SEVR 2026 Methodological Dossier

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State of European Volunteering Report 2026

Methodological Dossier — General Introduction

AI-assisted volunteering analysis · Centre for European Volunteering (CEV)

This dossier documents the AI-assisted methodology behind the **State of European Volunteering Report 2026 (SEVR2026)**. The analysis draws on **two complementary evidence strands**, each with its own data structure, prompt library and safeguards, and each feeding the same final report:

- the **3-Tier trends analysis**, a reading of colour-coded volunteering trends and their impact across organisational modalities, and
- the **BEV2030 indicator analysis**, an assessment of country progress against the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030.

The two strands are methodologically parallel — both are prompt-driven, both read meaning from text rather than from a single signal, and both guard against mistaking a reporting gap for a real finding. The subheadings that follow describe each strand side by side so the dossier serves as a single introduction to both.

> **How to read this introduction.** Under every subheading, the **3-Tier trends analysis** is described first and the **BEV2030 indicator analysis** second. Where the two share a principle (grounding claims in the files, treating 'not known' as missing, avoiding best/worst framing), it is stated once and flagged as common to both.

What the project does

3-Tier trends analysis — This strand develops and applies a reusable library of analysis prompts to interpret country-level volunteering trend data and feed the findings into SEVR2026. It highlights connections, general trends, differences, similarities, regional uniqueness, and recurring phenomena across countries, while also identifying what is truly country-specific.

BEV2030 indicator analysis — This strand develops and applies a reusable library of analysis prompts to interpret a country-by-country evidence base assembled against the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030). For each Blueprint indicator it reads, per country, whether the relevant condition exists, the documented evidence behind that judgement, and a national reviewer's qualifying notes — assessing how far each country, and Europe as a whole, has progressed toward the Blueprint outcomes while remaining honest about where the evidence is thin, contested, or self-corrected.

Together they give the report two lenses on the same field: *how volunteering itself is changing* (3-Tier trends), and *where the enabling conditions for volunteering stand* (BEV2030).

What the data files contain

3-Tier trends analysis

One **colour-coded trend file per country** (22 in the current set, spanning Western, Northern, Southern, and Central and Eastern Europe). Each file shares a common structure:

- **Rows** — each row is one observed volunteering trend (columns A and B hold the country name and the trend, and are not themselves analysed).
- **Columns C–H** — the trend's impact on six modalities in three families: **Associative** (C — traditional organised volunteering: NGOs, nonprofits, free associations); **Informal** (D — community organising without formal constitution or registration); and four **third-party organisers** — Local administrations (E), National public authorities (F), Educational institutions (G) and Businesses (H).
- **Cell colour** — the impact signal: **black** = negative, **green** = positive, **red** = challenge, **white / "?"** = not known (missing, never neutral), **grey** = does not apply.
- **Columns I–J** — two General Notes columns (CEV, and the organisation that compiled the file) giving the reasoning behind each colour.

BEV2030 indicator analysis

A single workbook with **one worksheet per BEV2030 indicator** (eleven in the current set), covering 22 countries. Each worksheet shares a common structure:

- **Indicator definition** — a header stating the Blueprint outcome the indicator measures.
- **Rows** — one per country, with a link to that country's Country Fact Sheet (CFS).
- **"Exists? yes / no / not clear"** — a status flag; compound values ("yes / not clear") and blanks both occur and are handled explicitly.
- **"Copy text from CFS"** — documented evidence quoted or summarised from the source. A primary data layer, not a footnote.
- **"Notes"** — the national reviewer's qualification, correction or lived-experience commentary. An equally primary layer that frequently complicates or overturns the flag.

Two indicators are multi-dimensional and read sub-column by sub-column: **2.3.3** (accessible point of information) splits National vs Regional/Local, and **2.1.4** (suitable and sufficient public support) splits across five partner types (informal groups, local administrations, national public authorities, educational institutions, business-sector actors).

The shared structural principle

Despite their different shapes, both strands locate meaning in the *text*, not in the summary signal:

	3-Tier trends	BEV2030
Summary signal (starting point only)	cell colour (black / green / red / white / grey)	"yes / no / not clear" status flag
The data that adjudicates it	cell text + two General Notes columns (CEV and compiler)	"copy text from CFS" + reviewer "notes", read together and weighted equally

	3-Tier trends	BEV2030
What 'missing' looks like	white cell or "?"	blank cell or "not clear"
Rule	the note gives the reasoning; where it qualifies a colour (a challenge that also opens an opportunity), the nuance is preserved	the text can confirm, qualify or overturn the flag; divergence is itself a finding

AI reading principles and safeguards

Both strands share a common discipline, applied to their own materials:

- **Read the text, not the signal alone.** In the 3-Tier trends analysis the cell text and General Notes give the reasoning behind each colour; in BEV2030 the CFS evidence and the notes are co-equal and adjudicate the flag. A summary signal (colour or flag) is never sufficient evidence on its own.
- **Treat 'not known' as missing, never as a finding.** 3-Tier white cells and "?", and BEV2030 blanks and "not clear", are unreported — never read as a neutral value or as a documented 'no'.
- **Keep the dimensions strictly distinct.** The 3-Tier analysis keeps the six modalities separate rather than merging them into an overall score; BEV2030 reads each multi-dimensional sub-column separately (2.3.3, 2.1.4).
- **Preserve nuance where the text qualifies the signal.** A 3-Tier note where a challenge (red) also opens an opportunity, and a BEV2030 note that downgrades a 'yes' to partial, are both retained rather than flattened.
- **Ground every claim in the files.** No invented facts or figures in either strand; each finding cites the wording that warrants it.
- **Separate a real difference from a reporting artefact.** Because the source files are compiled by different national contributors and the field lacks a harmonised EU-wide data framework (Fonović et al., 2025), each strand runs a dedicated reliability check before any comparative claim is finalised.
- **No ranking, no best/worst framing.** Both are self-reflection and progress-assessment exercises across CEV members, not league tables of countries.

How the AI prompts are set up

Both prompt libraries follow the same **five-part skeleton** — Task (what is required and why), Persona (the role the AI adopts), Format (how the output is displayed), Examples (sample outputs that anchor quality) and Constraints (rules and limits) — with the shared researcher context supplied once, up front. Each library is grouped into sequenced sets.

3-Tier trends analysis — prompt sets

- **Set A — Data check & single-country deep dives.** Step 1 sets the methodological framing and a data-coverage check (A1); Step 2 profiles each modality in turn (A2–A5); Step 3 reads across modalities for strain, resilience and trade-offs (A6–A7); Step 4 counts impacts and turns them into report-ready prose (A8).

- **Set B — Cross-country analysis.** Step 5 pools all files to surface recurring trends, test impact consistency, identify Europe-wide skews, trace divergent local forms, and detect structural trade-offs (B1–B5) — quantified wherever possible ("60% of countries note…").
- **Set C — Differences, similarities & regional analysis.** Similar profiles, outliers, interpretive clusters, regional uniqueness, and a closing check (C5) that separates a genuine difference from a reporting artefact.

BEV2030 indicator analysis — prompt sets

- **Set A — Per-country indicator profiles.** Applied one country (or one indicator sheet) at a time: a coverage check (A1), indicator-by-indicator reads through both text layers (A2–A5), and a consolidated country maturity profile across all eleven indicators (A6).
- **Set B — Cross-country analysis.** Applied across all countries at once: which indicators are strong or weak Europe-wide, how one condition takes different national forms, the paper-versus-practice gap, and recurring note themes — quantified wherever the text supports it (B1–B4).
- **Set C — Groupings, outliers and reliability.** Similar country profiles, outliers, interpretive clusters and regional patterns, closing with the real-difference-versus-artefact check (C1–C5).
- **Set D — Cross-file checks and supplementary reads.** An interpretation check across both main files and a harvesting-examples prompt for the file where members submit national examples and observations.

> **A common architecture, two data shapes.** Both libraries move from a coverage check, through single-unit deep reads, to a quantified cross-country synthesis, and close on a reliability check that protects the comparative claims. The difference is only in the material each reads — colour-coded modality impacts with explanatory notes on one side, dual-layer indicator prose on the other — which is why a single dossier can introduce them together.

AI Disclosure Statement — SEVR2026 Research

Centre for European Volunteering (CEV)

This statement records the use of AI tools in the preparation of a piece of research.

Disclosure statement

I declare that the present work is my original work, and that I have used AI tools only as permitted for this work.

Please indicate whether you used any AI tools in this work:

- ☐ No — no AI tools were used.
- ☒ **Yes — AI tools were used, as detailed below.**

If you selected "Yes", please complete the table below for each AI tool used.

Title of the work	State of European Volunteering Report 2026 (SEVR2026)
Author	Centre for European Volunteering
Name of the AI tool(s)	Claude (Anthropic)
Purpose of AI tool deployment	Structuring and refining a library of analysis prompts for the country trend data and BEV data. Supporting the analytical review of colour-coded country trends and BEV indicator files (classifying impacts, summarising and comparing across modalities/indicators and countries). Language editing and tightening of draft text. All AI-assisted analysis was based solely on the project's own source data; no figures or findings were generated without grounding in that data.

