



YouthPartnership

QUESTIONNAIRE

“VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES”

GREECE



YouthPartnership
Council of Europe
European Commission



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1) Which types of voluntary activities exist in your country for young people, explain the different fields of activities and if possible give numbers of how many young people engage in them per year, in totals and by gender?

- The **General Secretariat for Youth**, alone or in cooperation with non governmental youth organisations, runs various programmes based on voluntary activities. These programmes combine holidays and voluntarism or have to do with:
 - raising environmental or anti-discrimination awareness,
 - distributing information on health issues,
 - offering free group bicycle rides to all cultural and natural sites of the city of Athens,
 - offering free legal services to young people belonging to minorities or to groups with fewer opportunities,
 - emergency cases management in the framework of lifelong learning activities, aiming to offer citizens, mainly the youth, specialised knowledge and skills necessary for the protection of themselves and their fellow citizens.

Approximately 2000 young people participate in the volunteering and environmental programs of the Developmental Youth Activities Department every year.

- **KETHEA** occupies volunteers in two main areas of action: cure and prevention. The first area has to do with services towards the addicted people and their families via various units, while the second has to do with programmes and prevention actions to the general population and especially to educational and local communities, professional groups etc. The overwhelming majority of the volunteers that are occupied in KETHEA are young people, students or graduates of social science schools, psychology or mental health.

Volunteers with specialised professional training or certain knowledge may also contribute to the work of the cure and prevention programmes in different ways, such as educational provision, support of administrative and organisational activities etc.

- **The Youth and Sport Organisation of Athens Municipality (ONA):** The volunteers participate in athletic, cultural and social programs and activities. Generally the volunteers participate in all the activities that are organised by the Organisation.

2) Which kind of voluntary service exist in your country and how many young people engage in them per year, in totals and by gender.

- ***European Voluntary Service (EVS)***

A European Project under the Youth in Action European Programme that offers the possibility to young people to move for a short term period (up to 3months) or for a long term (up to twelve months) in a foreign country without knowing its language and culture. The Project offers all the necessary help through a series of pre-departure trainings and support systems. Their stay abroad will provide them with a sense of independence that will prove valuable asset for their future active life.

- ***KETHEA*** does not have permanent volunteers. Its needs and the volunteers occupied vary significantly from time to time and from structure to structure. In their majority, however, they are women, as women are also most of the volunteers who address KETHEA for volunteer service offering.

- ***EKEPY*** Blood donors in the Greek Army and Civilians. Volunteers trained by the Hellenic Emergency Medical System for provision of first aid.

- ***Youth and Sport Organisation of Athens Municipality (ONA)*** There is a voluntary section since 2005 with the name 'Participate - Volunteers of Athens' in the Youth and Sport Organization of Athens Municipality. The volunteers that participate in the program are above 18 years old. 10% of the volunteers is between the age of 18 and 24 years old and 33% is between 25-35 years old. From those 62.8% are women and 37.2% are men.

3) Financial and legal status of voluntary activities

Legal Status of Voluntary Activities

Until now there is no comprehensive legal framework for volunteerism in Greece; hence, volunteers in Greece do not have a specific legal status but they are assimilated to other categories of people depending on the case (eg: students, workers, etc). However, there are some national laws which refer to particular types of volunteerism. More specifically:

-Law 2646/20.10.1998 regarding the Institution of the National Social Care System and, in particular, article 12, refers to the development of volunteerism and anticipates the establishment of an independent Department for the Development of Volunteerism within the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity.

-Law 2731/5.7.1999 regulates issues related to development cooperation/aid and to NGOs; in addition, it refers to the international organizations of development aid which are financed and monitored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

-Law 3013/1.5.2002 regarding the Upgrading of Civil Protection regulates issues related to the development of voluntary civic service.

-Law 1951/1991 establishes the institution of the volunteer fireman.

- The **General Secretariat for Youth** recognizes, in every big event and campaign that young volunteers take part in, young people's efforts in voluntary activities by offering them official letters of recognition for their offer. Here we can mention the European Youth Weeks in 2007 and 2008 (Youth in Action /Eurodesk volunteers, EVS volunteers, as mentioned above), the "Holidays and volunteering" program as well as the "Break Down the Wall of Discrimination" project launched under PROGRESS 2007-2013.

