

Youth Partnership

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



EUROPEAN UNION



COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

FINAL REPORT

RESEARCH SEMINAR

“Mobility of young people – Opportunities and obstacles for
cross-border volunteering for young people,
particularly with fewer opportunities”

European Youth Centre, Strasbourg
11-13 December 2011

NB: This is a report produced for the EU-CoE youth partnership and does not necessarily reflect the
opinion of the partner institutions

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2. Participants

The following participated in the seminar (in alphabetical order):

Celine Barlet (panelist) is from France and works as a project officer in the EYV 2011 Alliance, which is an informal network involving 39 European networks of organizations engaged in volunteering activities.

Ion Botnaru is from Moldova and is a project manager and volunteer in “Terra-1530”, which is an NGO active within volunteering and environmental issues.

Marcello Cassanelli is a young volunteer from Italy. He has recently returned from a long-term cross-border volunteering experience in Romania, where he worked with Roma children.

Konstatinos Chrysikopoulos is from Greece and is working professionally with the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in volunteering activities at local level in Athens.

Ana Condrat (panelist) is a board member of the National Youth Council of Moldova, and a former long-term EVS volunteer. She is a member of the Working Group on Volunteering in the European Youth Forum, and has assisted in the drafting of the proposal for a European Charter on rights and responsibilities of volunteers.

Jo Deman is from Belgium and is a Project Officer for Volunteering and Youth Organisations in the European Youth Forum.

Carla Filetti is from Italy and employed by the Erasmus Student Network, which she represents in the European Youth Forum.

Nelli Gishyan (panelist) is a board member of the Federation of Youth Clubs of Armenia. She is a former EVS-volunteer herself.

Anna Hakobyan is from Armenia. She works in the Regional Studies Center (RSC) which is an independent, non-profit think tank engaged in a range of strategic analyses and implementing a number of educational and policy-related projects.

Søren Kristensen (reporter) is a Danish free-lance researcher who has worked extensively with transnational learning mobility in a variety of settings.

Ester Maestro is from the Spanish organization Cibervoluntarios, which works with volunteering to empower citizens by training them in ICT-skills

Maria-Carmen Pantea (convener) is a Romanian researcher who is involved in research on volunteering, also with a cross-border dimension. She is a member of the Pool of European Youth Researchers within the EU-CoE partnership on youth.

Fiorentina Poulli is from Cyprus and represents the organization LCEducational, which works in the area of education, training and youth and has implemented a number of EVS-projects.

Nicolae Procopie (panellist) is from Romania but lives in Moldova. He is active in the NGO “Youth for the Right to Live”, whose mission is preventing social exclusion of young people and promoting a healthy lifestyle through voluntary activities. He has been involved as an expert in drafting a recently implemented Law on Volunteering in Moldova.

Kateryna Shalayeva (panellist) is originally from Ukraine but lives in France. She is a free-lance researcher and is currently engaged in a comparative study on legal frameworks on cross-border volunteering in Europe. She is a member of the pool of European youth researchers within the EU-CoE partnership on youth.

Adelaide Trousselard (panellist) is originally from France but lives and works in Brussels in the Belgian NGO Dynamo International, which as an integral part of its activities works with transnational mobility and young, disadvantaged people.

Anisa Ymeri (panellist) is from Albania, where she is a co-founder and coordinator of the “Albanian Corps of Volunteers”, which is the biggest voluntary movement in the field of environmental issues in Albania.

Rasim Zeynalov is from Azerbaijan and is engaged in various projects promoting civic engagement in the NGO-sector.

From the EU–CoE youth partnership:

Srd Kisevic (research and youth policy officer)

Marta Medlinska (partnership coordinator and educational advisor)

Joachim Schild (external relations coordinator)

From the European Commission:

Jutta Koenig-Georgiades (DG COMM Citizens Policy Unit)

Karin Lopatta-Loibl (DG EAC Youth Policy Unit)

3. Introduction

The seminar was organized by the EU-CoE youth partnership with the aim to contribute to the work of both institutions in the field of cross-border voluntary activities of young people. Furthermore, it should serve to increase the understanding and constructive dialogue among researchers, policy-makers and practitioners on this topic, and it should have a particular focus on the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in these activities.

