

EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE

Fact sheet

1. In 2006, European Voluntary Service (EVS) celebrated its 10th anniversary.
2. The Commission had proposed to extend EVS under the **“Youth in Action” programme (2007-2013)** and to introduce new structuring elements. EVS thus will become more visible and effective and meet the increasing demand from young people
3. EVS is the Action 2 of the EU Youth in Action programme (2007-2013).
The “Youth in Action” programme was adopted in October 2006 and entered into force on 1st January 2007. Its total budget over 7 years will be 885 million Euro.
EVS will make up at least 23% of it.
4. 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).
5. EVS aims at enhancing active citizenship, solidarity and mutual understanding among young people through unpaid voluntary work.
6. EVS volunteers generally provide a service to a local community, but also receive regular training and a strong personal and taskrelated support. EVS thus is an important non-formal learning experience for young people, which is documented by means of an EVS certificate.
7. Through EVS, volunteers can increase key competences that are necessary to be active citizens and to improve their educational and employment prospects.
8. EVS is part of the Community Lisbon programme for growth and jobs.
9. EVS relies on a strong partnership between sending organisations, host organisations and volunteers.
10. Volunteers do not have to pay anything for participation in EVS. They receive a full reimbursement of travel costs, complete insurance cover and pocket money.
11. Organisations receive Community co-financing for their sending, hosting and coordinating activities.
12. Since its establishment in 1996, EVS has mostly been of individual nature, meaning that only one volunteer participates in one project.
13. Group EVS has only recently been introduced and successfully implemented at major youth, culture and sports events (Culture Capitals of Europe 1999 and 2002-2007, Special Olympics 2003, World Youth Festival Barcelona 2004, Euro 2004-European Football Championship, Recovering the Tatra Mountains 2005- 2006, etc.).

14. Group EVS activities with up to 100 volunteers will become a regular feature in the new programme.

15. EVS has allowed more than 4.000 volunteers between 18 and 25 years per year to do a voluntary service abroad under the previous YOUTH programme (2000-2006).

Key figures

- Total number of volunteers 1996-2006: Approx. 30.000
- Average grant amount per volunteer (2005): Approx. EUR 7000
- Annual number of volunteers (2006): Approx. 4.500 (estimate)
- Share of female / male volunteers in projects with Programme countries in Europe (2005)
Female: 70% - male: 30%
- Share of female/male volunteers in international cooperation projects with Partner Countries (2005)
Female: 41% - male: 59%
- Number of accredited host organisations in European Programme countries in the online database http://ec.europa.eu/youth/program/sos/vh_db_en.html :
Approx. 7000
- Share of young people with fewer opportunities in EVS (2005):
18%
- Funds committed for volunteer trainings (2005): EUR 2 million
- "Success rate" of granted applications compared to the number of submitted applications (2005):
80% for projects with Programme Countries
- Share of international cooperation projects with Partner Countries (2005):
Approx. 7%
- Funds committed for EVS (2005): EUR 27,9 mio. (= 30% of operational YOUTH budget)
- Funds available for EVS (2006): EUR 38,5 mio. (34,9% of operational YOUTH budget)
- Funds available for EVS (2007): EUR 37,4 mio. (= 29% of operational Youth in Action budget)



Contact and further information

European Commission, DG Education and Culture,
Youth: programmes unit

EAC-YOUTHINACTION@ec.europa.eu

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.html

Programme Guide and application forms 2007:

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.html and

http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm

SOS Volunteer Helpdesk at the Education, Culture and Audiovisual
Executive Agency in Brussels: +32/2/296 87 24,

volunteers@ec.europa.eu

National Agencies: see http://ec.europa.eu/youth/yia/contact_list_en.pdf
or Programme Guide 2007.

EVS event "10 years of solidarity and active citizenship" in Brussels on
26-27 November 2006: www.celebrateEVS.eu.

European Voluntary Service Charter

The European Voluntary Service (EVS) Charter is part of the 'Youth in Action' Programme Guide and highlights the roles of EVS sending, host and coordinating organisations and the main principles and quality standards of EVS. **Each EVS organisation adheres to the provisions set out in this Charter.**

EVS partnership

A solid partnership between EVS sending, host, coordinating organisations and the volunteer is the basis of every EVS activity. An adequate match-making between the volunteer profile and the tasks has to be in place. An *activity agreement* is signed by all the partners before the beginning of the activity.

- The sending organisation is in charge of the preparation and support of the volunteers before, during and after the EVS activities.
- The host organisation has to ensure safe and decent living and working conditions to the volunteer throughout the entire activity period. It has to provide adequate personal, linguistic and task-related support, including the identification of a mentor for the volunteer.
- The coordinating organisation (applicant) has the role of facilitating the implementation of the project by offering administrative and quality support to all project partners and enabling their networking.

EVS principles to be ensured

- The non-formal educational and intercultural learning dimension, through a clear definition of a learning plan for the volunteer.
- The service dimension through a clear definition of the non-profit making character and the volunteer tasks. Full-time service and active role of the volunteer in implementing the activities have to be ensured. EVS volunteer activities must not substitute any employment.
- The benefit to and the contact with the local community.
- EVS is free of charge for the volunteers.
- Accessibility and Inclusion: when recruiting EVS volunteers, the organisations maintain the overall accessibility of EVS for all young people, without prejudice related to ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation or political opinion. If the project targets volunteers with fewer opportunities, facilities and capacity in providing tailor-made preparation, support and follow-up have to be in place.

EVS quality standards to be ensured

Support to the volunteer

- before, during and after the EVS activities, in particular in crisis prevention and management;
- for insurance, visa, residence permit, travel arrangements and all the EVS administrative procedures;
- by facilitating the volunteer's participation in the EVS training cycle (pre-departure training, on-arrival training, mid-term meeting and final evaluation);
- by foreseeing proper evaluation measures;
- by encouraging a follow-up activity: every volunteer has the right to plan and implement a follow-up activity.

Information

- All EVS partners have the right to receive complete information on the activity and agree on all aspects.
- Visibility, dissemination and publicity measures have to be in place.

Recognition

- Each EVS volunteer is entitled to receive a Youthpass.