
CEV Board Statement International Volunteer Day 2025

5 December 2025

On International Volunteer Day, CEV recognises and honours all those volunteers, organisations, and communities, who uphold humanity, solidarity, and peace, often while facing immense hardship and uncertainty.

At a time globally marked by devastating civilian suffering, deep injustice, and serious human rights violations, CEV remains committed to the core values that must guide the European project: solidarity, human dignity, democracy, and peace.

Volunteering, at its core, is about being present for others. Even as we recognise the painful sense of helplessness in the face of such devastation, this principle remains more vital than ever. It reminds us that solidarity is not abstract, it is lived through the people and organisations who, often at great personal risk, continue to bring help, compassion, and hope. Protecting volunteers, humanitarian workers, and civil society actors is therefore essential, for they embody the resilience and humanity that our societies so urgently need. Today, more than ever, we must reaffirm these values and call on European leaders and institutions to stand clearly for the protection of human rights, the pursuit of peace, and lasting solutions rooted in humanity.

We also want to express our strong support for global peace and multilateralism, and we call for a stronger and reformed United Nations in fulfilling its peace mandate, ensuring the protection of civilians, upholding human rights, fostering lasting peace, and providing a safe space for volunteers worldwide to contribute to this mission.

On this International Volunteer Day 2025, as we honour those who stand for humanity in times of crisis and uncertainty, we also look ahead to International Volunteer Year 2026, the UN initiative aimed at strengthening the recognition, protection, and support of volunteers, and promoting the essential role of volunteering in building peaceful, resilient, and inclusive societies.

CEV supports the IVY Global Call to Action, which aims to mobilise governments, institutions, and civil society to strengthen recognition, safety, and enabling environments for volunteers worldwide.

From a European perspective, IVY2026 represents an important opportunity to further develop this vision by embedding principles that are fundamental to the European understanding of volunteering. In Europe, volunteering is grounded in democratic and human rights principles, and is expressed as a free and conscious act of civic engagement through which people participate on their own free will in shaping their communities and safeguarding the values that sustain open, resilient, and just societies. Reinforcing IVY2026 with this democratic, rights-based dimension is essential to ensure that volunteer engagement contributes meaningfully to human dignity, civic space, and peaceful coexistence.

CEV remains committed to working with partners in Europe and globally to promote a vision of volunteering that reflects these principles and supports volunteers everywhere to act safely, freely, and with lasting impact.

Today, and every day, we celebrate volunteers for their courage, their commitment, and their unwavering belief in a more humane and peaceful world.