

Sub-granting Report VERA 2025

(Financial Support to Third Parties – FSTP)



Volunteering Equality
Rights Action
VERA 2025



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Introduction

VERA “Volunteering, Equality, Rights, Action” 2025 is a project funded by the EU “Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values” Programme (CERV) to promote citizen engagement and equality through volunteering. VERA includes several important initiatives such as campaigns, events, the EVCapital Competition and European Volunteering Capitals Candidates Community (EVCCC), with a key emphasis on capacity building at the local level, throughout Europe. Through this emphasis, VERA aims to provide more inclusive volunteering opportunities, engaging with citizens in their full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors, and similarly aims to inspire and motivate even more citizens to contribute to the resilience of Europe through volunteering.

In line with these aims, CEV in 2025 has provided 188,480 EUR in sub-granting funds (Financial Support to Third Parties - FSTP) to partner organisations working on projects matching one of the two VERA thematic strands during this year.

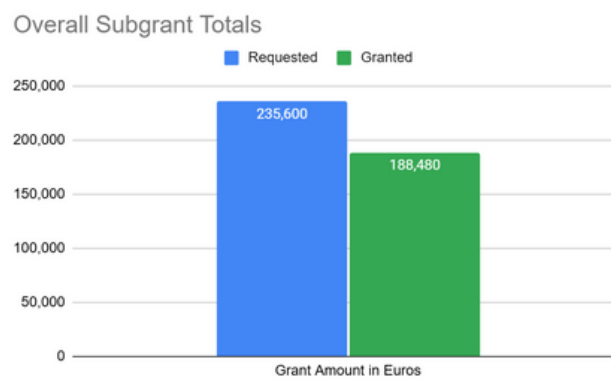
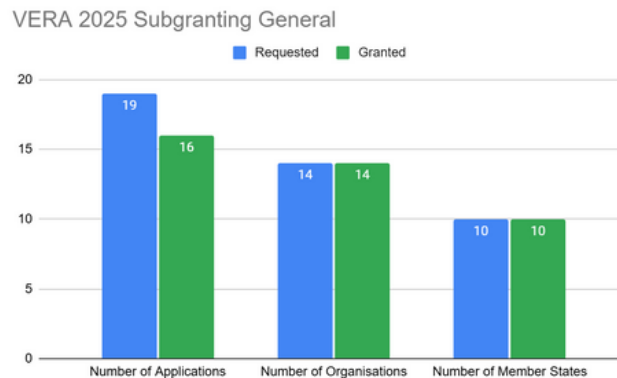
The first strand, “Volunteering & Equality” focuses on research and consultations to discover the extent to which volunteering involves people/citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors, in particular people in formal education through Service Learning and Civic Education for example. Within this strand, the use of the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030) to advance volunteer engagement through the validation of learning processes acquired through volunteering. Together, the activities within this strand aim to facilitate strong inclusion and diversity in volunteering.

The second strand, “Rights & Action” focuses on volunteering campaigns and events, particularly implemented in the framework of national/regional volunteer weeks, conferences and festivals, linking issues connected to introducing new groups of people to volunteering (inclusion) and new methods of volunteering (innovation), and with a particular focus on online volunteering and the impact of AI on the future of volunteering. These activities contribute towards the development of local volunteer development strategies, and their implementation in connection with candidate and/or winning municipalities involved in the European Volunteering Capital Competition, thus facilitating volunteering for diverse groups in new and innovative ways.

Through these activities, supported by member organisation staff and CEV volunteers, volunteering will be better understood as a key tool for achieving inclusive societies, where all citizens can be engaged and active, contributing to community resilience and solidarity, irrespective of their characteristics, disadvantages, or intersecting discrimination.

Sub-Granting Overview

(total data of grants given, organisations, and strands)

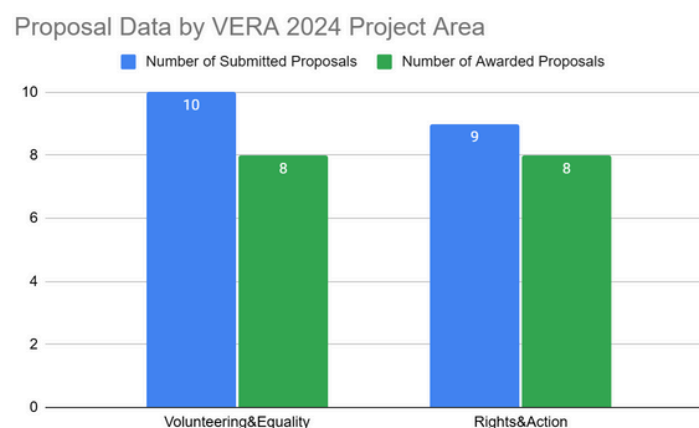


We received a total of 19 applications from 14 organisations from 10 different member states requesting a total amount of 223,820 EUR.

Compared to the previous year, the total number of applications was increased by 1, while the number of organisations increased by 1 and the variety of member states decreased by 2.

We granted 16 applications from 14 organisations from 10 different member states for a total amount of 188,480 EUR.

The applied for and approved projects were grouped into the two strands, Volunteering & Equality / Rights & Action, as follows.





Volunteering & Equality strand

Research & Consultation to discover the extent to which volunteering involves people/citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors, in particular people in formal education through Service Learning and Civic Education for example. As well as how to use the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030) to advance volunteer engagement through validation of learning processes acquired through volunteering to facilitate volunteering to become more inclusive and diverse.

Outputs:

A) National or regional fact sheet/report on how volunteering is promoted and supported through Validation of learning acquired through volunteering processes and in formal education through Service Learning and Civic Education.

AND

B) National or Regional Volunteer Development Plan (using the gathered data as the evidence base) with a central focus on validation of learning acquired through volunteering and how volunteering can be better promoted in formal education through Service Learning and Civic Education with a focus on increasing diversity in volunteering in general.

8 applications from 8 organisations across 8 EU member states were granted a total of 94,240 EUR, 11,780 EUR each.

Rights & Action strand

Events, campaigns & Activities linking issues connected to introducing new groups of people to volunteering (inclusion), new methods of volunteering (innovation) including aspects related to online volunteering and the impact of AI on the future of volunteering in Europe and how gender issues impact on these things, especially as concerns the leadership in organisations.

