

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

# INFORMATION SHEET

## VOLUNTEERING OF YOUNG PEOPLE

### HUNGARY



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# 1. Volunteering of young people in Hungary

**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: Y/N (included in the Youth Strategy)

On regional level: Y/N

Volunteering is defined by the *Act LXXXVIII of 2005 on voluntary activities in the public interest* as follows: “Voluntary activities on the part of individuals or communities which are based on the solidarity of members of society and which are carried out for the benefit of others as an expression of the independent actions of citizens and without recompense are recognised by Parliament.”

The 5<sup>th</sup> section of the *Act LXXXVIII of 2005 on voluntary activities in the public interest* covers some legal aspects of volunteering of young people:

Section 5(1) Persons who have not yet turned eighteen and persons who have reached majority who are of limited legal capacity may carry out voluntary activities in the public interest which are suitable for their age, their physical, intellectual and moral development, and their abilities, and which do not endanger their health, development and the completion of their study obligations.

(2) Volunteers who have not yet turned sixteen and volunteers who have reached majority who are of limited legal capacity may not carry out voluntary activities in the public interest abroad.

(3) Volunteers who have not yet turned eighteen may not carry out voluntary activities in the public interest between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m.

(4) The time spent on voluntary activities in the public interest by volunteers who have not yet turned sixteen may not exceed

- a) three hours a day and twelve hours a week during school holidays,
- b) six hours a week during the school year,
- ba) two hours a day on school days,
- bb) three hours a day on non-school days

The issue of volunteering appears in the National Youth Strategy as well, the related partial objectives are the following:

- In the topic of equal opportunities:
  - To establish an institutional and service providing system, which supports and coordinates youth community activities and voluntary projects (volunteering, community activities, community learning, as well as self-organizing youth groups and the building of networks); to increase and improve the capacities of the already existing institutional network
  - To launch domestic volunteer programmes and to support and develop existing programmes
- In the topic of culture mediation – intercultural experience:
  - To develop the set of criteria for volunteer work in the governmental, local governmental, non-profit and market sectors and encourage participation in such schemes.
- In the topic of awareness and social integration – Increasing opportunities for community and voluntary activities:
  - To encourage and motivate social and civil service institutions in the employment of young volunteers

**- Is volunteering usually paid?Y/N**

As stated in the definition of the Hungarian legislation, volunteering is carried out without recompense. However the law even allows recompense in some exceptional cases, if:

- The person carries out the activity for the benefit of him-/herself or a close relative of his/hers [Section 685b) of Act IV of 1959 on the Civil Code,
- The activity is based on a statutory order, a final decision of a court, or an order issued by an authority,
- The parties agree that the activity will be carried out under another legal relationship, in particular one of a civil law nature, as a member of a civil organisation, non-profit company or the church, a member of a foundation or an organisation managing a public foundation, or as a member of the clergy.

Besides these, the common ways of reimbursements, bonuses and benefits are allowed and used according to the (usually straitened) resources of the organizations.

**- Is there any National voluntary service?**

Y/N

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

**Legal:**

As defined by the law, “voluntary activities in the public interest shall be carried out in the framework of legal relationships as volunteers which have been established by means of volunteer contracts concluded between the host organisation and the volunteer. The volunteer contract must specify the following:

- the content of the voluntary activities in the public interest,
- the place where the voluntary activities in the public interest will be carried out,
- the time to be spent on the voluntary activities in the public interest and the amount of rest time, the allowances which the volunteer receives and which must be provided for in the event of the volunteer contract being terminated.”

**Financial:** Voluntary workers don't pay income-taxes after the reimbursements they get.

**Social security:** The voluntary workers are eligible to emergency medical services.

## 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:**

The National Civil Fund [http://www.nca.hu/?page=webtext/show&wte\\_code=english](http://www.nca.hu/?page=webtext/show&wte_code=english)

The Hungarian Parliament enacted the Law No. 50 on the National Civil Fund on 23 June 2003 that aims the strengthening of the operation of civil society organisations and the development of the third sector through grant supports.

All those private foundations and non-governmental organisations (excluding employers' and employees' interest groups, political parties and insurance associations) who are registered and operating in Hungary at least for a year can gain support from the Fund. The grants are distributed by the Boards composed of the representatives of civil society organisations. The principles of the grant-support system are laid down by the governing body, the Council that has a majority of delegates from civil society organisations, too.

The Volunteer Centre Foundation of Hungary (ÖnkéntesKözpontAlapítvány, ÖKA – website in Hungarian) <http://www.oka.hu/alap.php>

The Volunteer Centre offers its services to different actors of the society (individuals, NGOs, government, local authorities, institutions and companies). The services of the Centre are open to anybody and are free of charge for NGOs and individuals. The long-term goals of The Volunteer Centre are:

- To create an environment in Hungary in which the majority of the individuals volunteer regularly;
- To ensure that NGOs are well prepared to host volunteers,
- To encourage and facilitate public support of volunteering and to involve the different sectors of society<sup>1</sup>

The Foundation for Democratic Youth (DIA) <http://english-dia.blogspot.com/>

DIA's National Youth Service Network Programme (KözöD!) offers a grant scheme, professional support, an awareness raising campaign and regional meeting opportunities to young people aged 14-25 eager to volunteer.

The School-based Youth Service Programme (IKSZ – X) is an effort to bring youth service into the formal school system. Dozens of schools joined the constantly growing network encouraging new ones to start. A survey is being done among the schools which already put in place a structure for youth service.

