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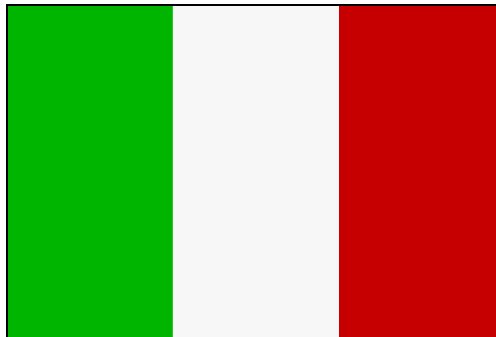
European Union  
Union Européenne

Partnership between the European Commission  
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth

# INFORMATION SHEET

## VOLUNTEERING OF YOUNG PEOPLE

### ITALY



Last updated:30/03/2011  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Volunteering of young people in Italy _____	2
2. Main actors and networks _____	3
3. Promotion of volunteering of young people _____	5
4. Mobility of young volunteers _____	8
5. Sources of information _____	9

# 1. Volunteering of young people in Italy

*Give an overview on volunteering of young people (13 – 30) in your country on the national and regional level (in federal states) answering the following questions:*

*- Are there official national/regional recommendations (policies) concerning volunteering of young people?*

*On national level:* No, there isn't any national recommendation concerning volunteering expressly addressed to young people. Anyway the social value of volunteering is recognized by the national law no. 266/1991 that considers volunteering as an expression of participation, solidarity and pluralism, promotes its development protecting the autonomy and encourages the contribution for achieving of social, civil and cultural aims.

These aims can be also promoted by other nonprofit organizations the so-called "social promotion" organizations regulated by Law no. 383/2000. The main difference is that these organizations can pay their own member if they work for the projects and generate income through their activities.

*On regional level:* No there aren't regional recommendations, but, as foreseen by art. 10 no. 266/1991, its social value is recognized and its development promoted by specific regional laws and there are many projects and interventions supported by Regions and local authorities to enhance the youth participation to volunteering.

*- Is volunteering usually paid? N*

Volunteering is unpaid, as volunteers cannot be paid, but only be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses.

*- Is there any National voluntary service? Y*

Yes there is. It's the National Civic Service introduced by Law No. 64/2001 when military service was still compulsory in Italy. It allowed conscientious objectors to substitute it with civilian service in the community. When military service ceased to be compulsory the National Civic Service (Servizio Civile) was opened to all young Italian citizens aged between 18 and 28 years interested to spend one year enriching their social and professional skills through activities carried out in not-for-profit, voluntary organizations or within the public administration. The length of the National Civic Service is one year and may not be prolonged or renewed.

The main fields of intervention are the following ones: social assistance, civil protection, artistic and cultural heritage, environment protection, education and cultural promotion and civil service abroad.

*- What is the legal / financial (fiscal) / social security status of volunteers ?*

There is not a specific legal status for volunteer. Under current legislation, "volunteer" is not an "employee". In this sense, a volunteer is a person who freely commits himself/herself to carry out activities exclusively for reasons of solidarity, especially in some fields (social assistance, environment protection and cultural heritage, etc.) without economic gain, despite the right of the volunteer to be reimbursed for any expenses s/he may incur while fulfilling their tasks. Moreover, a volunteering work must be of an altruistic and solidarity character and for these reasons it's compatible with social benefits. Volunteer activities are not paid to the volunteer by the organizations. Volunteers have social and health insurance.

In case the volunteer is employed he may ask to work flextime and, if he/she is cooperating with the civil defense, his/her salary is reimbursed by the State to the public or private employer for the period during which he is cooperating with the civil protection.

Despite volunteers as defined in the above –mentioned law volunteers of the National Civic Service receive a daily net salary of 14,46 Euro (a monthly net salary of 433,80 Euro) and get their National Insurance contributions paid by the UNSC. This income is not directly taxed. However, it increases the amount of taxable income. The period of National Civic Service is valid for the old-age pension.

## 2. Main actors and networks

- Who are the main actors (institutional and NGOs) in the field of volunteering of young people on the different levels?

