

# Subgranting Report (Financial Support to Third Parties -FSTP) VERA 2023



Volunteering Equality  
Rights Action  
VERA



Co-funded by  
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## Introduction

VERA “Volunteering, Equality, Rights, Action” 2023 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, and the EVCapital Competition, but also includes a key emphasis on capacity-building for local volunteer centres and organisations to create favourable conditions for advancing gender equality and tackling multiple and intersecting discrimination. The aim of this capacity-building is that these organisations will provide more inclusive volunteering opportunities involving the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors, and similarly will inspire and activate even more citizens as volunteers contributing to resilience in Europe.

CEV consequently made available<sup>1</sup> 240,000 EUR of sub-granting funds (Financial Support to Third Parties - FSTP) for organisations working on projects during 2023 that match one of the four key VERA thematic areas: “Volunteering”, through developing research reports and gathering key data on diversity and inclusivity in volunteering; “Equality”, strengthening volunteering at the policy level through the development of National and/or Regional Volunteer Development Plans; “Rights”, to engage citizens with the importance of volunteering and civic action through European Parliament campaign activities; and “Action”, to focus on the local level and strengthen volunteering activities and engagement in specific European cities, including the involvement of Ukrainian refugees.

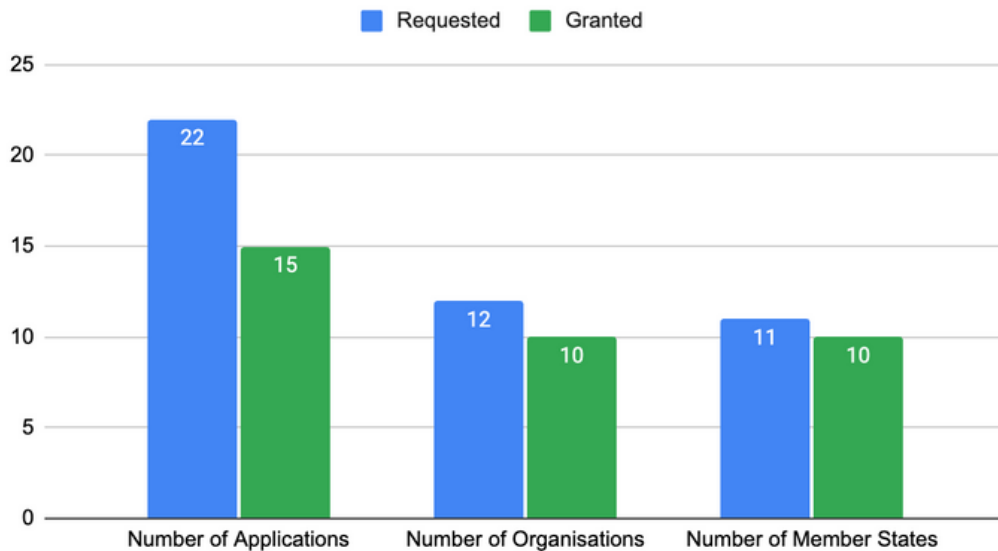
Through these activities, which reached on average 676 people per 15,000 euros of sub-grant, volunteering will be better understood in society as a key tool of citizen engagement and expression of solidarity contributing to the future of Europe and equality on the basis of EU Values, rights and volunteering.

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<sup>1</sup>The Call for Proposals was made available on the CEV website from 13 February 2023 until 14 April 2023, in which the eligibility criteria, assessment details and other key information was specified. The 2023 Call for Proposals is available here: <https://www.europeanvolunteercentre.org/vera-call-for-proposals>.

# Subgranting Overview

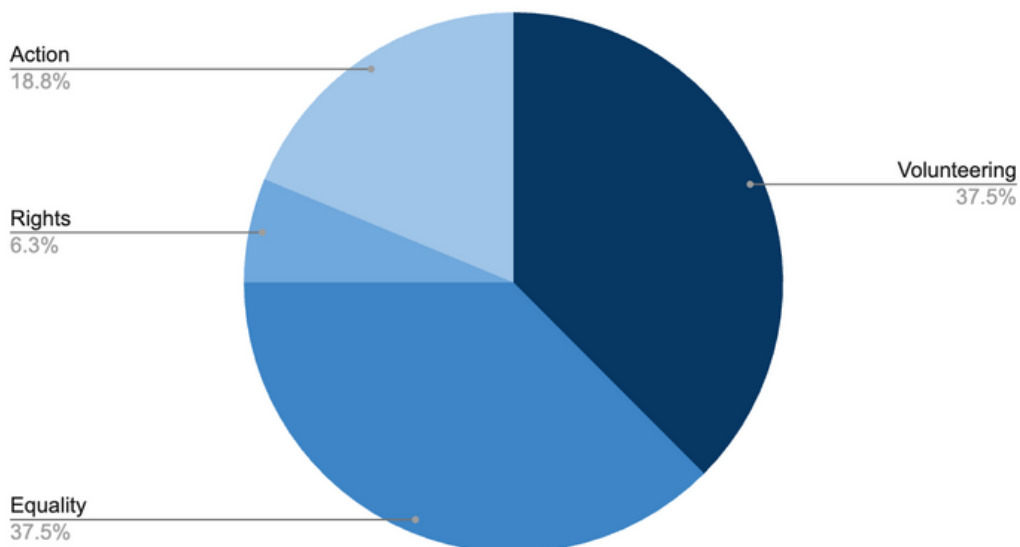
## Overall Data



A total of 22 applications from 12 organisations from 11 different member states were received, requesting a total amount of 375,000 euros. 15 applications from 10 organisations from 10 different member states for a total amount of 240,000 euros were successful.

The approved projects were grouped into the four thematic VERA areas in the following way.

## Proportion of 240 000 EUR Awarded by VERA Project Area



This assessment was made through a pre-sift eligibility check and by 5 independent experts on, inter alia, project management, grant management, impact measurement, equality issues and volunteering that were part of the awarding committee. These 5 experts had no direct connection and/or association with any of the applicants and represented different sectors, fields, and perspectives, and assessed the proposals against strict criteria specified in the Call.

# Subgranting Overview

## Volunteering:



Research to discover the extent to which volunteering involves people/citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors.

**Output:** National or regional fact sheet/report on volunteering including data on diversity.

6 applications from 6 organisations from 6 different EU member states were granted a total amount of 90 000 euros (15,000 euros each).

## Equality:



Consultation process on volunteer development - how to use the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030) to advance volunteer engagement in a more inclusive way at national or regional level.

**Output:** National or Regional Volunteer Development Plan.

5 applications from 5 organisations from 5 different EU member states were granted a total amount of 90 000 euros (four for 15,000 euros and one for 30,000 euros).

## Rights:



Campaign linking EU policy development processes to active citizen engagement through volunteering contributing to resilience, the recovery process and society based on values and rights.

**Output:** Vote Volunteer Vision 2024 EP election campaign development and implementation connected to national/regional volunteering weeks, conferences and festivals.

1 application from 1 organisation from 1 EU member state was granted a total amount of 15 000 euros.

## Action:



Activities contributing to local volunteer development strategies and their implementation in candidate and/or winning municipalities involved in the European Volunteering Capital Competition, including the integration and support to Ukrainian refugees.

**Output:** Local volunteer development plans including cross sector collaboration, strengthening of volunteer centres/networks and other support structures ensuring quality and inclusive volunteering at the local level.