- **Ministry of Health and Social Welfare**

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (www.mohaw.gr) organises annually a social event in order to present awards to volunteer organisations and individual volunteers from all over Greece for their services in the sectors of Health and Social Care. The main objective of that event is the recognition of the role of volunteers in the community.

- **President of the Hellenic Republic**

The President of the Hellenic Republic (www.parliament.gr) presents awards to citizens for their voluntary services.

- **KETHEA** provides training and supervision to the volunteers and issues volunteer occupation certificates.
- **EKEPY** Health campaigns are financed by the Greek Ministry of Health. Also, some days off duty are given to blood donors in public and private companies and in the Greek Army.
- **Youth and Sport Organisation of Athens Municipality (ONA)** The organisation provides the volunteers activated to its programs with a 'uniform' which contains a T-shirt, a hat and an accreditation confirming their role at the activities. The accreditation is renewed every year. They also have the right to participate in the athletic – cultural programs of the Youth and Sport Organization under the discount of 50%.

Financial Status of Voluntary Activities

In Greece, there are a lot of governmental or non-governmental bodies that offer financial support to voluntary activities. More specifically:

- the International Development Cooperation Department (Hellenic Aid), Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- the Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity
- the Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works
- the General Secretariat for Youth, Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs
- Local Authorities
- The Greek Church
- EU programmes
- the World Bank Group
- Companies Donations
- Members' Contributions
- Charitable Collections
- Donations Bequests

4) Name the main actors of voluntary activities of young people on national, regional and local level in your country

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- **Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity**, www.mohaw.gr
- **Hellenic Fire Service**, Ministry of Interior, Hellenic Fire Service Headquarters, 4 Mourouzi Str, Athens, 10554, Hellas, tel.: +30 210 7242211-17, fax: +30 210 7211441-43, www.fireservice.gr
- **General Secretariat for Civil Protection**, Ministry of Interior, 2 Evangelistrias Str, Athens, 10563 Hellas, tel.: +30 210 3359002-3, fax: +30 210 3359935, e-mail: info@civilprotection.gr, www.civilprotection.gr
- **Volunteering Organisations Initiative**, www.simetexo.gr
- **Hellenic Federation of Voluntary Non-Governmental Organisations**, www.ngofederation.gr
- **Panhellenic Network of Ecological Organisations**, www.eco-net.gr
- **KETHEA Information Department**, 24 Sorvolou St, 11639 Mets, Athens, tel.: +30 2109241993-6, fax: +30 210 9241986, e-mail: info@kethea.gr
- **ONA**, www.cityofathens.gr The corporation that deals with the volunteerism in Athens Municipality is the Youth and Sport Organization - Volunteerism Section, Satomvriadou 20 St, tel.: +30 2105284879, +30 2105284882, fax: +30 2105284883.
- **Hellenic Red Cross**, e-mail: ir@redcross.gr, www.redcross.gr

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- **Action Aid Hellas**, www.actionaid.gr
- **Medecins Sans Frontieres-Greek Section**, www.msf.gr
- **Medecins du Monde-Greek section**, e-mail: info@mdmgreece.gr, www.mdmgreece.gr
- **Friendship Bridges-Institute of Social Solidarity**, instphill@hol.gr, www.friendship.gr
- **oneEARTH**, www.oneearth.gr
- **Centre of Strategic Planning for Development DIMITRA**, e-mail: kessa@dimitra.gr, <http://kessa.dimitra.gr>
- **Solidarity-NGO of the Greek Church**, www.solidarity.gr
- **Greenpeace-Greek section**, www.greenpeace.org/greece/
e-mail: gpgreece@diala.greenpeace.org,
- **WWF-Hellas**, support@wwf.gr, www.wwf.gr
- **Arcturos environmental organisation**, vpetridou@arcturos.gr, www.arcturos.gr
- **Archelon environmental organisation**, stps@archelon.gr, www.archelon.gr
- **SCI-Social Civic Service International-Hellas**, www.sci.gr
- **Hellenic Rescue Team**, ops-center@rescue.gr, liamos@hrt.org.gr, www.hrt.org.gr
- **Mediterranean S.O.S.-Environmental and Social NGO**, medsos@medsos.gr, www.medsos.gr
- **Hellenic Ornithological Society**, birdlife-gr@ath.forthnet.gr, www.ornithologiki.gr
- www.anthropos.gr