Purpose may include, for example: planning, brainstorming, structuring or outlining, editing and language correction, summarising, feedback, literature search support, data-analysis assistance, content generation (specify), or code/debugging assistance.

Acknowledgement	I acknowledge my responsibility as a researcher to thoroughly verify all outputs and content produced by AI tools, and I accept full accountability for their accuracy and validity.
Any comments	AI outputs were treated as drafts. All classifications, interpretations, and figures were checked against the original source files, and data gaps were verified manually before use. Final analytical judgements and conclusions are the author's own.
Signature	Gabriella Civico (CEV DIrector)
Date	October 2026

3-Tier Trends Analysis Prompt Library

State of European Volunteering Report 2026 · Centre for European Volunteering

A reusable library of analysis prompts for the colour-coded country trend files. Each prompt follows a five-part structure: Task, Persona, Format, Examples, and Constraints. Sets are grouped by analysis type — Methodological disclaimer and single-country deep dives (A), cross-country comparisons (B), and differences and regional analyses (C).

How the data is structured

In each country file, every row is one observed trend. Columns C–H record that trend's impact on six modalities: Associative (C), Informal (D), and four third-party organisers — Local administrations (E), National public authorities (F), Educational institutions (G), and Businesses (H). Columns I and J hold the General Notes (CEV and Organisation).

The cell fill colour is the impact: black = negative, green = positive, red = challenge, white or "?" = not known (treat as missing), grey = does not apply. The colour is the data point; the cell text and the General Notes explain why — and the analysis should interpret every finding through that text, not the colour alone.

Setup prompt (paste into instructions within SEVR2026 Project)

Use the standalone setup prompt below at the start of a session when the analysis skill is not installed. If the sevr-volunteering-analysis skill is active, this context is already loaded, and the setup prompt can be skipped.

> *You are assisting a researcher at the Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) on the State of European Volunteering Report 2026 (SEVR2026) — a self-reflection exercise for CEV members, not a ranking of countries. I will upload country trend files. In each file, every row is an observed trend; columns C–H record that trend's impact on six modalities — Associative (C), Informal (D), and third-party organisers: Local administrations (E), National public authorities (F), Educational institutions (G), Businesses (H).*
>
> *Base your analysis on two layers together:*
>
> *1. The cell colours, which record the impact of each trend on each modality: black = negative, green = positive, red = challenge, white/"?" = insufficient understanding or information, grey = does not apply.*
>
> *2. The accompanying text, which explains the reasoning behind each colour. This includes both the explanatory text inside the coloured modality cells (C–H) and the comments in the two General Notes columns — General Notes CEV (I) and General Notes Organisation (J). Where present, this text is essential: it gives the rationale for why a trend was assigned a given colour, and your interpretation must draw on it, not on the colour alone.*
>
> *3. In parallel, maintain a running cross-country theme vocabulary, noting, as each new country comes in, where its themes map onto spines already seen.*

Prompt summary: read the colour as the impact signal, but explain and interpret every finding through the cell text and the CEV/organisation comments, since those justifications are key to understanding the reasons behind the colours. Where a comment qualifies or complicates a colour (for example, a cell marked as a challenge but described in the notes as also opening an opportunity), reflect that nuance rather than flattening it to the colour alone.

You need to read the real .xlsx files rather than rely on the attached previews.

Ground every claim strictly in the file, never invent figures, treat white/"?" as missing rather than neutral, keep the six columns distinct, and avoid best/worst framing. Use British English. Choose the clearest output format (table, narrative, or bullets) for each question.

BEV2030 Indicator Analysis Prompt Library

State of European Volunteering Report 2026 · Centre for European Volunteering

A reusable library of analysis prompts for the BEV2030 indicator workbook. Each prompt follows a five-part structure: Task, Persona, Format, Examples and Constraints. Sets are grouped by analysis type — per-country indicator profiles (A), cross-country comparisons (B), and groupings, outliers and reliability (C).

How the data is structured

The workbook has one worksheet per BEV2030 indicator. In each sheet, a header states the Blueprint outcome being measured. Every row is one country and records: a CFS link; an "Exists? yes/no/not clear" status flag; a "copy text from CFS" evidence column; and a "notes" column holding the national reviewer's qualification. Two indicators are multi-dimensional: 2.3.3 splits National vs Regional/Local level, and 2.1.4 splits across five partner types (informal groups, local administrations, national public authorities, educational institutions, business-sector actors), each with its own status / text / notes triad.

> **The status flag is the starting point; the two text columns are the data.** Read the CFS evidence and the notes together and as equals, and let them confirm, qualify or overturn the flag. Where the two text layers diverge, report the divergence as a finding.

The eleven indicators (and their Blueprint strands)

The indicator code's first digit denotes the Blueprint goal-strand it sits under. Grouping the indicators this way is useful for the cross-country and clustering work in Sets B and C.

Code	Indicator (short)	Blueprint outcome it measures
1.3.2	Co-financing with volunteer time	Volunteer time (not replacing paid jobs) can be used to co-finance / co-resource grants.
1.4.1	Sufficient funding	Not-for-profit volunteer centres and platforms receive sufficient public funding.
1.5.2	Co-creation of public policies	Co-creation of public policy becomes the norm; participatory decision-making is fully used.
2.1.4	Suitable & sufficient public support	Volunteer infrastructure bodies are supported to guide new forms of volunteering (5 partner types).
2.3.3	Accessible point of information	Every volunteer has an accessible reference point (national and regional/local levels).
3.1.1	Education: civic / service learning	Civic education and service learning are introduced more widely into formal education.

Code	Indicator (short)	Blueprint outcome it measures
3.3.2	Strategy	Cross-cutting, transversal volunteering development strategies are developed.
3.4.1	Legal framework	Legal frameworks for volunteering adapt and evolve to enable diverse engagement.
4.1.2	Recognition	Opportunities for public recognition (awards, volunteer weeks, festivals) are provided and increased.
5.2.1	Crisis prevention and response	Volunteering is an integral part of community crisis prevention and response planning.
5.4.2	Insurance	Volunteers are protected through suitable accident and third-party liability insurance.

Setup prompt (paste into instructions within the BEV2030 project)

Use the standalone setup prompt below at the start of a session. It loads the shared context so the individual prompts in Sets A–C can be used directly.

> *You are assisting a researcher at the Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) on the BEV2030 Indicator Analysis — a self-reflection and progress-tracking exercise across CEV members against the Blueprint for European Volunteering 2030, not a ranking of countries.*
>
> *I will share a workbook with one worksheet per BEV2030 indicator. In each sheet, every row is one country and records: a link to the Country Fact Sheet (CFS); an "Exists? yes/no/not clear" status flag; a "copy text from CFS" column with documented evidence; and a "notes" column with the national reviewer's qualification or correction.*
>
> ***Base your analysis on the two text columns together and as equals:***
>
> *1. The "copy text from CFS" evidence — what the source document documents.*
>
> *2. The "notes" — how the national reviewer qualifies, corrects or contextualises that evidence.*
>
> *Treat the "yes/no/not clear" flag as a provisional starting point only. The text adjudicates it: it may confirm the flag, qualify it, or overturn it. Honour explicit reviewer overrides (e.g. "Change to No") and compound flags (e.g. "yes / not clear") rather than flattening them. Where the CFS text and the notes diverge, treat that divergence as a finding and report it.*
>
> *Distinguish existence from maturity: a law, strategy or centre existing on paper is not the same as it working well — preserve any such distinction the notes draw. Treat blank cells and "not clear" as missing/unreported, never as "no". For the two multi-dimensional indicators (2.3.3 national vs regional/local; 2.1.4 across five partner types), read each sub-column separately.*

> *Ground every claim strictly in the file: quote or closely cite the wording from the CFS text and/or notes that warrants each finding; never invent facts or figures. Use British English. Choose the clearest output format (table, narrative or bullets) for each question. This is a progress assessment, so avoid best/worst framing or any ranking of countries.*

Prompt Library

1. 3-Tier Trends Analysis
    a. Set A - Data Check & Country-Specific Results
    b. Set B - Cross-Country Analysis
    c. Discussion & Validation
    d. Set C - Groupings, Outliers and Regional patterns
2. BEV2030 Analysis
    a. Set A - Data Check & Country-Specific Results
    b. Set B - Cross-Country Analysis
    c. Discussion & Validation
    d. Set C - Groupings, Outliers and Regional patterns
3. Supplementary Prompts for BEV2026 and Colour-coding

Set A — Data Check & Country-Specific Results

Applied to a single uploaded country file.

Step 1: Methodological Disclaimer

Step 1 sets the groundwork before any country trend is interpreted. Rather than diving straight into analysis, it establishes two things: the methodological framing that governs how the data should (and should not) be read, and an account of what the data can actually support.