*National:*

*Institutional*

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policies (<http://www.lavoro.gov.it/Lavoro/md/AreaSociale/Volontariato/>) is the public administration in charge for the implementation of the laws on voluntary activities. In particular this Ministry promotes the development of voluntary activities through the realization of research and studies, agreements with public and private organizations, funding and administrative managements of the projects financed to the voluntary organizations through the National Fund for the volunteering and is in charge for the National monitoring center of volunteering and for the monitoring activities of the Voluntary Support Centers.

The Voluntary Support Centers were regulated in 1991 with law 266/1991. Today they can be found in every Italian province with the exception of Bolzano. Overall there are 77 of them (69 provincial and 8 regional), 71 of which are members of the national Coordination,

The Ministry of Labour and Social policies is responsible also for the keeping of the National Register of the Social Promotion Organizations, where all Social promotion Organizations, active in at least five regions and twenty provinces, must register to cooperate with public institutions.

The Department of Youth (<http://www.gioventu.gov.it>) promotes some activities and interventions to enhance the active citizenship, participation in democratic life of young people, as well as their sense of the belonging to the European Union.

The National Office for the Civic Service (<http://www.serviziocivile.it>), established in the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, is in charge for the organization and implementation of the National civic Service. This Office is responsible also for its programming, coordination and checks.

*Regional:*

In every Region there is a Regional Counselor in charge for social policies and volunteering; these fields of activities are concretely managed by a specific Department. Usually Regions promote projects to disseminate volunteering good practices, to make citizens aware of the importance of the role of volunteering in civil society, especially considering young people. Every Region is responsible for the keeping both of the regional register of volunteering associations and of the regional register of the social promotion organizations. In both cases the registration is a necessary pre-requirements to cooperate with the regional institutions, for instance to participate to call for proposals, to obtain grants and implement projects and activities an so on.

*Local:*

Provincial counselors are responsible for the coordination of volunteering in their province. Moreover every Province is responsible for the keeping both of the provincial register of volunteering associations and of the provincial register of the social promotion organizations. In both cases the registration is a necessary pre-requirements to cooperate with the local institutions, for instance to participate to call for proposals, to obtain grants and implement projects and activities an so on. Municipalities usually have a municipal counselor in charge for the promotion of volunteering and other social policies in the territory. Sometimes the counselor in charge for volunteering is also responsible for youth policies.

*ONGs*

Volunteering associations are very often involved by regional and local authorities in the provision of public services. This trend increased in the last years following the decentralization of social policies in Italy (see he Title V - Art. 117 of the Italian Constitution, as modified by the Constitutional Law n. 3/2001). ONGs are involved in the promotion and implementation of projects abroad in the field of the development cooperation.

- Are any organizations in this field specifically targeting youth (as participants in voluntary activities and voluntary services)?

Even though the **Italian National Youth Forum** (<http://www.forumnazionalegiovani.org/>) is not a volunteering organization it's important to mention it in this context for its role in the involvement of young people in the social, civil and political life of the country. The Italian National Youth Forum is recognized by the legislative decree number 311 of the Italian Parliament of 30th of December 2004 and is the only national platform of Italian youth organizations which grants the representation of more than 4 millions of young people. It's composed by 77 different organizations. Since May 2008 is full member of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) which represents the interests of young Europeans by international institutions.

National Agency of the Youth in Action Programme (<http://www.agenziagiovani.it/presentazione.htm>) **Agenzia Nazionale dei Giovani (ANG)** is the National Agency of Youth in Action, the EU Programme for young people aged 13-30 that promotes mobility within and beyond the EU borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue, and encourages the inclusion of all young people, regardless of their educational, social and cultural background. The ANG is responsible for managing the programme at national level by providing appropriate information and support to project promoters, by selecting and monitoring projects, as well as by managing the EU funds.

**National Civic Service** (<http://www.serviziocivile.it>). The National Civic Service Office is a national governmental institution that involves 3,799 non profit organizations. The organizations operate at different levels (both local and national) and from 2001 to 2009 conveyed a voluntary service to 254,869 young people.

- Do networks and/or co-operations exist for supporting volunteering of young people in your country?

At national level there are some umbrella organizations belonging to the third sector and supporting volunteering of young people.