3 applications from 3 organisations from 3 different EU member states were granted a total amount of 45 000 euros.

## 1. Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bulgaria Association (Bulgaria)



Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bulgaria  
Голям брат Голяма сестра България

Volunteering research to discover the extent to which volunteering involves people/citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors in Bulgaria.

### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

In Bulgaria, prior to this research, the last time a study on volunteering was conducted was in 2011. In order to address this, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bulgaria Association (BBBS) conducted a national study to provide an up-to-date picture about the volunteering landscape in Bulgaria, including the existing volunteer infrastructure, the profile of active volunteers, good practices for inclusive volunteering and the opportunities to address various challenges through voluntary work. BBBS was supported in this project through a 15,000 EUR sub-grant.

BBBS conducted desk research into existing data in Bulgaria, and best practices in other EU countries. The information gathered during the research phase was then used to draft two sets of questions: a national survey and a questionnaire for focus groups. 10 focus groups were conducted in total with more than 120 participants. There were two types of focus groups: focus groups for citizens and focus groups for professionals. They were held both in-person and online. 8 in-person focus groups were held in Plovdiv 3 times, in Sofia twice, and once in Shumen, Varna and Targovishte. 2 focus groups were held online with participants from Lovech. All participants were older than 18. An online questionnaire was developed and distributed to gather data from volunteers, active citizens, citizens who do not have experience in volunteering, volunteering organisations, civil society organisations, public institutions and socially responsible companies. More than 3800 responses were gathered through the survey. A 2023 National Report on Volunteering was created based upon this research.

BBBS also increased the dissemination of the project activities through meetings with the Bulgarian Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Education and Science including activities to commemorate International Youth Day, 12 August 2023. The project was also promoted to experts from the Bulgarian Standard of Living, Demographic Policy and Social Investments Directorate at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs on 22 June 2023. In total over 3,900 people were reached by this project through the focus groups and questionnaire, with indirect outreach such as dissemination reaching over 6,000 people. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 3 volunteers, who contributed to 23 hours of volunteer time during their project.

### National Report on Volunteering - Bulgaria

The National Report for Bulgaria is available here: <https://site.bbbsbg.org/2023/12/15/nacionalno-predstavitelno-prouchvane-za-dobrovolchestvoto-v-bulgaria-2023/>.

**General Statistics:** There is a gender imbalance of volunteers according to the research. 73.2% are women, 26.1% are men and 0.7% are non-binary. Volunteers tend to be highly educated. 60% have a higher education degree; 29.6% have a secondary education degree; and 9.8% have a primary education degree. For employment statistics, 43.4% are employed; and 17.9% are students. Meanwhile, 48% of those who volunteer are members of civil society organisations

**Frequency of Volunteering:** 47.2% of those who volunteer do it several times a year; 13.8% volunteer several times per month; 13.4% volunteer once a year; 10.5% volunteer once a week; and 8.4% volunteer several times a week.

**Positive and Negative Attitudes to Volunteering:** The picture in Bulgaria is mixed. 46.3% of the volunteers feel supported in what they do by other volunteers; 22.1% by friends; 18% by families; 9.5% by colleagues; and 3.8% by strangers. Importantly, 17.9% have never faced a negative reaction. However, 57.6% of the volunteers report negative reactions in what they do from strangers; 9.9% face negative reactions from families; 7.9% from friends; 4.9% from colleagues; and 1.8% from other volunteers.



**Primary Motivation:** There are clear trends for the motivation to volunteer in Bulgaria. 89.6% say that the importance of cause is the biggest motivation to volunteer; 67.3% personal connection with the cause; 36.2% socialising ; 3.6% receiving a certificate; 3.2% receiving other benefits (such as free tickets, travel reimbursement, etc)

**Understanding of Volunteering:** There is still misunderstanding about what volunteering is and what it is not due to lack of framework and legislation (conclusion from the focus groups). For example 80.2% of respondents think that donating funds is a form of volunteering, while 48% of respondents do not think helping at cultural events, for example welcoming guests and checking tickets, is volunteering.



Focus Group



Presenting the results

## 2. Croatian Volunteer Development Centre (Croatia)



Volunteering research to discover the extent to which volunteering involves people/citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors in Croatia.

### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

Using a 15,000 EUR sub-grant from the CERV programme, Croatian Volunteer Development Centre (CVDC) conducted a national study into the state of volunteering in Croatia, and to understand to what extent that Croatian volunteering is diverse and inclusive. They provided an analysis of the actual state of volunteering in Croatia, giving insights into good existing research and practices and what is missing, and will use this analysis as an evidence-based framework to inform policy change to enable more equality in volunteering in the future.

CVDC conducted their research in several ways. They firstly published a joint report of Croatian volunteer centres, that encompassed 4 regional and 20 local volunteer centres based upon existing research. Following this and a phase of desk research, CVDC distributed their first questionnaire among the public in cooperation with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Rijeka. This first study reached 1215 citizens in total, of which 334 citizens had volunteering experience. A fact sheet on infrastructure and national policies relevant to volunteering was published in July 2023, and a research report was completed based upon analysis of the first questionnaire in September 2023. Later in the project cycle, CVDC distributed a second questionnaire to analyse more data on volunteering, in which 80 people responded. The project had a direct outreach of at least 1,295 people. Furthermore, over 5,000 people were reached by this project through dissemination and communication tools. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 5 volunteers, who contributed to 23 hours of volunteer time during their project.





## National Report on Volunteering - Croatia

The National Report for Croatia is available here: <https://www.docdroid.net/RE6o8dm/izvjestaj-o-stanju-volonterstva-u-hrvatskoj-pdf>.

### Report Findings

**High Level of Volunteering in Croatia:** 25% of citizens have volunteered at least once in a lifetime. In the period from 2020 to 2022, 11% of Croatian citizens volunteered.

**Positive Attitude towards Volunteering:** The research results indicate positive attitudes towards volunteering and high motivation among young volunteers. Despite positive developments, challenges such as a lack of financial resources, support, and adequate volunteering programmes underscore the need for further efforts to make volunteering accessible to all citizens.

**New Dynamics in Croatian Volunteering:** Identified trends, including the increase in informal initiatives, the rise of short-term volunteering, and growing interest in online volunteering, introduce new dynamics into the volunteering ecosystem.

**Challenges:** However, reduced collaboration among organisations involving volunteers and decreased interest from decision-makers pose challenges to sustaining and improving volunteering programmes. The research identifies challenges such as attracting new volunteers, connecting volunteering efforts with active citizenship, and strengthening the capacity of volunteer-involving organisations.

**Conclusion:** Considering the need for further promoting volunteering, it can be concluded that investing in research, development, and support strategies for volunteering programmes is crucial for making them more inclusive and accessible to various volunteer profiles.



Structured Dialogue

### 3. CSV Marche (Italy)



Volunteering research to discover the extent to which volunteering involves people/citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors at a regional level in Italy.

**Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR**







CSV Marche, in collaboration with CSVnet, CSV Trentino/Trento Municipality European Capital of Volunteering 2024, and CSV Padova/European Capital Municipality 2020, wanted to expand the resources dedicated to volunteer research in Italy, especially related to issues related to gender discrimination and diversity. They did this through an extensive regional research into volunteering in the Marches Region in Italy, funded in part by a 15,000 EUR sub-grant from the CERV programme with the involvement of The Department of Economics, Society, Politics of the University of Urbino Carlo Bo.