Outputs:

A) Volunteering event reports including policy recommendations (connected when possible to national/regional volunteering weeks, conferences and festivals) related to online volunteering and the impact of AI on volunteering in particular in connection to the impact on the inclusivity of Volunteering.

AND

B) Local Volunteering Development Strategy including the methodology for cross sector collaboration, strengthening of volunteer centres/networks and other support structures ensuring quality and inclusive volunteering at the local level, especially related to online volunteering and the impact of AI on volunteering and in particular in connection to the impact on the inclusivity of Volunteering, including in volunteer leadership, in particular as concerns gender.

8 applications from 8 organisations across 7 EU member states were granted a total of 94,240 EUR, 11,780 EUR each.

1. Croatian Volunteer Development Centre (Croatia)



The Croatian Volunteer Development Centre has approached this area of work with the aim of addressing key challenges relating to the validation of volunteer learning, and integration of civic education in formal schooling settings. While Croatia has introduced the Certificate of Competencies Acquired through Volunteering, CVDC has highlighted that the recognition of this among education institutions and employers remains limited, and there remains insufficient awareness of volunteering as a means for acquiring key skills and competencies. Similarly, while civic education in Croatia has undergone significant development, with 2019 seeing the introduction of a new curriculum including civic education as a cross-curricular topic, challenges persist in this area. These challenges manifest both at the implementation level, with a lack of institutional time and training for teachers to implement Service Learning as part of Civic Education, and more broadly due to a lack of a cohesive, centralised approach, which has led to variations in the implementation across Croatia.

Through research and consultations with a variety of key stakeholders, the project has gained a further insight into the current state, challenges, and opportunities with regards to validation of learning acquired through volunteering, with a particular focus on how this manifests in formal education. National consultations with CSOs across Croatia further complemented the research, providing a deeper understanding of how the CSO sector does cooperate with schools, and how this could be strengthened, particularly considering the role of Service Learning and civic education in supporting the recognition of volunteer learning and fostering great inclusivity in volunteering.

This was achieved through various methods. Firstly, a survey was organised and distributed, aimed at gaining the perspective of teachers, professors and education professionals, in total receiving over 144 responses from across Croatia. With the aim of exploring this topic further, and more closely looking at the collaboration between the CSO and education sectors, national consultations were held reaching 48 representatives from CSOs and volunteer-involving organisations to gain their perspective of the current situation, challenges and opportunities.

The results of this research were presented in a webinar on the validation of learning acquired through volunteering, which brought together 45 participants from both the education sector and from civil society organisations. The webinar facilitated a cross-sector dialogue on the topic, using the research as a starting point and building upon it with a focused discussion bridging the gap between the two key stakeholder groups.

Stemming from this research, two key outputs were created in line with the VERA 2025 FSTP objectives. The first is a **National fact sheet on the validation of learning acquired through volunteering**, which utilised insights from both the survey and national consultations to outline how volunteering is promoted and recognised in formal education, including Service Learning and civic education. **The factsheet** is available in Croatian [here](#) and with a summary translation in English [here](#). Complementing this factsheet, **a full research report** can be accessed [here](#) in Croatian with a summary translation in English [here](#).

The second core output is a **National Volunteer Development plan**, including recommendations on validating learning acquired through volunteering. This plan is a culmination of all the previous activities CVDC has implemented within the project, and outlines a comprehensive approach to the development of the volunteering sector, strengthening recognition and validation, and ensuring inclusive, active participation through civic education. The **plan** is available in Croatian [here](#) and with a summary translation in English [here](#). All outputs are also available on the CVDC website, at this [link](#).

In total, through these various activities, 237 people were reached and engaged within the project.
Volunteer time: 36 days, 1 volunteer.



Photo taken from the webinar



2. Fundação Eugénio de Almeida - FEA (Portugal)



FEA have promoted inclusion and diversity in volunteering, through research and a development strategy concerning the validation of learning acquired during volunteering, actively involving young people in volunteering in formal education through Service Learning and Civic Education. The project has been implemented with a focus on the Central Alentejo region, though with results and findings relevant to the wider Portuguese context.

The project first performed desk research and outreach to gain a strong understanding of the current situation regarding Service Learning, Validation of Learning, and inclusivity in volunteering within the specific Central Alentejo region. Specifically, surveys were created aimed at; Teachers; Social Organisation staff; Municipality Staff; Volunteers; Students, receiving 155 responses in total. Further focus groups were conducted, with the aim of gaining more qualitative insight and giving participants the opportunity to explore their own experiences and perspectives with peers. A total of 9 focus groups were organised, reaching 41 participants in total from 3 July 2025 to 9 October 2025. These focus groups involved various key stakeholder groups, including representatives of Teachers, Parents associations, NGOs, School groups and technical schools, and Municipalities.

The results of this research were analysed and synthesised into the report **Volunteering In Alentejo Central: Skills Validation And Service-Learning For Active Participation**, further informing the development of the **Regional Volunteer Development Plan**. Both documents benefited from internal review and feedback from key partners to ensure they are robust and serve as a useful resource for the target groups.

Disseminating the results, a final conference was delivered on 22nd October 2025, in person, which brought together the key stakeholders, teachers, students, volunteers and NGOs, involving 100 participants.

You can access the **report on Service Learning and the validation of learning in the Central Alentejo region** [here in Portuguese](#) and [here in English](#).

You can access the **Regional Volunteer Development Plan** [here in Portuguese](#) and [here in English](#).

In total, through these various activities, 296 people were reached and engaged within the project.
Volunteer time: 37 days, 4 volunteers.



Photo taken from a focus group session





3. MasterPeace Ro (Romania)



MasterPeace Romania have designed their activities to respond to the local and regional needs, particularly focusing on fostering inclusive volunteering and strengthening the involvement of underrepresented groups in volunteering, including those from low-income backgrounds, from minority ethnic backgrounds, and the diversity of gender. Highlighting the role of formal education, including regional high schools and universities, in preparing young people for their future civic engagement and active citizenship, MasterPeace have focused on bridging the gap between formal education and volunteering, working with these institutions to reduce the barriers to volunteer participation & ensure equal access to volunteer opportunities. Linked to this, the crucial element of the recognition of volunteer learning in formal education has been a key focus, strengthening the connections between the two and ensuring that volunteering is recognised as a valuable contributor to both professional, and personal development.