**Italian National Coordination Body of Voluntary Support Centers (CSVnet)** (<http://www.csvnet.it/>) CSVnet is the National Coordination of the Voluntary Support Centers. It was officially opened on January, 11th 2003 with the aim of gathering, providing continuity to and strengthening the experience of the National Association of Service Centers, constituted in 1999. It provides services to its members in order to improve the quality of the system, spreading training initiatives, the use of the social budget instrument and the charter of services.

**National Civic Service** Within the National Civic Service, it is possible to perform voluntary activities also in international organizations. The projects are carried out in collaboration with the European Union jointly with other international institution whose aim is cooperation and development among developing countries. In 2009, 499 volunteers have been involved in voluntary activities in different countries. <http://www.serviziocivile.it>

- What is the legal / financial (fiscal) status of organizations promoting volunteering?

The legal status of volunteering organizations is established by art. 3 of the Law 266/91 that defines the following characteristics as essential components for these organizations: non profit, non governmental, democratic, the activities must be for other people than the members and for the common good. Its main activity must be based on the personal, free and volunteer commitment of its members.

The law recognizes many tax benefits for voluntary organizations, and people can appropriate a part (5 per thousand) of the tax on their personal income to a voluntary organization.

### 3. Promotion of volunteering of young people

- Which methods among the one listed below are the most used to promote volunteering of young people in your country?

*By national policies:*

- Advertisement campaigns X
- Education X
- Youth information centers X
- funding of NGOsX
- Other X: creativity products, stages, publications, events and fairs.
- None

*By NGOs:*

- Advertisement campaigns X
- Education X
- Youth information centers X
- OtherX: creativity products, projects and stages, publications, events and fairs
- None

*Explain and provide examples for each of the box ticked.*

#### **Advertisement campaigns**

There are periodical information and awareness campaigns on voluntary activities and National Civic Service, promoted by the Government and carried out at national level through TV, radio, on line and newspapers spot advertisements. The last information campaign on voluntary activities has been carried out in July 2007, meanwhile the last information campaign on National Civic Service in September 2010.

[http://www.governo.it/GovernoInforma/campagne\\_comunicazione/index.html](http://www.governo.it/GovernoInforma/campagne_comunicazione/index.html)

#### **Education**

Voluntary activities are often promoted among young people through the school system.

The Report 2008-2009 of CSVnet, on the activities carried out by Voluntary Support Centers, shows that they organized meetings in 2008 and 2009 with 146,702 and 162,839 students in respectively 1,453 (61% secondary high schools; 20% primary high schools; 19% primary schools) and 1,824 schools (64% secondary high schools; 22% primary high schools; 14% primary schools) to present the potential and the importance of the voluntary activities.

Some Voluntary Support Centers promote voluntary activities also in the Universities and in youth centers.

Moreover, there are 66 information points school-voluntary activities, disseminated in all the country and many youth projects organized by Voluntary Support Centers, in collaboration with different level of schools and youth centers of aggregation.

## Youth Information Centers

In Italy, since 1981, over 1.170 Informagiovani centers have opened in all the large cities and in many smaller cities and towns as well. Their service is free and the information is reliable and varied and volunteering is one of the topics they deal with.

## Funding of NGOs

Public institution (national, regional and local) may finance volunteering organizations (only those one registered in the regional/provincial register of volunteering organizations) to carry out projects and activities aiming at increasing the youth participation to volunteering. Generally public institutions launch specific call for proposal.

## Other

### Projects and stages

Public institutions supports the implementation by NGOs of projects aiming at promoting awareness and offering guidance on voluntary activity to young people and, in some cases, giving them the opportunity to experience the voluntary activities through stages.

In succession some projects promoted by the Department of Youth ([www.gioventu.gov.it](http://www.gioventu.gov.it))

Youth Camps 2010: an initiative open to young people aged between 16 and 22 giving them the opportunity to spend a week as a main contributor working for and with the environment as a service to the public and to Italy as a whole during the period from June to September. The Youth Camps have been set up and carried out in collaboration with the Fire Service, the Italian Navy and the Corps of the Port Captaincies/Coast Guard, all of which are departments of the Italian Ministry of the Interior.