This matters as the exercise is inherently interpretive. Colours carry impact signals, but their meaning rests on the reasoning in the cell and General Notes text, and reasonable readers may weigh that reasoning differently. Identifying coverage gaps keeps this interpretive work honest, makes the basis for each reading transparent, and lets readers know which conclusions are firm and which are provisional.

The goal is to protect the integrity of everything that follows, ensuring that the self-reflection exercise rests on transparent assumptions and that the limits of the evidence are visible from the outset. To summarise, Step 1 addresses the guidelines for reading in this context and indicates the reliability of the information this dataset provides.

A1 — Data-Coverage Check

Task: This is your first task: data cleaning and preparation. Count how many cells in the uploaded file are not-known/"?" or grey (does not apply), broken down by modality, and state which questions cannot be answered reliably for this country as a result. The purpose is to make reporting gaps explicit before any interpretation, so a gap is never mistaken for a real finding. Don't just count but also interpret data here.

Format: A small table (modalities as rows; columns for "Not known", "Does not apply", "Coverage %"), then a short note on which analyses are limited by the gaps.

Examples:

- Row: "Educational institutions | 1 | 0 | 86%"
- Note: "National public authorities have the thinnest coverage, so conclusions about that organiser type should be treated as provisional."

Constraints: Treat white/"?" strictly as not enough information and treat grey as no impact. Report coverage even when high. British English.

Step 2: Modality-by-modality analysis

This step works systematically through the six modalities, taking each in turn so that none is blurred into another. Each task reads its assigned column on its own terms, draws the impact from the colour but the reasoning from the cell and General Notes text, and treats not-known cells as gaps rather than findings.

These four tasks build the modality-level picture. A2–A4 analyse columns in sequence (Associative (C), Informal (D), and third-party organisers (E–H) to create profiles, with impact shown by colour and reasoning from the cell and notes. A5 then summarises the country's volunteering scene, based on specific evidence rather than general knowledge.

A2 — Associative Volunteering Profile

Task: Using column C only, interpret which trends threaten formal associational life and which strengthen it. Also look at the reasoning from the cell text and General Notes, and flag any not-known cells. The purpose is a focused read and an in-depth interpretation on the modality that has historically been the backbone of organised volunteering. Associative volunteering refers to traditional organised volunteering through voluntary organisations, NGOs, nonprofits and free associations.

Format: Short bulleted lists — "Threats / challenges" and "Supports / opportunities" — then notes on data gaps.

Examples:

- Threats: "Instrumentalisation of volunteers (negative) — notes warn it undermines volunteer autonomy and values."
- Supports: "Rethinking engagement models (challenge framed as opportunity) — notes suggest a chance to design more agile, robust structures."

Constraints: Read column C only. Distinguish a true threat (black) from a challenge (red) — they are not the same. Treat white/"?" as a gap. British English.

A3 — Informal Volunteering Profile

Task: Using column D, describe how the recorded trends affect informal/community volunteering, and assess whether the notes suggest it is absorbing pressure as formal structures recede. The purpose is to understand a modality that is hard to measure because it is unregistered. Informal volunteering means community organising without a formal constitution or registration.

Format: A short narrative (4–6 sentences), ending with an explicit statement of how visible/measurable informal volunteering is in this file.

Examples:

- "Several trends register as a challenge for informal volunteering, with notes describing growing reliance on community self-organisation that these networks must adapt to."
- Closing line: "Coverage is partial — two of seven cells are not-known, so conclusions about informal volunteering here are tentative."

Constraints: Read column D only. Treat white/"?" as missing and say so. Don't infer beyond the notes. British English.

A4 — Third-Party Organiser Breakdown

Task: For columns E–H (Local administrations, National public authorities, Educational institutions, Businesses), give the dominant impact and rationale for each organiser type, and flag where they diverge on the same trend. The purpose is to separate the four third-party organisers (TP Local administrations, TP National public authorities, TP Educational institutions, TP Businesses) which behave differently and must not be merged. Third-party

volunteering covers public and private entities acting as organisers of volunteering.

Format: A table with the four organiser types as rows and columns for "Dominant impact", "Rationale (from notes)", and "Notable divergence". A two-sentence summary follows.

Examples:

- Row: "Businesses | Mostly positive | Corporate volunteering expands social engagement | Positive where Associative is negative on the same commercialisation trend."
- Summary line: "Public organisers (local and national) skew toward challenge, while Businesses skew positive — the same trend often reads differently depending on the organiser's incentives."

Constraints: Keep the four types strictly separate. Base dominant impact on colour, rationale on the notes. Exclude does-not-apply cells. British English.

A5 — Country-Specific Takeaways

Task: Based only on the uploaded file, give 3–5 takeaways distinctive to this country that would not be obvious from a cross-country comparison. The purpose is to capture what is genuinely particular about this country's volunteering picture for the self-reflection narrative.

Format: A numbered list of 3–5 takeaways, each one sentence, each tied to specific evidence in the file.

Examples:

- "Public-sector organisers consistently treat rising volunteering demand as a resourcing strain, suggesting capacity rather than willingness is the binding constraint here."
- "Corporate volunteering is the clearest growth area, but the notes flag a recurring difficulty in designing meaningful tasks for employee volunteers."

Constraints: Maximum five takeaways. Each must rest on something in the file, not general knowledge. No comparison to other specific countries. British English.

Step 3: Reading across the modalities

Step 3 shifts from profiling each modality in isolation to reading across them. Where Step 2 kept the columns separate, this step puts them side by side: first to identify where the country's volunteering landscape is under the most strain and where it is gaining ground, and then to surface the trade-offs in which a single trend pulls different modalities in opposite directions. The goal is not only to evaluate how each modality performs individually, but also to understand their relationships.

A6 takes a vertical view, comparing the modalities against each other to identify which faces the most negative impacts and which benefits most, with the judgement based on colour counts but explained through the notes. A7 takes a horizontal view, examining individual trends to identify those that affect modalities in opposite directions, and describing each tension in the reasoning behind the colours.

A6 — Most Affected and Most Resilient Modality

Task: Identify which modality faces the most negative impacts (black) and which benefits most (most green) in the uploaded file, and explain what drives each, citing and interpreting the reasoning in the cell text and General Notes. The purpose is to locate where this country's volunteering landscape is under most strain and where it is gaining.

Format: Two short labelled paragraphs — "Most affected" and "Most resilient" — each naming the modality, the count behind the judgement, and the rationale from the notes.

Examples:

- "Most affected: Local administrations — 5 of 7 trends register as a challenge. The notes describe administrations managing growing volunteering demand with fewer resources."
- "Most resilient: Businesses — 3 of 7 trends positive; the organisation note frames corporate volunteering as expanding companies' social engagement."

Constraints: Base the judgement on colour counts, but explain it in the text. Exclude not-known and does-not-apply cells from the counts. Keep modalities distinct. No ranking of the country itself. British English.

A7 — Cross-Modality Tensions within a Single Trend

Task: Find trends where the same phenomenon affects modalities in opposing directions (e.g. positive for one, negative for another), and describe each tension using the cell text and notes. The purpose is to surface trade-offs where one trend benefits some organisers while straining others — a key analytical insight for the report.

Format: A bullet per tension. Each bullet names the trend, the modalities pulling in opposite directions with their colours, and a one-sentence explanation from the notes.

Examples:

- "Blurring of non-profit/for-profit boundaries — positive for Businesses (legitimises their involvement) but a challenge for Associative (raises questions about values and commercialisation)."
- "Demand for flexible, short-term engagement — a challenge for Associative (weakens the centrality of formal organisations) yet positive for Businesses (low-commitment employee volunteering)."

Constraints: Only include trends with genuinely divergent colours across modalities. Anchor each tension in the cell text, not inference. Keep the four third-party types distinct. British English.

Step 4: The aggregate picture

Having profiled each modality (Step 2) and read across them for strain and tension (Step 3), this step systematically counts the impacts across all six columns and then translates those counts into an interpretation and a report-ready narrative. It is the point where the exercise turns its careful reading into something that can sit directly in the SEVR2026 report. The goal is a one-glance picture of which modalities the country's trends affect most, paired with the narrative that makes sense of it.

A9 — Impact Balance per Modality

Task: For the uploaded country trend file, count how many trends register as negative, positive, challenge, and not-known for each of the six modality columns (C–H), based on the cell fill colours. Explain what stands out, drawing on the cell text and the General Notes columns to interpret why the balance falls as it does. The purpose is to provide a one-glance picture of which modalities this country's trends most affect.

Format:

- **Output 1:** A table with the six modalities as rows and the impact types (Negative, Positive, Challenge, Not known) as columns. Add a “Comments” column with a short narrative (1-2sentences) on what characterises each modality.
- **Output 2:** Short narrative (3-5 sentences) as annotation to the table, an analytical summary of the overall reading of the Output 1 Table.
- **Output 3:** Provide a narrative, written as draft report prose that could feed the SEVR2026 report.
- **Output 4**: Identify four keywords on the basis of the “Comments” column of the Output 1 Table.

Examples:

Output 1 (table row): "Associative | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | Predominantly under strain: most trends read as negative or challenge, with the notes tying this to commercialisation pressures and questions over volunteer autonomy."