To assess the current situation on how volunteering is promoted and supported through the validation of learning, particularly within formal education settings, MasterPeace have conducted research and direct outreach to stakeholders. Specifically, 3 focus groups were hosted with volunteers, educators and policy makers, seeing a total of 172 participants across the sessions. These discussions have provided valuable insights into volunteer engagement, skill development, and the challenges in obtaining formal recognition for volunteer learning, with the best practices and barriers in volunteer learning validation being a core focus of the analysis.

Stemming from this, a **research report** was produced, including policy recommendations, which has gained endorsements from the Cultural House of Ploesti Municipality, and 2 NGOs who have committed to integrating the recommendations into their policies.

This research report has in turn informed a **Regional and Local Volunteer Development Strategy**, focused in the areas of Ploiesti, Bucharest, and rural communities surrounding these cities. This development strategy has been delivered and discussed with key stakeholders, through a series of 4 sessions, equipping a total of 120 participants with the tools and knowledge to engage with and implement the strategy. As part of the legacy of the grant, training sessions are envisaged to be delivered for educators, policy makers and volunteer coordinators, to support the implementation of the VDS.

Complementing the core activities, a further awareness raising campaign has been implemented, drawing attention to the importance of validating volunteer learning, and ensuring inclusive opportunities so diverse citizens can participate. This campaign has reached over 55,375 people primarily through online dissemination.

In terms of key outputs, aligned with the VERA 2025 objectives, the **research report on how volunteering is promoted and how learning through volunteering is validated in Romania, including policy recommendations**, is available in English [here](#). The **Regional and Local Volunteer Development Strategy**, focused in Ploiesti, Bucharest, and surrounding rural areas, is accessible in English [here](#).

In total, through these various activities, 292 people were reached and engaged within the project.
Volunteer time: 38 days, 3 volunteers.



Photo taken from a closing presentation of the strategy





4. Plataforma del Voluntariado de España - PVE (Spain)



Plataforma del Voluntariado de España have focused their activities on exploring the link between volunteering and Service Learning, particularly within the university environment. This approach is tailored to the Spanish context, where PVE highlighted that youth volunteering (15-24 years old) remains often under-represented in volunteering particularly when compared to the over 65 age group, and within the context of the state law on volunteering, which gives universities a core role as promoters of volunteering. As such, Service Learning provides an innovative and participatory method to engage universities and young people, promote volunteering and provide inclusive avenues for young people to generate a tangible impact in their communities while developing their personal & professional skills.

Given the well-developed Spanish volunteering landscape, and already existing innovation with regards to the validation of volunteering learning in formal education and Service Learning, an important first step for PVE was a thorough research and analysis of existing policies and opportunities. Through this research, both opportunities and gaps in the landscape were identified, helping to inform a **report on the current situation**, and subsequently a **Volunteer Development strategy** with regards to the validation of learning acquired through volunteering and how volunteering can be better promoted in formal education through Service Learning & Civic Education.

In terms of methodology, there were various aspects to this research and analysis. In order to understand the legislative framework, 15 relevant pieces of legislation were analysed, providing an overview of the current national policies regarding SL and validation of volunteer learning and identifying where there may be gaps between the legislative framework and on the ground implementation. Complementing this, there was a heavy focus on outreach to universities, with 67 representatives from universities contacted as part of a mapping exercise. The universities which responded and contributed towards the mapping were further involved in subsequent, more in depth, research and data gathering, firstly by identifying those with existing agreements on the the validation of learning, looking into how they have implemented elements of the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 linked to the validation of volunteer learning. Additional meetings with university officials took place, and a close analysis of their SL policies, initiatives, and programmes.

The research and analysis performed has been presented through a **report on the current situation of Service Learning and volunteering in Spain**, particularly considering the legislative framework and currently implemented Service Learning programmes within universities, which is accessible [here in Spanish](#) with a version in [English here](#).

This report and the project activities have informed the development of a **Volunteer Development Plan**, detailing specific best practices and advocacy strategies for organisations and universities in Spain. You can access it [here in Spanish](#) and with a summary version in [English here](#).

In total, through these various activities, 354 people were reached and engaged within the project.
Volunteer time: 38 days, 11 volunteers.



Photo taken from a meeting at an engaged University





5. Platform of Volunteer Centres and Organisations - PDCO (Slovakia)



PDCO identified that, while there has been clear progress in the development of the volunteering landscape in Slovakia, with actions led by the Ministry of Education between 2019-2020 seeking to assess the state of volunteering education in primary and secondary schools, and further provisions in the 2021-2028 National Youth Strategy acknowledging the need to “support the recognition of skills and competencies acquired by young people through volunteering in the formal and non formal education system”, in both cases there is a lack of concrete follow-up. There remains limited data on the extent to which Service Learning is applied particularly within schools and dormitories, or on how far volunteering is recognised as a learning tool within these institutions. Similarly there is no unified strategy to implement the measure contained in the 2021-2028 strategy, and most initiatives to address it originate from the NGO sector. This lack of data, and lack of unified implementation strategy, on the validation of volunteer learning gained through Service Learning in formal education settings, was therefore identified as a key obstacle which this project has addressed. The project has bridged the gaps by mapping existing approaches, identifying successful examples, thus providing a clearer picture of how volunteering is recognised within the education system and beyond. From this research, a further **development strategy** has been developed, complemented with outreach directly with key stakeholders.

In terms of methodology, surveys were administered to key stakeholders, including schools and dormitories, which acted as a starting point for gathering a wide range of perspectives on Service Learning and the validation of volunteer learning. The survey was similarly co-designed with the involvement of some of the key stakeholders, including 20 representatives of 5 volunteer centres and 5 educators, which helped to ensure the questions could be suitable, relevant, and of high quality to gain insightful responses. The survey saw over 670 responses from schools and dormitories, providing a broad and diverse range of view points.

Complementing this initial survey, further roundtables were organised in schools to provide space for discussion and a deeper exploration of the topic, while carrying forward some elements and issues raised in the survey responses. 3 roundtables were hosted with schools, involving 34 participants in total, between October and November. Together with more ad-hoc discussions and meetings hosted with individual stakeholders, this outreach helped inform the **national report on how volunteering is promoted and supported through the validation of learning acquired through volunteering in formal education institutions** with a specific focus on Service Learning.