An online survey was planned and conducted by the University of Urbino during Summer 2023 under the coordination of CSV Marche, whereby questionnaires were directed towards regional volunteer-involving organisations. They received 418 complete questionnaires and 310 incomplete questionnaires, including 43 of use to the data. The University delivered a preliminary report based on the data collected through the survey during Autumn 2023. The four CSV organisations, under the coordination of CSV Marche, conducted several meetings and events to organise, implement and promote the research. These included the Solidarity Festival organised by CSV Padua where the volunteering report was presented on 26 September 2023, and at an event organised by CSV Lazio, Rome on 26 October 2023. In addition to the 418 direct responses, a total of over 4,000 people were reached by this project through social media and a CSV newsletter. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 7 volunteers, who contributed to 23 hours of volunteer time during their project.

### **Regional Report on Volunteering - Marches, Italy**

The Regional Report for the Marches, Italy is available here: <https://www.csvmarche.it/ultime-notizie/uno-sguardo-sul-terzo-settore-marchigiano-anno-2023-ecco-la-nuova-ricerca-del-csv-marche>.

### **Report Findings**

**Gender:** Men are the majority of members and associates in 28% of organisations; they are the majority of paid workers in 21.5% of organisations; they are the majority of volunteers in 32.5% of organisations; and they are the majority of board members in 38.6%. The underrepresentation of women is not very pronounced, but it is still present, for example 8% of organisations have no women on the governing body

**Migrant Backgrounds:** EU and non-EU citizens are present as members or associates in 36.2% and 24.9% of organisations, respectively; as volunteers in 20% and 15.7% of organisations; and as workers in 12.7% and 11.8% of organisations. However, they are present in only 7.2% (other EU nationals) and 4.1% (non-EU nationals) of the governing bodies. Considering that there is a small but not negligible share of organisations composed exclusively or almost exclusively of non-Italian citizens, the presence of non-Italians in organisations where they are minorities is insignificant.

**Disabilities:** Volunteers with disabilities are present in the membership of 32.2% of organisations as members, 8.8% of organisations as workers, and 9.2% of organisations as volunteers. On the other hand, only 9.1% of organisations have at least one member with disabilities on the governing body.

**Perceptions of Discrimination - National:** Approaching the analysis at the national level, it emerges that discrimination perceived as most prevalent is discrimination based on ethnicity, followed by discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Young people perceive, to a greater extent, all the types of discrimination included in the questionnaire (based on ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, and disability).

**Perceptions of Discrimination - Regional:** In general, the perception of the presence of discriminatory situations and attitudes appears much lower at the regional level. If the national context is perceived as problematic, the local context is perceived as a place where problems are less pronounced. Participants confirm that it is very or somewhat common to be discriminated against by gender identity (38%), ethnic origin (36%), sexual orientation (35%), and disability (27%). Gender identity is the area in which there is the most awareness and dissatisfaction about promoting diversity, while disability and ethnic identity are the somewhat less problematised issues. The data observed so far show a broad self-perception of inclusiveness. It would be appropriate to ask whether such an attitude might not, indirectly or unconsciously, generate less attention to issues related to diversity, inclusion, and discrimination in all the forms it can take.





Research presentations

#### 4. Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (Malta)



Volunteering research to the extent to which volunteering involves people/citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors in Malta.

##### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

Research regarding the Maltese voluntary sector in general is very limited. Moreover, research and statistics pertaining to the topic of inclusion within the Maltese voluntary sector is found in passing, usually within Maltese papers connected to one specific group experiencing discrimination or lack of inclusivity. The Malta Council for the Voluntary Sector (MCVS) undertook national research using a sub-grant of 15,000 EUR, to uncover and discover the realities of discrimination and injustices within the Maltese Voluntary Sector, collecting data regarding diversity, or the lack thereof, within the sector.

Throughout the project MCVS has conducted research amongst different entities, stakeholders and individuals involved in the voluntary sector in order to identify what type of discrimination is experienced in the Maltese voluntary sector. The researcher has made use of different research tools and methodology in order to identify the different types of discrimination at all levels, including sectoral/ governmental, structural, organisations and direct or indirect discrimination. The research methods used as part of the mixed methodology included: desk research of legislation and databases about the voluntary sector to be able to first frame the voluntary sector in Malta; individual interviews with key stakeholders to obtain insights about how the sector works and awareness of possible discrimination within the voluntary sector by those involved at national level in terms of regulation, lobbying, and participation in the voluntary Council; focus groups with volunteers and volunteer administrators from the various voluntary sectors in Malta; questionnaires with voluntary organisations; and questionnaire with volunteers. These different forms of data collection targeted different aspects of the research question set.

MCVS held an ideation meeting on 2 June 2023, which was then followed by a discussion about appropriate partners to execute and implement the data collection aspect of the research. Ultimately, MCVS worked in partnership with Professor Suzanne Gatt from The University of Malta to undertake this research. Extensive research and data collection took place with this academic supervision during the Summer and Autumn of 2023, the findings of which were then compiled into a national research report for Malta. 7 interviews and 31 focus groups were conducted. The questionnaire for volunteer-involving organisations was completed by 84 organisations, while the questionnaire for volunteers was completed by 280. In addition to this direct outreach, over 3,750 people were reached by this project via the dissemination of information on the Government Gazette, social media and other platforms. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 1 volunteer, who contributed to 42 hours of volunteer time during their project.





## National Report on Volunteering - Malta

The National Report for Malta is available here: <https://maltacvs.org/vera-sub-grant-2023/>.

### Report Findings

**Size of VIOs:** The majority of the VIOs in Malta were found to be small, with around 30 volunteers and no or few employees, and a turnover of less than €50,000 a year. On the other hand, some VIOs have grown significantly, with a yearly turnover which is greater than €250,000, and with a good number of employees.

**Legal Status of Volunteering:** There was an overall consensus that there needs to be a discussion on issues related to the legal status of the volunteer, and study potential differential treatment in terms of access to social security and liabilities in case of different scenarios. This discussion should enable a comparison or cover, or not, of volunteers in comparison to employees. While there was agreement that it may be too early to take decisions and propose actions, it is worthwhile having a national discussion on the role, contribution, regulation and protection of volunteers.

**Diversity:** The biggest portion of volunteers are Catholic Maltese people. While there is diversity in volunteers across age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and ethnicity, it is still far off from the increased diversity that is being experienced in the local population. This highlights how persons from other groups than Maltese Catholics have not yet fully filtrated the voluntary sector.

**Discrimination:** The voluntary sector did not demonstrate any significant amount of direct discrimination taking place. While not totally immune to discrimination, both VOs and volunteers, the latter to a great degree, reported instances of discrimination taking place rarely or sometimes. Unlike what was expected, higher rates of discriminatory behaviour were identified across age and gender, even if still with low occurrence. The most significant finding of this study was the presence of indirect forms of discrimination which exist within the voluntary sector and which are creating barriers for persons from different groups from volunteering. This was found to be particularly the case with respect to persons with disability, those with lower educational level and skills, and foreigners. This finding is significant in view of the current shortage of volunteers which many of the VIOs and volunteers participating in this study complained about. VIOs need to eradicate practices which result in indirect discriminatory practices. They would also benefit from implementing inclusive practices which would allow them to open up to a more diverse range of volunteers. An inclusive voluntary sector is of benefit to all. It will enable VIOs to transform themselves into organisations which truly work for the benefit of society. They will also be able to attract more people to volunteer, and at least alleviate, if not solve the problem with the shortage of volunteers.

