



**Youth**Partnership

# ***QUESTIONNAIRE***

# ***“VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES”***

# ***LATVIA***



**Youth**Partnership  
Council of Europe  
European Commission



Education and Culture DG



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## **1. Which types of **voluntary activities** exist in your country for young people, explain the different fields of activities?**

Most of voluntary activities are done by individual initiatives. Mostly voluntary activities are organized by NGOs especially youth organizations. There are several big voluntary projects (collective) (see question 12). Therefore all young people activities in voluntary field can be described under one of following:

participation in organisations as a member and working voluntary on daily base;

voluntary participation in organisation and involving in activities of organization;

joining the organisation periodically or during the concrete project.

Concrete field of actions can vary from social to political activities and there is no study on how wide are taken actions in voluntary field and what are results.

According to survey „Attitude towards participation in youth organizations” (2008) 32.6% of young people are involved in voluntary activities out of which 4.4% are volunteers on regular base (4.7% male/ 4.2% female), 16.1% has done volunteering lately and would like to continue (13.1% male/ 19.1% female) and 12.1% has participated in volunteering ever (11.8% male/ 12.5% female).

## **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.**

There is no state organized voluntary service in Latvia. There are several youth organizations that provide data bases for volunteering opportunities ([www.prakse.lv](http://www.prakse.lv), [www.manrup.lv](http://www.manrup.lv), [www.brivpratigais.lv](http://www.brivpratigais.lv)) and support services for volunteers. There are some initiatives on local level to provide local voluntary work as system, as example city of Liepaja (<http://www.jauns.lv/home/darbs-brvprtqais-darbs-liepj/>).

No statistics available.

## **3. Financial and legal status of voluntary activities**

### **Youth Law. Section 10. Youth Voluntary Work Organisation**

(1) Youth voluntary work may be organised by associations and foundations, as well as State and local government institutions.

(2) An organiser of youth voluntary work:

1) shall be responsible for safe voluntary work conditions, which do not harm the health of a young person;

2) shall issue a written certification regarding the time spent in voluntary work, duties, acquired knowledge, skills and abilities upon the request of a young person; and

3) is entitled to request that a young person, upon commencing voluntary work, presents a statement issued by a doctor regarding his or her state of health, thus ascertaining the suitability of the young person for the intended voluntary work.

(3) A written contract regarding voluntary work may be entered into upon the initiative of the organiser of the voluntary work or a young person, specifying the work to be done and the time period for the fulfilment thereof.

#### Associations and Foundations Law. Section 8. Volunteer Work

(1) Associations and foundations have the right to employ persons in volunteer work.

Volunteer work shall be considered to be unpaid work or provision of services performed by a natural person without entering into employment legal relations and which is aimed at the achievement of the objective laid down in the articles of association of the association or foundation.

(2) A written agreement shall be entered into regarding the performance of volunteer work upon the request of a person, indicating the work to be performed and the performance deadline thereof.

(3) A person performing volunteer work may request the compensation of such expenses which have arisen during the course of the performance of the volunteer work, if it has been provided for in the articles of association of the association or foundation or in the decisions of the executive board.

(4) An association or foundation shall be liable for any harm caused to a person while performing volunteer work if such duty has been undertaken or also the harm was caused due to the fault of the association or foundation.

No other regulation exists. According to Associations and Foundations Law Section 8. Article 1. voluntary work relations are not considered employment relations, therefore no other regulation is necessary and volunteers as individuals does not receive any social guaranties. There exists Public Benefit Organisation Law according to which public benefit organisations have the right to receive tax rebates and persons (or enterprises) who donate to a public benefit organisation are entitled to receive tax rebates, but this is indirectly linked to volunteering.

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

There are several youth organizations that provide data bases for volunteering opportunities ([www.prakse.lv](http://www.prakse.lv), [www.manrup.lv](http://www.manrup.lv), [www.brivpratigais.lv](http://www.brivpratigais.lv)) and support services for volunteers, who might be considered as main players on national level. According to youth organizations data base on youth information portal [www.jaunatneslietas.lv](http://www.jaunatneslietas.lv) main youth organizations dealing with youth voluntary activities (who consider themselves doing so) are:

[Jaunatnes organizāciju apvienība IMKA Latvija](http://www.jaunatnesorganizacijuapvieniba.imka.lv) ph: +371 67293662, fax: +371 67293662 e-mail: [imka@imka.lv](mailto:imka@imka.lv), url: <http://www.imka.lv>

[Jauniešu konsultācijas](http://www.jauniešu.konsultacijas.lv), ph: 25910428, e-mail: [dace.udre@yc.lv](mailto:dace.udre@yc.lv), url:<http://www.jk.org.lv>; [www.kurpdodies.lv](http://www.kurpdodies.lv), [www.prakse.lv](http://www.prakse.lv)

[Latvijas Jauno zemnieku klubs](http://www.latvijasjaunozemniekuklubs.lv), ph: +371 63027168; +371 26619432, fax: +371 63027168, e-mail: [jzk@jzk.lv](mailto:jzk@jzk.lv), url:<http://www.jzk.lv>

[Latvijas Kristīgā Studentu Brālība](http://www.latvijas.kristigastudentubraltiba.lv), ph :+731 7611602; + 371 29130210, e-mail: [lksb@lksb.lv](mailto:lksb@lksb.lv), url:<http://www.lksb.lv>

[Latvijas Sarkanā Krusta Jaunatne](http://www.latvijas.sarkanakrusta.jaunatne.lv), ph: +371 7336653, fax: +371 7336652, e-mail: [youth@redcross.lv](mailto:youth@redcross.lv), url:<http://www.redcross.lv>