Output 2 (analytical annotation): "The balance tilts towards strain for the two community-rooted modalities, while Businesses is the only column where positives clearly outnumber negatives. Public organisers sit mostly in the challenge band rather than outright negative, suggesting capacity pressure rather than hostility to volunteering. Informal volunteering is the least legible modality here, with two not-known cells limiting any firm reading."

Output 3 (draft report prose): "In this country, the trends gathered for SEVR2026 point to a volunteering landscape under uneven pressure. Traditional associative structures register the most strain, with several trends raising concerns about commercialisation and the erosion of volunteer autonomy. Public administrations are characterised less by decline than by stretched capacity, managing rising demand with constrained resources. The clearest area of growth is corporate volunteering, though the notes caution that designing meaningful tasks remains a recurring difficulty. Informal volunteering is harder to read, owing to gaps in the source material."

Output 4 (keywords): "Commercialisation · Stretched public capacity · Corporate growth · Informal invisibility"

Constraints: Base the four counts strictly on the cell fill colours; draw the interpretation from the cell text and General Notes, never from the colour alone. Exclude does-not-apply (grey) cells from the counts and treat white/"?" as "not known", not as neutral. Keep the six modalities distinct throughout. No ranking of the country itself; no comparison to other countries. British English.

Apply these target lengths, each with a tolerance of about ±25%: Output 2 ≈ 100 words (≈75–125); Output 3 ≈ 150 words (≈110–190); Output 4 exactly four keywords. The table (Output 1) is exempt from word limits, though each "Comments" cell should stay within 1–2 sentences.

Where the country's material is too rich, nuanced, complex or internally contradictory to fit the target length without losing substance, do not compress it to fit. Instead, keep the analysis proportionate and append a short alert at the end of the relevant output, clearly flagged, e.g., **"⚠ Potential for more nuanced analysis — this country's trends are unusually complex and would repay fuller treatment."** Use this alert only when the material genuinely warrants it, not as a routine sign-off.

Set B — Cross-Country Analysis

Applied across several uploaded country files at once. These target the quantified, overarching-trend style the report calls for (e.g. "60% of countries note…").

Step 5: The Europe-wide picture

Everything up to this point has worked within a single file at a time; here, the analysis pools data across all uploaded countries to surface the overarching, Europe-wide patterns the report is built to highlight. Findings are quantified wherever possible, near-identical trends are grouped under shared themes while noting wording differences, and divergence is always interpreted through the cell text and General Notes rather than the colour alone.

The five tasks build the comparative picture from different angles. B1 establishes which trends recur and how widely they do. B2 examines the major shared trends and tests whether they are experienced consistently across modalities or split across contexts. B3 steps up to the European level, reporting which modalities most often skew negative or positive across the dataset. B4 then goes deep rather than wide, tracing how two or three shared phenomena take different local forms, with the divergence explained from the notes. B5 closes the step by testing for structural trade-offs, whether trends that benefit third-party organisers tend to strain associative or informal volunteering.

B1 — Recurring Trends across Countries

Task: Across all uploaded country files, identify trends that recur in multiple countries and express the findings quantitatively (e.g. "X of N countries record a trend about volunteer instrumentalisation"). The purpose is to surface the overarching, Europe-wide trends that the report is built to highlight.

Format: A table of trend themes (rows) against the countries that mention them (columns or a count), with a short narrative leading on the strongest headline figures.

Examples:

- Headline: "6 of 10 countries (60%) record a trend toward flexible, short-term volunteering."
- Table row: "Instrumentalisation of volunteers | BE, FR, NL, IT | 4 countries."

Constraints: Quantify wherever possible. Group near-identical trends under one theme but note wording differences. Don't merge a trend present in one country into a "trend". British English.

B2 — Impact Consistency for a Shared Trend

Task: For major recurring trends that appear in several countries, compare how their impact colour is recorded per modality across those countries, and state where countries agree and where they split. The purpose is to test whether a shared trend is experienced in the same way everywhere or diverges across contexts.

Format: A matrix with countries as rows and the six modalities as columns, cells showing the recorded impact, followed by a narrative on points of agreement and divergence.

Examples:

- "For corporate volunteering, Businesses is positive in 8 of 9 countries, but Associative splits — negative in 5, challenge in 4."
- "All reporting countries agree the trend is positive for Businesses; disagreement concentrates on its effect on informal volunteering."

Constraints: Specify which trend is being compared. Interpret divergence through the cell text and General Notes, not the colour alone. Flag countries where the trend is absent or not-known. British English.

B3 — Which Modality Is Most Often Negative or Positive Europe-wide

Task: Across all files, calculate the share of countries in which each modality most often carries negative versus positive impacts, and report as percentages. The purpose is to identify, at a European level, which parts of the volunteering ecosystem are under most pressure and which are gaining.

Format: A summary table (modalities as rows; "% of countries skewing negative" and "% skewing positive" as columns), then a short interpretive narrative.

Examples:

- "Businesses register a positive skew in 70% of countries; Local administrations skew negative or challenge in 80%."
- Narrative: "Public-sector organisers emerge as the most consistently strained modality across Europe."

Constraints: Define "skew" (e.g. the most frequent impact colour for that modality in a country). Exclude not-known and does-not-apply from the base. Report the N of countries. British English.

B4 — Same Phenomenon, Divergent Local Forms

Task: Pick the most analytically interesting recurring phenomena (e.g. corporate volunteering, the socialisation of public services, demand for flexible engagement) and trace how the recorded impact differs from country to country, using the notes to explain the divergence. The purpose is to show how one shared European trend takes different local forms.

Format: One subsection per phenomenon: a brief description, then country-by-country contrasts in narrative form, drawing explicitly on the cell text and General Notes.

Examples:

- "Corporate volunteering: framed as a clear opportunity for businesses in BE and NL, but the notes in FR stress difficulty creating meaningful tasks, giving it a challenge colour there."
- "Socialisation of public services: read as added strain on local administrations in some countries, but as a legitimising opportunity in others."

Constraints: Limit to two or three phenomena for depth over breadth. Every contrast must cite the file text, not general knowledge. British English.

B5 — Connections between Modalities across Countries

Task: Test across all files whether trends positive for third-party organisers tend to be negative for associative or informal volunteering, quantify the pattern, and illustrate with examples. The purpose is to detect structural trade-offs in the volunteering ecosystem that recur across borders.

Format: A short quantified statement of the pattern's strength, a small supporting table, and two or three illustrative examples drawn from the notes.

Examples:

- “In 7 of 10 countries, at least one trend is positive for Businesses while negative for Associative on the same row.”
- “Example (NL): the same commercialisation trend benefits Businesses but is flagged as an identity challenge for Associative.”

Constraints: State the rule being tested explicitly. Count co-occurrences on the same trend row. Don't overclaim causation — describe co-occurrence. British English.

Discussion & Validation

Step 5: Pause before analysis

This step is a deliberate pause before the analysis proceeds. Rather than moving straight from the core analytical work into final reporting, Step 5 builds in a checkpoint to consolidate what has emerged so far, surface preliminary findings, and flag where human judgement or further work is needed. The idea is to selectively feed Claude's own output documents back in so they can be reviewed, validated against the original data tables, and turned into discussion points for the later stages.

What this step will involve:

1. **Consolidate preliminary findings** — pull together what the analysis has produced so far into an initial set of observations, held as provisional rather than settled.
2. **Summarise Set A and Set B** — draw the single-country analysis (Set A) and the cross-country synthesis (Set B) into a short combined overview.
3. **Feed outputs back for checking** — take selected response documents from earlier steps and re-submit them so Claude can run targeted checks against the original data tables, confirming the readings hold.
4. **Build a stop-and-go around the core steps** — treat the two main analytical phases as the point to validate before proceeding (the data-coverage check counts as preliminary methodological work rather than a core analytical step in its own right).
5. **Flag follow-up needed** — note open questions, gaps and points requiring human discussion or a further pass before the findings feed the report.

Prompt to consider here to reflect:

Mapping to the Blueprint for Volunteering 2030

Task: Identify which cross-country patterns in the data relate to Blueprint for Volunteering 2030 (BEV2030) indicators, and state clearly which BEV2030 outcomes the files cannot speak to. The purpose is to connect the trend evidence to the report's policy framework and to be honest about coverage gaps. The analysis feeds a report that tracks progress towards the envisaged outcomes in the Blueprint for Volunteering 2030.

Format: A two-column mapping (BEV2030 indicator | supporting cross-country evidence), followed by an explicit list of outcomes the data does not address.

Examples:

- "Outcome: stronger volunteering infrastructure — supported by trends on public-authority involvement in 6 countries."
- "Not addressed: the data says little about volunteer rights/legal status, which falls outside the trend columns."

Constraints: Only map where the file evidence genuinely relates to an outcome. Be explicit about unmapped outcomes rather than stretching the data. British English.

