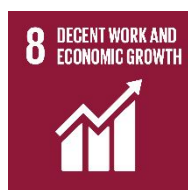




Workshop 8

The role and economic value of volunteers in the road to recovery and beyond

4 March 2021 | 16:00 – 18:00 | EESC - Brussels



Organised by:

the Centre for European Volunteering (**CEV**) and the EESC Section for Employment,
Social Affairs and Citizenship (**SOC**)

Draft programme

Moderated by **Gabriella Civico, CEV Director**

16:00 - 16:10 Opening by **SOC President Laurențiu Plosceanu**

16:10 - 16:20 Presentation of the draft "Blueprint for Volunteering in Europe 2030"
by **CEV President Lejla Šehić Relić**

16:20 - 16:35 Presentation by **EESC member Krzysztof Pater** on the economic
value of volunteers in Europe.

16:35 - 16:50 Presentation by **Prof Dr Lucas Meijs**, 'Strategic Philanthropy and

Volunteering' (Department of Business-Society Management, Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University) & **EESC Expert on trends in volunteering in Europe**, on "Making volunteer energy sustainable and circular in order to improve volunteering, now and in the future"

16:50 - 17:15 Breakout groups:

1. Policy and programme support for volunteering in the framework of the Next Generation EU Recovery Fund. (Facilitated by **Pavel Trantina**, Board member, Czech Scout Foundation)
2. Better measuring the value of volunteering in Europe to have a stronger evidence base for current and future policies and a better understanding of the economic contribution of volunteering to the recovery process. (Facilitated by **Katja Jäger**, Researcher at the project office EVC Berlin & betterplace lab)
3. Volunteering as an expression of European values contributing to the future of Europe based on democracy and active citizenship on the 10th Anniversary of EYV 2011 and beyond. (Facilitated by **Costin Dedu**, Vice President of Volonteurope network, & president of Asociatia Imago Mundi)

17:15 - 17:45 Feedback from the groups

17:45 - 18:00 Conclusions & closing remarks

Concept note

2021 is the 10th Anniversary of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 (EYV 2011). Since 2012, volunteering has appeared only occasionally in official EU documents, but the launch of the European Solidarity Corps has generated renewed interest in and attention to the role and value of volunteering and solidarity in the European Union.

Despite the best efforts of stakeholders there is still a lack of common understanding among decision-makers that the activity of volunteers has real economic value (amounting in many countries to more than 2% of GDP). In many areas of life the volunteer activity is necessary to ensure the basic needs of citizens, including those related to their safety. Volunteers play a crucial role in the implementation of all UN Sustainable Development Goals and represent every social group and age, which means that there is no justification for combining volunteer support programmes only with programmes addressed exclusively to young people.

During the debate on the future of Europe, policy-makers must be aware that this future will be shaped not only by politicians or formally structured bodies, but also by millions of citizens – volunteers who spend their time and energy every day acting in solidarity with others for the common good. To support the debate, as part of #EYVplus10 the Centre for European Volunteering (CEV), in collaboration with other stakeholders, will publish a new "Blueprint for European Volunteering 2023".

The EESC has already made important contributions to the discourse on volunteering in Europe:

- 1) The EESC opinion on *Statistical tools for measuring volunteering* <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/node/53227>,
- 2) Group III Conference in Warsaw, as part of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 (many of the conclusions from this Conference were incorporated by the Polish Presidency into the Council conclusions as a summary of this Year) <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/resources/docs/europe-iii---july-2011.pdf>
- 3) Forthcoming (in 2021) Group III Conference in Warsaw (initially scheduled for March 2020) <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/agenda/our-events/events/role-volunteering-implementation-un-sustainable-development-goals> "The role of volunteering in the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals"
- 4) A study on volunteering which will be undertaken in Group III in 2021.

Objectives of the workshop

In the workshop we will address a number of sub-topics:

1. Assessing policy and programme support for volunteering in the framework of the Next Generation EU Recovery Fund
2. Exploring how to better measure the value of volunteering in Europe and thus have a stronger evidence base for current and future policies.
3. Understanding the economic contribution of volunteering to the recovery process.
4. Reflecting on volunteering as an expression of European values contributing to the future of Europe based on democracy and active citizenship

The Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) (until 1 July 2020 known as the European Volunteer Centre), was established in 1992 and is a European network of over 60 organisations dedicated to the promotion of, and support for, volunteers and volunteering in Europe at European, national or regional level. Through our network we aim to be the leading voice in the values-based volunteering debate in

Europe, influencing and sharing current trends and challenges and those predicted for the future, developing and providing policy advice and expertise for European policy-makers so that volunteering policies and programmes developed at European level are effective and fit for purpose.