This site, among others, promotes voluntary activities and informs about the NGO sector in Greece. It is an easy-to-use resource centre accessible to everyone and provides to youngsters (users) with all they need to find out about volunteer opportunities in Greece, and helps them make the best match possible between their personal requirements and choice of volunteer work. It is worth mentioning that over 1,700 NGO's have been subscribed in the specific site and more than 18,000 people visit monthly this site most of them being young people.

- **Citizen in Deed** – www.ergopoliton.gr

A volunteering organisation established as a legal entity of private law by presidential decree in 2005, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture. The General Secretary for Youth signed a Memorandum regarding volunteerism between the General Secretariat for Youth and the "Citizen in Deed". The mission of the organisation, among others, is the promotion, strengthening and development of the volunteerism ideal, the registration and organisation of the volunteerism forces at local, regional and national level, the harmonisation of voluntary initiatives for the effective exploitation of the capabilities of the public sector and local authorities and the implementation of any kind of subsidised projects that apply to the advancement of volunteerism. Moreover, Citizen

in Deed may provide legal advice to voluntary groups on how to form a voluntary organisation as a legal entity while it offers core guidance on national, European and international programmes.

5) What is the social protection of young volunteers in your country and are voluntary activities compatible with social benefits?

There are no national standards or arrangements. Individual programmes and projects have their own arrangements regarding expenses, insurance, living allowances, etc. However, as far as European Voluntary Service (EVS) is concerned, participant volunteers in the programme are subject to the EU provisions.

When asked, the organisations, organising the volunteering activities, certify the voluntary action of the young volunteers and the time that they have spent to volunteering programmes. This certificate of attendance can be used for any legal use (i.e. curriculum vitae - special day off during their military service).

6) What programmes and plans are there in your country on volunteering?

- The **General Secretariat for Youth**, alone or in cooperation with non governmental youth organisations runs various programmes based on voluntary activities. These are, mainly, the following:

Regional

- “My City on a Bike”

A new voluntary programme launched by the General Secretariat for Youth. Its aim is to establish a network between the 15 Municipalities of Athens offering to all citizens and visitors especially the young ones, free group bicycle rides to all cultural and natural sites of the city of Athens. Trained young volunteers accompany groups of cyclists who come to a standard meeting point from 10.00h to 15.00h, on Saturdays and Sundays, offering their services as guides. The overall aim of this ambitious programme is to sensitise young people for a development of healthy lifestyle behaviour.

- Legal Aid

Young lawyers-members of the Athens Bar Association offer free legal services to young people belonging to minorities or to those with fewer opportunities. In 2008, the General

Secretary signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the Bar Associations of Athens, Volos, Ioannina and Rhodopi in order to enhance the implementation of the project.

- ***“PROGRESS” programme***

In the framework of the European Community Programme for Employment & Social Solidarity – PROGRESS (2007-2013), the General Secretariat for Youth, in co-operation with the Institute for Youth, were assigned, during the first half of 2008, with a project titled “Break Down the Wall of Discrimination”. The project is co-financed by the European Commission, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG - Unit G.4. The purpose of the project is to raise awareness in the combat against discrimination in the broader Attica region, giving special emphasis on youth. In this attempt, groups of young volunteers participated and helped in the dissemination of information.

- ***“Archelon” Volunteers Training Centre, Glyfada Attica***

Archelon is one of the largest NGOs, operating since 1983, dealing with environmental issues and in particular with sea turtle rescue. At the same time is one of the most competent EVS host organisations in the country (projects realised in Athens, Rethymnon and Zakynthos). In May 2005, a volunteer training centre was inaugurated with the support and cooperation of the General Secretariat for Youth. Since then more than 1.000 volunteers have been trained on sea turtle treatment, maintenance and public awareness raising while the centre hosts more than 15.000 visitors per year (students, organised groups and individuals).

