

VISEGRAD 4 VOLUNTEERING

NEW BREATH IN

YOUR LIFE



HUNGARY/A Nyilvánosságért és Civil
Társadalomért Alapítvány

POLAND/ Fundacja Dobra Sieć

SLOVAKIA/ Fórum informačné centrum

CZECH REPUBLIC/ HESTIA, o. s.

2014-2015

To encourage volunteering among V4 countries

Our project was supported by the International Visegrad Fund



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1. Introduction of our project

The aim of our project is to encourage mobility among Visegrad 4 countries (Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland), as a volunteer. To reach this objective, we organised a workshop involving experts from partner V4 countries where we worked out the criterias of national analysis. We also had a mini-conference, where we introduced the results of national situations in V4 countries based on the analysis impelented during the project; possibilites of volunteering in V4 countries, promoted V4 countries for volunteering. The main results of our project is summarized in this study. This online version aims to reach host organisations, NGOs who are keen on cooperation with V4 bodies and also volunteers, who are interested to spend their service in the Visegrad 4 region. Project's website: www.nyicita.hu

Our project was supported by the International Visegrad Fund.



2. Introduction of partners



For Publicity and Civil Society Foundation/ A Nyilvánosságért és Civil Társadalomért Alapítvány (NYICITA)/HUNGARY was established in 2000 by 9 teachers, actors, journalists, scientists, experts working in the non-profit sector in 2000.

Our working area is mainly in the Central Transdanubian region, but our activities expand on the Balaton region, sometimes over the borders. The foundation provides useful information to the non-profit area, conducts community services and training activities. Working with academic communities, governments, non-governmental organizations and public educational institutions

We have several projects in the topic of volunteering on national and international level, too. We had an international seminar in 'Volunteering from different international aspects', which aimed to compare the voluntary system and services in the partner countries

Our project 'Happy to be a volunteer' aimed to involve the forprofit and the governmentetal sector in the voluntary programs, and increase the number of volunteers in Veszprém county

Project 'YOU became a volunteer' TÁMOP-5.5.2-11/2 - Önkéntes (Pont) TE magad légy! aimed to create 2 Volunteer Contact Points in Veszprém County and call the attention on the importance of voluntary work, through organising actions, events involving the inhabitants.

For more info: www.nyicita.hu



HESTIA, o. s. / CZECH REPUBLIC is a Czech non-profit organization with more than 20 years of experience in volunteering. The mission of HESTIA is to promote and develop volunteering in Czech Republic.

HESTIA aims and activities:

- ✚ We promote volunteering. We maintain a website about volunteering opportunities and general information about volunteering. Our aim is to raise awareness of the value of volunteering.
- ✚ We actively engage in research, training, and educational programs for non-profit organizations in the field of volunteering and social work. Our aim is professionalization of volunteering in the Czech Republic.
- ✚ We run our own volunteering programs: Compass, Five P and 3G – Three generation focused on building a long-term relationship between a child in need and a volunteer.
- ✚ We develop corporate volunteering projects for international and local businesses. Our aim is to motivate business partners to participate in volunteering.

Our target groups are: employees of non-profit organizations, social workers, youth and seniors interested volunteering, and students and scholars interested in research of volunteering in the Czech Republic

For more info: www.hest.cz



Forum Information Center /SLOVAKIA (kulcsar@forumic.sk) is there to develop the civil society in South-Slovakia and help the region in progressing and gaining competitiveness.