Young Protagonists is a call for proposal launched in 2009 to promote projects targeting the support for creativity and youth prominence, developing a culture of meritocracy and excellence among the younger generations, and in favour of active participation in the social, cultural and economic life of the community.

One of the initiatives carried out by the Ministry of Labour and Social policies targeted to young people is the project:

“Youth & Volunteer: a laboratory of ideas in evolution”, is a coordinated set of internet activities that has the target to promote the voluntarism in the young generations, as an experience of responsible and active citizenship (<http://www.lavoro.gov.it/Lavoro/md/AreaSociale/Volontariato/Progetti/Giovani+e+volontariato.htm>).

### Publications

Public institutions and NGOs publish both leaflets to promote volunteering activities and the results of studies and researches on the topic of volunteering, where the analysis of the youth participation is very often part of it.

During 2011 there will be an increase of these activities that will be carried out by public institutions and ONGs in the framework of the European Year of volunteering 2011.

<http://www.destinazioneeuropa.eu/piano2011/>

- Which among the followings are methods of recognition of volunteering of young people in your country?

- European Youth Pass X
- Certificates X
- Credits in the formal education system X
- Awards
- Incentives

- They are valued in the CV X
- Other:
- They are not recognized

*Explain and provide examples for each of the box ticked.*

Even though there isn't a unique formal system for the validation of non formal and informal learning acquired by young people through voluntary activities, there are some tools for the recognition of volunteering of young people participating in specific programmes such as:

- European Voluntary Service (EVS) is formally recognized by Europass.
- National civic service of the young volunteer is recognized by a certificate from the National Civic Service Office and the competences are recognized as credits mainly in the University courses and in some cases also in the secondary high school.

Moreover competences acquired through voluntary activities are generally certificated by the voluntary organization and are recognized as credits in the University system and positively evaluated by the third sector. The participation of students to voluntary activities is part of their training in some Universities faculties.

*- What obstacles to young people's engagement in volunteering do exist and how are these faced by national policies?*

Many young people participate to volunteering, especially considering the opportunities offered by the National Civic Service and the EVS. Though in the last years youth information in these fields has been developed, limited access to information on volunteering opportunities and their positive effects remains an obstacle, especially for young people with fewer opportunities. The information about volunteering, especially when it offers the opportunity to spend a period abroad, generally comes from informal contacts and personal experiences of other people that did this experience. This happens more frequently among young students or young people members of social, political, cultural or environmental platforms (cfr. Page 159, Public Policy and Management Institute, Mobility of young people across Europe, Brussels, 2011)

Anyway the creation of a European system for the recognition of the skills acquired through the participation to voluntary activities could be an important factor to promote young people's engagement in volunteering, especially in a period characterized by a high percentage of youth unemployment.

Currently some activities are recognized through certificates and validations but there isn't yet a national system of certification of competences acquired through non formal learning experiences such as volunteering. Moreover, these certificates have still a very limited value when considering offers of job.



## 4. Mobility of young volunteers

*- Is there any national monitoring of how mobility of young volunteers takes place?*

No, there isn't any at national level, but there are monitoring mechanisms concerning specific programmes and activities promoting youth mobility, such as the EVS and the National Civic Service.

Data on NGOs volunteer mobility initiatives aren't collected systematically and so it's very difficult to find information on the monitoring of mobility of young volunteers.

*- What are these monitoring mechanisms? N/A.*

## 5. Sources of information

### Laws

- Legge 11 agosto 1991, n. 266 'Legge quadro sul volontariato'. (Framework Law on Volunteering)

- [www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/A34C1403.../0/19910811\\_L\\_266.pdf](http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/A34C1403.../0/19910811_L_266.pdf)

Legge 6 marzo 2001, n. 64 'Istituzione del servizio civile nazionale'. (Law 'Establishment of the National Civic Service')

- [www.serviziocivile.gov.it](http://www.serviziocivile.gov.it)

Legge 7 dicembre 2009, n. 383 'Disciplina delle associazioni di promozione sociale'. (Law 'Rules for Organizations of Social Promotion')

[www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/65FEC762-E4EE.../20100730\\_Dir.pdf](http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/65FEC762-E4EE.../20100730_Dir.pdf)