National

- ***“Holidays and volunteering” programme***

The General Secretariat for Youth in collaboration with the Hellenic Ministry of Transport and Communications has specifically implemented the “Holidays and volunteering” programme, in which young people, aged 18 to 26, work voluntarily, during the summer, in a Hellenic Post Office of a tourist destination.

- ***Environmental Awareness Actions in fire-stricken areas***

The General Secretariat for Youth, in cooperation with the National Tourism Organisation (EOT) support bodies that take on actions in fire-stricken areas aiming at the active participation of young people, the voluntary offer, the emergence of environmental protection practices and the encounter of environmental problems.

- ***“Ask First”***

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The General Secretariat for Youth, in cooperation with the non governmental organisation PRAKSIS organise groups of volunteers that go to the most tourist-visited parts of Greece and distribute information material about HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, alcohol, smoking and dependence-creating substances, while volunteering physicians accompany them to give more specific information.

- ***European Youth Week, 2-9 November 2008***

In the framework of the European Youth Week, several events were organised in different towns all over the country in cooperation with the Local Youth Councils. During the week, seminars, conferences /tele-conferences, cultural activities, debates, YOUTHPASS awards ceremony, exhibitions, activities aiming at the networking of environmental NGOs, awareness raising activities on local youth issues, youth entrepreneurship & EU programmes activities took place. In addition to the above, themes concerning youth participation, volunteering, and intercultural dialogue were discussed.

- ***“Protect Myself and the Others”***

It is a volunteer training programme on emergency cases management, aiming to offer citizens, mainly young people, specialised knowledge and skills necessary for the protection of themselves and their fellow citizens. The programme is jointly implemented by the Lifelong Learning Unit, the General Secretariat for Civil Protection (www.gscp.gr), the General Secretariat for National Defence, the Earthquake Planning and Protection Organisation, the Fire Squad (www.fireservice.gr), the Hellenic Coast Guard (www.yen.gr) and the NGOs Médecins Sans Frontières Greece (www.msf.gr) and Red Cross Greece (www.redcross.gr). In specific, the programme offers training on the following areas: decision making and problem solving, information management, self-protection, rescue-first aid, psychological support to citizens in need, team working etc. It is developed in cooperation with the local authorities, hospitals, schools etc. and is structured in thematic training seminars of two and a half months duration. Twenty such seminars are realised on an annual basis with the participation of up to 50 trainees per seminar.

- ***Volunteerism KIT***

A Volunteerism Kit was produced by the General Secretariat for Youth in 2006, including a full set of tools, useful to potential volunteers and organisations. The kit contains: a volunteer's handbook and a DVD with basic information on volunteer values and aims, additional definitions and training tips on the issue, as well as best practice examples to empower the participation of youth. The Kit has been distributed to schools, universities and voluntary NGOs promoting

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information and contributing to the constant development of volunteerism, especially among young people.

7) Does a strategy (plan) or specific measures for the development of voluntary activities of young people exist in your country ?

The General Secretariat for Youth, the governmental body responsible for designing and implementing youth policy in the country, undertakes initiatives and develops policy measures and programmes that enhance the participation of young people and their involvement in voluntary activities. The implementation of its projects and initiatives has resulted in the development of a clearer volunteer's identity among youth and to an increase of:

- a. numerous small scale voluntary youth initiatives active mainly at local level;
- b. young people's expression of personal commitment to offer voluntary service;
- c. exchange of views for recognition between civic society and the state.

Exchange of information

Effective dialogue among voluntary NGOs, stakeholders and the General Secretariat for Youth is an ongoing process. It is mainly based on the exchange of updated information via the Secretariat's web-portal, the Youth Information Centres network (Eurodesk relays), the European Youth Portal and the Media.

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European Voluntary Service

The Hellenic National Agency for the EU YOUTH IN ACTION Programme, Institute for Youth, General Secretariat for Youth disseminates information for EVS opportunities via the Secretariat's web-portal, the Youth Information Centres network (Eurodesk relays), the European Youth Portal, the Media and presentations held in different cities and regions of the country throughout the year. Moreover, training seminars are offered to incoming and outgoing EVS volunteers as well as to

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representatives of the Local Youth Councils and NGOs, Youth Information Centres network (Eurodesk relays) and targeted groups.

