procedures and given prescribed deadlines for the application are completed, the applications are considered and the candidates are notified of the outcome of the process itself. Candidates who have successfully passed this process and are selected for the program are further approached to conclude a contract and proceed to the next step of preparation and training of the volunteers.

It is at most importance the public call to be clear with the description of the role and requirements for the volunteers that are needed in the municipality. A high level summary describing what the role does and why it is important for the municipality, who the specific role reports to, and how the job that the volunteer is going to conduct fits into the wider structure of the municipality should be included.

#### **Suggestion guide questions for writing successful call:**

##### **What the volunteer will be responsible for...**

- Bullet pointed list of the positions main responsibilities;
- Focus more on responsibilities than specific tasks;
- Who will they connect with? What will they manage?
- What work or results will the volunteers be accountable for?;
- Aim for 6 – 10 concise bullet points in this section.

##### **What the municipality need from the volunteers:**

- List the volunteers commitment expectations such as the following;
- Terms of contract;
- Hours
- Location
- Any special requirements such as travel, evening/weekend work etc.

##### **What skills and experience are most desired for the position:**

- Bullet pointed list of skills, experience and qualifications successful candidates will need;
- Be specific as possible, using numbers where possible (e.g. experience in service providing industries; experience in organization of public events...)
- Don't ask for anything that discriminates against personal traits such as age or sex
- Ask for submission of motivational letter, cover letter, CV.

### **6.3. Tips for recruitment of volunteers**

The volunteer recruitment its important and continuous process, that the municipality or organization is promoting free volunteering positions in the public. This process is full with challenges for the main reason that it requires patience, time and a lot of planning. With positive approach in

combination with clear thinking and creativity, the municipalities that want to recruit volunteers, will cause significant interest amongst its citizens.

There are different types of recruitment that can be used in this process and they are the following:

### **1. Recruitment according to the principle of "warm body" - mass recruitment**

The basic principles of mass recruitment include spreading the information of the volunteering program that you want to promote through:

- Distribution and dissemination of info materials;
- Billboards;
- Commercials on the mass traditional media and social media;
- With "spoken word from person to person".

This method is used when the volunteering positions meet at least one of the two following conditions:

- The municipality needs a large number of volunteers for a short period of time (example: public events, festivals, local actions, sports events organized by the municipality, etc.);
- The volunteer position does not require special qualifications, as they can be performed by almost everyone, with a possible short training.

### **2. Targeted recruitment**

The targeted recruitment is a process of planning a campaign that has the aim of spreading the message to a small and specific audience. Targeted recruitment is method best used when for the volunteer position it's required the volunteer to have specific skillset, qualifications and knowledge or other characteristics that are not as usual.

The planning of targeted recruitment includes 4 questions:

- What the municipality needs?
- Who can do this?
- What type of communication is most adequate for the specific target group?
- What can motivate the volunteers?

The answers to these questions for the volunteering positions will ease the approach and the search for the volunteers that have the required skillset and qualifications that the municipality needs.

### 3. Concentric circles

The recruitment of volunteers with the usage of concentric circles is a way of recruitment of people that are somehow connected with the municipality. This is the fastest and the easiest way of recruitment, but sometimes it can be insufficient. Using this method we can recruit people that are:



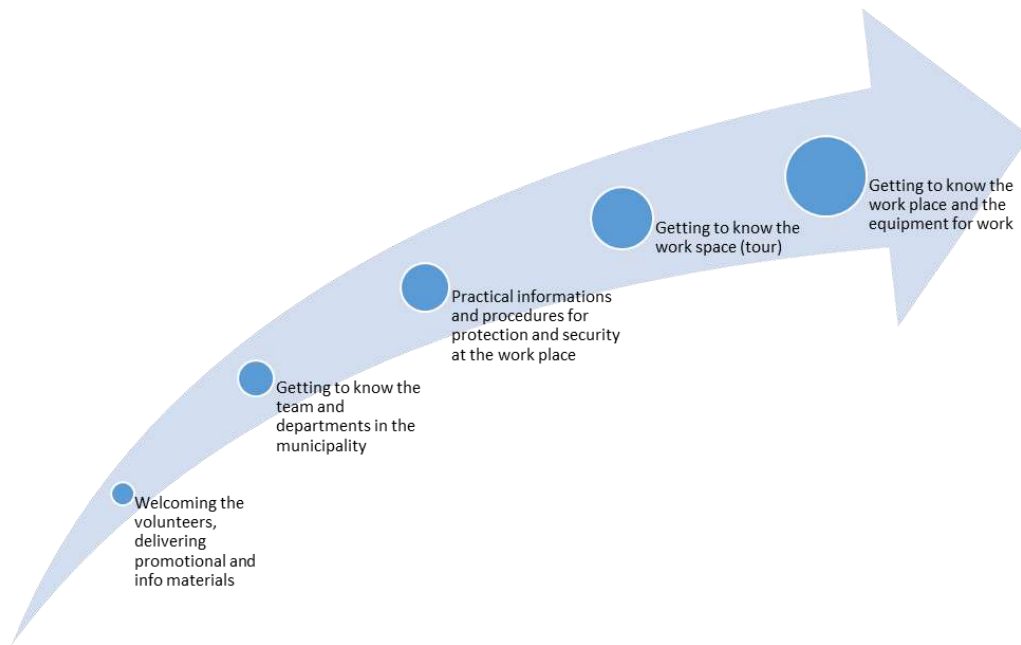
## 6.4. Interview:

Summary of suggestions for screening and interviewing potential volunteers:

- Prepare and use a form that asks for information regarding the candidate's work experience, volunteer experience, interest, talents and skills, reasons for volunteering, and the other information that may be relevant to the volunteer program;
- Screen each candidate with variety of volunteer opportunities in mind that reflect the interest and skills shown within the application;
- Interview for a selected volunteer position;
- Conduct the interview in an exceedingly quiet place. Prepare basic interview questions before, generally using open-ended inquiries to facilitate discussion. Always use active listening skills during the interview;
- Give the applicant a chance to ask questions on the program and therefore the municipality, and be prepared to answer these questions;
- Explain the policies and procedures of the municipality regarding volunteers and describe the advantages generally afforded to volunteers;
- Utilize references (usually by telephone) by asking non-leading, specific, and open-ended questions.

## 6.5. Orientation process:

The preparation and training of the volunteers is part of the cycle where the municipality, as the organizer of volunteer work, conducts orientation activities in order to familiarize the selected volunteers with the activities and tasks they will perform during their engagement. In this phase of the cycle the municipality as organizer of volunteer work is obligated to familiarize the volunteers with the teams and the supervisors of their job. If the orientation process is done right, it will help the volunteers to start feeling comfortable and welcomed in the new environment. Orientation well done will ensure that the volunteers are not only familiar with the job that they will do in the municipality, but will ensure understanding of the organizational culture, procedures and policies that the municipality has.



Good orientation programme needs to have few key elements:

1. Needs to be regular part of the municipality practice;
2. It needs to be well planned (what will be presented, in what format, where...);
3. Too much information on the first day can be ineffective way of orientation;
4. There is no such thing as “one and only” formula, the orientation needs to be planned adequately on the needs of the municipality and the volunteers. Good methods of orientation can be done before the arrival of the volunteers, online, sending materials to the volunteers, tour virtual/in person etcetera.
5. Prepared evaluation form for the orientation programme for further improvements.



## 6.6. Training programme and process:

When the orientation is completed, the municipality should involve the volunteers in training process which is mandatory. This process will give the volunteers the required knowledge for the volunteers to adapt or gain new skills and behaviors that will furthermore help them in completing the daily tasks and work.

Outcomes of a successful training programme:

- It insures the municipality that each volunteer is adequate of executing their job in an efficient and effective way;
- The training should also target increasing the productivity, efficiency, overcoming obstacles and shortcomings that the volunteer might have, gaining new skills;
- Ensures that in the future the consumption of funds and time is rational and minimized;
- Ensures improvement of the quality of work;
- Ensures improvement of the protection and safety on the work place (special trainings and trainings on safe equipment usage if necessary)
- To improve organization's culture;
- To help in the personal development of the volunteers.

### **Determining the needs for training:**

The training of volunteers is a process which includes needs assessment in various levels.

We can start by determining the needs of the municipality administration and its departments for the need of volunteers. This assessment should be done within the departments of the municipality and included in the programme for volunteers beforehand.

From the needs concerning the preparation of the candidates for the programme we are continuing to determining the needs of the organizational and operational level. Here inter organizational questions must be addressed such as: "What are the goals that the municipality wants to achieve with the volunteering programme?" is it short staff at the administration, is it to improve citizen services etc. From here still on an organizational level, we must determine the tasks that the volunteers are going to perform when in the programme. The administration must give input and a clear description on the tasks and the level of performance needed to be conducted, this particular step can be also very helpful in facilitating the candidate orientation process. The next step here is determining the values are necessary for the position so the volunteer can successfully do the needed tasks. Should the volunteer have good listening skills, good working with clients on service providing positions or maybe analytical skills, or some other value it is up to the municipality's administration to determine it so.

When we reach the final step and all of the other needs are addressed, we need to reach to the volunteers and ask about their needs, meaning on what segments of their personal knowledge and skills is needed improvement that will furthermore determine the level of need for volunteering training needed. If for some position that is included in the program for volunteering we have a candidate that has experience, skills and the education needed to perform the tasks that are needed, the supervisor

can conclude that the candidate needs less training than some other candidates that are considered for that position as well.

Going back to the cycle of management of volunteers we go further in the next step which is the implementation of the training of volunteers and filling in those gaps in the knowledge and skills that the volunteers might have, that will help them in successful transition in the organizational culture of the municipality and completing their tasks as expected.

## 6.7. Implementation period and monitoring:

From here the implementation period of the programme can start. It is important to note that the volunteers should be in constant communication and supervision by the volunteer's coordinator or department's head. This process of mentoring and communicating with the volunteers leads to the next step which is supervision and monitoring that can give relevant information for improvement of aspects and processes of the programme for the future.

The monitoring process on inspection of the progress against set goals. This process includes continuous monitoring of the volunteer's activities and achievements in order to ensure that the work performed is in accordance with the needs of the program and the municipality. The reports in these periodical monitoring activities can give suggestions for the improvement of the next programme to be created, best methods to be used in the recruitments and selection of the future candidates of volunteers meaning what kind of profiles of volunteers should be included in the programme, what values should the future candidates have, and will gain feedback on the preparation phase of the volunteers what can be improved and what is well done.