### Plans and programmes

- Piano Italia per l'Anno europeo del volontariato 2011 (Italian action plan for the European Year of volunteering 2011)

<http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/20099A43-B67D-42F5-8A8F8386718C676/0/PianoONCIItaliaR.pdf>

- European Commission, 'Youth in Action' Programme Guide. Brussels, 2010

[http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc/how\\_to\\_participate/programme\\_guide\\_10/guide\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc/how_to_participate/programme_guide_10/guide_en.pdf)

### Publications

- National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), chapter 24 "The social participation and the religious practice", multiscope survey "Daily life – year 2009",

[http://www.istat.it/dati/catalogo/20110121\\_00/inf\\_10\\_05\\_la\\_vita\\_quotidiana\\_nel\\_2009.pdf](http://www.istat.it/dati/catalogo/20110121_00/inf_10_05_la_vita_quotidiana_nel_2009.pdf)

- Polidori, Rotondi, Tavazza, Osservatorio nazionale per il volontariato, Rapporto di ricerca i Giovani ed il territorio

[http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/F570E08E-BB9C-4C6C-9E59E334759F55A0/0/Rapp\\_di\\_Ricerca\\_Igiovanieilterritorio.pdf](http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/F570E08E-BB9C-4C6C-9E59E334759F55A0/0/Rapp_di_Ricerca_Igiovanieilterritorio.pdf)

- Educational, Audiovisual & Culture Executive Agency (EAC-EA - Directorate General Education and Culture (DG EAC), Volunteering in the European Union, Final Report submitted by GHK, 17 February 2010

<http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/eyv2011/doc/Volunteering%20in%20the%20EU%20Final%20Report.pdf>

- R. Di Gioia, L. Giacomello, P.P. Inserra, S. Rotondi, Quando i giovani partecipano, Prima indagine nazionale sulla presenza giovanile nell'associazionismo, nel volontariato e nelle aggregazioni informali, Sviluppo locale edizioni.

[http://www.csvnet.it/usr\\_view.php/ID=1536](http://www.csvnet.it/usr_view.php/ID=1536)

- Coordinamento nazionale dei Centri di servizio per il volontariato, Report delle attività 2008 – 2009 dei Centri di Servizio per il Volontariato

[http://www.csvnet.it/repository/dly\\_cont\\_schedemm/2158\\_file.pdf](http://www.csvnet.it/repository/dly_cont_schedemm/2158_file.pdf)

- Public Policy and Management Institute, Mobility of young people across Europe <http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/news/attachments/mobility-of-young-volunteers.pdf>

### Speechs and statements

- Intervento del Presidente della Repubblica Giorgio Napolitano alla Cerimonia celebrativa della giornata del volontariato Roma, 4/12/2009

[http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/F0DCAF6A-AA48-4113-B4B5-BC4EE9CA9ED6/0/Intervento\\_PdR\\_5122009.pdf](http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/F0DCAF6A-AA48-4113-B4B5-BC4EE9CA9ED6/0/Intervento_PdR_5122009.pdf)

- CSVnet – Italian National Coordination Body of Voluntary Support Centres, Representation in Italy of the European Commission, Manifesto of volunteering for Europe

[http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/1DABB8D6-EADC-4F53-B92D55FE5B0C72DF/0/Manifesto\\_Volontariato\\_inglese.pdf](http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/1DABB8D6-EADC-4F53-B92D55FE5B0C72DF/0/Manifesto_Volontariato_inglese.pdf)

- Carta della Rappresentanza Giovanile – Progetto e Risultati

[http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/BCC31242-0D96-4C66-AF43B11CF47C1354/0/Carta\\_della\\_Rappresentanza\\_Giovanile.pdf](http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/BCC31242-0D96-4C66-AF43B11CF47C1354/0/Carta_della_Rappresentanza_Giovanile.pdf)

- Volunteering infrastructure in Italy

[http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/BD103809-769D-4AA6-9B88-4CFB995C20FF/0/Volontariato\\_infrastruttura\\_inglese.pdf](http://www.lavoro.gov.it/NR/rdonlyres/BD103809-769D-4AA6-9B88-4CFB995C20FF/0/Volontariato_infrastruttura_inglese.pdf)