International solidarity Voluntary service in the EU and the world

There is a great variety of programmes promoting international solidarity voluntary service in the EU and the world. The role of the state administration in the organisation, support and implementation of international solidarity service is vital. In particular, the International Development Cooperation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for the planning and implementation of the national policy for the development of cooperation and humanitarian aid. In this context, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (www.mfa.gr) facilitates and supports the establishment of humanitarian aid NGOs in Greece, coordinates the work of humanitarian and cooperation development national NGOs, promotes this kind of volunteerism around the world, encourages cooperation between Greek humanitarian NGOs and those in other EU Member States and allocates the necessary national funds for humanitarian aid and cooperation development.

8) Describe which obstacles to volunteering of young people do still exist in your country and which measures are taken to remove them?

Obstacles

One of the main obstacles that make it difficult for young people to participate in voluntary activities is the lack of information observed today. As a result, young people willing to participate are either those who are informed by friends or those who already participate in voluntary activities. Unfortunately, as we are living in a country that has one of the lowest Web accessibility levels and the information has difficulty in reaching the public, the efforts undertaken by organised bodies (General Secretariat for Youth) and associations (anthropos.gr, olimazi.eu, symmetexo.gr) simply recycle a number of people,.

Another important problem is that the experience and the skills acquired in the framework of volunteering are not acknowledged or validated by any system. The most important example is the European Voluntary Service, whose certification is not recognised by Greek public bodies. The skills developed by the volunteer are not recognised as qualifications, and the problem is even bigger for disadvantaged young people.

More specifically, the obstacles may be summarized in the list below:

List of Existing obstacles

- Low information level about the possibilities of voluntary activities and low level of support from the society.
- Absence of a comprehensive legislative framework which will cover rights and responsibilities of volunteers and organisations.
- The society's lack of recognition of volunteer service hinders its development and efficiency.
- Obstacles to the involvement of the disabled and of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Lack of a centralized system of voluntary work at national level, which would ensure availability of information and possibilities to engage in activities for any young person.
- Lack of training modules for persons involved in organising and coordinating voluntary activities.

Measures

In general, public authorities show more interest for promoting the voluntary activities by rising the funding and by including more and more voluntary activities in their action plans. Additionally, some of the voluntary organisations support volunteers by providing training and supervision in order to overcome these difficulties.

As far as information is concerned, each Public Authority and each NGO organise their own information strategy, which corresponds to the use of different channels for promotion, such as massive, targeted, word-of-mouth and through intermediaries.

Some examples of measures taken in order to overcome the difficulties are:

Dissemination - Access to Information

Young people's voluntary engagement is facilitated through a better dissemination of the relevant information. In particular, this is one of the main aims of the Youth Information Centres: 58 bodies supported by the General Secretary for Youth all over Greece responsible for informing the youngsters of their region about the opportunities available in the framework of voluntary activities. Here we have to mention that the General Secretariat for Youth is constantly (twice a year) organising training seminars for the staff of all Youth Information Centres so as for them to reach a better knowledge of most of the projects that can be used by youngsters on a voluntary basis.

www.anthropos.gr

This site, among others, promotes voluntary activities and informs about the NGO sector in Greece. It is an easy-to-use resource centre accessible to everyone and provides to youngsters (users) with all they need to find out about volunteer opportunities in Greece, and helps them make the best match possible between their personal requirements and choice of volunteer work. It is worth mentioning that over 1.700 NGO's have been subscribed in the specific site and more than 18.000 people visit monthly this site most of them being young people.

www.esyn.gr

The National Youth Council's site works to raise the profile of volunteering amongst the Greek youth and ensure that the contribution of voluntarism to civil society is recognised and accounted for. Young people will find that this site brings together valuable information and important announcements.

Societal recognition

In general several discussions aiming at the recognition of voluntary activities take place.

Involvement and participation of youngsters at local level

Local youth councils are a new institution in our country under the initiative of the General Secretariat for Youth in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs and the Ministry of Interior.

All young people will now have the opportunity to participate in the public meetings of their Municipal or Communal Council in order to express their views on issues that concern them. Through the specific institution that is becoming widely known at national level, young people will now be able to foster the value of volunteerism through the activities undertaken and the proposals they will be able to promote.