[Liepājas Jaunie Vanagi](http://www.liepajas.jaunievanagi.lv), ph: 3427047; 28452124 , e-mail: [liepajasiv@inbox.lv](mailto:liepajasiv@inbox.lv), url:<http://www.liepajasiv.lv/>

[NVO "Pūks un draugi"](http://www.nvo.puksundraugi.lv), ph: 26769655; 67571813, e-mail: [pooh.org@gmail.com](mailto:pooh.org@gmail.com), url:<http://www.iesim.lv> (no 01.06.2008- 01.09.2008 atrodas rekonstrukcijā)

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

According to Associations and Foundations Law Section 8. Article 1. voluntary work relations are not considered employment relations, therefore volunteers as individuals does not receive any social guaranties and social benefits, but according to Law On State Social Insurance persons who have reached 15 years of age whose permanent place of residence is in the Republic of Latvia and who are not subject to mandatory social insurance in the Republic of Latvia may join the State social insurance voluntarily in accordance with the procedures

specified by the Cabinet, therefore paying voluntary contribution according social insurance system and receive benefits accordingly.

## **6 What Programmes and plans are there in your country on volunteering?**

No specific plans on national level, youth volunteering is included in Youth policy state programme for current year according youth policy state five years programme based on Youth policy guidelines for years 2009-2018.

Some local municipalities have their strategy and system for volunteering as example Liepaja (see question nr. 2).

## **7. Does a strategy (plan) or specific measures (link to the glossary) for the development of voluntary activities of young people exist in your country?.**

Youth policy guidelines for years 2009 -2018 propose specific line of action in order to develop youth voluntary work with main tasks:

- a) reduce obstacles for youth voluntary work;
- b) promote achievements of voluntary work and to promote motivation to participate in voluntary activities;
- c) promote recognition of skills gained via voluntary work;
- d) to increase voluntary work possibilities and accessibility for young people with fewer opportunities by improving state support system.

Implementation of Youth policy guidelines for years 2009 – 2018 will reduce obstacles mentioned in question nr.8.

## **8. Please, describe which obstacles to volunteering of young people do still exist in your country and which measures are taken to remove them?**

Main obstacles to volunteering recognized in Youth policy guidelines for years 2009 – 2018, which will be reduced by implementation of guidelines via state youth policy programmes:

- In Latvia there is no state support mechanism for the implementation of voluntary work, there are various barriers to successful youth volunteer organization and implementation.
- Society in general has lack of awareness and information about the importance of voluntary

work in creation of civil society, democratic values and knowledge-based society.

- Young people lack information about the volunteer work and the opportunities, what would promote youth involvement in voluntary work activities.
- There is not provided any statistics on the voluntary work.
- There is no adequate recognition of skills gained via volunteer work.
- There is lack of promotion of cross-border volunteering opportunities and youth mobility in Europe.

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

In year 2008 Ministry of Children, Family and Integration Affairs supported 8 projects on municipal level for activities (camps, seminars, workshops, etc.) with young people from social risk groups. Projects were carried out by municipalities in cooperation with youth organizations in order to raise knowledge and skills of young people with fewer opportunities and to promote youth participation in social and cultural life – youth organizations, non-formal education and voluntary work.

In year 2009 Ministry of Education and Science has supported special training programme which takes place in 7 youth centre across all Latvia with more than 140 participants – youth workers, teachers and youth organization representatives and young people – on how to work with young people with fewer opportunities in order to increase their participation and activity in youth centres, youth organizations, non-formal education, voluntary work, etc. It is planned to achieve high multiplying effect in future.

### **10. Explain how (by which means) voluntary activities of young people are recognised in your country.**

There isn't one recognized certificate or other measure. State promotes usage of Europass CV and Youthpass as pan-European recognized tools for non-formal and voluntary work recognition. Other organizers of voluntary work can introduce their own measure of acknowledgment – different certificates, as example there was coalition “Cita-skola” (Other-school) created by youth and health related organizations that developed peer-education programme on health and created certificate of educators which was widely recognized.

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

There exist several state and private funding schemes for support activities of youth organizations, mainly voluntary initiatives. Ministry of Education and Science supports youth activities according to annual State youth policy programme; according to Youth policy guidelines for years 2009 – 2018 it is planned to foster state support for youth voluntary activities. State Agency responsible for implementations of EU non formal education programme Youth in Action (Valsts Aģentūra "[Jaunantes starptautisko programme aģentūra](#)") co-ordinates network of youth voluntary work organizers in Latvia supporting work of hosting and sending organizations. There are several youth organizations that provide data bases for volunteering opportunities ([www.prakse.lv](http://www.prakse.lv), [www.manrup.lv](http://www.manrup.lv), [www.brivpratigais.lv](http://www.brivpratigais.lv)) and support services for volunteers.

## **12 Do collective volunteering projects exist in your country?**

Most of collective volunteering projects exist to support big events, as example in year 2008 there was Latvian song and dance festival with 38 601 participants, in organizing event 259 volunteers were involved. There has been tradition to organize joint cleaning of environment once a year, in year 2009 event was organized country wide according to calculation 110 000 people took part in one day voluntary activities across Latvia.

## **13 Which recent survey or research has been carried out on the topic of voluntary activities?**

1. Survey „Attitude towards participation in youth organizations” (SKDS, 2008) (same survey will be carried out in year 2009).
1. Study “Research on youth social and political activities” (Ministry for Children and Family Affairs, 2007).
2. Study “Youth identity formation and participation” (LU FSI, 2005) included a chapter on voluntary activities.