Our Target groups are NGOs working in South-Slovakia AND the Hungarian organisations in the region. We offer trainings about:

- ✚ Complex packs
- ✚ Preparation of NGOs for efficient functioning and cooperation between the sectors
- ✚ Thematic training – from legal issues to crisis management
- ✚ E-learning – www.ngoemmanual.org

Training statistics: Over 2594 hours; With 1446 participants; Countries: Slovakia, Hungary and Transcarpathia

We offer Services for NGO's in

- ✚ Consultancy
- ✚ Information services - project monitoring, databases, information materials
- ✚ Project counsellings
- ✚ Process control - planning, crisis management
- ✚ Information processing - background information mainly for the purpose of lobbying

For more info: <http://forumic.sk>



Good Network Foundation (Fundacja Dobra Sieć)/POLAND is an organization founded in 2009 by “Academy For The Development of Philanthropy in Poland” Association, which is one of the most experienced non-governmental organizations in the country. We are active mostly in the Internet where we pursue the major aims of our organization that is: dissemination of knowledge about volunteering, e-volunteering, scholarships and promotion of new technologies as means of strengthening the civil society and increasing the public commitment, together with creating new space for civic action in the Internet.

From the very beginning the foundation has run two main programs: “Moje stypendium” (My Scholarship) and “E-volunteering”. “Moje Stypendium” (www.mojestypendium.pl) is by far the biggest database of scholarships available in Poland and a project aimed to research and improve the scholarship opportunities for young people in Poland. In the course of the second project, “E-volunteering”, we established the first Polish website dedicated to the online volunteering: www.e-volunteering.eu. We were the first organization to coin the term “e-volunteering” in Poland and we continuously attempt at assuring its presence in public media in order to make e-volunteering an integral part of the Polish non-governmental organizations’ agendas. In 2014 we released the “E-volunteering handbook” – a practical guide for the people who want to cooperate with volunteers via the Internet, available in Polish, English and Ukrainian.

For more info: <http://goodnetworkfoundation.com/>, www.e-volunteering.eu

3. Meaning of volunteering

In Hungary it is based on the free will of individuals, decisions and motivations; Without any financial compensation; With the aim to act for others’ benefit.



In the Czech Republic volunteering is defined by the law. Volunteering = unpaid work for people blond the family and close friends. Volunteer can be a person up the 15 years (in CZ), up the 18 years (abroad). Act of Law defines terms as

Sending organization (= organization, which is responsible for recruitment and selection of volunteers, training volunteers, care about them before and during voluntary service, drafting contracts with volunteers and arrange insurance for volunteers), Host organization (=organization, where volunteers will realize their volunteer activity) or voluntary service (can be short time or long time – longer than 3 month).

In Slovakia it is same as in Czech Republic, but have no sending organisation on national level.

In Poland volunteering is understood as a formal or informal activity undertaken freely and without expecting remuneration, helping to benefit the common good, typically performed on the behalf of non-governmental organizations or grassroots communities



3.a. Why is it good to be a volunteer?

It is good being a volunteer, because you can support and help others, meanwhile you are also develop yourself. You get new knowledge; meet new people; learn many different things; belong to a team working for the same aim...

- ✓ During the socialization, education of **children** is an important aim to recognize their own opportunities, later to be active members of their community, be given a wider view of the world, learn what it means to help others.
- ✓ **For Young people, school leavers** are useful when helping carry out their first work experience environment where other people have more responsibility for them. It is important springboard expect the acquisition of non-formal road experience that can be very helpful in further positioning.
- ✓ **For unemployments** is a great help to acquire knowledge and experience in other fields of work.
- ✓ The mean attracting **retired volunteers** loneliness, passivity, escape into the disease and the possibility of avoiding poverty
- ✓ Volunteering provides informal and non-formal learning opportunities and is therefore advocated by the European Union's **Lifelong Learning** (LLL Lifelong Learning) is an important tool

3.b. Types of volunteering

- **Formal/informal** (Formal: volunteering under contract with NGO's - with selection procedure, training, supervision etc. X Informal: less administrative secured (without need of drafting contracts, selection procedure etc.)
- **according to the period of time:** short/middle/long term
- **geographical dimension:** national/European/international
- **type of service:** individual/group
- **background of volunteer:** have/have not professional skills
- **offline /online** (e-volunteering)
- ...

Every form and type of volunteering gives you something. In fact, as volunteers we give a lot of ourselves, but on the other hand we have the opportunity to participate in great projects and we get even more than we give. (Marta (EVS volunteer) from Poland)



3.c. What can I do as a volunteer?