What was also noted during the qualitative data collection was that both in the interviews and during the focus groups, the majority of participants demonstrated an unclear understanding of discrimination. Many of the participants tended to use a sociological perspective of discrimination rather than the legalistic one which refers to protection against age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. This also demonstrated how many working within the voluntary sector do not understand the nature of discrimination well, and while they may be sensitive to obvious examples of direct discrimination, they are less aware and sensitive to how processes and structures on which their VIOs are based may be reflecting indirect discrimination and create barriers of certain groups from participating in volunteering.

### Concluding Recommendations:

- The voluntary sector would benefit from developing better and more accurate ways of tracking how the voluntary sector is evolving. The voluntary sector, through the Commissioner for the Voluntary Sector, or the Malta Council for the Voluntary Service, to develop a regular data collection process which can take place periodically and provided by all VOs as a requirement;
- A national discussion on the role of the volunteer in terms of legal status, regulation, protection, rights and code of ethics can be initiated. This would enable VOs to reflect on how the role of the volunteer has changed as the voluntary sector has evolved, and how the sector can be better regulated, also by regulating volunteers;
- The study shows that there is a good level of awareness of discrimination within VOs. Nonetheless the voluntary sector would benefit from training on the different forms of discrimination. This would help VOs and volunteers learn to distinguish between discrimination and differential treatment, as well as raise their awareness of how processes and structures can result in indirect discrimination. Training can be organised to help VOs understand how they can implement inclusive modes of working by learning from examples of good practice.





Posters used throughout the Outreach Phase of the Project

## 5. Talentum Foundation for the Support of Volunteering (Hungary)



Volunteering research to discover the extent to which volunteering involves people/citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors at a regional level in Hungary.

### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

Talentum Foundation for the Support of Volunteering proposed to carry out regional research and compile a report on the state and possibilities of inclusive volunteering, and on the diversity of volunteering in the Southern Great Plain Region, Hungary. They aimed to understand the extent to which volunteering in the region involves citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors, collect data and information about the inclusive factors of volunteering, and draw conclusions on the needs to increase the capacity of civil society organisations to foster the inclusive conditions for volunteers, and was awarded 15,000 EUR to support this endeavour.

Talentum Foundation conducted a survey called 'Diversity in Volunteering', in which 97 volunteer-involving organisations in the Southern Great Plain Region, Hungary, took part. The survey also included responses from 71 volunteers from the region. The survey was promoted throughout the Summer of 2023 through various events including: two online meetings (15 June 2023 and 29 June 2023); the Szeged Youth Days event with more than 50 organisations present (23 to 26 August 2023); the 9th Civil Market event with volunteers distributing paper copies of the questionnaires to representatives from more than 20 organisations (23 September 2023); and participation at a conference in Szeged (27 September 2023). Following the results of the survey, Talentum Foundation developed a regional report on inclusive volunteering including data on diversity specifically for the Southern Great Plain region in Hungary. The research survey and the research report was promoted several times in a mailing list to 782 addresses, and on the Facebook and Instagram pages of Talentum. In total over 3,750 people were reached by this project. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 6 volunteers, who contributed to 23 hours of volunteer time during their project.

### Regional Report on Volunteering - Great Southern Plain, Hungary

The Regional Report for Great Southern Plain, Hungary is available here:

<https://www.talentumonkentes.hu/hirek/megjelent-befogado-onkentesseg-cimu-kutatasunk-tanulmanyai>.





## Report Findings

**Diversity in VIOs:** Organisations in the region find volunteers from older, disabled and geographically disadvantaged groups, but struggle to build contact with volunteers from national minorities, refugees, immigrants, or LGBTQ+ people. Generally, organisations report having a welcoming and inclusive approach to volunteers from disadvantaged backgrounds, but have less experience with them as they rarely work as volunteers. Ensurance of physical conditions (e.g. accessibility, suitable location), provision of specific/adaptive tasks, access/contact/engagement, experience and knowledge in coordination, furthermore travel/transport, financial and organisational background are the biggest barriers to involving volunteers from this group.

**VIO Interest:** VIOs report a need for financial and material assistance and exchange of experience. 66% of organisations would be interested in training or coaching on this subject, but less than 10% can pay for it. 50 organisations would like to contact the Talentum Foundation in the future for a relevant programme on this topic.

**Accessibility of Volunteering:** The research mainly reached out to older volunteers, people with disabilities and volunteers with geographical disadvantages. There were no or few respondents from refugee, immigrant, ethnic minority and LGBTQIA+ volunteers in the region. Most of the volunteers with fewer opportunities who participated in the research found it was simply to find a place, mostly in organisations close to them, which are prepared to host them. Their answers confirm those of the organisations: they were welcomed, helped and involved easily. Although special conditions were a little more difficult to provide, they were always ensured when needed. Volunteers with fewer opportunities mostly need a tailor-made schedule, mental support and encouragement, while only few of them need accessibility and physical conditions. All the host organisations were able to provide the conditions requested, and most of them did it themselves, or provided them immediately at the volunteer's request. The majority of respondents did not request physical changes in the organisations.

**Promotion of Volunteering:** There is a lack of promotion of volunteering opportunities in the organisations, and the volunteers felt the opportunities were not sufficiently advertised or communicated. Volunteers pointed out that a step forward is to help volunteers with fewer opportunities to find the volunteer activities through promoting, advertising and publishing voluntary activities better.



9th Civil Society Market



Presentation of the Research Report



# VERA Area - Volunteering

## 6. Pro Vobis - Centrul National de Resurse pentru Voluntariat (Romania)



Volunteering research to discover the extent to which volunteering involves people/citizens representing the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors in Romania

### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

Prior to this project, there was no national research or analysis, nor current or reliable data, on how many people in Romania volunteer, nor any other statistics in the field of volunteering. To address this challenge and through resources in the form of a 15,000 EUR sub-grant, Pro Vobis - Centrul National de Resurse pentru Voluntariat conducted a national research in Romania, to capture quantitative and qualitative data about volunteering, including the inclusion of diverse volunteers, the way volunteers are managed and discrimination factors, as well as about the profile of volunteers and tendencies in the field.

At the start of the project, Pro Vobis conducted desk research into the current state of Romanian volunteering and wrote a short analysis paper, highlighting the main trends in volunteering in Romania. They then implemented an OMNIBUS survey in partnership with a research institute, Centre for the Study of Democracy, targeting the general public, and an additional survey targeting the active volunteer-involving organisations and institutions. Events were used to disseminate information about this survey, including the Romanian National Volunteer Week in May 2023, which was strategically used as an opportunity to prepare active volunteer-involving organisations in Romania for the need to monitor, collect and report such data. The local partners of the NVW were offered resources on the topic of monitoring and evaluation, such as the "Measuring and communicating the impact of volunteering programs" guide. Other preparatory activities included an interview for a podcast addressed to NGOs that also discussed the need of data and statistics around volunteering and the Rural Youth Summit event organised in Iasi, Romania during September 2023. Following this research, a Romanian national report on volunteering was published on Pro Vobis channels and promoted among civil society representatives. Pro Vobis recorded 1,001 responses from the public, and data from at least 195 organisations and institutions. At least 3,750 people were reached by this project, from the combined reach of direct targeting of the organisations, survey responses, the promotion on social media of the survey as well as the report and main results, and also through the promotion that volunteers also made in all stages. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 14 volunteers, who contributed 184 hours of volunteer time during their project.

