



International FORUM on Development Service
FORUM International du Volontariat pour le Développement

European Conference on International Volunteering



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Build the Europe of Volunteering

Director General of the French Association of Volunteers of Progress (AFVP), Dante Monferrer, welcomed delegates to the conference saying that we need to "build the Europe of volunteering."

Fethi Ben Brahim from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs then made a speech stating that "volunteering is a priority for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs". He talked about setting new goals for volunteering and international volunteering.

President of International FORUM on Development Service, Cliff Allum, went on to talk about the role of FORUM and the benefits of the conference including discovering new ways of international volunteering from other organisations.

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Cliff Allum, President of FORUM and CEO of Skillshare International

In May 2007 we were pleased to hold the European conference of organisations involved in international volunteer co-operation in Paris.

This conference was organised by the International FORUM on Development Service, formerly a European organisation but now a global network, and the French Association of Volunteers of Progress (AFVP).

A variety of thought provoking presentations were made relating to developments in European based international

volunteering from NGOs and also the European Commission. Also this year we held best practice workshops around the theme 'Improving what we do.'

The focus of this conference was primarily on a programmatic level and we were pleased to welcome a wide range of delegates from Programme Managers to Recruitment Co-ordinators.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of the conference, in particular to AFVP and Skillshare International for the financial support that enabled it to happen. Also, thank you to everyone who provided feedback either at the conference or through our online survey. We will use this valuable information to help steer our next European conference.



Cliff Allum



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Working Towards Best Practice

This year saw a real focus on workshop sessions. Each afternoon of the two days were dedicated to best practice workshops, with a choice of topics for each session.

The workshops gave delegates a chance to discuss areas of their work and discover different

practices from across Europe.

On the Thursday afternoon delegates had the choice of attending either monitoring and evaluation or recruitment and training of international volunteers.

Fridays choices were models of support and benefits given to international volunteers or using quality techniques to manage your programme.

International Volunteering for Different Generations & Social Engagement for International Development



During the first session Hartwig Euler, Executive Co-ordinator of Aklhue made two presentations.

The first focused on the international volunteer service for different generations (IFL) project which has been up and running since June 2005.

The aims of the IFL project are to develop and establish an international volunteer service for people of all ages, to address a new target group (27+), to improve the quality of the exchange programmes and to arrange inter-cultural and inter-generational dialogue.

The IFL project encompasses eleven German NGOs including Aklhue who co-ordinate the project. The Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth in Germany fund the project along with donations from the NGOs and some participant fees from supporters.

Hartwig went on to describe the make up of the IFL volunteers, where they are placed, where they come from, their average length of stay, their fields of activity and the distribution of gender.

He explained how interaction between generations is achieved.

“The volunteers usually work for another generation. Young people work with older people and vice versa,” explained Hartwig.

He also stated that in many workplaces volunteers stayed with communities or guest families so they live in inter-generational surroundings.

Hartwig went on to state that, “Women and men, who were active within an international volunteer service are in possession of valuable experiences and are open to transfer these into their own community.”

This brought us on to his next presentation on promoting public awareness through voluntary service.

The second presentation gave delegates an insight into the Young Volunteers Development Service being piloted and funded by the German Development Ministry and due to be launched next year.

The young volunteers will be chosen by German NGOs and partner organisations, and the NGO will be responsible for the volunteer. The volunteers will be aged between 18-28, have a high school diploma and will be willing to work in another country for 12-18 months. The German Development Ministry will provide approx €580 per volunteer per month to help with living expenses.

“Every year the programme will give 10,000 young Germans aged between 18-28 the chance to stay in a partner country and work on a development programme,” says the German Development Ministry.

Hartwig explained the stage they were up to in the process of preparing for the launch. Very soon the government will approve the sending agencies and placements and they can then start recruiting volunteers.



New Innovations and Models of volunteering at AVFP

Dante Monferrer, Director General of the French Association of Volunteers of Progress (AFVP), concluded the first morning session with a presentation outlining new developments at AVFP.

First Dante discussed how AFVP have progressed over the last forty



Dante Monferrer, Director General of the French Association of Volunteers of Progress (AFVP),

years moving from craftsmanship volunteers alone, to more technical volunteers. Then, in the 80s and 90s, they had a high intake of young professionals such as engineers and physicians.