The task you can do as a volunteer is mainly pending on the profile and activities of the hosting organisation you join. You can work with youth, elderly, kids, animals....you can organise programs, create leaflets, take pictures...you can do your voluntary work online or offline.

During my volunteering time I had the opportunity to share my knowledge and to experience completely different and new type of volunteering, as well. (EVS volunteer Marta from Poland)

3.d. Why to HOST volunteers in your NGO?

- ✓ You can expand the organization's activities
- ✓ can ensure new services for the target audience
- ✓ volunteers can bring new colours into the organisation's life
- ✓ meet new possible partners for further work

4. Life in my country

Why to be a volunteer in HUNGARY?

Did you know...??



- Rubik cube, soda water, match, Vitamin C, first dynamo etc. are invented by Hungarians?
- The HU language is one of the most difficult languages in the world
- We use our names in order Family name+ Surname (there are only 4 nations in the world, who do the same)
- There are only 5 countries in the world, who reached more golden medals on the Summer Olympic Games, than Hungary?
- Hungary is one of the oldest nations in Europe (established in 896)
- Has one of the oldest thermal water culture in Europe
- 15 Hungarians received the Nobel Prize
- Has 7 regions and 19 counties
- Give 2 kisses on the face 😊
- We are famous of our hospitality



Why to be a volunteer in the CZECH REPUBLIC?

Czech Republic is located in Central Europe. It is small but very nice country. You can get from one end of the republic to the other in less than 7 hours by train (railway network is among the best in Europe).

Did you know that...?

- In the Czech Republic you can visit more than 2000 castles and this republic is one of the countries with the highest density of castles in the world.
- In the Czech Republic are also 12 monuments entered in the UNESCO World Cultural and Natural Heritage List.
- Capital Prague has the largest castle area in the world - incredible 70 000 m².
- One of the best hockey players in the world - Jaromír Jágr - comes from Czech Republic.
- One of the most famous football players - Pavel Nedvěd - is also from Czech Republic.
- Sigmund Freud was born and spent the first years of his life in the Czech Republic.
- Sugar cube was invented in the Czech town Dačice in 1843.
- Czech Škoda is one of the oldest automobile brands.

Why to be a volunteer in SLOVAKIA?

Did you know...?

- World's highest number of castles and chateaux per capita
- More than 6000 caves
- First reservation of folk architecture in the world



- The only capital (Bratislava) in the world bordering two countries (Austria and Hungary)
- Geographical midpoint of Europe
- Remarkably diverse nature (Slovakia with its 9 national parks and 14 protected landscape areas is literally a paradise for tourists.)
- More than 1300 mineral springs
- When you meet Slovak people for the first time, they kiss you on your cheek.
- Slovakia and Slovenia are two different countries. Staffs of Slovak and Slovenian embassies meet once a month to exchange wrongly-addressed mail! :)
- Famous pop artist Andy Warhol had 100% Slovak roots.



Why to be a volunteer in POLAND?

Poland is a country with great history, a country of contrasts, country that in 2014 celebrated 25 years of freedom recovered after the communists era. You can see and learn great solidarity in here, live a life of big city or feel the peace of small villages with traditional cuisine, music and lifestyle. Actually in Poland lives over 38 million people, the largest city is Warsaw (capital)

with almost 2 million citizens. With Baltic sea in north and Tatra mountains in south – it is definitely worth visiting or staying longer. The number of NGOs is growing every year so you will find many volunteering opportunities in here!

Did you know...???

....Poland shares its borders with no less than seven countries!

...Geographically, Poland is not actually in Eastern Europe – it is in fact in the very centre of Europe.

...The Polish are generally well educated, with 90% of Poles having completed at least a secondary education.

...In Poland, one's "Name Day" – imieniny – is considered a far more important occasion than one's birthday.

...The most "World's Strongest Man" winners are from Poland.

...Roman Catholicism is so popular that Poland actually has a TV channel dedicated to the Pope.