Reaching the evaluation phase of the program, surveys, observations and interviews should be made with everyone included in the programme volunteers, trainers and coordinators and employees, so in that way all the parties involved can give feedback on the process the satisfactory and productive aspects of it, that can be used as a reference in creating the next programme for volunteers. *The evaluation in this terms represents the measurement of the overall result and impact of the program.* During the evaluation, an objective and detailed analysis of the current or already completed program is made in order to evaluate its significance, effectiveness and efficiency, the impact of the program and its sustainability.

If this process is done correctly it can save time and resources in the future planning.

## 7. How to welcome volunteers? Explaining roles, induction, training and support needs for volunteers.

People may notice that involving volunteers from the community they serve allows the municipality will allow the administration to remain more in touch with what is going on in its community. Volunteers may also give important information and insights on the subjects and issues that the citizens have, issues that need to be addressed by the municipality. Volunteers as well can bring a diverse set of talents and knowledge to the table, allowing the group to accomplish its goals.

A crucial first step in good volunteer management is to ensure that everyone in the municipality administration and working organization values the variety of benefits that all volunteers contribute.

The first thing that the administration can do to is to demonstrate its commitment to having volunteers offer their ideas, expertise, and skills at all levels of the organization is to simply adopt a statement stating that it values the role of volunteers.

Municipality's administration can also show its dedication to volunteers by include a diverse set of volunteers in its planning and decision-making processes. This as well can be considered while developing a strategic plan or analyzing impact from policies and project that the municipality has been implementing, the benefit in this case is that the volunteers who represent an outside, objective subject can and may hold a different perspective from the administration staff and other stakeholders throughout the process.

## 8. What is need volunteering to happen: money, management, resources and keeping volunteers safe

### 8.1. Why volunteering is important:

Every volunteer you encounter will have his or her own set of reasons for volunteering. Understanding why some people are able to overcome hurdles and achieve their goals while others give up more quickly in the same activities may help us understand why.

When creating volunteer programs, it's critical to remember that an overly simplistic picture of people and their motivations will almost certainly result in the program's failure. As can be seen from the examples above, volunteering can be motivated by a variety of factors. When running a volunteer program, it's critical to have a broad picture of prospective volunteer participation. Volunteer managers should be ready to provide opportunities for self-realization to volunteers with various motivations. Otherwise, only those volunteers who have the same motivations will stay with the project or institution in this context and be pleased, excluding potentially significant contributions from others. Furthermore, a volunteer manager who is not prepared for a wide range of motivations will be unable to accomplish his or her work effectively. Neglecting the needs of volunteers can lead to unhappiness with volunteer

work in general and a failure to self-realize and self-express through volunteering for some people. Current and future volunteer managers will benefit from some theoretical input on human motivation.

## 8.2. Volunteering program planning

When creating a volunteer program for an organization or institution, the relationship between the program and the organization in this case the municipality that develops it should be extremely apparent. The volunteer program must be in line with the working organization's strategy, vision, values, and mission statement. A thorough examination of the existing situation inside the organization and its environments is required. Many factors in the "environment" of the working organization could have an impact on it and its volunteer program. It is preferable if the municipality personnel are involved in the process from the start.

Quality needs assessment is required before formal planning and the creation of a volunteer program. This process can be carried out in a variety of ways; the method chosen should be based on the objectives you wish to achieve by involving volunteers.

The following methods can be used to assess needs:

- a study of the needs and expectations of the people who would directly benefit from the volunteer work (users of voluntary services);
- an examination of the needs and expectations of the volunteer group (volunteers);
- a study of the group that designs and administers the overall volunteer program's needs and expectations (the organizers volunteer activities ie. the employees in the municipality)
- the analysis of the needs and expectations of the entire local community.

These studies can be done alone or in combination, based on the assessment – and which guidelines will be needed when creating a volunteer program. Certainly, a combination of all of the above mentioned methods can provide the most comprehensive picture. If the municipality has done previous research it can certainly help to have data that the creators of the program can work with (for example, different research and/or evaluations of previously implemented programs), you can start creating a volunteer program right away.

## 9. Why is important to mentor volunteers? What is the mentor role?

### 9.1. Mentoring in volunteering activities:

All participants that decide that want to be part in a voluntary activities should receive personal support in the form of mentoring. Mentoring entails regular meetings between the participant and the mentor selected by the support organization or in this case the municipality, both inside and outside the activity location. The meetings should be centered on the volunteers' personal well-being, as well as guiding and supporting volunteers in identifying the lessons learned during their experience.

Because mentoring is tailored to the needs of each individual, the content and frequency of meetings and supporting activities will probably change according to their need. Topics for mentoring meetings could include personal well-being, team well-being, task satisfaction, practicalities, and so on.

### 9.2. Strengthening of the mentorship:

'Reinforced Mentorship' is a more intensive mentoring approach that may be required to assist young people with less chances who are unable to carry out an activity on their own or with regular mentoring or tutoring support.

Volunteering activities can benefit from this form of coaching. Closer interaction, more frequent encounters, and greater time dedicated to task completion characterize reinforced mentoring. This ensures that participants are supported step-by-step throughout project activities as well as outside of working hours. Reinforced Mentorship allows participants to obtain as much autonomy as feasible, resulting in a successful project execution.

### 9.3. Management of human and other resources:

Volunteer programs, like any other program the volunteering programme needs time and money. It is critical that the administration set aside a percentage of the municipality budget to support the volunteer program with resources.

