



## REPORT

of the

### **WORKSHOP ON VOLUNTEERING**

**Project EU:SPORT:FUTURE**

**23 June 2009**

**Comité national olympique et sportif français  
Maison du sport français  
1, avenue Pierre de Coubertin  
F – 75013 Paris**

#### Participants:

<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Nationality</b>
Andreeva	Mila	Bulgaria
Devlet	Anna	British
Greis	Andrea	German
Heaton	Phil	British
Hollmann	Susanne	European Commission
MacDougall	James	British
Mathou	Cécile	French
Pekkola	Heidi	Finn
Plasse	Marie-Christine	French
Salva	Danielle	French
Simpson	Gemma	British
Solar	Ales	Slovenian
Dr. Starc	Gregor	Slovenian
Teow	Karin	French
Welch	Mel	British



Education and Culture DG



## **Introduction**

The workshop on sport and volunteering was held on the 23rd June 2009 and led by James MacDougall, CCPR. The discussions were based on the workshop leaflet, including the results of the online survey which have been distributed and presented prior to the workshop.

Prior to the workshop general presentations on the topic "Sport and the EU" and best practice examples in the field of volunteering were aimed at introducing the issues of the workshops and giving food for thought for the discussions in the workshops.

The participants of the volunteering workshop came from very different backgrounds.

The workshop leader structured the discussions in the workshop the following way:

1. Analysis of present situation (status quo, problems, challenges)
2. Definition of ideal situation/ objectives
3. Recommendations: Tools, measures to achieve ideal situation / objectives
4. Priorities, Follow up

### **Ad 1) Analysis of present situation**

Participants first tried to answer the question "who volunteers?":

The range of tasks done by volunteers at sports clubs emphasised just how important volunteering is to sport in Europe. In the UK 93% of sports clubs use volunteers and similar figures were reported for Slovenia, France and Germany. The technical capacity of volunteers ranges widely- from electricians and accountants to tea-making and bus drivers; and this is before sport-specific roles such as officials and coaches are considered. The challenge to help promote such a wide range of volunteers and remove bureaucracy in multiple areas is clearly large.

The workshop participants considered the following volunteer positions as key to sports clubs:

- groundsmen/women
- event promoters
- team captains
- odd-job men/women
- marketing officers
- junior co-ordinators
- treasurers
- catering
- child care staff
- club chairmen/ women/ committee members



- fund-raisers
- administrators/ secretary/ fixture secretaries
- technical officers
- officials
- skilled volunteers e.g. electrician
- team managers
- stewards/ marshals
- ceremony officials
- timekeepers/ scorers
- policing
- legal support
- first aiders
- kit men/ women
- transport

Participants also came up with a large range of barriers to volunteering and picked a top eight to focus on. The biggest perceived barriers (first eight in the list below, but not in any order) were then considered in the solutions phase.

People do not volunteer because:

- not enough time
- not enough information/ do not know where to volunteer
- cost/ covering expenses
- lack of recognition
- facilities are not attractive
- society/ tradition
- bureaucracy/ legislation
- lack of training/ mentoring
  
- other commitments
- unaware of need
- requires regular commitment
- fear of letting people down
- excessive responsibility
- poor sport club management
- sports clubs afraid of change/ management stagnation

From discussions, however, it is clear that the barriers to volunteering may well be perceived- for example 'not enough time' was considered as a convenient excuse in many instances, whereas 'not enough information' may be a perceived issue and the real problem is that people do not know where to go to volunteer. This may be despite excellent programmes offered at local, club or national level, indicating that a lack of awareness or a failure to put volunteering in the public eye was evident.

A second area of investigation could be the need to encourage young volunteers. Firstly that young people are disinterested may not be true- a UK survey showed a



key reason that young people didn't volunteer was that they hadn't been asked (43%). While it was acknowledged that volunteering does need to be more accessible to young people, it was also noted that as the baby boom generation following the Second World War are now retiring, more should be done to target this group to volunteer.

## **Ad 2) Definition of ideal situation/ objectives**

Recommendations for overcoming the key barriers were discussed and best practices gathered from the group. It is clear that, across Europe, there are many successful projects already running to promote volunteering and overcome barriers. The sharing of these best practices, the dissemination of information about and the promoting of volunteering is clearly needed to allow good projects to be more successful and transferred to other initiatives.

Following best practices, representing potential ideal situations, have been identified:

- **Creating time**

Government and industry alike help provide time.

Example: Corporate Social Responsibility- The Royal Bank of Scotland allows staff time off for volunteering. An estimated 20% of employees took part in community projects in 2007; equating to 173,996 business hours given for volunteering.