The Nonprofit Information and Training Centre (NIOK) Foundation [http://niok.hu/fooldal\\_eng.html](http://niok.hu/fooldal_eng.html)

The mission of the Nonprofit Information and Training Centre Foundation is to strengthen civil society in Hungary by providing capacity building services to the non-governmental organizations and by building an environment supportive of the long-term future of NGOs.

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<sup>1</sup>source: <http://perso.numericable.fr/leonardo.vaeb/contactHongrie.gb.htm>

### **Regional:**

The network of Civil Service Centres (CISZOK) <http://www.ciszokhalozat.hu/> (website in Hungarian)

The network consists of centres operating in every county capital of Hungary. In order to develop the civil sector they initiate and offer professional and infrastructural services helping cooperation within the civil sector and among sectors. They aim to provide a knowledge centre of experts, best practices and necessary information based on experiences and needs. Beyond the basic technical support the partner organizations provide consultancy and hold trainings.

The above mentioned **National Youth Service Network of the Foundation for Democratic Youth** is present in every region and has many partner organizations.

### **Local:**

Volunteering and especially youth volunteering is typically not among objectives aided by funds granted by county and local municipalities to organisations operating in their area through tenders. These funds represent a very small fragment of income for both the non-governmental sector as a whole and as individual beneficiary organisations.

In Hungary, public services that usually involve the work of volunteers, such as care for children, for the elderly, for the disabled and the for the ill, are typically funded from three types of resource: (1) base rates allocated from the central governmental budget, (2) operators' contributions (meaning municipalities in most cases) and (3) contributions by users (not in every case). Generally, no funds in such resources are budgeted by institutions for the purposes of liaising with NGOs, involving their resources and using volunteers<sup>2</sup>

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

Youth-related organizations constituted not more than 4% of the Hungarian non-governmental sector. In 2005 the average income of one organization was HUF 6.4 million, which was far below the average of the non-profit sector (HUF 17 million). 6% of the youth organizations had neither any income, nor any expenses, presumably they only existed formally. Two-thirds of the youth organizations operated in the form of associations and 33% as foundations. 2% of all employees, 4% of association members and 5% of regularly working volunteers took part in their activities. One-third of them were affiliated to the Central Hungary region, and a great majority (81%) performed their activities in towns.<sup>3</sup>

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

The Mobilitás National Youth Service provides information and guidance for young people in many related issues. The National Youth Information and Documentation Archive operated by Mobilitás has voluntary activities as one of the fields they collect data about.

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<sup>2</sup>Source: National Report of Hungary on the implementation of common objectives for voluntary activities among young people (2007)

<sup>3</sup>Source: National Youth Strategy

### 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:** In 2011 there is an extensive campaign with programs, festivals and advertisements connected to the voluntary year.
- Education:** Mobilitás National Youth Service is an accredited adult training institution, offers trainings in several related issues.
- Youth information centres:** The network of Eurodesk-offices coordinated by Mobilitás collects and provides information on national and international possibilities of youth volunteering
- funding of NGOs:** The National Civil Fund (see above)
- Other:
- None

**By NGOs:**

- Advertisement campaigns:** The NGOs try to promote volunteering according to their resources. One of the most visible sites for advertising is [Civil Radio](#) Budapest, which is a site for volunteering itself and gives possibilities for advertisement campaigns.
- Education:** The Volunteer Centre Foundation and The Foundation for Democratic Youth provides possibilities for non-formal trainings for individuals and organizations
- Youth information centres:** Many of the members of the former HAYICO (Hungarian Association of Youth Information and Counselling Offices) are still operating and providing information on many youth-related issues including volunteering
- Other:
- None

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

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

- European Youth Pass** (Exists, however not widely known or used)
- Certificates
- Credits in the formal education system** (In many cases forms of volunteering can be counted as professional practice)
- Awards
- Incentives
- They are valued in the CV**
- Other:
- They are not recognised

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

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

The main problem seems to be the high immobility of people as well as the existence of a fixed career-model especially for under the middle-class groups that expects young people to start earning money just after finishing school. The benefits of volunteering are rather appealing for those who already own more cultural capital. The initiative of the state secretary responsible for education, that volunteer work should be required for high-school graduation can be a reaction to these tendencies.



#### **4. Mobility of young volunteers**

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

**- What are these monitoring mechanisms? If yes, please explain.**

There is no official monitoring of volunteering of young people. The Foundation for Democratic Youth unofficially disclosed for my question that they experience, that volunteers who go to school are highly immobile; only do volunteering where they live. The only exceptions are those who are professionally involved in volunteering, such as coordinators.

## 5. Sources of information

<https://kereses.magyarorszag.hu/jogszabalykereso>(governmental website of laws)

[http://www.civil.info.hu/uploaded/documents/onkentes/1212746798vol\\_act\\_pub\\_int\\_2005\\_hu.pdf](http://www.civil.info.hu/uploaded/documents/onkentes/1212746798vol_act_pub_int_2005_hu.pdf)

(The voluntary law in English)

<http://www.onkentes.hu> (The website of the Volunteer Centre Foundation in Hungarian with practical information about volunteering)

<http://www.mobilitas.hu>(The website of Mobilitás National Youth Service)

The National Youth Strategy (the English translation can be downloaded at this address:

<http://www.szmm.gov.hu/main.php?folderID=16512&articleID=41878&ctag=articlelist&iid=1>)

The National Report of Hungary on the implementation of common objectives for voluntary activities among young people (2007)

And the linked websites of the mentioned organizations