Set C — Groupings, Outliers and Regional patterns

Step 6: Mapping the field

Step 6 builds on the cross-country synthesis of Step 5 but turns from *what recurs* to *how countries relate to one another*, so which sit together, which stand apart, and which patterns belong to particular regions. The purpose is to give the report an interpretive structure: natural groupings and distinctive cases that can organise a comparative narrative across many countries.

The five tasks move from grouping, to divergence, to a validation check. C1 identifies the most similar country profiles, naming the shared trends and colour patterns behind the similarity. C2 flags the outliers that diverge most from the overall pattern. C3 organises countries into interpretive clusters, defined by region, most-affected modality, or infrastructural maturity. C4 isolates region-specific phenomena that a Europe-wide average would otherwise hide. C5 assesses, for each claimed difference, how much reflects genuine variation versus differing source coverage or not-known cells, and says so explicitly where the two cannot be separated.

C1 — Most Similar Country Profiles

Task: Compare the uploaded files and identify which countries have the most similar trend/impact profiles, stating the basis for the similarity (shared trends, shared colour patterns). The purpose is to find natural groupings that can structure the report's comparative narrative.

Persona: You are a research analyst supporting the Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) on the State of European Volunteering Report 2026 (SEVR2026) — a self-reflection exercise for CEV members, not a ranking of countries. You are comparing several country files.

Format: A short ranked list of the most similar country pairs/groups, each with a one-line justification.

Examples:

- "BE and NL: closely aligned — both show businesses positive and public organisers challenged on the same trends."
- "FR and IT: similar emphasis on instrumentalisation risks across associative and informal volunteering."

Constraints: Base similarity on both the trends present and their impact colours. Name the shared features, don't just assert similarity. British English.

C2 — Outliers

Task: Identify the countries that diverge most from the overall pattern and explain, from the data, what drives the divergence. The purpose is to flag distinctive national cases that merit individual attention in the report.

Format: A short list of outlier countries, each with a paragraph explaining what makes it diverge, citing specific trends or impact patterns.

Examples:

- "Country X is an outlier: it is the only file where informal volunteering skews positive across most trends, which the notes attribute to strong community self-organisation."

- "Country Y diverges by recording educational institutions as the most affected modality, unlike the cross-country norm."

Constraints: Anchor each divergence in evidence from the file. Distinguish genuine divergence from thin reporting (see C5). British English.

C3 — Clustering

Task: Group the countries into clusters (e.g. by region, by which modality is most affected, or by infrastructural maturity), define each cluster, and present the grouping clearly. The purpose is to give the report an interpretive structure for organising many countries.

Format: A table or grouped list with each cluster, its member countries, and the defining characteristic. A short note clarifying these are interpretive groupings, not formal categories.

Examples:

- "Cluster 1 — 'business-driven': BE, NL — third-party/business volunteering is the main growth area."
- "Cluster 2 — 'public-strain': FR, IT — public administrations carry the most challenge-coded trends."

Constraints: State the clustering basis explicitly. Present clusters as interpretive, drawn from the data, not as fixed typologies. A country may sit in more than one cluster if justified. British English.

C4 — Regional Uniqueness

Task: Identify any trend or impact pattern strongly present in one region but largely absent elsewhere, and describe it. The purpose is to capture genuinely region-specific phenomena that a Europe-wide average would otherwise hide.

Format: A short narrative per region with a notable pattern, naming the countries and the distinguishing trend/impact, drawing on the notes for explanation.

Examples:

- "In the Nordic files, social prescribing appears as a recurring positive trend for public authorities — largely absent from the Southern European files."
- "Emergency-relief informal networks feature prominently in one region's files but rarely elsewhere."

Constraints: Only claim regional uniqueness where the contrast is clear in the data. Distinguish a real regional pattern from a reporting artefact. British English.

C5 — Real Difference versus Reporting Artefact

Task: For the differences you find across countries, assess how much reflects genuine variation versus differing source coverage or not-known cells, and be explicit where the two cannot be separated. The purpose is to protect the report from mistaking a data gap for a real finding — the central risk given the absence of harmonised EU-wide data.

Format: For each major claimed difference, a short verdict — "likely real", "likely artefact", or "cannot tell" — with the reasoning.

Examples:

- "Apparent absence of informal-volunteering trends in Country Z is likely an artefact — that column is mostly not-known rather than negative."

- “The business/associative split looks real: it appears consistently with substantive notes across well-covered files.”

Constraints: Always run this check before finalising cross-country claims. Treat heavy not-known coverage as a warning sign. Don't resolve genuine ambiguity by guessing. British English.

Set A — Per-country indicator profiles

Applied to a single country across all indicator sheets, or to a single indicator sheet, as noted on each prompt.

> **Standing rule for every prompt in this set:** build each finding from the "copy text from CFS" evidence and the "notes" commentary read together and weighted equally. The status flag only orients; the conclusion must be one the two text layers jointly support, and any divergence between them is itself reported.

Step 1: Methodological framing & coverage check

Before any indicator is interpreted, Step 1 establishes how the data should (and should not) be read, and how much the evidence can actually support. The exercise is interpretive: the status flag is thin, and the meaning rests on reading the CFS evidence and the reviewer notes together. Identifying coverage gaps up front keeps the work honest and makes clear which conclusions are firm and which are provisional.

A1 — Coverage & reliability check

Task: This is the first task: assess what the data can support before interpreting anything. For the chosen country (or chosen indicator sheet), count how many cells are blank, "not clear", or carry a compound flag (e.g. "yes / not clear"), and — critically — how many rows have a status flag but little or no CFS text or notes to substantiate it. State which indicators (or countries) cannot be read reliably as a result. The purpose is to make reporting gaps explicit so a gap is never mistaken for a real finding, and so a bare flag is never treated as evidence. Do not just count: interpret what the gaps mean for the analysis that follows.

Format: A table (indicators or countries as rows; columns for "Status present", "CFS text present", "Notes present", "Blank / not clear", "Substantiation"), then a short note on which readings are limited by the gaps.

Examples:

- Row: "5.4.2 Insurance | 7 statuses | 5 CFS texts | 6 notes | 15 blanks | Thin — most countries unreported."
- Note: "Co-financing (1.3.2) and Insurance (5.4.2) are the least covered indicators; conclusions about them should be treated as provisional. Several 'yes' flags rest on a status alone with no CFS text — these are unsubstantiated and flagged."

Constraints: Judge proof against both text layers — the CFS evidence and the notes: a row is only well-evidenced where at least one carries real content, and a flag standing alone is unsubstantiated. Treat blank and "not clear" strictly as missing, never as "no". Report coverage even when high. British English.

Step 2: Indicator-by-indicator reading

This step works through the indicators one at a time, reading each through both text layers. Each task draws the provisional position from the status flag but builds the actual finding from the CFS evidence and the notes jointly, and treats blanks as gaps rather than findings.

A2 — Single-indicator deep read

Task: For one chosen indicator sheet, read each country's entry through the CFS text and the notes together. For every country, state the position the evidence actually supports (not merely the flag), and explain it from the wording — what is documented, and how the reviewer qualifies it. Flag explicitly where the notes overturn the flag (e.g. "Change to No"), where they downgrade a "yes" to partial, or where evidence and notes pull apart. The purpose is a careful, text-grounded read of one Blueprint condition across the countries that reported it.

Format: A table — countries as rows; columns for "Flag", "What the evidence supports", "Key nuance from CFS text + notes". Follow with a 3–4-sentence narrative on the overall picture for this indicator.

Examples:

- Row: "Scotland | flag 'not clear' → reviewer note: 'Change to No' | A volunteer charter exists but is non-statutory and unenforced; the documented framework is cross-cutting duties, not a volunteering law."
- Row: "Belgium | 'yes' | A 2005 volunteer law exists | but notes stress it is 'not enough known or respected', with misuse and an often-ignored advisory council — existence outpaces working reality."

Constraints: Build the finding from the CFS text and notes jointly; never from the flag alone. Quote or closely cite the wording that warrants each reading. Treat blank/"not clear" as missing. British English.

A3 — Comparing formal existence and operational reality

Task: Analyse either a specific country across all indicators or a single indicator across multiple countries to distinguish between two distinct states: formal existence and actual function. Consult the "copy text from CFS" for evidence of formal provision and the "notes" to determine the working reality. Identify instances of divergence, such as legislation that is unenforced or strategies that have lapsed, to ensure that paper-based provisions are not misrepresented as functioning systems.

Format: Present a two-column list titled "Exists on paper" and "Working reality (from notes)", followed by a concise paragraph identifying where the discrepancy between the two is most significant.

Examples:

- Strategy (3.3.2), Hungary: While a national strategy was documented for 2012–2022, reviewer notes indicate it has since expired without a successor, resulting in a current strategic void.
- Funding (1.4.1), Belgium: Regional centres are formally established, yet notes reveal a lack of dedicated funding, rendering their operational capacity unstable.

Constraints: Treat the CFS evidence and reviewer notes as co-equal sources. Use the CFS text as the primary basis for "existence" and the notes for "working reality", ensuring the final conclusion is supported by both. Avoid inferring gaps not explicitly mentioned in the notes. Use British English.

