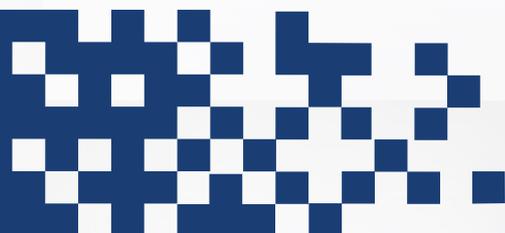


INEAR



Inclusion, Equality and Rights in Volunteering

WEBINAR



Resources for more Value Report

July 4th 2022

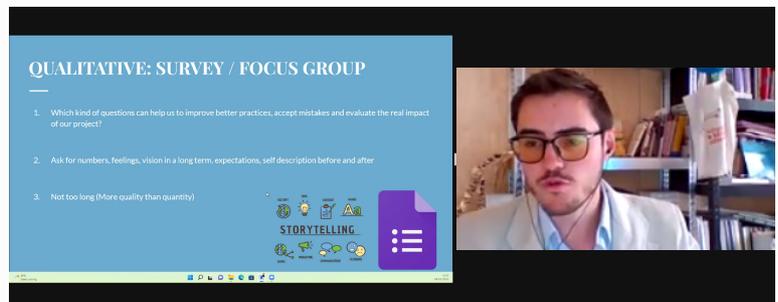


Technical Briefing and Introduction to the Agenda and BEV 2030 Chapter “Resources for more Value”

Gabriella Civico opened the webinar by exploring the Agenda and Chapter 5 of the blueprint, which included the subsections: Investing for social impact; community resilience; the importance of managers and mentors and their role; importance of physical, mental and social safety; the role of online matching systems; how to move forward with building on the basis of the European Solidarity Corps programme towards a more comprehensive European Volunteering Policy.

Investing for Social impact - Joseph Rojas

Joseph Rojas began by asking the audience who had made a social impact survey before, and who was aware of the concept of SROI (Social Return On Investment). While most people had made impact measurement surveys before, less were knowledgeable about SROI specifically.



Joseph Rojas - CEV

He highlighted that all our actions have an impact, either positive or negative, so it is important that we are aware of our own impact on the people and communities around us.

Some typical questions asked by stakeholders, with regards to the creation of projects, were explored, including “What do my actions and investments represent?”, “why should I invest in this?”, and “what is the return of social investment?”. The audience shared that they had all experienced these questions when trying to find support for projects. Joseph outlined that measurement is important for building a partnership where all feel safe to give funds or resources.

It was stressed that we should be aware that it is not always obvious to people what the specific value of volunteering is, even though it seems logical for those involved in the sector; we need to communicate this successfully to stakeholders.



SROI was shown as a framework for measuring impact and comparing the costs/benefits of a project. It also provides a holistic approach in situations where some outcomes cannot be assigned a monetary value, but it remains important to show the value gain in order to express this to stakeholders.

The following formula was expressed as a way of calculating the SROI:

$$\text{SROI} = \text{Tangible} + \text{Intangible Benefits} / \text{Total Time and Money Investment.}$$

Next, Joseph explored the topic of surveys for data gathering and analysis, stressing the importance of gathering useful qualitative data. This included gaining specific stories of participants and partners, as one of the most important ways to see the project is from a new perspective. It is incredibly important to find the right questions and right focus for analysis, because a few quality answers tells us a lot more than a large number of weaker, less in-depth answers.

To close his presentation, Joseph shared some resources which he had found useful for gaining a new perspective on impact measurement, including a Ted Talk, a guide and framework for looking at social impact, and a website tool which shows what issues are most important to people from a specific country.

To conclude, Joseph stressed that impact measurement comes in two parts, equally important, firstly you have to do the research, but secondly you need to communicate what the research has found.

Presentation Report from Webinar (7 June Ukraine Refugee crisis)

“Response and Resilience through volunteering. What is the role of Municipalities?”

Gabriella then discussed what had been explored during the webinar on June 7 regarding the role of Municipalities in supporting volunteering in crisis and emergency situations.. The webinar was held with 6 cities reflecting on how to build strong cooperation. The full report is available [here](#).



Ukraine Refugee crisis
Response and Resilience through volunteering.
What role for Municipalities?
7 June 2022, 14.00 - 17.00 CET
Online

Report Ukraine Refugee Crisis Webinar - EVCapital 2024 Gdansk



Karol Gzyl, Gdansk Foundation - Community Resilience - Supporting resilience through planning and preparation for crisis situations (Q&A)

Karol opened with a discussion on some of the steps the Gdansk Foundation had put in place to support Ukrainian refugees, including creating a platform for accepting and coordinating donations, and the 'Gdansk Helps Ukraine' initiative to quickly address the needs of refugees while national and regional governments started the process of organising support. There was a huge amount of support for Ukraine in terms of money, resources, and volunteering, in part because of the existing strong civil society and crisis management mechanisms that the city had built previously.