5. Recognition tools for non-formal learning

During our volunteer service we learn on non-formal way. On national level there is no ruled national recognition of non-formal education in the V4 region, but the organisations are able to give their own certificates.

On international level we would like to introduce 2 types of certificates as a recognition for non-formal learning:



Youthpass is a European recognition tool for non-formal and informal learning in youth work.

Youthpass is for projects funded by Erasmus+ Youth in Action and Youth in Action programmes. With Youthpass the participants of these projects can describe what they have done and show what they have learnt. www.youthpass.eu




Europass is a new way of helping people make their qualifications and competences clearly and easily understood in EU Member States, EFTA/EEA countries


and candidate countries. Europass brings together five documents that have been developed at European level to improve the transparency of qualifications. The aim of the Europass is to facilitate the mobility of both learners and workers throughout Europe.


Europass Mobility: The Europass is a record of any organised period of time that a person spends abroad for the purpose of learning or training. This can include a work placement in a company, a semester in a university degree programme or other educationm training experiences or voluntary work. <https://europass.cedefop.europa.eu>


6. Possibilities for volunteering in the V4

 **Erasmus+ ERASMUS+ European Voluntary Service (EVS)** enables young people (age 17-30) to participate individually or in groups to volunteer projects in countries of the EU and the partner countries. http://europa.eu/youth/evs_database

 **Workcamps** - Short-term international volunteer projects usually lasting one to three weeks. A group of people from different parts of the world (there may be five, but should also twenty), who jointly participate in community service activities in different areas. e.g. <http://www.inexsda.cz/en/Volunteering/workcamps/workcamps/>

 **The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award ('the Award')** enables 14-24-year-olds to learn practical skills that are valuable to their personal and professional development. <http://www.intaward.org/near-you>

 **Salesian of Don Bosco Association, os** was established in 2005 to help disadvantaged children and youth in the world. In the Czech province of SADBA is responsible for mission projects, preparation of missionary volunteers, and information dissemination and retrieval funds for the Salesian mission. **For more info:** <http://www.sadba.org/en/>

 **UNV Programme** - The United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme is the UN organization that contributes to peace and development through volunteerism worldwide. www.unv.org



AFS-Intercultural Programs - www.afs.org AFS Volunteers contribute their time and energy to help people develop the foundation to become responsible global citizens. Through their work with participants and host families, volunteers can learn more about their own cultures, practice other languages, develop leadership skills and take part in community activities.



The International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE) www.iave.org exists to promote, strengthen and celebrate the development of volunteering worldwide. It is the only international organisation for which this is the primary aim.



UNESCO-Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service www.unesco.org/ccivs

eurodesk Today, more than **1.200 youth professionals** work with us in Europe to raise awareness among young people on mobility opportunities and to encourage them to become active citizens. www.eurodesk.eu




Information and opportunities for young people across Europe https://europa.eu/youth/EU_en



e-volunteering.eu E-volunteering is a volunteer work conducted via the Internet. It always refers to work where an online system (accessed through a computer, a mobile device, etc.) plays a key role in recruitment, facilitating access to tasks, and conducting that tasks.

7. Presentations of the mini-conference in the topic of volunteering

7.a European Voluntary Service (EVS)

 **Erasmus+** EVS is an international program. Its aim is to support to young people's participation in various forms of voluntary activities. **Under this Action young people take part individually or in groups in non-profit, unpaid activities.**

A successful EVS project requires close cooperation among at least three key players: a sending organisation, a host organisation and you – the volunteer. **Sending organisation** is organisation from your country, which will help you find the EVS project and send you to the host organisation. **Host organisation** is organisation in the country, where is realised the EVS project. This organisation will host you. In bigger projects can cooperate coordinating organization. This organisation coordinates the activities, is responsible for administration and finance.