A4 — Multi-dimensional indicators (2.3.3 and 2.1.4)

Task: For the two multi-dimensional indicators, read each sub-column separately and then compare them. For 2.3.3, contrast the National level with the Regional/Local level. For 2.1.4, give the position for each of the five partner types (informal groups, local administrations, national public authorities, educational institutions, business-sector actors), reading the CFS text and notes for each, and flag where they diverge within the same country. The purpose is to avoid collapsing a genuinely split picture into one status.

Format: For 2.1.4, a table with the five partner types as rows and columns for “Position” and “Evidence + nuance”. For 2.3.3, two short labelled blocks (National; Regional/Local). A two-sentence summary follows each.

Examples:

- Row (2.1.4): “Business-sector actors | partial | collaboration exists mainly through corporate volunteering, but the notes describe it as ad hoc rather than systematically supported.”
- Summary (2.3.3): “The national reference point is well-established, but regional/local provision is uneven and described in the notes as patchy across municipalities.”

Constraints: Keep sub-dimensions strictly separate; never merge them into a single status. For each sub-column, base the position on the CFS text and the notes read together and as equals, not on the flag. Exclude blank sub-columns from claims. British English.

A5 — Country-specific takeaways

Task: Based only on the chosen country’s rows across all indicators, give 3–5 takeaways distinctive to this country that would not be obvious from a cross-country comparison — each drawn from the CFS text and/or notes. The purpose is to capture what is genuinely particular about this country’s position against the Blueprint for the self-reflection narrative.

Format: A numbered list of 3–5 takeaways, each one sentence, each tied to specific evidence or a specific note in the file.

Examples:

- "Recognition is the most firmly established condition here, with documented awards and volunteer weeks — yet the notes flag that recognition is not matched by a legal framework."
- "Crisis-response volunteering is highly visible in the evidence, but the notes describe it as 'come and go' rather than structurally embedded."

Constraints: Maximum five takeaways. Each must rest on the file — the CFS text, the notes, or both read together — not on general knowledge, and the most revealing takeaways usually come from where the evidence and the notes pull apart. No comparison to other named countries. British English.

Step 3: Consolidating the country profiles

Following the coverage assessment (Step 1) and the dual-layer textual analysis (Step 2), this stage aggregates a country's standing across all eleven indicators into a finalised profile. This process transforms detailed analytical readings into structured content suitable for direct inclusion in the report.

A6 — Country maturity profile across all indicators

Task: For the chosen country, summarise its position on each of the eleven indicators, classifying each as Established, Partial/emerging, Absent, or Not reported — with the classification justified by the CFS text and notes together, not by the flag alone. Then write a short interpretive narrative and a report-ready short paragraph. The purpose is a one-glance picture of where this country stands against the Blueprint, paired with the prose that makes sense of it.

Format:

- Output 1: a table — the eleven indicators as rows; columns for "Position" (Established / Partial / Absent / Not reported), and "Basis (evidence + notes)" with a 1–2 sentence justification per indicator.
- Output 2: a short analytical annotation (≈100 words) reading across the table — where this country is strongest, where the paper-versus-practice gap is widest, where it is silent.
- Output 3: a report-ready paragraph (≈150 words) as draft prose for the report.
- Output 4: four keywords capturing this country's profile.

Examples:

- Output 1 row: "3.4.1 Legal framework | Partial | A volunteer law exists, but notes record it is poorly known and inconsistently applied."
- Output 4: "Strong recognition · Legal gap · Precarious funding · Crisis-active"

Constraints: Classify from the CFS text and notes jointly; the flag only orients. "Not reported" for blanks — never read as "Absent". No ranking of the country; no comparison to other named countries. British English. Apply the target lengths with a tolerance of about ±25%.

⚠ *Where a country's material is too rich or internally contradictory to fit the target length without losing substance, do not compress it. Keep the analysis proportionate and append a short flagged alert, e.g. "Potential for fuller treatment — this country's evidence and notes diverge substantially and would repay closer reading." Use this only when the material genuinely warrants it.*

Set B — Cross-country analysis

Applied across all countries at once. These target the quantified, Europe-wide picture the report calls for (e.g. "14 of 22 countries document a volunteer law"), always reasoning through the CFS text and notes rather than the flag alone.

> **Standing rule for every prompt in this set:** every cross-country count or comparison is built from the CFS evidence and the notes read together and weighted equally, never from the status flag. A country counts toward a pattern only where both text layers (read jointly) support placing it there.

Step 4: The Europe-wide picture

Here the analysis pools data across all countries to surface where Europe stands on each Blueprint condition. Findings are quantified wherever the text supports it, and divergence is always interpreted through the CFS evidence and notes.

B1 — Indicator strength across Europe

Task: For each indicator, count how many of the 22 countries the evidence places as Established, Partial/emerging, Absent, or Not reported — deriving each placement from the CFS text and notes — and express the result quantitatively. The purpose is to show which Blueprint conditions are most and least advanced across Europe, and how much of each picture is simply unreported.

Format: A table — the eleven indicators as rows; columns for Established / Partial / Absent / Not reported (counts), plus a one-line interpretation. Lead with a short narrative on the strongest headline figures.

Examples:

- Headline: "Recognition (4.1.2) is the most widely established condition — documented in 19 of 22 countries."
- Row: "5.4.2 Insurance | 4 Established | 4 Partial | 0 Absent | 14 Not reported — mostly unreported, so any Europe-wide claim is weak."

Constraints: Derive placements from the text and notes, not the flag. Report "Not reported" explicitly and never fold it into "Absent". State the N. British English.

B2 — Same condition, different national forms

Task: Pick the four to five most analytically interesting and most filled-in indicators (e.g. legal framework, strategy, co-creation of policy). For each one, classify every country into one of four categories, based on the CFS text and notes read together:

- **Established** — the condition exists, and the notes don't substantially undercut it
- **Partial/emerging** — it exists on paper, but the notes qualify it (paper-vs-practice cases)

- **Absent** — a documented "no"
- **Not reported** — blank cell or "not clear," with nothing in the notes to resolve it

This classification is the analytical basis for the section, not a side note — use it to group countries, then explain *within* each category (and especially within "Established" and "Partial/emerging") how the underlying form still differs from country to country: a binding law here, a constitutional freedom-of-association tradition there, an expired strategy elsewhere. The point is to show that two countries can end up in the same category for different reasons, and that "Established" doesn't imply uniformity.

Format: One subsection per indicator:

1. A brief description of the condition.
2. A short list of countries by category (Established / Partial / Emerging / Absent / Not reported).
3. Narrative contrasts — organised by category, where that groups countries sensibly, but free to cut across categories where the more interesting contrast is *within* "Established" or "Partial/emerging" (e.g. two "Established" countries reaching the same status via different mechanisms).

Examples: "Legal framework — Established: Belgium and Croatia via a dedicated volunteer law; Italy also Established but the notes flag underused provisions rather than fully applied ones, so it's a lighter-touch 'Established.' Partial/emerging: Sweden and Germany, where there is no specific law but a constitutional freedom-of-association tradition the notes treat as functionally equivalent, though not codified as volunteering law. Not reported: [country], where the cell is blank and no note fills the gap." "Strategy — Established: Slovenia and Malta, both with active strategies. Partial/emerging: Hungary, where a strategy exists but the notes confirm it expired and was not renewed. Absent: Greece, where the notes confirm no strategy exists. Not reported: [country]."

Constraints: Limit to four to five indicators for depth over breadth. Every classification and every contrast must be built from the CFS text and the notes together — cite the wording from both where they each add something, never from general knowledge. Where CFS text and notes diverge (e.g. CFS says "yes," notes correct or qualify it), that divergence is itself worth flagging as a finding, and should usually be what pushes a country from Established into Partial/emerging. Treat blank/"not clear" as Not reported, never as Absent. No best/worst framing or ranking of countries — the four categories describe status, not performance. British English.

B3 — The theory-versus-practice gap across Europe

Task: Across all countries and indicators, identify the recurring pattern where a condition exists on paper (CFS text) but the notes record it functioning poorly —

laws not known or respected, strategies expired, advisory bodies ignored, centres unfunded, recognition without legal backing. Quantify how widespread this gap is and illustrate it. The purpose is to surface the single most important cross-cutting finding the notes make possible: that formal existence overstates real progress.

Format: A short quantified statement of how common the gap is, a small supporting table (Indicator | example countries | nature of the gap), and two or three illustrative examples drawn from the notes.

Examples:

- "In at least 8 of 22 countries, a documented legal or strategic provision is qualified by the notes as poorly known, expired, or unenforced."
- "Example (Belgium, 3.4.1): a volunteer law exists but is 'not enough known or respected', with an often-ignored advisory council."

Constraints: Anchor every gap in a specific note. Count a country only where the notes — not your inference — record the shortfall. Describe co-occurrence, not causation. British English.