Following this initial research phase and the development of the **report**, having identified the current landscape, the proposal proceeded with developing the **National Volunteer Development Plan** outlining possible avenues for strengthening said landscape. As part of the development of this plan, a hybrid consultation was hosted with 20 participants, providing further insight and information. 5 meetings were held with policymakers and representatives from the public sector at the national level, providing the space to advocate for the plan while encouraging institutional engagement with it. These meetings resulted in an agreement to support the development of education for volunteering in schools and dormitories, through joint preparation of a national strategy for implementing Service-Learning in formal and non-formal education.

A final dissemination event took place seeing 120 participants, where the plan was shared widely with key stakeholders, and space given for discussions and collaboration forming, as well as sharing the project outputs.

The results of the research, the **National Report**, is accessible [here in Slovak](#) and [here translated into English](#), with an additional summary version in [English here](#).

The **National Volunteer Development Plan** is accessible [here in Slovak](#) and with a translated version in [English here](#).

In total, through these various activities, 844 people were reached and engaged within the project.

Volunteer time: 36 days, 3 volunteers.



Photo taken from the final dissemination event





6. Slovenska Filantropija (Slovenia)



Slovenska Filantropija have focused their project within the Coastal-Karst region of Slovenia, an area covering eight municipalities and home to nearly 119,000 people. They identified core issues around inclusion, marginalisation, low academic achievement, and disadvantaged youth. Through the project, they present volunteering as a key way of encouraging civic engagement of diverse groups, and explore the potential of Service Learning in tackling these challenges.

The project followed a clear logical flow of activities, beginning with mapping the current situation and creating a strong evidence base, before using these findings to develop a targeted **Regional Volunteer Development Plan** focused on validation, Service Learning, Civic Education and inclusivity.

To explore the current context of Service Learning and Civic Education, the project created research on existing best practices, both in Slovenia and abroad. Complementing this desk research, additional data gathering took the form of two surveys, one aimed at education institutions, and one aimed at volunteer organisations. The surveys aimed to gather data on the existing practices and the inclusivity of CE and SL, as well as the volunteers' experience and knowledge validation practices.

The first survey aimed at education institutions reached 20 preschools, 24 primary schools, 12 secondary schools and 7 faculties across the 8 municipalities. In terms of response rate, 4 preschools, 8 primary schools, 1 highschool, and the university representing 7 faculties provided input via the survey.

The second survey aimed at volunteer organisations and organisations with a volunteer programme, reached 135 organisations, with 32 having responded to the survey.

In both cases, additional outreach and reminders was performed in order to achieve more responses, with the survey aimed at education institutions being administered twice and the one for organisations three times.

Additionally, two promotional stands were organised during the National Volunteer Week for promotion of the project and further data gathering, reaching hundreds of members of the public otherwise engaged in the NVW events.

The data was analysed and, in collaboration with a workgroup of experts, **a regional factsheet was produced with a focus on presenting the number of identified SL and CE good practices**, particularly towards inclusion, and the prevalence and form of the validation of learning acquired through volunteering.

In terms of key findings, it was noted that Service Learning and Validation of Learning practices were already widespread at certain levels, particularly in pre and primary schools, however high schools and universities generally engage less on these topics, often being more limited to a formal curriculum of learning. Similarly, while it was found that almost all organisations in the region do offer validation certificates, the content and quality of these certificates varies greatly. These contextual factors highlighted that the **Development Plan** could be particularly impactful through a focus on standardisation, capacity building, and structural support.

The learning acquired through this research phase was then carried forward into a **Development plan for the Coastal Karst Region**, with examples of best practices for CE and SE, and the validation of learning acquired through volunteering. The plan provides guidance and encouragement for organisations to implement better inclusion policies and practices, and showcasing how SL can be a strong tool in tackling the challenges facing the region.

The project outputs were further disseminated to all 8 municipalities in the region, specifically targeting the relevant staff with volunteering in their remit, and 63 education institutions at various levels.

You can access the [factsheet here](#), and the [development plan here](#), both produced in English, and available on the [Slovenska Filantropija website here](#).

In total, through these various activities, 521 people were reached and engaged within the project.
Volunteer time: 36.1 days, 7 volunteers.



Photo taken from the stand at NVW





7. Talentum Foundation for the Support of Volunteering (Hungary)

Talentum identified that while Service Learning is a compulsory part of formal education for some students in Hungary, there remains gaps in how well prepared CSOs are for hosting young volunteers, as well as a need for strengthening the validation of learning acquired through volunteering. The project therefore built upon a strong Service Learning landscape, with existing implementation in schools, and has strengthened and developed this further. A focus was placed on highlighting the pathways to continue volunteering after students complete their integrated Service Learning experience, and broadening the attitudes of formal education institutions and hosting organisations towards Service Learning - reinforcing its value particularly in terms of inclusivity.

In light of this, the project was implemented with some key aims. This included gaining a deeper understanding of Service Learning in Formal Education, gathering information from young people on their expectations and needs in Service Learning, and drawing the attention of volunteer organisations to the value of Service Learning and its role in the volunteering landscape. Together, these aims build towards a few long-term points of impact which are identified as follows: Make young volunteers more aware of their volunteering path after Service Learning, encouraging further engagement in different voluntary fields; Formal Education institutions and host organisations (Volunteer Organisations) have a broadened view of the target group (young people), with an emphasis on volunteer contributions and diverse, inclusive volunteering; An Action Plan makes clear to the formal education institutes and volunteer host organisations the learning potential of Service Learning and volunteering, particularly recognising its positive potential in supporting the mental health of young people.

The project's aims and outputs were focused regionally, on the Southern Great Plain region of Hungary. To reach these aims and achieve the long term impact, the project was designed in phases. Beginning with research and data collection, a survey was delivered aimed at grammar school and university students with experience in Service Learning. This was further complemented with interviews and a small discussion group, primarily with coordinators at CSOs, allowing a deeper exploration of Service Learning implementation from their perspective. This data gathering phase highlighted some of the areas of progress, and barriers towards Service Learning, and provided an insight into the issue from the perspective of young people to better understand their needs and expectations.

The survey reached 190 people, with an additional in person focus group involving 10 participants, and further direct interviews involved 20 coordinators from CSOs.