Dante then went on to talk about the new programmes AFVP were involved in today. He spoke about their new programme open to young people from the South and underprivileged people from the North. He then focussed on three areas where AFVP have embraced new models of volunteering:

South-South

"In the South there are highly skilled young people who wish to engage in development," says Dante. AFVP open their recruitment to young African graduates. At present they have five non-French volunteers working in the field of capacity building and similar possibilities are being explored.

Co-Development

Many migrants from Southern countries help finance groups in their country of origin. The money goes to cultural, social and religious groups. There is attachment and belonging to the communities migrants have come from, so AFVP involve migrants themselves in development. This is experimental at the moment involving some young migrants or descendants of migrants serving their country of origin.

South-North

"Development should not be the monopoly of developed countries," says Dante. AFVP try to be more reciprocal. They offer parties and local authorities in France the opportunity to build operational partnerships with youth organisations in the South to send people to France to be involved in cultural and social work.

Best Practice Workshops

Monitoring and evaluation

This workshop was led by Caspar Merkle of UNV and Helge Espe of FK Norway. This session was a mixture of presentations of models and discussion from delegates.

Caspar presented on the Participatory Methodology for Assessing the Contribution of Volunteering to Development that FORUM members have been involved in developing.

Helge presented on the FK Norway model of monitoring and evaluating their volunteer work.

Recruitment and training of international volunteers

Led by Sophie Aston of SPW this session was very interactive.

She first asked participants to draw a picture of the 'ideal volunteer' and it was

discussed what qualities they were looking for.

They were then asked to write down one positive and one negative comment about their own organisations recruitment and share with everyone.

This led to group discussions with group one focussing on length of service and whether it is detrimental to recruitment and group two discussing recruiting the perfect volunteer.

Promoting International Volunteering in New Member States

International volunteering in the New Member States (NMS) has been a fairly recent development with many international volunteering co-operation organisations (IVCOs) in new European countries being established over the last few years.

The Global Education Network of Young Europeans (GLEN) is a European network for learning in the field of development and development education created in 2003 as a project by the ASA-program and partners in seven NMS.

GLEN is fast growing - presently the network is composed of 12 partner organisations from Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

The aims of GLEN are global education/awareness raising within Europe on global interdependencies, connections between North and South and issues of development. Capacity building among students and young professionals for work in the field of development co-operation and awareness raising is part of GLEN's work along with strengthening young future decision-makers and promoting a common vision on Europe's role and responsibility for fair and sustainable relations between North and South.

Kordian Kochanowicz, Project Manager for GLEN, spoke about the challenges that face NMS when involving themselves in international volunteering.

"Governments face budgetary constraints, administrative

adjustments are rather slow and there is no legal act concerning development co-operation," explained Kordian.

He also went on to add that the ODA targets in NMS are low and development is low on the political agenda. There is political climate for politicians to address it.

After discussing the challenges for both IVCOs and volunteers, Kordian talked about the potential in NMS. He explained there is high motivation for engagement due to cultural beliefs, often related to Christian values. It is a very attractive topic raising the interests of young people, in Poland there were 150 applicants for eight volunteering places in 2005.

GLEN responds to these challenges by targeting both IVCOs and volunteers, they link organisations from the North and South, as well as organisations within Europe.

GLEN works with NMS organisations by strengthening human resources, linking individuals from NMS and old member states (OMS), as well as from the South, bringing together different expertise, encouraging common learning.

"Glen gives them a space and a chance to take over responsibility for global problems. They enable dynamics, encourage creativity of the people involved, both during preparation phase and follow-up activities," said Kordian.

They also help in terms of practical support, scholarships, covering costs for travel.



ONE EUROPE!
ONE WORLD!

Review of international volunteering in Italy

FOCSIV's Recruitment Co-ordinator, Lucia De Smaele, presented the work that international volunteer co-operation organisations (IVCOs) were doing in Italy and also talked about Civil Service Volunteers (SCV) and FOCSIV's involvement .

Lucia started by giving an overview of the numbers of volunteer organisations in Italy at present and explained that of the 200 organisations registered at the ministry of foreign affairs, 61 are members of Volontari nel mondo (FOCSIV).

Then the Italian Official Development Aid (ODA) was discussed as a 'bad example'. In 2006 the ODA allocation for international co-operation was 0.11% compared to other European countries who were committed to over 7%.

