
Trondheim European Volunteering Capital Candidate 2023
Jury Feedback | Brussels, 5 December 2021

Trondheim in Norway is making outstanding efforts to publicly recognise volunteers and the contribution they make to the community. A gala event with an award ceremony hosted by the mayor is held on 5 December each year on International Volunteer Day. **The city has shown that it prioritises the quality of volunteering and the principles on which this is based are clearly explained. The high volunteer-engagement rate is an extraordinary testimony to a long-term commitment and the creation of a strategic and regulatory framework that has been highly effective.** It is based on an **integrated voluntary policy across all strategies and plans to develop and strengthen the interaction between the municipality and volunteering.** The approach is based on **recognising the sector, emphasising its independence, and providing good conditions for volunteering.**

The connection between the municipality and the volunteering sector is **diverse, structured and suitably resourced and respected.** Trondheim allows for the inclusion of volunteer time as in-kind co-funding for grants using the system provided by Volunteer Norway for calculating hourly fees for volunteering. However, even though the added value and importance of volunteering in the community is clearly valued, there is no structured system in place for measuring its impact in the city nor support procedures to help volunteers validate the skills and competencies they acquire whilst volunteering.

The volunteering system in Trondheim relies on continuously evaluating the collaboration with the volunteering sector: goals, incentives, results and measures are regularly reviewed by all stakeholders. An evaluation report, which includes an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the approach and also recommends improvements, helps to enable an excellent environment for volunteering. **The municipality's collaboration with the volunteer sector is integrated in many of its four-yearly strategies and action plans.**

The volunteer infrastructure is financed by municipal and government funds, in addition to gifts from businesses and private citizens. In general, Trondheim municipality offers volunteering infrastructure premises, courses, networks, advice, knowledge-sharing, support for start-ups, visibility and collaboration, various grants and a combination of funding possibilities for projects and operating costs. Examples are provided of volunteer groups run by immigrants with municipal support, while **the attention to social-inclusion aspects in general and to the engagement of young people, including students, is impressive.**

Trondheim stands out for the way it has developed cross-sector collaboration, four-year strategic plans, grants and funding support in a very comprehensive way. There is a very clear record of the achievements in stakeholder and citizen engagement embedded in values and principles. The investment in volunteer centres and professional support has supported this excellence. **The attributes it demonstrates can be seen in the outcomes of volunteering in building a sense of belonging, social capital, shared dialogues, social networks, physical meeting spaces and democracy. Its strategic plan for the future builds on this in a comprehensive way.**

About the competition

CEV launched the **European Volunteering Capital Competition to strengthen, inspire and celebrate volunteering** and the impact made by volunteers at the local level by giving recognition to municipalities that support and strengthen volunteering, especially through partnerships with stakeholders from different sectors such as volunteer centres, volunteer-involving organisations and the for-profit sector. The judging criteria are the recommendations in the Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe (PAVE), CEV's 5R policy recommendations and the planned engagement with the European Solidarity Corps.

The awarded municipality is chosen from the candidates by an **international jury** of key personalities connected with volunteering, representing civil society, the private, for-profit sector, as well as the EU institutions: Michel Lefranc (CEV Board), Jan Verdée (CEV Board), Lena Karnalova (CEV Board), George Thomson (CEV Board), Kieran McCarthy (Cork City Councillor & EU Committee of the Regions member), Krzysztof Pater (EESC Rapporteur on "Volunteers . Building the Future of Europe"), Predrag Fred Matic (MEP), Barbara Eglitis (Program officer SALTO European Solidarity Corps), Rares Craiut (Member of the Bureau of the Conference of INGOs, Council of Europe), Begona Barbera Garcia (Iberdrola Social Projects Manager, Employee Volunteering European Network (EVEN)), Monica Lallai (Business Development for Religious and Third Sector/Non Profit Organizations Business Unit. Cattolica Assicurazioni Spa), Sawsan Chebli (Berlin State Secretary for Civic and International Affairs).

The previous winners are: Gdansk 2022 - Berlin 2021- Padova 2020 - Košice 2019 - Aarhus 2018 - Sligo 2017 London - 2016 Lisbon - 2015 and Barcelona- 2014.

The Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) is the European network of over 60 organisations dedicated to the promotion of, and support to, volunteers and volunteering in Europe at European, national or regional level. Through our network we work together to ensure that: the value of quality volunteering as an expression of Solidarity and European values is understood, supported and celebrated; policies & programmes, together with the European social environment, inspires, encourages and supports quality European Volunteering; Individuals and organisations that are active in the volunteering and civil society sphere share, learn and are inspired from one another in the framework of CEV . In this way we reach out to the many thousands of volunteers and volunteer organisations in Europe as a source of support bringing the European dimension to their work.