This research, after a period of analysis and synthesis, helped to inform a **printed leaflet aimed at young people in the region**, highlighting potential volunteer pathways after Service Learning, providing a valuable resource for the target group to support their engagement in volunteering. Of this volunteer pathways leaflet, 300 copies were printed and distributed among young people during classroom based sessions with students. A total of 5 classroom based Service Learning sessions were delivered, involving 114 high school students.

Further from this research, a **regional fact sheet** has been developed, outlining the volunteer landscape in the region, particularly regarding the current picture of Service Learning and Volunteering, the validation of volunteer learning, and the opportunities to develop the diversity of volunteers among young people.

Finally, collecting all the research and input gathered through the project, an **Action Plan for regional volunteer development** was developed, turning the findings of the research and other outputs into concrete, actionable development strategies which could be employed to support volunteer coordinators and schools in implementing quality service learning practices.

You can find the **fact sheet** [here in Hungarian](#) and with a summary translation in English from page 17 of the document. You can find the **regional volunteer development action plan** [here in Hungarian](#) and with a summary translation in English from page 12 of the document.

All outputs are available on the Talentum website [here](#).

In total, through these various activities, 334 people were reached and engaged within the project.

Volunteer time: 36 days, 4 volunteers.



Photo taken from a classroom intervention



8. Volunteer Ireland (Ireland)



Volunteer Ireland have focused their proposal on exploring Service Learning at the national level across Ireland, and building upon the principles Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 to develop an evidence based plan on the validation of volunteer learning in formal education and its role in building inclusivity in volunteering.

In terms of specific aims, the project was implemented with the key objectives in mind, including firstly to determine the extent to which volunteering involves people/citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors, in particular people in formal education through Service Learning and Civic Education. Secondly, to determine the level to which validation of learning through volunteering is currently promoted and supported. Exploring the role of service learning and civic education in formal education and how this can be better recognised and promoted, and using the principles of the Blueprint for European Volunteering, to develop an evidence based plan to ensure validation of learning through volunteering and formal education can play a role in increasing inclusion and diversity in volunteering, were further identified objectives of this proposal.

To achieve these aims, the project first conducted desktop research to inform the **national factsheet on volunteering**. Through this it was highlighted that service learning is not a well known concept in Ireland and it doesn't exist in any cohesive, systematic way - although there are many service learning projects, they are ad hoc and rarely use that terminology.

This informed the rest of the project as the partner gained stakeholder feedback and hosted discussion around what could be done to change this, with a particular focus on the recognition of prior learning and how people can be supported to articulate the skills they learn while volunteering. This took the form of a national survey of volunteers, which reached 300 responses, and two smaller discussion groups in informal coffee mornings, involving 7 participants. Together, these inputs along with the prior research involved in the production of the **national fact sheet**, informed the development of a **development plan** focused on Service Learning and how this can be strengthened in Ireland. The partner finally presented during the RPL conference in Ireland on 5th November 2025, which brought together 65 participants from key stakeholder groups particularly focussed on the validation of volunteer learning.

The final stage was dissemination of the **factsheet** and **development plan** which will help continue the discussions in this space as the partner looks to continuing sustainable actions to improve service learning in Ireland.

You can access the [factsheet here](#) and the [development plan here](#), in English, both hosted on the [Volunteer Ireland website here](#).

In total, through these various activities, 372 people were reached and engaged within the project.
Volunteer time: 36 days, 3 volunteers.



Photo taken from the presentation at the RPL conference



1. CSV Padova & Rovigo (Italy)

CSV Padova & Rovigo identified that in Italy, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, online volunteering has been rising in prevalence and prominence. Many organisations began offering online volunteering opportunities during the pandemic, marking a shift from largely in-person only participation. While these new methods of volunteering bring new opportunities to involve more people as volunteers, from diverse backgrounds, complemented by a developing digital infrastructure of online volunteer platforms, there remains large gaps in terms of how AI is utilised to support the process. Many organisations remain apprehensive about integrating AI into volunteering, in spite of the trend we see where young people, who in many cases are more accustomed to digital tools and AI use, increasingly participate in volunteering online.

Responding to this issue, the project was designed with a few key objectives in mind, including; Raise awareness among a wider audience about the culture of volunteering and the potential applications of artificial intelligence (AI), which is often perceived as distant from the world of social work and volunteering; Increase participation in volunteering, particularly among underrepresented groups such as young people, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities; Make volunteering more flexible and accessible by leveraging digital tools and AI solutions, enabling remote participation; Promote social inclusion by fostering a volunteering environment that welcomes individuals from all social backgrounds, ethnicities, and physical abilities.

In terms of reaching these aims, the project hosted various events engaging young people and schools in activities relevant to AI and the voluntary sector. A series of 3 study days were organised in the Solidara Territories, engaging 45 volunteers on the topic of AI and inclusivity in volunteering. The study days were divided between contributions from experts & showcasing best practices, and a world cafe style discussion, encouraging peer-to-peer discussion and learning, while providing a chance for the project implementers to collect feedback and input from volunteers directly.

Training materials on AI use in volunteering and digital tools was created, and will remain a strong resource for those looking to develop on the topic, in the long term as part of the legacy of the grant. These materials were initially delivered in an online course, with 30 people participating. The project further engaged 211 students in a hackathon linked to the IVD 2025, offering the chance to bring novel and innovative digital tools to school students, engaging in volunteering in a novel and innovative way. The hackathon provided the goal to students of developing an AI based solution to support volunteer organisations - giving a clear focus and relevance to the activity and strong link to volunteering. This further presented the chance to raise awareness and engage new students in digital volunteering. The hackathon was delivered across multiple sessions, necessitated by limitations with the capacity of rooms in the school, however this enabled a higher reach and more students to participate than would otherwise have been possible. In terms of potential long term impact, the digital helpdesk of CSV Padova was strengthened with the hosting of project outputs, and promoted throughout the activities, providing a sustainable place to access and engage with the materials.

Together these activities have led to two main outputs. The first, a **report of the volunteering and AI events**, covers the results and insights gained through the study days and outreach to young people & volunteers. It further includes policy recommendations, developed in tandem with the University of Padova Course for Law for the Third Sector. You can access the **report** [here in Italian](#) and [here with an English summary](#).