Lucia also talked about the reform of the law 49/87, the law that assures social welfare

contributions and insurance grants to all volunteers employed. The problem had been that the majority of projects did not conform to the aims of the law and volunteers were unable to benefit. The reform of the law in April 2007 should mean that more volunteers are able to benefit in terms of welfare contributions and insurance grants.

The framework of volunteer recruitment in Italy is split into five different types of volunteers, international volunteers, co-operators, short mission volunteers, local personnel and civil service volunteers.

The introduction of civil service volunteers (SCV) are a fairly new resource and have been employed alongside the 'classical volunteers' since 2002.

"SCV volunteers are usually between 18-28 years old, almost always hold degree qualifications and usually have poor work experience," explained Lucia. The

are placed for 12 months and receive monthly financing from the National Bureau of Civil Service.

The aim of recruiting SCV volunteers is to promote a sense of active and responsible citizenship in the younger generation. It is also seen as a *non armed* experience of "country defence".



federazione
organismi
cristiani
servizio
internazionale
volontario

Best Practice Workshops

Models of support and benefits for international volunteers

This workshop was led by Hartwig Euler of Akhlu.

The workshop group decided to focus their session on professional volunteers (rather than youth) and the key question was, how do we guarantee equal treatment between local staff and send development workers or (short-term-professionals etc)?

During the second part there was group discussion on individual experiences e.g. payment conditions and discrimination.

Using quality techniques to improve your programme

Led by David Harries of Skillshare International this session also had a presentation from Caspar Merkle of UNV, on their volunteer periodic progress reports.

David Harries made a presentation on leadership development techniques and how there were used within Skillshare International.



Plenary discussion then focussed on systems and putting new systems in place

EC Initiatives in International Volunteering



Youth Programmes Manager, Peggy Genève, joined us from the European Commission to talk about the European Voluntary Service (EVS) programme which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2006.

EVS offers young people the opportunity to volunteer in another country, normally for a period of six to twelve months. There are a wide variety of placements in the social, cultural, environmental and sports sector.

The EVS programme is largely decentralised to national agencies and it is EVS sending/hosting organisations that carry out the actual sending and hosting activities.

The core services that the EVS provides are orienting and supporting potential volunteers and organisations in the partner-finding and matchmaking processes. Other services may be added, e.g. ensuring proximity and support, developing EVS towards certain target groups, themes or regions, providing volunteers with training, evaluating EVS, giving advice in crisis situations, informing about admission and residence conditions, etc.

"A grant agreement with a single beneficiary can last up to 24

months and comprise up to 100 volunteers who are involved in individual or group EVS activities," explained Peggy.

Since its establishment in 1996, EVS has mostly been of individual nature, only one volunteer participates in one project. Group EVS has only recently been introduced and successfully implemented at major youth, culture and sports events.

EVS volunteers can be in placement in a number of countries in Europe, South East Europe, Eastern Europe, Mediterranean partner countries such as Israel and Lebanon, and Latin America. However, the majority of volunteers are placed within a European country.

The EVS volunteer can choose EVS organisations or be guided by EVS sending/hosting organisations, National Agencies and their Facilitator Organisations. They receive preparation, training, linguistic training and task-related and personal support. They receive free food and accommodation, insurance cover, travel cost contribution and a volunteer allowance.

They also receive a Youthpass/ EVS certificate. EVS volunteers generally provide a service to a local community, but also receive regular training and a strong personal and task related support. EVS is an important non-formal learning experience for young people, which is documented by means of an EVS certificate.

The European Commission has proposed to extend EVS under the "Youth in Action" programme (2007-2013) and to introduce new

structuring elements. EVS will become more visible and effective and meet the increasing demand from young people. The "Youth in Action" programme entered into force on 1st January 2007 and its total budget over seven years will be 885 million Euro. EVS will make up at least 23 per cent of this.

The new EVS will build on achievements so far, but simplify its management and funding rules.

The age range of volunteers and the geographic scope of EVS are broader (16-30 years old). Group EVS activities with up to 100 volunteers will also become a regular feature in the new programme.



Presenters and Participants

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Jean-Daniel Balme, Service
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Jean-Michel Bourreau, Chef
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Kate Boylan, Elections Desk
Officer, Irish Aid

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hosting this year's European
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employees involved.

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