Staff time, recruitment advertising, recognition gifts, and even office supplies could all be budgeted for. The municipality may choose to cover operational expenses for the volunteers. Other aspect that need to be covered is that it is important to make sure that the municipality has enough room and equipment for volunteers to work with, as well as the necessary insurance to safeguard both the volunteers and the municipality. In this context we must not forget the financial aspects for engagement of volunteers in the municipal work. According to the national Volunteering Law the volunteer has the right to be reimbursed for food costs and transportation costs to and from the place of volunteering is paid up to a maximum of 15% of the average monthly salary in the Republic paid for the previous one year, and business travel expenses and training expenses are pay the same amount as for the employees of the

organizer of volunteer work<sup>6</sup>. All of these measures if taken, will increase the volunteering participation in the public sector.

When speaking of human resources management there are certain steps:

**1. Adopt a volunteer statement that recognizes the important role that volunteers play.**

The municipalities can incorporate a volunteer statement into their local legal framework that will serve as the mission statement for your volunteer program.

**2. Involve volunteers in the planning process.**

There are several approaches to increase volunteer participation in the planning efforts of the institution. If the municipality is starting a strategic planning process, it would be productive to consider enlisting the help of volunteers from various departments to attend the forum or planning sessions that the municipality organizes.

Because of the diverse roles they play, they will bring a different viewpoint than administration staff and policy makers (for example, volunteers may have inside knowledge of client reactions to programs, community opinions of the organization, or future work prospects).

**3. Provide enough resources for the volunteer program (money, time, location, equipment, and insurance).**

In reality, managing volunteers effectively requires at least some financial resources. The municipalities by the Law on youth and youth policies are obligated to provide at least 0.1% of their budget on youth and youth policies. On the other hand as mentioned before the national Law for volunteering as well predicts reimbursed for food costs and transportation costs to and from the place of volunteering is paid up to a maximum of 15% of the average monthly salary in the Republic paid for the previous one year, and business travel expenses and training expenses are pay the same amount as for the employees of the organizer of volunteer work.

**4. Set and review goals for volunteer involvement in the administration's work on a regular basis.**

Your group can choose from a variety of goals to determine the level and type of volunteer involvement in administration's work. Recommendation in this terms must be the goal that the municipality need to set in order to develop objectives aimed at improving their volunteer program. One goal might be to establish volunteer policies and procedures in the coming year. Another option is to analyze the municipality's many efforts and use that information to create new volunteer jobs for the coming year. You may set a goal to create a new training program for a certain group of volunteers (for example, board members, coaches, and event organizers).

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<sup>6</sup> *Article 10, Volunteering Law*

## 9.4. Volunteering contract:

The volunteering contract should include all of the obligations and articles that are predicted in the Law of volunteering regarding the obligation of the organizers of the volunteer work in this case the municipalities and the volunteers itself, the terms and the conditions of the contract, the duration of it and other relevant information that explains the work position of the volunteering. Deviation of the contract can be done, including and excluding things regarding the conditions and the work that needed to be done, or if this engagement will be usual volunteering contract or should be upgraded and modified to the needs of the volunteer or the municipality.

### IV. Volunteering agreement

#### Article 14

The organizer of the volunteer work is obliged with volunteer who is a domestic natural person to conclude a volunteering contract in writing form, if the volunteer work lasts more than 40 hours per month.

The organizer of the volunteer work can conclude a contract for volunteering and with a volunteer - domestic natural person for volunteer work which lasts less than 40 hours per month.

The organizer of the volunteer work is obliged with a volunteer who is a foreign natural person to enter into an agreement in written form for volunteering for all volunteer services.

The volunteering contract contains the following elements:

1. Contracting parties:
  - volunteer work organizer (name and headquarters)
  - volunteer (name and surname, residential address, i.e place of residence);
2. Subject of the contract;
3. Place of volunteering and duration of volunteering, a if there is no permanent place, then they are only listed the places where the services are provided;
4. Volunteer activities or services provided;
5. Special rights and obligations;
6. Method of insurance during volunteering upon arrival and return to the place of volunteering and other activities provided during volunteering;
7. Pre-agreed costs for volunteering and the method compensation for the same;
8. Method of termination and termination of the volunteering contract i
9. Date and place of conclusion of the contract

Example of the volunteering agreement can be found on the next page:

VOLUNTEERING AGREEMENT NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Concluded and signed on \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ between (municipality of XXX) in the hereinafter referred to as Organizer of the volunteer work represented by an authorized person (Major XXX) \_\_\_\_\_ and the volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ (name of the volunteer) born on \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, with a residential address of \_\_\_\_\_.

Article 1

Subject of the agreement for the regulation of the voluntary work of the volunteer in the above-mentioned municipality of XXX - organizer of the volunteer work.

Article 2

The organizer of the volunteer work accepts the volunteer services of the volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ in the period from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_, in the volunteer position \_\_\_\_\_. The description of the volunteer position is an integral part of this agreement as an Annex. The place of volunteering is \_\_\_\_\_.

