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

The volunteer centre in Asti in Italy has developed a pathway with the national network CSVnet for the recognition and validation of skills acquired through volunteering, which is a good starting point. Some recognition events are also being organised by the municipality, such as the 'Association of the Year Award for commitment to the common good', and a general description of the recognition activities is provided.

There is **good collaboration between the municipality and the volunteer centre as regards promoting volunteering**. 'Volunteering in the window' is an inspiring initiative designed to promote awareness of the sector. However, there are no procedures for measuring the economic or social impact of volunteering. The municipality and the volunteer centre are using a variety of different communication channels to inform about volunteering but the link between the civic engagement of stakeholders and European values is absent.

Some efforts have been made to guarantee an enabling environment for volunteers. The municipality offers support to the local infrastructure by providing premises free of charge to volunteer organisations. Nevertheless, an actual strategy relating to the regulatory framework for volunteering organisations is missing.

There is a sense that the **municipality is being creative with resources across different support activities** both towards and together with different organisations which offered support during the pandemic. However, it does not provide funding directly to volunteering organisations.

Although the municipality has launched an interesting campaign to promote volunteering among foreigners in different languages, there is no training or other support to make organisations more inclusive.

The strategy for future growth in volunteering focuses on its overall role in society and **demonstrates that the attention paid to volunteering is not limited to delivering services**. The strategy supports those volunteers making a direct contribution to social change. It states that attention will be paid to a generational change within organisations and communication. **The municipality wants to increase the participation of associations in dialogue in specific areas of interest and will also draw up an impact assessment plan that confirms and highlights the participation of volunteers in community life**. There is a desire to improve how the European dimension is introduced into local volunteering. Although Asti demonstrates a **comprehensive vision for volunteering in the municipality**, concrete and tangible plans to strengthen local volunteering are less apparent.

About the competition

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

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

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

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