Example: French government will reimburse companies for volunteers' time off (N.B. issues exist in the UK where unemployed can lose their benefits if they volunteer)

- **Information on volunteering**

Governing bodies and sports organisations offer guidance which could be shared across Europe. Volunteering organisations, corporate bodies and Governments also have similar projects.

Example: Slovenian Olympic Committee has produced a guide for volunteering.

Example: ENGSO Youth's promotes youth volunteering through their [website](#).

Example: Runningsports' guide on how to be a volunteer / [how to be a club secretary](#)

- **Covering costs**

Volunteers do not expect to be paid for volunteering, but they should not be left out of pocket.

Example: French government offers tax incentives for volunteers.

Example: Bulgarian Ski Federation provides free accommodation for volunteers during sport events.



- Recognising volunteers

Volunteering should be fun to do, but also seen as worthwhile. Volunteers should be rewarded for a job well done.

Example: French Tennis Federation provides Roland Garros tickets to volunteers.

Example: Bulgarian Skiing provides jackets and other clothing.

- Facilities

Volunteers are more likely to offer their services if they feel comfortable in modern facilities and they have all they need for their position.

Example: Corporate responsibility- Barclays funds a [spaces for sports](#) campaigns.

Example: Denmark ensures sports organisations have places to play their sports- school facilities are available free after 3pm to registered sports.

- Society/ tradition

The modern world has so many demands on people's time, volunteering must be promoted to be fun and appeal to a new generation of people.

Example: use of sports stars to promote volunteering. In Poland, World Strongest man Mariusz Pudzianowski fronted a [campaign](#) which saw volunteering sign-up double in 2 months.

Example: use event volunteering as a hook to change attitudes towards volunteering.

- Bureaucracy

Sports clubs run by volunteers add value to the society, paperwork should be minimised for those who help and the specific nature of sport considered in legislation.

Example: Snowsport GB has a manual to provide clear guidance and support to volunteers.

Example: [Community Amateur Sports Club bill](#) which proposes legislative change to help volunteer sports clubs (note: this bill is unlikely to become law).

- Bringing in and enabling new volunteers

Training should be available to those who need to acquire more skills in order to be comfortable as a volunteer.

Example: use event volunteering to raise interest e.g. Euro 2012, 2012 Olympics (as in the Manchester Commonwealth Games).

Example: Youth Sport Trust (UK) [young officials programme](#) which has trained 1300 young officials in 3 years.



### **Ad 3) Recommendations: tools, measures to achieve ideal situation / objectives**

Given that many good practices existed throughout Europe, the participants considered which organisations should act and in which area to counteract the key barriers in order to provide concrete direction to:

#### **➤ the Local Governments**

- Improving facilities

#### **➤ the National Governing Bodies**

- Providing information
- Covering expenses
- Improving Facilities
- Bringing in and enabling new volunteers
- Recognition

#### **➤ the Sport organisations**

- Improving Facilities
- Bringing in and enabling new volunteers

#### **➤ the Member States (national governments)**

- Time
  - incentivise volunteering/ subsidise company loss
  - provide tax benefits in recognition of volunteering
  - enable unemployed to volunteer without losing benefits
- Recognition
- Society and tradition
  - Bid for major events and organise pre- and post-event volunteering
  - National campaigns to increase appeal of volunteering
- Improving facilities (funding to local authorities and clubs)
- Training
  - Government should provide funding to train volunteers needing new skills

#### **➤ the European Union**

- Time
  - Collate best practices and recommend Member States use them
- Providing information
  - Collate best practices for Member States
- Recognition
  - Encourage member states to recognise volunteering
- Society and tradition



- Reinforce a positive social message on volunteering
- Use advertising space e.g. UEFA champions league to promote societal role
- Bureaucracy
  - Watch for unintended consequences in European legislation
  - Advise Member States on best practices
- Bringing in new volunteers
  - Share best practice

➤ **the Media**

- Providing information
  - Mainstream information
- Society and tradition
  - Show attractive nature of volunteering

**Ad 4) Priorities, Follow up**

With 300 million Europeans regularly active in sport and 160 million of those using sports clubs, the fact that sports clubs rely so heavily on volunteers means that both the role of volunteers and the support they as well as structures based on voluntary activity require cannot be underestimated.

Volunteering is, in essence, done at a very local level, therefore the work of the European Union is best directed not at creating projects, but ensuring best practices are shared and bureaucracy is minimised.

While legislation from Europe in the field of volunteering is not necessary, the specific nature of sport and the structures based on voluntary activity should be considered when creating and reviewing European legislation. The European Commission is, however, well placed to gather good legislative proposals from around Europe and recommend them to the Member States.

Europe should also consider promoting the societal value of volunteering in sport, using major events to increase interest in volunteering and using media opportunities to increase the appeal of volunteering.