In addition, young people participate in several voluntary activities organised by grass root youth organisations and the national platform of the National Youth Council.

Steps for legislative recognition

The General Secretariat for Youth has undertaken a legislation initiative as regards the definition and recognition of non formal and informal learning at national level for the programmes the General Secretariat for Youth launches or financially supports.

9) How are voluntary activities of young people promoted in your country, particularly among young people with fewer opportunities?

The promotion of voluntary activities is one of the first priorities of the General Secretariat for Youth. This is done by providing information and/or support to initiatives aimed at linking volunteer work to specific target groups, by co-operating in specific initiatives and further developing the site of "Time Bank" (<http://volunteers.neagenia.gr>) in view of an efficient use and maintenance of the database.

NGO Anthropos

The site of NGO Anthropos has as a main aim to promote volunteer opportunities and match volunteers with non-profit organisations much faster and more efficiently. This leads to the reduction of both time and cost required for the recruitment of volunteers. Anthropos.gr is a necessary link to volunteer – organisations, and especially youngsters looking to volunteer their time for a good cause.

Seminars

It must also be mentioned that the Youth Information Centres play a major role in the promotion of voluntary work. The Department of Youth Information and Hellenic National Agency for the EU Youth and Eurodesk Programmes organise regular seminars addressed to the employees of the Youth Information Centres as well as to the members of the Local Youth Councils; an integral part of these seminars is the promotion of the European Voluntary Service.

Volunteerism Kit

In 2006, the General Secretariat for Youth produced a Volunteerism Kit, to motivate potential volunteers/ organisations and give some guidelines about recruitment and training. This kit has been distributed mainly to schools and non-profit organisations involved in voluntary activities in order to promote volunteerism and serve as a tool to non-governmental organisations and also to the youngsters who are interested in becoming involved with volunteerism.

European Youth Weeks

During the European Youth Weeks that take place each year, the website of the General Secretariat for Youth announces the need for volunteers for the organisation and implementation of this European Youth Event. The volunteers, subscribed, participate actively in various activities / events, such as educational seminars, interactive activities, theatre, music, dance, plastic arts, sports, games, etc. All of them receive a personal certificate mentioning their personal contribution

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to the event.

Examples of promotion activities:

By non-governmental organisations:

“Volunteering Organisations Initiative” (www.simetexo.gr) is an informal network of nine volunteering organisations, which organises an annual event on volunteerism that includes audiovisual presentations on voluntary activities as well as a music concert.

Exclusion of certain groups of young people

The fact that some young people have access to fewer opportunities is many times due to the particularities of the area in which they grow up. For example, in certain deprived city areas and regions which are economically and structurally weak or demographically imbalanced, the social participation of young people is seriously restricted. The Greek government's youth policy provides a framework to reduce exclusion of these groups. A number of initiatives are aimed at promoting the participation of youngsters from 'disadvantaged backgrounds' in the life of their community; these initiatives may also have a direct or indirect influence on voluntary commitment.

Initiatives to promote voluntary commitment of young people are mainly launched within the framework of youth work. The Greek National Agency of “Youth in Action” 2007-2013 E.U. Programme provides information about the European Voluntary Service and for all the volunteering programmes that the General Secretariat for Youth is carrying out, on its Internet site, through the media (TV, radio, newspapers, etc.) and through frequent presentations held in small cities and regions throughout the country during the year. Its goal is to promote volunteerism among young people, and especially among young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

- **KETHEA-Treatment Centre for Addicted People-** encourages its members to get involved in voluntary actions as a characteristic aspect of KETHEA's therapeutic approach. The therapeutic programmes take over initiatives of social, cultural, ecological and sport content, thus being an active part of the local community where they are situated. These actions contribute to the change of the member's life attitude and prepare their social rehabilitation. The elimination of prejudice surrounding the substance use, the substance user and the services for encountering the problem is accomplished through the interaction with the social background and the cooperation with other bodies and people.

An example of good practice is KETHEA MOSAIC, KETHEA's intercultural programme for immigrants, refugees, repatriates in Athens. The programme aims at psycho-socially supporting this population group to facilitate their social integration and the prevention or cure of substance abuse. The programme operation is based mainly in the work of the volunteer group, consisted mainly of the people addressing to the services and others interested in it. The group works as a communication "bridge" with the communities of the immigrants and the refugees, as well as with the wider community, facilitating the access of people needing support. The volunteerism is at the same time a means of personal reinforcement, social activism and training for the volunteers themselves.