Article 3

Rights and obligations of the volunteer

1. The volunteer has the right to:

- to receive in written form the description of the rights and obligations that they must fulfill and to familiarize themselves with the conditions and dangers related to the time of volunteering, before the start of volunteering.
- to be familiar with the general acts of the organizers of the services, those of those parts that refer to the volunteer services, for which they are employed.
- to use means of protection at work in accordance with the regulations on protection at work.
- of training, if necessary to provide the service that is the subject of the contract.
- on leave during volunteering, if there are justified reasons for it.
- on a day off.
- to be consulted and informed when deciding on the provision of services.
- of reimbursements for all contracts related to volunteering (expenses, transportation costs to and from the start of volunteering, travel service costs, expenses costs, work-related sickness, and injury insurance costs) and
- on the protection of privacy and personal data.

2. The volunteer is obliged to:

- inform the organizer of volunteering about illness or other reasons for not being able to provide services;
  - the provision of services according to the law, the volunteering agreement and the general acts of the organizers of the volunteering with which it is previously known;
  - provides service personally and immediately;
  - participates in training, in order to ensure verification of the provision of the service;
  - keeps the confidential data, i.e. the classified information about the organizer of the volunteer work, with which they are familiar before providing the service and
  - inform the organizer of the volunteer work about the consequences that have been discovered that may arise for the organizers and for them self or for three persons.
3. The volunteer who, during the provision of the volunteer service intentionally or through gross negligence causes damage to the organizers of the volunteer work, must compensate the organizer of the volunteer work for the damage, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Obligation Relations.
4. The volunteer who, during or in connection with the provision of the volunteer service, causes an attack on third parties, is obliged to compensate them according to the provisions of the Law on Obligation Relations.

Article 4

Rights and obligations of the volunteer work organizer

1. The volunteer service organizer is obliged to:

- providing conditions for performing volunteer work in accordance with the Law and the contract for volunteer work;
- the volunteer must receive a volunteer booklet for the volunteer work and in it to state the data published by this law;
- provided materials and means for performing the volunteer work;
- ensuring timely payment of all agreed expenses;
- ensured confidentiality of data and protection of privacy;
- provided other conditions published by this law or for which they mutually agreed and
- Protected health diseases and injuries at work of volunteering, in accordance with the pension and disability insurance regulations and health insurance regulations, if so agreed.
- keeps records of the volunteer's volunteer work

According to the provisions of the Law on personal income tax, no personal income tax is paid based on the expenses related to the volunteer work determined in the contract. The organizer of the volunteer work should compensate the volunteer for the damage caused during or in connection with the volunteer service, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Obligations.

Article 5 (optional)

What is the compensation for the costs of volunteering, which are costs for transportation, refreshments and funds, the volunteer receives a volunteer compensation in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ denars on his personal transaction account.

(Note: the maximum monthly compensation for volunteer expenses for 2022 is set at 6.43 MKD)

The volunteer compensation, according to the applicable legal regulations, is exempt from payment of personal income tax and the volunteer is not obliged to report it as income in his Annual Tax Return.

The organizer of volunteer work for the duration of volunteering will cover the monthly costs of insurance against occupational diseases and injury at work of the volunteer, in accordance with the applicable legal regulations.

Article 6

1. The volunteering contract ends:

- with the expiration of the time limit for which the contract was concluded or the conditions for which it was concluded are fulfilled;
- with amicable termination;
- when the volunteer organizer stops working without a legal successor;
- with the day of the final decision to revoke the volunteer's business capacity and
- by terminating the residence permit in the Republic of North Macedonia (for foreigners)

2. The volunteer may terminate the contract before the expiration of the time for which it was concluded, with a written statement without the obligation to state the reason for terminating the contract, except in the case when the termination may cause harmful consequences in the work of the organizer of the volunteer work or of third parties.

3. The volunteer work organizer can terminate the volunteering contract:

- by ending the need for volunteering;
- when he is unable to provide the conditions for volunteering;
- when he finds that the volunteer does not fulfill the agreed obligations and
- in case of violation of ethical norms, adopted for separate forms of volunteering.

The contracting party is obliged to deliver the written statement of termination of the contract to the other contracting party within five days before terminating the contract.

Article 7

This agreement enters into force on the day of its signing. The contract is made in 4 (four) identical copies, of which two copies are kept by each contracting party. The Basic Court \_\_\_\_\_ is competent for all disputes based on this agreement.

Organizer of volunteer work

Volunteer



## 9.5. Reimbursement:

As mentioned in the previous parts of this guide the reimbursement for the volunteer's work and engagement should be done by previous agreement if the job that the volunteer will convey will be compensated. The amount of compensation that the volunteer will receive should not be higher than the legislative regulations in the Law of volunteering.

“The volunteer has right of compensation for the pre-agreed costs associated with volunteering (food expenses, transportation expenses to and from the place of volunteering, business travel expenses and training costs) and on the protection of privacy and personal data.

Reimbursement of food expenses and transportation expenses to and from the place of volunteering is paid at most up to 15% of the average monthly salary in the Republic paid for the previous one year, and the expenses for business trips and training expenses, are pay in the same amount as for the employees of the organizer of volunteer work.

A volunteer - a foreign natural person, in addition to the rights from paragraph 1 of this article, has the right to stay expenses, health insurance and return travel expenses.”<sup>7</sup>

By 2022, the if we calculated the percentage of average monthly salary in North Macedonia, the volunteer costs for food, transportation and training is estimated maximum amount of MKD 6,433.