### National Report on Volunteering - Romania

The National Report for Romania will be made available here: <https://www.provobis.ro/>.

### Report Findings

**General:** The majority of volunteers are female, young, highly educated and with good incomes. They usually get involved on the longer term rather than the short term, however, 63% of people questioned indicated the main reason they do not volunteer is the lack of time. NGOs prefer longer-term missions, but the general public might be more ready to participate if more shorter term opportunities were available.

**Lacking Monitoring of Volunteers:** The Omnibus study showed that 26% of respondents have volunteered in the past year. The study from the organisations cannot track how many volunteers are in Romania, as there were only responses from 196 active VIOs out of many more existing and doing activities. The study shows clearly that many organisations do not properly monitor or track data on their volunteers, but the majority of organisations work with smaller teams: up to 30/volunteers per year. However, there were also 49 organisations that work with more than 100 volunteers yearly, 16 of them with over 500. By extrapolation, as an average calculation, the study reached 195 organisations that involved (in 2022 as a full year) at least 18,500 volunteers.



**Volunteer Occupation:** Many NGOs work both with pupils and students, as well as with employees. 52 of the responding VIOs also involved retired persons and 41 of them involved unemployed people as volunteers.

**Volunteers with Disabilities:** 34 organisations have experience in involving either volunteers with physical or intellectual disabilities or with other medical issues, but the measures taken to support these types of volunteers are still rather informal, and taken only on a case by case basis. Pro Vobis could not identify any coherent practices or policies among the studied organisations. The fact that 34 of them are already including volunteers with disabilities and medical issues, even so, is encouraging and reveals the need for training in this area, as well as for more support.

**LGBTQIA+ Volunteers:** 152 organisations say they don't know or can't estimate the number of LGBTQIA+ volunteers. Pro Vobis believes this reflects either a tendency to protect the privacy of the volunteers, or a 'don't ask don't tell' policy within the organisation, both stemming from the fact that sexual orientation and sexuality in general are still taboo topics in the Romanian community.

**The study identified the following challenges:** The lack of public funding from local authorities explicitly dedicated to volunteer involvement (over 90 respondents); Volunteering is not sufficiently valorised in the community (85 respondents); Lack of financial resources to organise the activity of volunteers (75 respondents); Inability to find the right volunteers (over 60 respondents); Collaboration with local authorities to support development of volunteering is difficult (over 60 respondents); Excessive bureaucracy; too many documents to fill in for the volunteers (over 60 respondents).



Screenshot from the National Study Online Campaign



Final Meeting with the Volunteer Team



## 1. Croatian Volunteer Development Centre (Croatia)



Consultation process on volunteer development and how to use the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030) to advance volunteer engagement in a more inclusive way at national level in Croatia.

### **Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR**

Croatia is starting the process of redesigning the existing draft of the National Volunteer Development Programme 2023-2027. CVDC has been invited to participate in the process through a working group and as a member of the National Board for Volunteering Development (NBVD). As such, CVDC proposed to develop a revised Croatian National Volunteering Development Programme using the BEV2030 as a basis, and with the support of a sub-grant of 15,000 EUR to achieve this objective.

CVDC's project activities included work on the finalisation of guidelines for the creation of public policies in line with BEV2030. These guidelines use information collected by Croatian regional and local volunteer centres on the current state of volunteering in Croatia.

Additionally, a consultation process took place, where CVDC utilised its membership of the NBVD to organise a working group for the creation of an enabling environment for volunteering development on 2 June 2023, and later participated in the formal session of the NBVD in July 2023. In November, CVDC organised regional consultations in four major Croatian cities (Zagreb, Split, Rijeka and Osijek). Over 120 participants (representatives of volunteers involving organisations, decision makers, researchers and practitioners) attended the regional consultations (29 in Osijek, 19 in Rijeka, 33 in Split and 44 in Zagreb).

These discussions with national policymakers helped CVDC to redesign the Croatian National Volunteer Development Programme 2023-2026. In total over 5,000 people were reached by this project directly, or through dissemination. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 5 volunteers, who contributed to 186 hours of volunteer time during their project.

Croatian Volunteer Development Centre (Croatia) Consultation process on volunteer development and how to use the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030) to advance volunteer engagement in a more inclusive way at national level in Croatia. Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR Croatia is starting the process of redesigning the existing draft of the National Volunteer Development Programme 2023-2027. CVDC has been invited to participate in the process through a working group and as a member of the National Board for Volunteering Development (NBVD). As such, CVDC proposed to develop a revised Croatian National Volunteering Development Programme using the BEV2030 as a basis, and with the support of a sub-grant of 15,000 EUR to achieve this objective. CVDC's project activities included work on the finalisation of guidelines for the creation of public policies in line with BEV2030. These guidelines use information collected by Croatian regional and local volunteer centres on the current state of volunteering in Croatia. Additionally, a consultation process took place, where CVDC utilised its membership of the NBVD to organise a working group for the creation of an enabling environment for volunteering development on 2 June 2023, and later participated in the formal session of the NBVD in July 2023. In November, CVDC organised regional consultations in four major Croatian cities (Zagreb, Split, Rijeka and Osijek). Over 120 participants (representatives of volunteers involving organisations, decision makers, researchers and practitioners) attended the regional consultations (29 in Osijek, 19 in Rijeka, 33 in Split and 44 in Zagreb). These discussions with national policymakers helped CVDC to redesign the Croatian National Volunteer Development Programme 2023-2026. In total over 5,000 people were reached by this project directly, or through dissemination. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 5 volunteers, who contributed to 186 hours of volunteer time during their project.





## New Policy Documents for Croatian Volunteering

**Croatian National Volunteer Development Programme 2023-2026:** This document was drafted through the consultation process, and is according to the responsible Croatian Ministry, due to go through a process of adoption next year.

**Guidelines for the Creation of Public Policies in the Field of Volunteering:** CVDC developed this document as a guide to stakeholders in the field of volunteering, especially policymakers, regarding the steps that need to be taken in order for volunteering to reach its full potential in Croatia. This is available on the CVDC website here: <https://www.hcrv.hr/>.

### Consultation Events:



Zagreb

Split



Rijeka

Osijek

## 2. Platform of Volunteer Centres and Organizations (Slovakia)



Consultation process on volunteer development and how to use the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030) to advance volunteer engagement in a more inclusive way at national level in Slovakia.

### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

In 2013, the Government of the Slovak Republic adopted the Program for the Support of Volunteering and Volunteer Centers. After 10 years, thanks to the resources in the form of subgrant of 15,000 EUR sub-grant provided from the CERV programme and the support of staff and volunteers, the Platform of Volunteer Centres and Organizations (PDCO) has been able to evaluate the fulfilment of measures from the Program. In addition, it has been possible to set other measures according to the current situation, new needs, and challenges that organisations involving volunteers and volunteer centres face.

PDCO has been able to implement a wide consultation and use the outcomes from these discussions to form the basis for a new national plan for the development of volunteering in Slovakia. Three full-day workshops took place in the cities of Prešov (27 June 2023), Trnava (28 June 2023) and Banská Bystrica (29 June 2023) in Slovakia reaching 59 across eastern, western, and central parts of Slovakia. These workshops involved representatives from volunteer-involving organisations (at the local, regional, and national level); volunteers; other NGOs, and municipality representatives.