My time as an EVS volunteer has made me more conscious of her role and possibilities as a member of the European community (Marci in SK)

EVS is open to all young people aged 17 to 30. EVS projects can be short term or long term from 2 to 12 months, and as a volunteer you can work in a wide range of fields, such as culture, youth, sports, children, cultural heritage, arts, animal welfare, environment and development cooperation etc. **The following costs are covered from the grant:** travel costs, accommodation, food, language course and pocket money. At the end of your EVS period, you will receive a certificate confirming your participation and describing your project – the [Youthpass](#)

Volunteering abroad is an exciting experience and gives you lots of wonderful memories and friendships (Marta from PL)

How to get involved?

1. Contact Sending organization (who will send you abroad) and together find volunteer opportunity http://europa.eu/youth/evs_database
2. Contact Host organization (where you will realize your EVS activity) and ask them, if they are able to host you http://europa.eu/youth/evs_database
3. Choose _____ granted _____ project http://europa.eu/youth/vp/opportunity_list and then the Sending organization (who will send you in this project)



7.b E-volunteering: volunteer online!

e-volunteering.eu

The Internet affects our lives every day. Hardly any can spend a day without checking their mails or favorite social websites. One can find e-shopping, e-books, e-learning already, and, in addition, the activity we would like to encourage you to – e-volunteering. The Internet is full of social initiatives of different kinds, including many examples of activities volunteers are involved in!

What is e-volunteering?

E-volunteering is a volunteer work conducted via the Internet. It is often called also virtual volunteering, cyber volunteering, digital volunteering, online volunteering, but it always refers to work where an online system



(accessed through a computer, a mobile device, etc.) plays a key role in recruitment, facilitating access to tasks, and conducting that tasks.

E-volunteering, as the name suggests, has a lot to do with the traditional volunteering. To become a virtual volunteer, one needs the same motivation which is helpful in the real life: a will to involve oneself in social matters. Volunteering on the Web, similarly to “the real one” bases on

altruism, the will of helping other people, improvement of the surrounding space and readiness to involve our time and skills selflessly. Nonetheless, e-volunteering brings new quality due to the fact of being virtual. Using the Internet in volunteering brings new perspectives: it allows defeating constraints of time and space, opens new areas and ways of cooperation and adds a global dimension to the work.

Who is an e-volunteer and what he can do?

An e-volunteer is a person, who have got the basic digital skills – can surf the net, send e-mails, use Skype, etc. and who donate his/her time to support others in a voluntary and non-paid way.



Even if we think we don't know any e-volunteers in person, we may be wrong. Thanks

to them the animals living in animal shelters are taken to their new homes, we can use the resources collected on Wikipedia every day, read the recent news on the citizen journalism websites or receive specialized help from Amazons when a relative suffers from breast cancer. It is difficult to enumerate all the activities of the e-volunteers in Europe and in the whole world. The Internet changes every day which gives way to new types of activities. Among the other e-volunteering activities we can enumerate the following: blogs running, forums and websites administration, text translation and edition, fundraising, searching the materials on the Web, legal services, counselling and self-help, graphic and video documents creation, foreign language teaching or promotional activities in the Internet (viral marketing).

E-volunteering gives all the people the opportunity of involving themselves in interesting projects, regardless their place of living. The traditional volunteering is very often restrained by space. Due to high costs of travelling, many volunteers find the participation in many events very difficult. Using the Internet, any volunteer interested in ecology, the fate of national minorities or literature can involve himself into projects of a given branch even if there is no local organization dealing with a given topic.

Who can become an e-volunteer?

Everyone! The only things you need to become an e-volunteer are: access to the Internet and basic digital skills.

What are the advantages of volunteering online?

- You can donate as much time, as you want: one hour a week, or 15 minutes during the lunch break.
- It is up to you, from what place you want to volunteer from – on your way home, at the library, on the bus, etc.
- You don't even have to go out. You can volunteer from home, if you want.
- Even, if there are no interesting organizations in your neighborhood, don't worry! Thanks to e-volunteering you can support organizations from all over the world.
- You can share your skills and a hobby and develop them both.

How to become an e-volunteer?