10) Explain how voluntary activities of young people are recognised in your country.

- In every big event and campaign where young volunteers take part the General Secretariat for Youth recognizes young people's offers in the voluntary activities by giving them certificates of attendance and various awards.
- The Ministry of Health and Social Solidarity organises annually a social event in order to present awards to volunteer organisations and individual volunteers from all over Greece for their services in the sectors of Health and Social Care.
- Many volunteers have received honours by local authorities for their voluntary activities.
- The President of the Hellenic Republic has presented awards to citizens for their voluntary services.
- When asked, the organisations, organising the volunteering activities, certify the voluntary action of the young volunteers and the time that they have spent to volunteering programmes. This certificate of attendance can be used for any legal use (i.e. curriculum vitae - special day off during their military service).
- **KETHEA** provides its volunteers with training and supervision, while issuing certificates that describe the framework, the content and the duration of the volunteer's occupation.
- **EKEPY** Awards are given to regular blood donors by local agencies in recognition of their offer.

- **The Youth and Sport Organisation of Athens Municipality (ONA)** The volunteers of the program 'Participate - volunteers of Athens' that participate in big activities are awarded with special honorary diplomas for their participation, i.e. diplomas of participation to the 'Final Four'.

11) Which co-operations, networks and exchange programmes do exist in your country for supporting voluntary activities of young people?

-Youth Information Centres. Network of 58 youth information points which provide free information on issues of interest to young people, including voluntary activities initiated or sponsored by the General Secretariat for Youth and other governmental or non-governmental organisations.

-Local Youth Councils

-National Youth Council (ESYN), www.esyn.gr

The National Youth Council's site works to raise the profile of volunteering amongst the Greek youth and ensure that the contribution of voluntarism to civil society is recognised and accounted for. Young people from every region of Greece, who are either volunteers or are considering of becoming, will find that this site brings together valuable information and important announcements.

- <http://volunteers.neagenia.gr>

-Volunteering Organizations Initiative. It is an informal network of nine volunteering organisations. Since 2001, the Volunteering Organizations Initiative organises an annual event on volunteerism which includes audiovisual presentations on voluntary activities as well as a musical concert.

-Hellenic Federation of Voluntary Non-Governmental Organisations, www.ngofederation.gr. This is a network of 129 (June 2009 data) voluntary non-governmental organisations (e-mail: info@ngofederation.gr), 6 of which have to do only with young people. It publishes the quarterly magazine Volunteering Expression (Ethelontiki Ekfrasi).

- www.anthropos.gr

This site, among others, promotes voluntary activities and informs about the NGO sector in Greece. It is an easy-to-use resource centre accessible to everyone and provides to youngsters (users) with all they need to find out about volunteer opportunities in Greece, and helps them make the best match possible between their personal requirements and choice of volunteer work. It is worth mentioning that over 1.700 NGO's have been subscribed in the specific site and more than 18.000 people visit monthly this site most of them being young people.

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-Citizen in Deed – www.ergopoliton.gr

A volunteering organisation established as a legal entity of private law by presidential decree in 2005, under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture.

-European Voluntary Service: A long-term action of the EU Youth Programme, aimed at young people aged between 18 and 25 and legally residing in an EU Member State or an associated country. There are two parts in this action of the Youth in Action E.U. Programme (Action 2): programmes offering support to Greeks who aim to volunteer abroad and hosting programmes for Europeans who aim to volunteer in Greece. (Contact Person: Ms Dora Bei, Head of Youth Information Department & of Hellenic National Agency, General Secretariat for Youth, Tel: +30 210 25.99.402, Fax: +30 210 25.31.879, e-mail: dbei@neagenia.gr).

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc82_en.htm

There is no data available regarding exchanges initiated by NGOs.

12) Do collective volunteering projects exist in your country?

Yes, in major sporting events, forests safety surveillance, fire-stricken areas, areas hit by natural disasters, medical assistance to other countries in need (namely “Doctors of Heart”) and offering developmental aid.