This led to their main output: the development of a Slovakian National Volunteer Development Plan 2024-2030 taking into account European Values and context. Other meetings and online events including communication with representatives of the Ministry of the Interior of the Slovak Republic about the possibilities of accepting the Plan at the government level, and a presentation of the document to the Chamber of NGOs at the Government Council of the Slovak Republic, to involve other NGOs, municipality representatives, and regional self-government and ministries representatives have led to increased awareness of the Plan and reached at least 250 people. More than 2000 people were directly invited via email to comment on the document and more than 1500 people were reached on social networks where invitation to comment on the draft was published.

PDCO has also delivered the translation of BEV2030 into Slovakian, which has been promoted together with the national plan. In total over 3,750 people were reached by this project through all direct and indirect activities. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 2 volunteers, who contributed to 11 hours of volunteer time during their project. PDCO also co-financed this project directly.

### *New Policy Documents for Slovakian Volunteering*

**Slovakian National Volunteer Development Plan 2024-2030:** This document was drafted as a result of the consultation process and is available in full on the website of PDCO here:

[https://www.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/images/stories/files/2023/Narodny\\_plan\\_2024\\_2030.pdf](https://www.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/images/stories/files/2023/Narodny_plan_2024_2030.pdf).

**Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (SK):** The BEV2030 is now available in Slovakian as a result of this project, and is available on the PDCO (<https://www.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/sk/>) and CEV (<https://www.europeanvolunteercentre.org/bev2030>) websites.

### **Consultation Events:**



Roundtables

### **3. Slovenska Filantropija (Slovenia)**



Consultation process on volunteer development and how to use the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030) to advance volunteer engagement in a more inclusive way at national level in Slovenia.

**Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR**





In 2023, Slovenia is instituting its first independent Slovenian Volunteering Strategy 2024-2028, which provides an opportunity to include as many guidelines from BEV2030 as possible. Slovenska Filantropija, which coordinates the Slovenian network of volunteer organisations, has participated extensively in the process of preparation of this strategy through use of a 15,000 EUR sub-grant, and together with Slovenian volunteer organisations and the Slovenian Government’s Ministry of Public Administration has developed several additional policy-specific documents to support Slovenian volunteering.

Through a working group on 6 June 2023, Slovenska Filantropija concluded the draft of a Slovenian Volunteering Strategy 2024-2028, including recommendations from BEV2030. They then developed Recommendations for a Volunteer-Friendly Municipality that include the guidelines from BEV2030, which followed a research process that included a questionnaire that was sent to 1,939 Slovenian volunteer-involving organisations and completed by 108 of them. Additionally, a survey was sent to 212 Slovenian municipalities, of which 51 representatives completed it. Based upon these two documents, a Regional Volunteer Development Plan was drafted and sent to 12 regional hubs, and an overall Slovenian National Volunteer Development Plan was developed for the national level. Both the Regional and National Plans are based on BEV2030, and the Recommendations for Municipalities developed through the survey and questionnaire. In total over 3,750 people were reached by this project through all forms of communication and dissemination. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 5 volunteers, who contributed to 23 hours of volunteer time during their project.

### **New Policy Documents for Slovenian Volunteering**

**Slovenian National Plan for the Development of Volunteering 2030:** Using the key themes of the BEV2030, this document was developed as a result of the consultation process and published on the website of Slovenska Filantropija here: <https://www.prostovoljstvo.org/novice/nacionalni-nacrt-za-razvoj-prostovoljstva-do-leta-2030>.

**Regional Plan for the Development of Volunteering 2030:** Similarly, this document is also based on the BEV2030, but instead has a regional context. It is also published on the website of Slovenska Filantropija here: <https://www.prostovoljstvo.org/novice/regionalni-nacrt-za-razvoj-prostovoljstva-do-leta-2030>.

**Recommendations for a Volunteer-friendly Municipality:** This document aims to equip municipalities with a 15-point list of clear objectives to follow in order to create a more encouraging environment for volunteering, and is available on the website of Slovenska Filantropija here: <https://www.prostovoljstvo.org/>.

**Volunteering Development Strategy 2024-2029:** This document has also been worked on, and has been submitted to the respective Ministry in the Slovenian government.



Slovenian Congress of Volunteering



Slovenian National Plan for the Development of Volunteering 2030 Promotion



## 4. Talentum Foundation for the Support of Volunteering (Hungary)



Consultation process on volunteer development and how to use the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030) to advance volunteer engagement in a more inclusive way at regional level in Hungary.

### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

One of the core aspects of implementing the recommendations of BEV 2030, has been the need to translate and utilise it across the EU. Talentum Foundation for the Support of Volunteering recognised this need to introduce BEV2030 to their region in Hungary, the Southern Great Plain Region. Through the use of a 15,000 EUR sub-grant, they did this by conducting activities to implement a broad consultation process about BEV2030 in the region.

Firstly, they translated BEV2030 into Hungarian. They then implemented 6 in-person workshops across the region to introduce BEV2030 to regional volunteer-involving organisations. These workshops took place in Orosháza (15 August 2023) with 17 people, in Mórahalom and Szentés, with 11 and 19 participants (7 September 2023); in Gyula with 19 people (18 September 2023), in Kecskemét with 16 people (19 September 2023); and in Szeged with 11 people (27 September 2023). Based upon these experiences, Talentum Foundation drafted a Regional Volunteer Development Plan 2023-2030, which was then presented through an online meeting to 11 participants from 8 organisations (19 October 2023). They organised an in-person volunteer meeting on International Volunteer Day (5 December 2023) with 60 participants and an online workshop with 18 people (7 December 2023), where the BEV2030 and the finalised Development Plan was promoted. These documents were also promoted several times in the mailing list (782 addresses), Facebook page and Instagram page of Talentum. In total over 3,920 people were reached by this project directly and indirectly. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 6 volunteers, who contributed to 24 hours of volunteer time during their project.

### New Policy Documents for Hungarian Volunteering

**Regional Volunteer Development Plan 2023-2030:** The Plan for the Southern Great Plain Region is now available based upon a consultation process, and includes recommendations from the BEV2030. The document is available on the Talentum website here: <https://www.talentumonkentes.hu/hirek/regionalis-terv-az-onkentesseg-fejleszteseert>.

**Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (HU):** The BEV2030 is now available in Hungarian as a result of this project, and is available on the Talentum (<https://www.talentumonkentes.hu/>) and CEV (<https://www.europeanvolunteercentre.org/bev2030>) websites.



Workshops

Consultation process on volunteer development and how to use the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030) to advance volunteer engagement in a more inclusive way at national level in Spain.

### Amount Awarded - 30 000 EUR

Plataforma del Voluntariado de España (PVE) is committed to the study and dissemination of BEV2030 at the national level in Spain, and has worked to make it known and implement it in the country. To advance this, PVE conducted participatory processes and collective actions across Spain to achieve a Spanish National Volunteer Development Plan 2024-2025 for inclusive and diverse volunteering as a consensual and enforceable policy, following the same thematic lines of the BEV2030 and shared values. This wide-reaching consultation was only made possible through a sub-grant of 30,000 EUR, including activities in all Spanish regions, and PVE also included the participation of the Catalan Federation of Social Volunteering (FCVS) to carry out consultations in the Catalonia region.