You can:

- Visit the portal www.blog.e-volunteering.eu, go to the "Search" section and select an interesting advertisement.
- Offer an e-volunteering support to a chosen organization. You can



**E-VOLUNTEERING
HANDBOOK**
A practical guide for individuals, institutions and organizations interested in
to develop their knowledge and skills in the field of e-volunteering
© 2010

search for them in national databases of NGO, or in the Internet.

More information on e-volunteering can be found on: www.e-volunteering.eu.

7.c Crisis management during a volunteering project

CRISIS MANAGEMENT DURING A VOLUNTEERING PROJECT



Every beginning is difficult! - Problems with settling in

The volunteer usually has to adapt to completely alien environment, including unfamiliar people, often not even speaking the local language. Therefore we must be patient. Free programs can help a lot with exploring the environment and getting acquainted with

people (trips, "welcome party", shared meals etc). It's a nice gesture if you learn at least some basic terms of the volunteer's language (Good Morning! Good appetite !, Thank you! etc.).

Communication difficulties – ‘English is the universal language, so no one is speaking it’

Most volunteers speak English poorly and they go abroad to learn it. In Slovakia, however, most of the population does not speak any foreign languages. Therefore here is necessary to accompany them first and to quickly teach them the basic words and sentences in the language of the country. If the organization has no English-speaking member, you should look for other volunteers with whom you will be able to communicate.

When receiving multiple volunteers speaking different languages the situation gets even more chaotic. In such cases you should organize a training that initiates the healthy communication. (Nonverbal games or ones that do not require language skills). You should also encourage them to learn each other's languages. It is also worth making an illustrated multi-language dictionary with the most basic terms. This makes learning for everyone faster and coping with unfamiliar places easier

Young adults or big children?

For most of the young volunteers it's their first time away from their family and home for a longer period. They can be easily overtaken by fear or homesickness.



The organization should take the role of a foster family, act as a substitute to make the volunteers feel included, that they have the same rights as the

the Help

other members. You should always take the time to listen to them when they want to talk. Give them the chance to take part in the organization's work and in brainstorming. You should also take them to all the events and programs you are

organizing. Don't forget their birthdays and name-days – celebrating these together can help a lot make them feel at home, even if you give them just small things, like a cake, a surprise gift and a warm smile.

If they are feeling really homesick, you should let them visit their family for a few days, or, if the distance is too big, find an alternative, like video calls.

Look before you leap

Volunteers sometimes come not informed well enough, imagining volunteering as a holiday and then act surprised when they find out that there are rules and work to be done and so on; or in some cases they wanted to do something else than what the organization is offering. Definitely clear up these misunderstandings and give them time to consider whether they would rather accept your terms or go home.

Sometimes it's the exact opposite – the organization gets something else that they thought they were signing up for. It can be just a deceptive first impression, so don't judge hastily. If that's not the case explain to the volunteer what bothers you about them. Maybe you can change their attitude but maybe your ways will part here. If they don't want to return home you can search for other organizations where they could work – the

coordinators usually agree to this solution. It's definitely not worthy to torture each other for a months.

Recklessness and misbehavior

Escaping the parents' watchful gazes can sometimes backfire as the youngsters can jump head first into anything. Too frequent or extreme splurges are embarrassing for the organization but can also be dangerous in certain situations.

Typical situations:

- excessive alcohol consumption (typical for boys),
- picking up girls/boys on every step,
- getting into the local bad company
- Vandalism/hooliganism, rambunctious behavior.

Before the volunteers' arrival work out a set of basic rules which you should explain to them. Make it clear that these rules are there to protect them because you know the environment better.



Deadlock or burnout

In volunteering the 9th month is always critical. Symptoms: neglecting work, irritation, breaking rules etc. You should prepare some kind of distraction – some program so the volunteers can have fun and do what they really like. One week of rest is usually enough.

Regular chatting also helps – once every week you should sit down with the volunteers so that everyone can unload their complaints and relieve

the tension. You should encourage them to share their problems with you so you can solve them in time. This way negative emotions won't pile up and won't explode at the point when the load becomes too much.