B4 — Recurring themes in the notes

Task: Across all sheets, identify themes that recur in the notes column independent of any single indicator — for example, consultation-but-not-co-decision, youth-only structures, crisis volunteering as episodic, reliance on EU funding, the informal sector left outside the framework. Express how widely each recurs and ground each in specific notes. The purpose is to mine the reviewer commentary for Europe-wide patterns that the indicator structure alone would hide.

Format: A table of themes (rows) against the countries that express them (count and list), with a short narrative leading on the strongest themes.

Examples:

- Theme row: "Consultation but not shared decision-making | CZ, RO, SE, SCO… | 6 countries."
- Theme row: "Volunteering structures defined for youth only, leaving other volunteers without coordination | LT, RO…"

Constraints: Group near-identical themes under one label but note wording differences. Quantify where possible. Every theme must be grounded in specific notes, not inferred. British English.

B5 — Open harvesting (prompt under construction)

In addition to the directive prompts above, are there other useful Europe-wide perspectives to take?

Discussion & Validation

Step 5: Pause before final synthesis

This step is a deliberate pause before the analysis proceeds to final reporting. Rather than moving straight from the analytical work into the report, Step 5 builds in a checkpoint to consolidate what has emerged, surface preliminary findings, and flag where human judgement or further work is needed — by feeding selected AI outputs back in to be reviewed against the original workbook.

What this step involves:

- **Consolidate preliminary findings** — pull together what the analysis has produced so far, held as provisional rather than settled.
- **Summarise Set A and Set B** — draw the per-country profiles and the cross-country synthesis into a short combined overview.
- **Feed outputs back for checking** — resubmit selected response documents so the AI can run targeted checks against the original CFS text and notes, confirming the readings hold and that no status flag was treated as evidence.
- **Build a stop-and-go around the core steps** — validate the two main analytical phases before proceeding (the coverage check counts as preliminary methodological work, not a core analytical step).
- **Flag follow-up needed** — note open questions, gaps and points requiring human discussion or a further pass before the findings feed the report.

Set C — Groupings, outliers and reliability

Step 6: Mapping the field

Step 6 turns from what recurs to how countries relate to one another — which sit together, which stand apart, which patterns belong to particular regions — and closes with the reliability check that protects the whole exercise. The purpose is to give the report an interpretive structure: natural groupings and distinctive cases that can organise a comparative narrative across many countries.

> **Standing rule for every prompt in this set:** groupings, outliers and regional patterns are judged on the CFS evidence and the notes read together and weighted equally — countries can resemble or diverge from one another on documented provision, on reviewer commentary, or on the gap between the two, and all three count.

C1 — Most similar country profiles

Task: Compare the countries across all indicators and identify which have the most similar Blueprint profiles, stating the basis for the similarity (shared established conditions, shared gaps, similar paper-versus-practice patterns read from the notes). The purpose is to find natural groupings that can structure the report's comparative narrative.

Format: A short ranked list of the most similar country pairs/groups, each with a one-line justification.

Examples:

- "Sweden and Scotland: both lack a dedicated volunteering law and strategy, relying on broader frameworks; notes in both stress consultation without co-decision."
- "Italy and Croatia: both have a developed legal framework but notes flag weak co-creation of policy."

Constraints: Base similarity on the evidence and notes, not the flags alone. Name the shared features; do not just assert similarity. British English.

C2 — Outliers

Task: Identify the countries that diverge most from the overall pattern and explain, from the CFS text and notes, what drives the divergence. The purpose is to flag distinctive national cases that merit individual attention in the report.

Persona: You are a research analyst identifying distinctive national cases in the BEV2030 dataset.

Format: A short list of outlier countries, each with a paragraph explaining what makes it diverge, citing specific evidence or notes.

Examples:

- “Sweden is an outlier: it documents no dedicated law, strategy or insurance requirement, yet the notes describe high participation and a strong autonomous civil-society tradition — maturity without formal scaffolding.”
- “Hungary diverges by combining a detailed legal architecture with an explicitly expired strategy and a noted political transition.”

Constraints: Anchor each divergence in the CFS text and the notes together — weighing both, since an outlier may stand out on documented evidence, on reviewer commentary, or on the gap between them. Distinguish genuine divergence from thin reporting (see C5). British English.

C3 — Clustering

Task: Group the countries into clusters (e.g. by region, by overall maturity profile, by which Blueprint strand is strongest, or by the size of the paper-versus-practice gap), define each cluster, and present the grouping clearly. The purpose is to give the report an interpretive structure for organising many countries.

Format: A table or grouped list with each cluster, its member countries, and the defining characteristic. A short note clarifying these are interpretive groupings, not formal categories.

Examples:

- “Cluster — ‘law-led’: BE, IT, HR, PT — a dedicated legal framework anchors the profile.”
- “Cluster — ‘tradition-led’: SE, DE — no specific law, but strong autonomous civil-society foundations.”

Constraints: State the clustering basis explicitly. Present clusters as interpretive, drawn from the data, not as fixed typologies. A country may sit in more than one cluster if justified. British English.

C4 — Regional patterns

Task: Identify any condition or pattern strongly present in one region but largely absent elsewhere, and describe it, drawing on the CFS text and notes for explanation. The purpose is to capture genuinely region-specific patterns that a Europe-wide average would otherwise hide.

Format: A short narrative per region with a notable pattern, naming the countries and the distinguishing condition.

Examples:

- “In several Central and Eastern European files, volunteering structures are defined chiefly for youth, leaving other volunteers without dedicated coordination — a pattern less visible in the Nordic files.”
- “Crisis-response volunteering features prominently in the notes of countries near recent conflict or disaster, and is framed there as central rather than episodic.”

Constraints: Only claim a regional pattern where the contrast is clear across both text layers — the CFS evidence and the notes read together. Distinguish a real pattern from a reporting artefact (see C5). British English.

C5 — Real difference versus reporting artefact

Task: For the differences found across countries, assess how much reflects genuine variation versus differing source coverage, blank cells, or a status flag left unsubstantiated by text — and be explicit where the two cannot be separated. The purpose is to protect the report from mistaking a reporting gap for a real finding — the central risk, since the Country Fact Sheets are compiled by different national contributors.

Format: For each major claimed difference, a short verdict — "likely real", "likely artefact", or "cannot tell" — with the reasoning.

Examples:

- "Apparent absence of co-financing (1.3.2) in many countries is likely an artefact — that sheet is mostly blank rather than recording a documented 'no'."
- "The paper-versus-practice gap looks real: it appears consistently with substantive notes across well-covered indicators."

Constraints: Always run this check before finalising cross-country claims. Treat heavy blank coverage and unsubstantiated flags as warning signs. Do not resolve genuine ambiguity by guessing. British English.

Set D — Supplementary Prompts to Consider for the main files (for the AI to reflect on their work)

Preliminary task — Devise framework for the analysis.

Output: a coding grid documenting the full spectrum of your interpretive stance, from solidly anchored (direct restatement of the source text) to loosely grounded (independent inference not explicitly stated in the file), as proposed in the prompt below.

The tasks that follow then produce analytical outputs using these **AI data interpretation codes**, tagging each finding inline according to where it sits on that spectrum.

The subset concludes with a final assessment of the overall degree of interpretation applied across the analysis, how much of the output is solidly anchored versus loosely grounded, and where that balance shifts.

Cross-Dataset Interpretation Check

Task: As you begin your analysis of the BEV2030 indicator dataset (country-level status flags, CFS evidence, and reviewer commentary) and the SEVR colour coding dataset (colour-coded modality ratings and descriptive text), define your interpretive stance before you draw any findings. Position your approach on the spectrum between literal reporting of the source material and deriving independent conclusions not explicitly stated in the files. This matters because the two datasets invite different degrees of interpretation — one lives in prose, the other leads with a rating — and I need to know how much of what you tell me is the file speaking versus your own conclusions, so I can trust and verify each finding. For both datasets, specify: the distinction you are drawing between primary source data and your analytical interpretation of it; the weight you assign to status flags or colour ratings relative to the descriptive text, particularly where they appear to conflict; the classification of each of your outputs as a faithful restatement, a judgement based on weighted evidence, or an inferential hypothesis; and the variation in your interpretive method between the two files, accounting for BEV2030's dual-layered prose structure versus SEVR colour rating-led format.

Persona: You are the AI doing this analysis. Speak in the first person about your own interpretive process — how you yourself are reading, weighing and reasoning over these two files as you analyse them. You are expected to be explicit and self-aware about the degree of interpretation you are applying to the source data before any of your conclusions are used.

Format: Open with a short statement of your overall interpretive stance for each dataset. Then present a two-column table — one column per dataset (BEV2030 and SEVR2026) — with rows for: primary data vs interpretation, weighting of flag/colour vs text, output classification, and interpretive method. Close with two or three sentences on how the two methods differ and why. As you then proceed with the actual analysis, signpost each finding inline as either a direct finding or an analytical conclusion.