## 9.6. Volunteer's safety:

For keeping the volunteers safe while they volunteer in the municipality, by the North Macedonian law there are in rule the same regulations as they are in regular working relation with the institution or organization. The Health and safety law, again under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy. This law determines the measures for safety and health at work, the obligations of the employer and the rights and obligations of employees in the field of safety and health at work, as well as preventive measures against occupational risks, the removal of risk factors for accidents, information, consultation, training of workers and their representatives and their participation in planning and taking measures for safety and health at work.<sup>8</sup>

## 9.7. Recording of volunteer work:

The recording of volunteer work is recorded in the Law of volunteering in the section “V. Record of volunteer work and volunteer book” where it explains who is responsible for the monitoring of the correctness of the volunteer book. It represents a mandatory segment and obligation for both of the

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<sup>7</sup> Section III, Article 10 Law on volunteering

<sup>8</sup> See: Health and safety law,

[https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/trud\\_2017/pravilnici/%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%20%D0%B7%D0%B0%2016,11-%D0%B7%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%91%D0%97%D0%A0.pdf](https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/trud_2017/pravilnici/%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%20%D0%B7%D0%B0%2016,11-%D0%B7%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%91%D0%97%D0%A0.pdf)

parties and it represents a public document that the Ministry of Labor and Social policies will have insight in it.

#### V. Record of volunteer work and volunteer book

##### Article 19

The organizer of the volunteer work is obliged to keep records of the volunteer work for all volunteers.

The way of keeping records from paragraph 1 of this article is prescribed by the Minister of Labor and Social Policy.

##### Article 20

The volunteer book is a public document.

The volunteer book contains data on the type and duration of the volunteer work and the type of training for which the volunteer is trained for the duration of volunteering.

The form and content of the volunteer book, the method of its issuance and recording of the data, will prescribe them the Minister of Labor and Social Policy.<sup>9</sup>

On the base of this Article in the Law of volunteering, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy made a Rulebook on the way of keeping records of the volunteer work, it only has two articles and they are the following:

#### **REGULATIONS ON THE METHOD OF KEEPING RECORDS OF VOLUNTEER WORK.**

##### Article 1

This regulation prescribes the way of keeping records of volunteer work for all volunteers.

##### Article 2

The records from Article 1 are kept manually or electronically and data are entered for:

- A Serial Number;
- Personal data of the volunteer (name and surname, social security number, place of residence, that is, place of residence);
- Contract number concluded with a domestic natural person;
- Number of the contract concluded with a foreign natural person;
- A written document signed by both parties in which the rights and obligations of the volunteer and the organizer of the volunteer work are determined for the volunteers for whom no written agreement has been concluded;

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<sup>9</sup> *Section V, Article 19 and 20, Volunteering law*

- Duration of volunteering;
- Duration of volunteer hours during the month;
- Type and duration of training that the volunteer had during volunteering and
- Signature of the volunteer and the person authorized for representation and seal.<sup>10</sup>

**Example: Record of volunteer work**

(Rows to be added accordingly)

No.	Personal data for the volunteer (name and surname, personal identification number, place of residence)	Contract number or written document	Duration of volunteering (from dd/mm/yyyy – to dd/mm/yyyy)	Number of volunteer hours during the month	Type and duration of training the volunteer had during volunteering	Signature (of the volunteer, authorized person) and seal
1.						

Alongside this the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies has published an example of Volunteer book<sup>11</sup> that needs to be kept in the record in order that the volunteer will have the evidence in the future that he or she has done the volunteering in that specific municipality or organization.

<sup>10</sup> *Rulebook on the way of keeping records of volunteer work*, Official Gazette number: 128/2007;

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/volonterska\\_kniska.pdf](https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/WBStorage/Files/volonterska_kniska.pdf)

## 10. How to ensure volunteer inclusion? Obtain equal access to opportunities and fair recruitment.

Each and every institution including the municipality should promote social inclusion, tolerance, human rights and the value of differences and diversity of all kinds and to provide all young people equal access to opportunities in its work especially when working with young people and volunteers.

In order to encourage involvement of different groups of young people in the volunteering services, programs and the work of the institutions, they need to be aware of the differences of each individual in order to better cater for the needs of the institution as well as the need of the volunteers.

When designing their programmes for volunteering and activities within, the institutions and municipalities should have an inclusive approach and make use of the available mechanisms to involve a diverse range of volunteers. In this terms we recommend for the municipalities to consult national mechanisms such as the “Law on prevention and protection of discrimination<sup>12</sup>” as well as some international mechanisms explained in the “Inclusion and Diversity Strategy<sup>13</sup>” of the Erasmus+ and ESC program, that has been developed to support organizations and institutions to better reach out to more volunteers with fewer opportunities and help addressing the barriers that different target groups may face. Young people with fewer opportunities are young people who are at a disadvantage compared to their peers because they face one or more exclusion factors and obstacles. The list of barriers, spelt out below, is not exhaustive and is meant to provide a reference in taking action with a view to increasing accessibility and outreach to disadvantaged groups:

- **Disabilities:** This includes physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which may hinder someone’s full and effective participation in society on the same footing as others.
- **Health problems:** Barriers may result from health issues including severe illnesses, chronic diseases, or any other physical or mental health-related situation that prevents from participating in the programmes.
- **Barriers linked to education and training systems:** Individuals performing poorly in education and training systems for various reasons and for early school-leavers, NEETs (people not in education, employment or training) and low-qualified adults may face barriers. Although other factors may play a role, these educational difficulties, while they may also be linked to personal circumstances, mostly result from an educational system which creates structural limitations and/or does not fully take into account the individual’s particular needs. Individuals can also face barriers to participation when the structure of curricula makes it difficult to undertake a learning or training mobility abroad as part of their studies.