Prior to the start of their activities, PVE held a meeting with a group of experts (23 June 2023) and an online briefing was held with 31 people from 30 organisations across the PVE network, representing the different Spanish territories (28 June 2023). The consultation process involved interviews with 23 different Spanish volunteering organisations across Summer/Autumn 2023, including interviews with Federación Riojana de Voluntariado Social, COCEMFE, Plataforma del Voluntariat de les Illes Balears, Plataforma de Voluntariado de Asturias, Plataforma de Entidades de Voluntariado de León, ANAV Protección Civil España, Plataforma del Voluntariado de la Comunidad Valenciana, Coordinadora Aragonesa de Voluntariado, Plataforma del Voluntariado de Andalucía, FEVOCAM (Madrid), Amnistía Internacional, Plataforma Coruñesa de Voluntariado, and UNAD (addictions), among others. The data gathered through these extensive interviews led to the development of a Spanish National Volunteer Development Plan 2024-2025.

The last part of the process focused more on the assessment of the information collected and analysed, different activities have been generated such as 2 workshops where 85 people participated, 2 focus groups where 16 people attended and an advisory board session with an attendance of 11 people. In summary, a total of 135 people were directly involved in the different phases of the consultation process. And PVE reached more than 7,500 people through communication actions, including a newsletter, web news and social media posts. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 13 volunteers, who contributed to 420 hours of volunteer time during their project.

### New Policy Documents for Spanish Volunteering

**Spanish National Volunteer Development Plan 2024-2025:** This Plan has been developed as the result of a detailed consultation process across all Spanish regions, and includes input from the BEV2030. The Plan is available on both the PVE (<https://plataformavoluntariado.org/la-pve-publica-el-plan-nacional-del-voluntariado-2030/>) and FCVS (<https://voluntaris.cat/>) websites.

### Consultation Events:



Consultation Workshop



Advisory Council Meeting

## 1. Confederação Portuguesa do Voluntariado (Portugal)



Portuguese campaign linking EU policy development processes to active citizen engagement through volunteering contributing to resilience, the recovery process and society based on values and rights.

### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

Confederação Portuguesa do Voluntariado (CPV) promotes volunteering in Portugal, and has recognised the importance of the Vote Volunteer Vision 2024 (VVV2024) European Parliament Election Campaign to promote its shared values of volunteering, and protect the rights of citizens who contribute to society through volunteering through relevant political changes. Consequently, CPV conducted a campaign of activities, through the support of a 15,000 EUR sub-grant, to highlight the VVV2024 campaign in Portugal and encourage awareness about the topic of volunteering for the European Parliament elections.

The campaign involved several activities at different stages of the project. CPV translated BEV2030 into Portuguese for use in the campaign, along with other documents such as a data analysis form to analyse voting intention and volunteer participation, especially among younger people, which was completed by 100 individuals. They also prepared complementary promotional documentation to improve the information provided by the analysis form. However, the majority of CPV's project manifested in the form of activities and events to promote the VVV2024. CPV co-organised a webinar on 12 July 2023 that acted as a launch of the VVV Campaign activities, in which they distributed materials including the Portuguese version of BEV2030. CPV then held several meetings and events, such as meetings with volunteer-involving organisations such as Youth CPV and several in-person activities in the Summer and Autumn of 2023 with young volunteers. Meetings were held with a working group of two young volunteers from the largest youth organisation in Portugal, CNE and at universities in northern Portugal (Porto, Braga, Guarda, and Bragança). In addition, the project team participated in the Inter Municipality Meeting in Loures to promote the VVV2024 during October 2023, reaching over 160 people. In total over 3,750 people were reached by this project during the events, the analysis-form responses and through dissemination actions. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 3 volunteers, who contributed to 24 hours of volunteer time during their project.

### VVV2024 Campaign Implemented in Portugal

**VVV Campaign:** The core VVV Campaign materials have been translated into Portuguese and are available on the CPV website here: <https://www.convoluntariado.pt/p%C3%A1gina-inicial>

**Events:** The VVV campaign was primarily promoted by CPV through a series of events targeting young people (18-30 years old), particularly students, in Portugal. These included: the kick-off webinar on 12 July 2023; meetings with youth organisations such as Youth CPV and CNE; an Intermunicipal Volunteering Meeting with 160 participants; and a visit to the University of Porto.

**Data Analysis Form on Youth-Voter Intention:** This form was targeted towards young people (18-30 years old) enrolled in university, and completed by over 100 people, giving data on young people's voting intention and volunteer participation. The results include that 67% of respondents value the practice of volunteering; 57% of respondents have yet to learn much about the European elections; 70% of respondents consider that the role of volunteers in raising awareness of the European elections has been fundamental.

**Promotional Resources:** These documents were developed to complement the event activities to promote the VVV campaign and included the "Volunteering for a stronger and more inclusive society" report and a printed version of the Portuguese BEV2030.

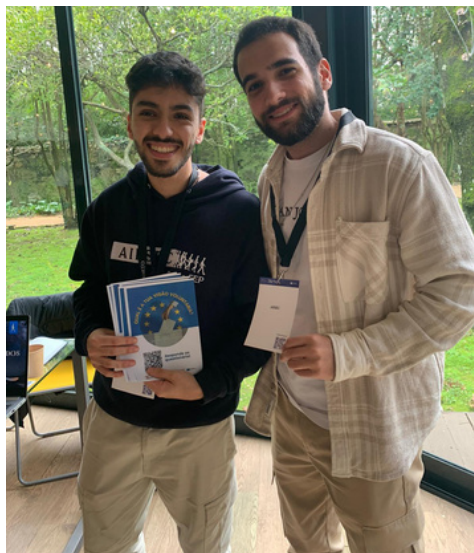
**Educational Resources:** The project made significant progress in developing educational resources and activities to help young people learn more about civic participation and volunteering. These resources and activities will be available to the public in early 2024.



**Recommendations for Increased Civic Participation:** CPV developed recommendations based upon their activities which can be summarised as follows: 1) Provide young people with easy access to information about civic participation and volunteering; 2) Develop educational resources and activities to help young people learn about the importance of civic participation and volunteering; 3) Create opportunities for young people to get involved in civic participation and volunteering; 4) Promote the role of volunteers in society.

**Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (PT):** The BEV2030 is now available in Portuguese as a result of this project, and is available on the CPV (<https://www.convoluntariado.pt/p%C3%A1gina-inicial>) and CEV (<https://www.europeanvolunteercentre.org/bev2030>) websites.

**Consultation Events:**



VVV Campaign Presentation



## 1. CSV Marche (Italy)



How do volunteering activities contribute to local volunteer development strategies and their implementation in candidate and/or winning municipalities involved in the European Volunteering Capital Competition in Italy, including the integration and support to Ukrainian refugees?

### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

Trento, Italy has been designated the European Volunteering Capital in 2024. CSV Marche accomplished, in collaboration CSVnet, CSV Trentino/Trento Municipality European Capital of Volunteering 2024, and CSV Padova/European Capital Municipality 2020, an expansion of the local volunteer development strategy outlined in the context of Trento's candidacy for European Volunteering Capital through interactive activities funded by a sub-grant of 15,000 EUR. These activities could then strengthen the engagement of volunteers in Trento.