The second output is a **strategy for the development of local volunteering**, based on the possibilities offered by online platforms and AI, with a particular emphasis on inclusivity and gender equality in volunteering. This strategy is developed using the learning from all previous activities, and represents a culmination of the knowledge gained through the project. You can access the **strategy** [here in Italian](#) and [here with an English summary](#).

In total, through these various activities, 271 people were reached and engaged within the project.
Volunteer time: 36 days, 14 volunteers.



Photo taken from one of study days



2. Croatian Volunteer Development Centre - CVDC (Croatia)



The Croatian Volunteer Development Centre through this project has fostered outreach and engagement in volunteering, at the national and local level, primarily centred around the “Croatia Volunteers” campaign linked with the Croatian National Volunteering Week. The campaign explored and promoted the role of online volunteering, and the impact of AI on volunteering, with a particular focus on inclusivity. This is in response to the limited online volunteering opportunities identified in Croatia, despite a rising digitalisation many volunteer organisations have not kept pace, particularly with regards to the inclusivity and accessibility impact of online volunteering. AI, being largely unregulated, further exacerbates the need to address the areas of innovation, risk, and impact on inclusivity in volunteering.

As part of this campaign, CVDC conducted short online surveys and polls to assess perceptions of how volunteering and AI contribute to inclusivity and access to volunteering for diverse volunteers. These reached a total of 103 volunteers who contributed and responded.

Furthermore, dissemination of 12 best practices which were identified through desk research took place on social media - with 6 via individual video statements and 6 through the **final campaign video**, showcasing quality online volunteering, involving volunteers or volunteer managers and aiming to raise awareness of the potential of online volunteering.

Based on the initial insights collected through the short online survey among volunteers, CVDC prepared a set of **practical recommendations** on online volunteering and the use of AI. These were disseminated together with the analysis of the survey results, providing early guidance to stakeholders and informing the next stages of the project.

You can find the **recommendations** [here](#) with an [English summary translation here](#).

You can find a **report of the campaign**, including outreach and conclusions, [here in Croatian](#) and [here with an English summary translation](#).

You can access the [campaign video here](#).

The project culminated with the organisation of the National Volunteering Conference in November 2025, bringing together 103 participants from volunteer centres, CSOs, educational institutions, public authorities and other sectors. The conference focused on the role of digitalisation and AI in volunteering, active citizenship and community engagement. Through panel discussions and group activities, participants contributed to a structured dialogue on how digital volunteering and AI can support more inclusive, accessible and high-quality volunteering in Croatia. Building on the findings from the campaign, the survey and the structured dialogue held during the conference, CVDC developed the **Volunteering Development Strategy**, which brings together the main insights and provides guidance for further development of digital volunteering in Croatia.

You can find the **Volunteer Development Strategy** [here in Croatian](#), with an [English translation here](#).

In total, through these various activities, 218 people were reached and engaged within the project.
Volunteer time: 36 days, 2 volunteers.



Photo taken from the National Volunteer Conference





3. Federació Catalana de Voluntariat Social - FCVS (Spain)

VOLUNTARIES.cat

Aligned with the broader objectives of the BEV2030, FCVS have with this project addressed the need to enhance accessibility and inclusion in volunteering, empowering more diverse young people to actively participate in society through volunteering. The project had a particular focus on exploring the impact of AI on volunteering, with the goal of making volunteering more accessible to diverse people and ethically integrating technological advancements. The project was implemented with a focus on Catalan society, though the outputs are intended to be accessible and useful for organisations across Europe, particularly volunteers, volunteer managers, and institutions.

The project has taken a strong analytical approach centred around intersectionality, emphasising the interconnectedness of inequalities and barriers to participation. This lens was applied in a series of working sessions, both with federated entities and related organisations implementing the 2030 volunteering strategy, and in implementation sessions for the Catalan Community Action Network (XACC). A total of 4 strategy sessions were held, connecting 92 participants in total, and a total of 3 XACC implementation sessions were held, connecting 28 participants. Through these sessions, a new **Local Volunteering Development Strategy** was developed, incorporating insight gained through the sessions and outreach, with a section on guiding principles and a particular focus on inclusivity. The document was further validated by a reading group including 8 experts and practitioners.

Directly, FCVS disseminated the strategy with 336 federated organisations and 130 affiliated organisations in their networks and beyond, including through mailing lists, events connected with International Volunteering Day 2025 and a [press release](#) shared on the 5th of December.

You can access the strategy [here in Catalan](#), and [here in English](#).

Online videos reports were published from volunteering events with recommendations on virtual environments, AI, and ethics in volunteering and the third sector. Each of the four videos is around 2 hours long, in Spanish, and are available on the FCVS youtube channel here, ensuring a permanent resource and lasting impact from the project events. A total of 90 participants took part in the 4 sessions presented in the videos.

Each of the **four videos** has focused on one core aspect of the link between AI, online tools, and volunteering:

1. [Introduction to AI in the Third Sector: What it is, what it is for, how to apply it ethically.](#)
2. [How AI can enhance Voluntary action](#)
3. [AI as a cultural change in the communication of entities](#)
4. [AI and strategic management in organisations: Decision-making, efficiency and inclusion](#)

You can access a written [summary report of the videos in English here](#).

In total, through these various activities, 639 people were reached and engaged within the project.

Volunteer time: 39 days, 2 volunteers.



Photo taken from one of the strategy sessions





4. France Bénévolat (France)



France Benevolat have implemented this project responding to the need for developing Civil Society Organisations capacities to utilise AI and digital tools within France. Targeting a national level impact, and primarily disseminated through the France Benevolat network of volunteers and volunteer centres across France, including 70 territorial delegates and 88 member associations, the project engaged and energised CSOs on the potential of AI, particularly as regards to its potential impact on inclusivity and volunteer management.

To reach this, a series of **5 workshops** were hosted with the aim of co-creation and collecting input directly from volunteer-involving organisations on their perspectives of AI and its potential in volunteering as well as the potential risks and barriers. The workshops were implemented using a mix of in person and online events, providing a range of options to engage with the workshops, between April and May 2025, and saw 36 participants in total.

You can find a **report of the workshops** [here in French](#), with an English summary translation included.

The results of these workshops were carried forward into France Benevolat's own discussions on the development of the strategy for AI use in volunteer involving organisations, which were presented in a **booklet of information, guidelines, case studies and best practices**.