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<sup>12</sup>

<https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/%D0%97%D0%B0%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%BD%20%D0%B7%D0%B0%20%D1%81%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B5%D1%87%D1%83%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%9A%D0%B5%20%D0%B8%20%D0%B7%D0%B0%D1%88%D1%82%D0%B8%D1%82%D0%B0%20%D0%BE%D0%B4%20%D0%B4%D0%B8%D1%81%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BC%D0%B8%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%86%D0%B8%D1%98%D0%B0.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/document/implementation-guidelines-erasmus-and-european-solidarity-corps-inclusion-and-diversity-strategy>

- Cultural differences: While cultural differences may be perceived as barriers by people from any backgrounds, they can particularly affect people with fewer opportunities. Such differences may represent significant barriers to learning in general, all the more for people with a migrant or refugee background – especially newly-arrived migrants -, people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, sign language users, people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties, etc. Being exposed to foreign languages and cultural differences when taking part in any kind of programme activities may put off individuals and somehow limit the benefits from their participation. And such cultural differences may even prevent potential participants from applying for support through the programmes, thereby representing an entry barrier altogether.
- Social barriers: Social adjustment difficulties such as limited social competences, anti-social or high-risk behaviors, or social marginalization may represent a barrier. Other social barriers can stem from family circumstances, for instance being the first in the family to access higher education or being a parent (especially a single parent), a caregiver, a breadwinner or an orphan, or having lived or currently living in institutional care.
- Economic barriers: Economic disadvantage like a low standard of living, low income, learners who need to work to support themselves, dependence on the social welfare system, in long-term unemployment, precarious situations or poverty, being homeless, in debt or with financial problems, etc., may represent a barrier.
- Barriers linked to discrimination: linked to gender, age, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, or intersectional factors (a combination of one or several of the mentioned discrimination barriers).
- Geographical barriers: living in remote or rural areas, on small islands or in peripheral/outermost regions, in urban suburbs, in less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities), etc., may constitute a barrier. Other difficulties may derive from the limited transferability of services (in particular support to people with fewer opportunities) that need to be "mobile" together with the participants when going to a far place or, all the more, abroad.

## 11. How to value volunteers? Recognition for volunteers' time, contribution, feedback and creating positive endings

### 11.1. Volunteer recognition:

Volunteer recognition leads to the growth of the volunteers' sentiments of affiliation, individuality, and power. If a group or team's efforts are recognized, the volunteer will feel more linked to the institution and its people as a member of that team. The volunteer will feel valued and have a higher sense of efficacy and uniqueness if the recognition activities are centered on appreciating the individual contribution, qualities, and achievements.

Volunteers vary in terms of the sorts, styles, and sizes of recognition that best suit their personalities. Some volunteers prefer to be thanked by their coworkers, some by their supervisors or managers, others by the board, and yet others by their peers or relatives. Volunteers who have volunteered for a longer period of time require team acknowledgment, but volunteers who have volunteered for a shorter period of time desire to obtain quick individual recognition. Some volunteers prefer to be appreciated in words, while others want to have something tangible to take with them. Some volunteers want official appreciation, while others prefer casual recognition. In this case it is recommended the volunteers to receive formal recognition such as awards, plaques, apparel items, recognition events, and so forth, are used to communicate formal acknowledgment. These gestures of acknowledgment occur on a regular basis and are particularly beneficial for recognizing volunteers who meet infrequently. These activities can help them feel more connected to the group and the organization.

Rewards are the informal acknowledgement activities and oftentimes they are more conducive to the growth of volunteers' feelings of effectiveness than formal ones. Rewards are day-to-day volunteer motivating actions in which administrations personnel demonstrate gratitude for the volunteer's efforts.

This recognition is powerful and effective due of its regularity. The rewards, in contrast to the prizes, are intangible methods of acknowledgment, saying "thank you," improving the quality of the volunteer's supervision, demonstrating a consistent and genuine personal interest in the volunteer, regularly including the volunteer in staff and decision-making meetings, allowing different recommendations from the volunteer to others, equal treatment of volunteers and paid staff, additional training opportunities, and so on are examples of rewards.

The organization's recognition system should be thoroughly planned and developed. As previously said, each volunteer's recognition should be planned based on his or her personality traits and work accomplishments. Different approaches should be employed, but accomplishments and achievements of the same type and worth, accomplished by different volunteers, should be valued equally. Appreciating the volunteer's labor should be done regularly and soon after the accomplishment is finished, in order to urge him or her to continue volunteering. One of the most significant features of quality recognition is sincerity and honesty.

## 11.2. Retaining of volunteers:

When volunteers approach the organization, they bring a mix of needs and motivations that they aim to meet during their voluntary work.

They have expectations of the organization, the assignments, the coworkers, and themselves, as well as their potential accomplishment. Those expectations are frequently based on the volunteer's perceptions about the organization and volunteer program, as well as the volunteer's first interactions with the organization. When they begin volunteering on a regular basis, the reality of their participation in the organization often differs from their expectations.