Similarly, during the pandemic, Gdansk was able to create a helpline and web platform to maintain contact with residents and their needs, as well as creating local points to provide support. The city was able to use these existing mechanisms created for the pandemic to support Ukrainian refugees, which allowed a faster response.

Karol outlined that they had created an advisory board to the mayor to create a line of constant communication between NGOs, civil society, and city officials; a communiqué in place before and after the outbreak of the war. NGOs were also invited to collaborate in the first crisis meeting to discuss the challenges the city would face, where they identified existing resources and collaborated to organise them around supporting refugees.



Karol Gzyl, Gdansk Foundation

Furthermore, Karol highlighted that his role as an NGO, rather than a political body, contributed towards facilitating a synergy between the national government and the Gdansk mayor, who held deep ideological and political differences.



Monika Popow, working in Gdansk City Hall, explained the importance of a diverse range of NGOs operating in Gdansk, who could all collaborate through the creation of district-wide networks, complementing the overall coordination.

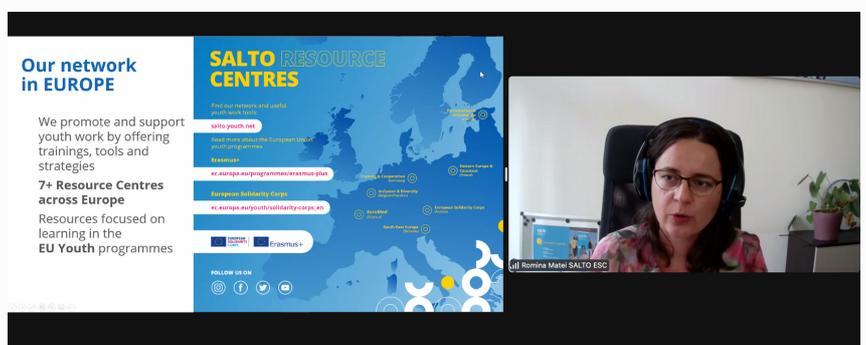
A question was asked regarding the challenges of a language barrier between Polish and Ukrainians, with regards to the welcoming of refugees. Karol answered that there is a shared history between the two countries, and that they were able to use the help of existing Ukrainian communities in Poland to hire people who could translate or provide services directly to the refugees. Providing Polish lessons also helps with integration and enables refugees to start on the job market. Furthermore, there were cultural events such as concerts, put in place to welcome the Ukrainian audience.

Romina Matei, European Solidarity Corps Resource Centre Volunteer Mentors (Q&A)

Romina highlighted that, especially in crisis volunteering, giving general and psychological support is crucial in ensuring volunteers feel safe and can continue to have a positive impact. The role of mentors in particular can contribute to this, through the support they provide to volunteers.

She presented the work and organisation of SALTO, with 7+ resource centres around Europe focusing on supporting and promoting youth work through training, tools, and strategies. The five strategic dimensions of SALTO are: Shaping solidarity; Strengthening EU volunteering; embedding solidarity in volunteering; supporting the implementation of the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programme; creating a community of practice.

She next showcased that mentoring is seen as part of the quality measures in the ESC guide, however it is defined vaguely so mentoring can look very different between organisations.



Romina Matei, SALTO Resource Centre



This was explored further during the presentation, and particularly in questions from participants, where it was discussed that the differing resources organisations have can sometimes necessitate the mentor being an organisationally internal, rather than external, point of contact to the volunteers. This debate of internal vs external is ongoing and has no clear answer in the project guide, however some national agencies do put in place rules on who can be a mentor and what kind of training they must go through.

Romina stressed that mentoring is one of the first categories that SALTO focused on, which was achieved through the “mentoring under construction” agenda. This agenda featured different activities to support mentors, including a social media community, regular meet-ups, an annual residential event, and podcasts about different topics connected with mentoring.

The importance of training and preparation for mentors was discussed, particularly if the mentor is external to the organisation; they need to understand volunteering and the organisation in order to best support the volunteer.

It was also mentioned that the changing landscape post-Covid has opened up the potential for remote/ digital mentors, which provides more options to organisations who lack the resources to find traditional mentors.

Antonia Matkovic Puljek (Croatian Volunteer Development Centre) - Importance of Volunteer Manager training for ensuring Physical, mental and social safety for volunteers (Q&A)

Antonia presented on volunteer management within the context of the EVI-DEMS (Enhancing Volunteer Impact - Developing Management Standards) project, which has partners from 6 countries.

She outlined that Europe lacks volunteer management courses at the higher education level, and that there are big gaps in the recognition of volunteer managers as a profession, despite the need to train and accredit managers to ensure quality contributions to the volunteering project.