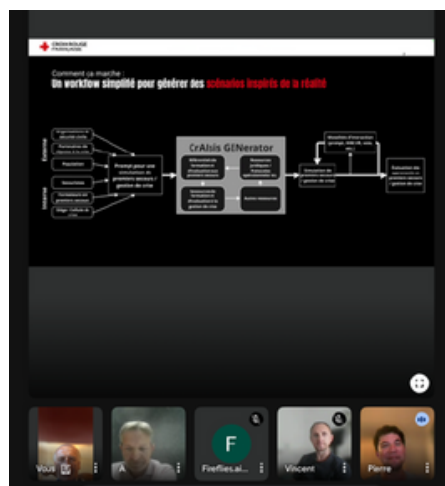
The booklet was further presented during two webinars hosted on 9th and 16th of October 2025, which saw 94 participants in total. One presentation of the booklet was also recorded and hosted on Youtube, reaching 84 views, complementing the booklet itself with a sustainable, accessible way to explain and guide newcomers on how to engage with it.

You can access the **booklet** [here](#), and the [recorded session here](#).

With an eye for the sustainability and long term impact of the project, the principles guiding AI use are further being integrated into France Benevolat's day to day activities and volunteer management, while continuing to find new partners to co-implement it's principles and bring new organisations to the outputs.

In total, through these various activities, 214 people were reached and engaged within the project.

Volunteer time: 40.75 days, 6 volunteers.





5. Marche a Rifiuti Zero (Italy)



MRZ identified that despite a strong local tradition of activism and civic engagement, digital volunteering remains underutilised in volunteering, and gender inequalities remain particularly in the context of leadership positions. Building on MRZ's expertise in environmental projects, zero waste and youth engagement, the project has explored inclusion and the use of new technologies in volunteering on this topic, with a focus on AI and its potential to assist volunteers. The impact and activities are focused at the regional level, in the Marche region of Italy, though the outputs are intended to contain insight and knowledge applicable across Europe.

The project started from a point of stakeholder mapping and outreach, including a survey aimed at schools and students regarding AI, sustainability and gender, which saw 116 responses. A further seminar linking together the issues of AI, Gender Equality and Environmental volunteering was hosted in September, online, bringing together 25 participants. Through this seminar, participants were also pointed towards the online course "AI and sustainability in Volunteering", consisting of 10x1 hour sessions, as a tool to further develop and deepen their skills and knowledge on AI in volunteering while gaining insight into best practices and use cases for ethical AI usage. These, along with ad-hoc bilateral meetings, fed into the drafting of the **Local Volunteer Development Strategy**.

Additionally, a series of **events** took place within the project, across cities and towns within the Marche region between October and November, during which the **LVDS** was presented to a variety of key stakeholders, including the public, associations, and municipalities. The events took place in Civitanova Marche, Grottammare, Cupra Marittima, and with a final event taking place in Pesaro, seeing a total of 246 participants. The events were connected, where possible, to wider volunteering events and festivals, ensuring that the project and its outputs on AI have a presence in the broader volunteering community, and providing an avenue for dissemination outside of the direct partner network - this included the Volontariato d'aMare day in Grottammare, and the Cupra per l'Ambiente festival in Cupra Marittima.

You can access the report of the 5 events and see the developed policy recommendations [here](#), with an english summary contained at the start of the **report**.

Building on the insight gained through these events and outreach, a **Local Volunteering Development Strategy** has been developed. The **Strategy** presents a robust methodology for cross-sector collaboration, leveraging volunteer centres and networks to ensure quality, inclusive volunteering in the environmental sustainability sector. The plan has a strong emphasis on how to incorporate AI ethically, how to ensure gender inclusivity in volunteer management, and how to strengthen volunteer leadership roles for women in local communities. The Strategy gained endorsements from 8 municipalities across the region, ensuring key stakeholder buy-in and engagement with the outputs, while providing an avenue for long term impact.

You can access the [strategy here](#), with an English summary at the start of the document.

Both outputs are available on MRZ's website [here](#).

In total, through these various activities, 246 people were reached and engaged within the project.

Volunteer time: 37.9 days, 4 volunteers.



Photo taken from the event at Cupra Marittima





6. Önkéntes Központ Alapítvány - ÖKA (Hungary)



OKA highlighted through this proposal a need to raise the capacity of civil society organisations regarding the use of digital tools and the inclusivity of volunteering, particularly in the context of the challenges faced by civil society in Hungary. Aligned with the VERA objectives, the project implemented the key aims of strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations to welcome diverse volunteers, particularly from disadvantaged groups, and therefore making volunteering more inclusive and accessible, and exploring the impact of AI especially regarding volunteer recruitment and matching, supporting the work of coordinators, and digital tools useful in outreach to potential new volunteers.

To reach these objectives, OKA organised a series of 5 workshops on a weekly basis between 6th November and 4th December 2025, with a total of 209 participants, centred around AI, particularly regarding its potential impact on inclusivity in volunteering. The first four sessions were organised as workshops, involving smaller groups and focused more on discussion and knowledge sharing, while the final session was organised in a conference format, bringing together guest speakers from the NGO and corporate sector on the topic of AI, which served to attract a wider audience of participants from across sectors, while providing ample opportunities for dissemination of the project outputs.

From these workshops, 23 volunteer coordinators were equipped with better skills and knowledge in the fields of AI and inclusivity in volunteering, particularly on managing volunteers with additional needs. A further 40 volunteers participated and put into practice the learning from the workshops in their regular volunteering, developing their skills in AI and supporting inclusive practices to welcome other volunteers.

As a key output, the results and key insights from these workshops were used to develop a report containing recommendations on opportunities with AI. You can access the report [here in English](#) on the [OKA website here](#).

Further from this, a strategy containing a toolkit to improve the communication of volunteer organisations, and of volunteers, using digital skills and AI was developed with the input of both experts in the field of digital tools and volunteers themselves to ensure it is robust and impactful.

You can access the strategy and materials [here on the OKA website](#), [here in Hungarian](#) and with a [summary version here in English](#).

In total, through these various activities, 209 people were reached and engaged within the project.

Volunteer time: 36 days, 6 volunteers.