Motivated volunteers can often feel useless and dissatisfied due to a lack of effort. Volunteers can feel exploited, as if their work descriptions are uninteresting and inadequate. They may believe that the organization's coordinators or managers are uninterested in them and that supervisors do not devote enough time to them. The overall working environment might be disheartening, and volunteers' efforts may not be sufficiently recognized and appreciated. Volunteers frequently leave organizations because there is a significant disconnect between their expectations and reality, and they do not feel fulfilled or valued.

Volunteers must be appreciated and recognized in order for them to stay with the organization. Every volunteer wishes for others to notice and appreciate his or her hard work. If not, the volunteer will feel unappreciated and will leave. It is beneficial to an organization when effective volunteers decide to stay and select another volunteer role once their current one is over. If the volunteer is satisfied with his or her achievements and knows and appreciates the organizational atmosphere and principles, his or her future engagement will be more fruitful, and the organization will spend less time on the volunteer's orientation and education. There are numerous strategies, activities, and approaches for efficiently retaining volunteers. The acknowledgement of volunteers is an important aspect of the volunteer retention process.

## 11.3. European Solidarity Corps as programme that support volunteering in the institutions:

The European Solidarity Corps<sup>14</sup> is open to a wide range of organizations to run projects. These include governmental organizations, municipalities, non-governmental organizations and companies. These could also be of all sizes, from big multinational companies to a small NGO working in a local community. In order to participate, organizations should obtain a Quality Label. Any public or private organization from a European Union Member State holding a Quality Label can submit applications for funding for volunteering.

Each and every organization whatever it is CSO, institution public or private as mentioned before that hold a Quality label can participate in volunteering activities as partners.

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<sup>14</sup> [https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity/faq\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity/faq_en) <https://na.org.mk/> <https://esc.org.mk/about/>

## WHAT DOES IT MEANS TO HAVE A QUALITY LABEL?

The European Solidarity Corps Quality Label attests to an organization's ability to create the necessary conditions for young people to participate in solidarity activities.

The participating organization must adhere to the European Solidarity Corps' principles and meet the high quality requirements outlined in the Guide for applicants.

### Principles of the European Solidarity Corps:

- Conduct guidelines

The norms of behavior outlined here are broad in scope, intended to cover a wide range of potential participants, organizations, and settings in which activities can be carried out. They should be tailored to each activity's unique circumstances.

- As a young participant,

The organizations who put together your event have invested a significant amount of time, energy, and resources. Please appreciate their efforts, as well as the efforts of the local communities and those who are directly affected by the activities.

- As a hosting organization/institution

Participants carry with them certain ideas, convictions and expectations. Please be mindful of these needs as you are responsible for providing a respectful and trusting hosting environment.

The European Solidarity Corps financing opportunities and pool of motivated young people are made available to applicants with the Quality Label. Although having the label is required in order to apply for financing, it does not guarantee funding.

For volunteering – supporting and/or hosting roles, an organization can apply for a Quality Label based on the fulfilment of the European Solidarity Corps Quality Standards.

## WHAT ARE THE QUALITY STANDARDS?

The European Solidarity Corps guarantees high-quality volunteering activities, through the Quality Label process.

Participating organizations must respect the following principles and standards:

- **Equal opportunities and non-discrimination.**

Volunteers are to be selected in a fair, transparent and objective way, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, political opinion or disability. No previous qualifications, educational level, specific experience or language knowledge must be required. A more specific profile of the volunteer might be drawn up if justified by the nature of the tasks of the activity or by the project context. In order to promote inclusion, participation in volunteering activities must be free of charge for the volunteer, with the exception of possible



contributions to travel. The activities should respect the principles set out in Article 9 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- **Avoidance of job substitution.**

Volunteering activities must not substitute traineeships or jobs, so that any adverse effect on potential or existing paid employment is avoided. The involvement of volunteers should complement the work of paid staff. They should not replace paid staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service.

- **Avoidance of harmful activities.**

Security and safety of the participants, participating organisations, institutions and target groups must be ensured. Such security and safety should include appropriate clearance requirements for participants working with vulnerable groups in accordance with applicable national law. Volunteering activities should be implemented with due consideration for the impact of unforeseen circumstances such as environmental crises, conflicts or pandemics. The activities should respect the principles set out in the EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child<sup>15</sup>

- **Provision of high quality, easily accessible and inclusive activities.**

The volunteering tasks should enable participants to develop skills and competencies for personal, social and civic development. Particular attention will be given to the capacity of hosting organisations in third countries and the need to embed the activities of volunteers within the local context and to facilitate volunteers' interaction with local humanitarian actors, the hosting community and civil society. The value and benefits of European Solidarity Corps volunteering should be recognised for volunteers, through validation of learning outcomes.

- **Adequate training, working and volunteering arrangements.**

Safe and decent living and working conditions must be ensured for participants. The young people and the organisations must sign a volunteering agreement that will outline the rights and responsibilities of both parties and will include a well-defined set of volunteering tasks.

- **"No profit".**

In accordance with the Financial Regulation, beneficiaries must not derive any profit from the activities funded by the grants awarded. Furthermore, volunteering should cover the participants' expenditure arising from participation in such solidarity activities but should not provide them with salaries or an economic benefit.

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<sup>15</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/internal-security/organised-crime-and-human-trafficking/together-against-trafficking-human-beings\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/policies/internal-security/organised-crime-and-human-trafficking/together-against-trafficking-human-beings_en)

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