The planned results of the project were outlined: A state-of-the-art report about volunteer management across Europe, detailing the qualification and potential training routes for volunteer managers; an education programme for volunteer managers at the HE level, consisting of four modules over one year with each module having a syllabus and assessment plan; the creation of course materials including a European course of ethics for managers and guide to European volunteering, solidarity, and values; a guide on the role of managers in facilitating inclusive volunteering. The project also aims to create training for university lecturers and other experts using the developed curricula and course materials.

Antonia stressed that volunteer management proves to be crucial particularly in times of crisis, where a fast and well-coordinated response is needed, but it is also necessary for non-crisis times in harnessing the volunteering energy within local communities.

Participants shared from their own experience, where volunteer managers introduced the mentor to volunteers, which created a sense of synergy between the two while also providing the distinction between the two roles which enables volunteers to feel they have someone external to the organisation who can support them.

Antonia expressed that, in Croatia this would be the ideal, however due to lack of resources many organisations struggle to find separate managers and mentors so the role is often combined.

Further discussion was held regarding the legal framework and recognition of volunteer managers, particularly that some countries don't allow the hiring of "volunteer managers" specifically, causing the role to be named something different, like "project coordinator".

In general, this feeds into the lack of cultural recognition for the role of managers. Furthermore, it was commented that managing volunteers is a very different role and comes with very specific challenges when compared to managing employees in a company, and as such specialised training is needed, rather than generalised HR courses which target a more standard employee management.



Antonia Matkovic Puljek,
Croatian Volunteer Development Centre



Patrick Anthonissen, Founder Social Care Network - Online Matching Systems (Q&A)

Patrick shared the results and learning his organisation has gained in the 10 years they have spent developing an online matching platform in The Netherlands. They found that there are high levels of volunteer energy, but this often doesn't find the demand for volunteers. As such, online matching systems can help complement the traditional offline matching ecosystem.

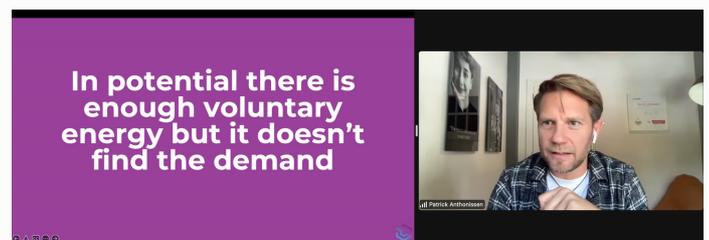
The platform operates as a network of 57 city and 1 national level platforms, and it was found that the implementation of local platforms resulted in around 350% better results and more successful matching. The local platforms are connected through the national platform which brings the advantages of both formats.

A few factors were identified in terms of enabling the success of the platform, including strong communication and search engine optimisation, gamification such as challenges in the platform, strong safety mechanisms, and peer to peer reviews, as well as crucial impact measurement which enables the organisation to know what factors work and which need to be improved.

It was outlined that the platform mainly attracts young people due to their larger online presence, and is successful in attracting more first-time volunteers (43% said it was their first time). Despite success, this platform comes with the caveat that there is still a huge amount of potential volunteer energy to harness across Europe, and in response the platform is being expanded into Germany, and hopefully more EU countries in the future.

Participants shared that this platform and style of online matching systems is very attractive and has huge potential, however there are big barriers in terms of implementation in countries across Europe due to the differing contexts, legal frameworks, resources, and cultural attitudes.

A question was posed regarding the sustainability of the platform, to which Patrick answered that the platform is free for users (organisations and volunteers), and is therefore sustainable in terms of user growth and engagement, and that it is funded by local governments.



Patrick Anthonissen, Founder Social Care Network



Finally, it was expressed by participants that the platform does the important job of showcasing to potential volunteers that volunteering can be easy and accessible, without a huge bureaucratic burden or time spent filling out paperwork.

EC Response to EESC Opinion “Volunteers - Citizens Building the Future of Europe” - European Solidarity Corps and European Volunteering Policy

In the final section, Gabriella Civico outlined the EC response to the EESC opinion on volunteers, linking this with the sixth sub-section of the Blueprint on European Volunteering 2030 calling for a comprehensive volunteering policy in Europe that takes into account the important role of volunteering in the implementation of EU Values. It was stressed that in the campaign for the European Year of Volunteers 2025, the civil society needs to clearly define the difference between the Year for Volunteers and the Year for Volunteering 2011. The Year for Volunteers is focused on celebrating the volunteers themselves, their impact, and providing recognition to that; The Year for Volunteering was more focused on a policy and framework perspective. This Year of Volunteers is particularly relevant given the huge contribution of volunteers in the various crises Europe has recently faced and their critical role in future recovery and resilience processes.

In closing, it was expressed that work still needs to be made with regards to encouraging the EU institutions to expand the view of volunteering as one for all ages and for all fields, contexts and models, and to recognise the necessity and value of volunteering within one's own place of residence, as EU institutions are currently focused more on cross-border volunteering.



Some of the Webinar Participants

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