Examples:

- Row (weighting): "BEV2030 — the status flag is provisional; where the notes contradict it (e.g. a 'yes' the reviewer downgrades), I follow the text and report the divergence. | SEVR2026 — the colour is the primary rating; I use the text to explain it, and flag any case where the text seems to pull against the colour."
- Inline signposting: "Direct finding: the sheet records a volunteer law as present. Analytical conclusion (L3, weighed): the notes indicate it functions poorly, so I read this as existence without full implementation."

Constraints: Ground every claim in the specific terminology of the source files; do not introduce facts or figures not present in them. Keep direct findings and analytical conclusions clearly distinguished throughout — never let a conclusion read as an established fact. Where a conclusion would require more interpretation than the evidence supports, flag it explicitly rather than asserting it. Treat blanks and "not clear" as missing, never as "no". Use British English.

Harvesting Examples File Linking Prompts

Preliminary task — Devise framework for connecting harvested observations to BEV indicators.
Output: a Sankey diagram (or similar) showing which harvested observations feed into which BEV indicator(s).

Data coverage check — stop before analysing.
Assess whether the harvesting file gives enough to analyse: how many countries feed each indicator, and how substantive that input is. Define a benchmark for the minimum evidence needed to analyse an indicator at all. Output: an interpretation grid classifying each BEV indicator as **solidly grounded**, **sufficient**, or **weak**, based on that benchmark.

Main tasks: collect, then analyse, per BEV indicator.

1. **National level** — for every country, collect and analyse harvested input against each BEV indicator.
2. **European level** — across countries, identify commonalities and outliers per indicator, using the same approach as the Country Fact Sheet analysis.

Connector Prompt 1 — Link harvested observations to the BEV2030 indicators

Task: Read the harvesting-responses file (real initiatives submitted by CEV members, each with fields for country, organisational modality, territorial span, state of art, motivation, relevance/why-it-is-a-trend, and implications for Volunteer Centres) and connect each relevant observation to the BEV2030 indicator it speaks to. For every observation, identify which Blueprint indicator(s) it illustrates — for example a national volunteering strategy maps to 3.3.2 Strategy, an employer-supported-volunteering framework to 2.1.4 (business-sector partner type), a digital volunteering platform to 2.3.3 Accessible point of information — and say what the live example *adds* to the indicator sheet: does it confirm the

documented status, put flesh on a bare "yes", or reveal something the indicator sheet does not capture. The purpose is to let the grounded, on-the-ground observations enrich and pressure-test the more abstract indicator data, so the report can cite a real initiative behind a Blueprint condition.

Format: A mapping table — one row per harvested observation; columns for "Observation (country + title)", "BEV2030 indicator(s) it maps to", and "What it adds to the indicator sheet". Follow with a short narrative on the indicators most enriched by real examples, and those the harvesting file leaves untouched.

Examples:

- Row: "Scotland — national ESV framework | 2.1.4 (business-sector support) + 3.3.2 Strategy | Gives a concrete national mechanism behind Scotland's strategy activity; shows the business-partner dimension working in practice, which the indicator sheet records only thinly."
- Row: "Malta — National Volunteering Strategy 2025–2030 | 3.3.2 Strategy | Confirms and dates the strategy the indicator sheet flags as present, and adds its cross-sector scope."
- Narrative: "Strategy (3.3.2) and the accessible-point-of-information indicator (2.3.3) are richly illustrated by Maltese and Italian digital-platform observations; insurance (5.4.2) and co-financing (1.3.2) have no matching observation at all."

Constraints: Map an observation to an indicator only where the content genuinely fits; leave it unmapped rather than forcing it. Ground each mapping in specific wording from both the observation and the indicator sheet. Note that the harvesting file covers only seven countries unevenly (Malta, Spain and Italy dominate), so the absence of an observation is never evidence about an indicator. Keep the harvested example and the indicator finding clearly distinguished. British English.

Connector Prompt 2 — Link harvested observations to the SEVR2026 colour-coded modalities

Task: Read the harvesting-responses file and connect each relevant observation to the SEVR2026 colour-coded modality framework. Each observation already carries an "organisational modality" tag (associative volunteering, third-party volunteering, informal volunteering, or "something different / not clear"); use that plus the observation's content to place it against the SEVR2026 modalities and the trends the colour ratings track. For each observation, say which modality it belongs to and what it shows about the direction of travel — does the live example support the colour rating's implied trend for that modality, complicate it, or point to an emerging form the colour scheme does not yet have a category for (several observations self-describe as "something different or not clear", which is itself a signal). The purpose is to let real, current initiatives test whether the

SEVR2026 colour picture still holds, and to identify where new modalities are emerging.

Format: A table — one row per observation; columns for "Observation (country + title)", "SEVR2026 modality", "Trend it shows", and "Fit with the colour rating (confirms/complicates / new form)". Close with a short narrative on which modalities the live examples reinforce and where an emerging form sits outside the existing categories.

Examples:

- Row: "Malta — SimplyGiving (digital fundraising as civic participation) | self-tagged 'something different / not clear' | digital/indirect participation as volunteering | New form — sits outside the classic modalities and suggests the colour scheme may need a digital category."
- Row: "Italy — Cantiere Terzo Settore | associative volunteering | third-sector infrastructure consolidation | Confirms the associative-modality trend the rating tracks."
- Narrative: "Associative volunteering is well-populated and broadly confirms the existing picture; the recurring 'something different' tag on digital platforms is the clearest sign of a modality the colour framework does not yet capture."

Constraints: Respect each observation's own modality tag; where you read it differently, say so and why rather than silently overriding it. Treat "something different / not clear" as a meaningful signal of an emerging form, not as missing data. Ground every placement in the observation's wording. Distinguish what the observation shows (a live finding) from what the colour rating asserts (the framework's position), and flag rather than assert where they diverge. Note the file's limited seven-country coverage before any broad claim. British English.

(Set D) Supplementary Prompts to Consider for the main files (for the AI to reflect on their work)

Preliminary task — Devise framework for the analysis.

Output: a coding grid documenting the full spectrum of your interpretive stance, from solidly anchored (direct restatement of the source text) to loosely grounded (independent inference not explicitly stated in the file), as proposed in the prompt below.

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Format: Open with a short statement of your overall interpretive stance for each dataset. Then present a two-column table — one column per dataset (BEV2030 and 3-Tier Trends) — with rows for: primary data vs interpretation, weighting of flag/colour vs text, output classification, and interpretive method. Close with two or three sentences on how the two methods differ and why. As you then proceed

with the actual analysis, signpost each finding inline as either a direct finding or an analytical conclusion.

Examples:

- Row (weighting): "BEV2030 — the status flag is provisional; where the notes contradict it (e.g. a 'yes' the reviewer downgrades), I follow the text and report the divergence. | 3-Tier Trends— the colour is the primary rating; I use the text to explain it, and flag any case where the text seems to pull against the colour."
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Harvesting Examples File Linking Prompts

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Connector Prompt 1 — Link harvested observations to the BEV2030 indicators

Task: Read the harvesting-responses file (real initiatives submitted by CEV members, each with fields for country, organisational modality, territorial span, state of art, motivation, relevance/why-it-is-a-trend, and implications for Volunteer Centres) and connect each relevant observation to the BEV2030 indicator it speaks to. For every observation, identify which Blueprint indicator(s) it illustrates — for example a national volunteering strategy maps to 3.3.2 Strategy, an

employer-supported-volunteering framework to 2.1.4 (business-sector partner type), a digital volunteering platform to 2.3.3 Accessible point of information — and say what the live example *adds* to the indicator sheet: does it confirm the documented status, put flesh on a bare "yes", or reveal something the indicator sheet does not capture. The purpose is to let the grounded, on-the-ground observations enrich and pressure-test the more abstract indicator data, so the report can cite a real initiative behind a Blueprint condition.

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Examples:

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Connector Prompt 2 — Link harvested observations to the SEVR2026 colour-coded modalities

Task: Read the harvesting-responses file and connect each relevant observation to the 3-Tier colour-coded modality framework. Each observation already carries an "organisational modality" tag (associative volunteering, third-party volunteering, informal volunteering, or "something different / not clear"); use that plus the observation's content to place it against the modalities and the trends the colour ratings track. For each observation, say which modality it belongs to and what it shows about the direction of travel — does the live example support the colour rating's implied trend for that modality, complicate it, or point to an

emerging form the colour scheme does not yet have a category for (several observations self-describe as "something different or not clear", which is itself a signal). The purpose is to let real, current initiatives test whether the colour picture still holds, and to identify where new modalities are emerging.

Format: A table — one row per observation; columns for "Observation (country + title)", "3-Tier modality", "Trend it shows", and "Fit with the colour rating (confirms/complicates / new form)". Close with a short narrative on which modalities the live examples reinforce and where an emerging form sits outside the existing categories.

Examples:

- Row: "Malta — SimplyGiving (digital fundraising as civic participation) | self-tagged 'something different / not clear' | digital/indirect participation as volunteering | New form — sits outside the classic modalities and suggests the colour scheme may need a digital category."
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- Narrative: "Associative volunteering is well-populated and broadly confirms the existing picture; the recurring 'something different' tag on digital platforms is the clearest sign of a modality the colour framework does not yet capture."

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