Photo taken from one of the workshops





7. Pista Mágica (Portugal)

Pista Mágica built on CEV's Policy Statement on Volunteering and AI as a starting point for this project, which has addressed AI directly, recognising it as a tool with potential in volunteering, and focused on the utilisation of AI in volunteer management. The project was implemented with activities largely at the national level, though with input particularly from a case study of the Municipality of Maia (PT), EVCapital 2026, bringing together recommendations applicable broadly while learning from what has worked at the local level. The project was implemented with support from Confederação Portuguesa do Voluntariado (CPV), who strengthened the project's dissemination and outreach activities in particular.

As part of the outreach and data gathering, a nationwide survey was conducted regarding the potential of AI in volunteer management, which saw 187 responses in total. From these, analysis was performed and 10 policy recommendations developed. The results of the survey and the recommendations were further presented, disseminated and discussed during a webinar with 86 participants which was hosted on 17 November 2025.

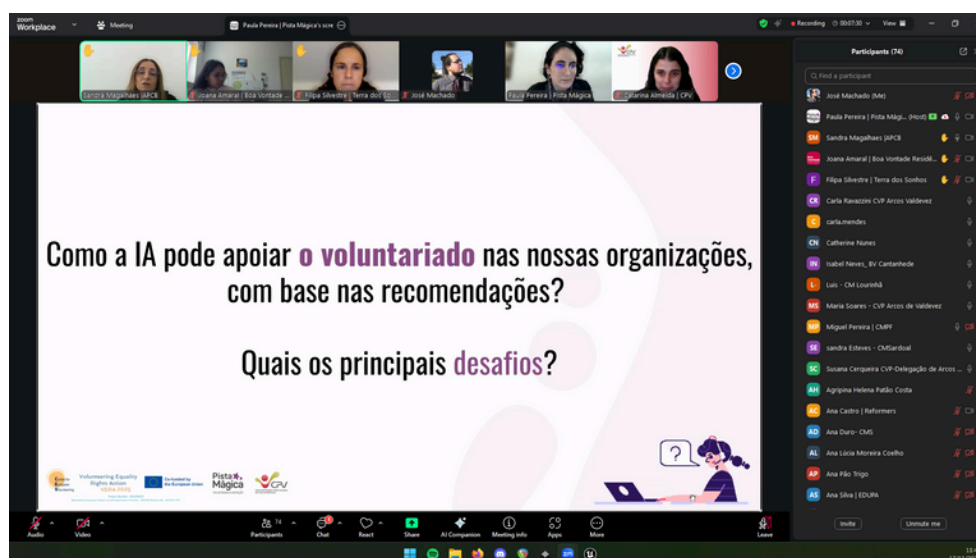
Together, the **results of this webinar and the key highlights of the survey results, along with the developed policy recommendations**, are presented in a **report** [here in English](#).

The second output, a **digital guide with strategies for development**, was created using firstly the results of the nationwide survey, and a case study of the local volunteer bank "**Compromissum**" from the Municipality of Maia. The case study provided key insights into the extent to which AI is used, the results, the main advantages and obstacles, and was conducted through desk research complemented with interviews. The **guide** is designed for professionals from local volunteer banks, municipalities, and volunteer-involving organisations particularly in Portugal, though with replicability across Europe. The guide presents 5 best practices and obstacles with regards to AI, and was further disseminated on social media and via newsletters to reach a total of 21776 people.

You can access the **guide** [here in Portuguese](#) and with an [English summary version here](#).

In total, through these various activities, 275 people were reached and engaged within the project.

Volunteer time: 47 days, 3 volunteers.





8. Plataforma del Voluntariado de España - PVE (Spain)



PVE have centred this project around actively contributing to the strengthening of volunteering in the context of digitalisation, inclusion, and the use of AI. This is a particularly complex issue with the Spanish context where 13% of the population lives in rural areas with less access to digital technologies and infrastructure. Furthermore, 17% of the population lacks basic digital skills, while only 26% of organisations have a digitalisation plan. These factors present risks to inclusion and accessibility in volunteering, as volunteering involves more and more digital tools and new methods these people and organisations risk being left behind. The project has addressed this issue by providing tools and methodologies which facilitate the integration of digitalisation, with inclusion at its heart, in the volunteering sector.

To achieve this, the project performed outreach to organisations and experts on AI and digitalisation, bringing them together with representatives from the public sector to debate relevant issues around digitalisation in the field of volunteering. The reflection saw 246 participants through **two roundtable sessions**, one face to face and one online, on 23rd and 24th of October 2025, within the context of the **Autumn Volunteering School 2025** in Spain which was celebrating its 30th anniversary.

You can find a **report of the session** [here in Spanish](#) and an [English summary version here](#).

Complementing this, current policies and implementation of digital inclusion in volunteering was analysed through document review and interviews, which consulted 24 documents and policies. A further survey was conducted as a part of this outreach and data collection, which saw 152 responses. Based on these analyses, good practices and barriers in the digitalisation of volunteering were identified and a **Digitalisation Plan** was subsequently developed.

You can access the **plan** [here in Spanish](#) and an [English summary version here](#).

With an eye for long term impact and sustainability, three initial training sessions on digital tools were given utilising the outputs of the project, which saw 161 participants.

In terms of dissemination, the **Digitalisation Plan** saw 103 downloads and was further presented during the Autumn Volunteering School 2025 in Spain.

In total, through these various activities, 662 people were reached and engaged within the project.

Volunteer time: 36 days, 8 volunteers.



"This discussion helped us understand concrete steps to strengthen validation of learning acquired through volunteering in schools."

"The conference offered inspiring perspectives and meaningful opportunities to exchange ideas, and I especially appreciated the practical examples of digital volunteering."

"Many young people told me they didn't know there were so many forms of volunteering in the city. The fact that I was able to inform them made me feel like my voice matters."

"We look forward to applying the proposed use cases and exploring further collaboration."

"For me, this campaign was a personal growth experience. I talked to people from all walks of life and realised that volunteering brings people together. It doesn't matter where you come from - what matters is what you choose to do for others."

"Let's try to engage diverse profiles of people! Let's really think about why and how community action transforms reality!"

"It was encouraging to see so many perspectives and sectors come together around shared priorities."

"Very interesting reflection, but especially the shared process. A true example of good practice. Thank you."

"The university of the future will be one that manages to train competent professionals and, at the same time, citizens who show solidarity, are critical, and committed to the common good"

"AI is an ideal solution to integrate and support my association's activities, not to replace them."