To achieve this objective, under the supervision of CSV Marche, several participatory workshops were held in Trento. In June, two participatory workshops were organised by CSV Trentino with local stakeholders to understand how to develop a common strategy to strengthen volunteering at a local level. The first event was held on June 9th, with 43 participants, and saw the participation of local non-profit organisations, CSV's staff and members of the Board, and other public and private stakeholders. The event was mainly aimed at discussing the major challenges of volunteering in the coming years and, consequently, imagining future lines of action. The second workshop was held on June 27th, with 17 participants, and involved a group of young volunteers, local associations, and some CSV members. The focus was mainly on the urban and social regeneration theme, as during the first workshop, this was underlined as one of the fundamental elements for future volunteering development. On 17 October 2023, CSV Trentino organised the last participatory workshop concerning the topics of sustainability and inclusion in volunteering, including 18 participants. The group of participants was mainly composed of CSV staff and young people. This meeting was also the occasion to discuss these topics with two Ukrainian organisations that brought their experience with including Ukrainian refugees in the settlement country. Subsequent dissemination events were held on 26 September 2023, reaching at least 21 people, 26 October 2023, reaching at least 30 people, 18 November 2023, reaching at least 90 people, and on 9 December 2023, reaching at least 98 people.

In total, over 3,750 people were reached by this project directly, through social media tools and newsletters by CSV Trentino and CSV Marche. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 7 volunteers, who contributed to 35 hours of volunteer time during their project.

### Participatory Workshops in Trento, Italy

Local volunteer development in Trento took place primarily through 3 participatory workshops.

#### Consultation Events:



Workshop



## 2. Platform of Volunteer Centres and Organizations (Slovakia)



How do volunteering activities contribute to local volunteer development strategies and their implementation in candidate and/or winning municipalities involved in the European Volunteering Capital Competition in Slovakia, including the integration and support to Ukrainian refugees?

### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

There is currently no definition of the term "volunteer centre" in the legislation of the Slovak Republic, or in other national documents. This underdevelopment of terms enabled PDCO, through the resources of a 15,000 EUR grant from the CERV programme, to conduct meetings with local volunteer centres to define standards, and consequently set up a definition for organisations fulfilling the role of volunteer centre, crucially including the important role of such centres as encouraging sharing and growth in those that use them. This process of defining terms also took a context-specific dimension, given the different realities individual centres face including their involvement of Ukrainian refugees.

An online kick-off meeting started the project, with PDCO meeting with representatives of 7 regional volunteer centres working in 7 of Slovakia's regions. PDCO then drafted and finalised a set of standards for volunteer centres, which was then presented in a joint 2-day meeting to those representatives of the regional volunteer centres, reaching 20 people at the meeting. The final version was then approved via emails, and made publicly available. It will be used to advocate position and financial support for volunteer centres as key components of volunteer infrastructure.

Following this, PDCO supported the volunteer centres in their own specific strategic development plans, using methods according to their needs and context. Crucially, these plans also included provisions for how to better involve Ukrainian refugees in Slovakian volunteering. 5 centres have prepared and delivered such plans. There was also advocacy training conducted in Bratislava for the representatives of volunteer centres, which included 14 people.

In total over 3,750 people were reached by this project through all communication and dissemination actions. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 2 volunteers, who contributed to 12 hours of volunteer time during their project. PDCO also co-financed this project directly.

### Local Volunteer Development Plans in Slovakia

This project saw the creation of local specific development plans for the following Slovakian cities: Trnava, Banská Bystrica, Prešov, Nitra, Žilina and Trenčín. These are available through PDCO here: <https://www.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/sk/>.

### Standards for Slovakian Volunteer Centres

PDCO created a set of standards for volunteer centres which is available on the PDCO website here: <https://www.dobrovolnickecentra.sk/sk/materialy/materialy-na-stiahnutie>

These standards were approved through a consultation process with local volunteer centres including several meetings to gather the opinions and feedback of practitioners.

### Consultation Events:



Volunteer Centres Meeting

## 3. Pro Vobis - Centrul National de Resurse pentru Voluntariat (Romania)



How do volunteering activities contribute to local volunteer development strategies and their implementation in candidate and/or winning municipalities involved in the European Volunteering Capital Competition in Romania, including the integration and support to Ukrainian refugees?

### Amount Awarded - 15 000 EUR

Pro Vobis is based in Cluj, Romania, a diverse, cosmopolitan city that includes a vibrant civil society and active volunteering. These volunteering activities in Cluj have grown significantly in the past 10 years, and even more intensively in the past 3 years, due to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the Ukrainian war. Pro Vobis sees Cluj as a potential European Volunteering Capital candidate in the future, and consequently has established a good foundation for a EVCapital candidacy application through local volunteer development plans, utilising a 15,000 EUR sub-grant.

Pro Vobis conducted a needs analysis of Cluj regarding volunteering, through desk research that collected data and insights that support the design of the consultations with local stakeholders. They then conducted the following events in Cluj to promote the opportunity of the EVCapital competition: 2 online and 1 face to face discussions with 3 local partners in June 2023, to support the process of the activity design; a face-to-face meeting with project partner PONT Group in August 2023, reviewing in detail their current projects to support youth infrastructures and finding synergies with this project; several meetings and discussions with project partner Cluj-Napoca Volunteer Center during September, October and November (29 participants across 4 events), to plan the approach for local consultations as well as to moderate them; and an online meeting with project partner Cluj Cultural Centre in November to agree on the best ways to consult some of the cultural institutions and organisations, and rethink the approach. In total over 3,750 people were reached by this project through all project actions. This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 9 volunteers, who contributed to 184 hours of volunteer time during their project.

### EVCapital Awareness Raising Campaign

Pro Vobis implemented an online campaign to raise awareness of the European Volunteering Capital title, which was designed and developed by their Communication Aces Volunteers Team.

### Local Consultations and Volunteer Development Plan in Cluj, Romania

Pro Vobis conducted 4 local stakeholder consultations, gathering 29 participants from 20 different organisations and institutions. This led to the development of a Local Volunteer Development Plan with the main conclusions deriving from these consultations. Pro Vobis has published this plan on their website: <https://www.provobis.ro/voluntariatul-in-romania-in-anul-2022/>

### Consultation Events:



Consultation Workshops

*"In total over 5,000 people were reached by this project"*

*"This project would not have been possible without the contribution of 3 volunteers, who contributed to 23 hours of volunteer time during their project"*

*"Investing in research, development, and support strategies for volunteering programmes in this way is crucial for making them more inclusive and accessible to various volunteer profiles"*

*"We better understood how we can implement inclusive modes of working by learning from examples of good practice"*

*"The data observed so far show a broad self-perception of inclusiveness. It would be appropriate to ask whether such an attitude might not, indirectly or unconsciously, generate less attention to issues related to diversity, inclusion, and discrimination in all the forms it can take"*

*"The research identifies challenges such as attracting new volunteers, connecting volunteering efforts with active citizenship, and strengthening the capacity of volunteer-involving organisations"*

*"It helped us provide more inclusive volunteering opportunities involving the full diversity of genders and other discriminating factors"*

*"The voluntary sector would benefit from training on the different forms of discrimination"*

*"This project has been a valuable initiative that has the potential to make a real difference in the lives of young people like me in Europe, understanding about the European Parliament and European Rights is really helpful"*

*"The most significant finding of this study was the presence of indirect forms of discrimination which exist within the voluntary sector and which are creating barriers for persons from different groups from volunteering"*