The objectives of the seminar were:

- To collect and present new research available on the topic of the cross-border mobility of young volunteers;
- To entice exchange between researchers, practitioners and policy-makers
- To produce recommendations that can feed into the EU and CoE discussions, whilst taking stock of previous events and their recommendations on this topic.

Specific key themes and questions for the discussions were:

- How to draw vulnerable young people closer to the non-formal education/youth work and, consequently, volunteering? What does it imply in terms of motivation, preparation, and, ultimately, selection?
- Obstacles and opportunities to volunteering in countries without established cultures of volunteering or with weak political and institutional support for volunteering. What are the realistic proposals for and institutional/policy change?
- What support is needed to underpin learning processes and opportunities for personal development in cross-border volunteering for this target group? And who should provide this support?
- What can we demand from young people from disadvantaged backgrounds when participating in cross-border volunteering?
- What are the responsibilities of organisers vis-à-vis participants?
- How can research contribute to increasing the visibility of barriers to participation in volunteering? What areas need to be further explored?
- How could organizations contribute to making cross-border volunteering more inclusive of disadvantaged youth?
- How can we strengthen contacts and cooperation between researchers and practitioners?

The seminar was divided into an introduction and 3 panels, which each treated a key theme of the subject. In each panel, two or three panelists gave initial presentations to fuel the ensuing discussions.

Representatives from the EU-CoE youth partnership as well as from the European Commission and the Council of Europe outlined the overall political framework of cross-border volunteering activities involving young people with fewer opportunities.

4. Nature of the report

It is the aim of this report to give an overview as well as a summary of the overall outcomes/conclusions of the seminar. It is not the minutes of a formal debate, but it tries to capture the major lines of argumentation and conclusions of a lively and multi-faceted discussion, which often grew organically to transcend given themes and revisit previous points of the agenda. To achieve its aims, the structure of this report consequently does not follow the chronological sequence and headlines of the programme (see below), but has bundled the contents under themes that only partly overlap with these. In the discussions, especially the contributions of civil society (NGOs and other providers of cross-border volunteering opportunities) were emphasized, but also the role of policy-makers both at national and European level and the role of research were highlighted.

The conclusions of the seminar have been formulated into a set of recommendations, which were discussed and agreed upon by participants at the end of the seminar. These recommendations form an integral part of the report.

It follows from the nature of the report that it cannot represent the full richness and diversity of the discussions of a diverse group of practitioners, policy makers and researchers. Therefore the individual presentations given at the seminar by the panellists have been included as an annex to this report to enable readers with specific interests and priorities to consult these for more details.

5. Definition of target group and rationale for inclusion

What exactly do we mean when we talk about "young people with fewer opportunities" and, secondly, why is it important to involve this group in cross-border volunteering activities?

Whereas "youth" is generally taken to mean people in the age bracket roughly from 15-30, "fewer opportunities" is a more slippery proposition. "Young people with fewer opportunities" is a very heterogeneous group, and it is impossible to provide a clear-cut and explicit definition of the term, as our understanding of it is always contextually embedded and related to changing societal developments. When used in an operational context, it may therefore refer to target groups as diverse as –

- Young people with physical disabilities
- Young people in a precarious economic situation
- Young unemployed
- Young people with few or no formal qualifications
- Young people from rural areas
- Young people from deprived city areas
- Young people with psychological problems
- Young people from ethnic minorities
- Young offenders
- Young mothers
- Young people with difficult family circumstances

This list may be further extended almost ad infinitum, in accordance with the changing contexts and practices on the basis of which it is defined. Specifically in connection with cross-border mobility, however, it is important to keep in mind that “young people with fewer opportunities” constitute *a population for whom a transnational experience may not suggest itself naturally* (motivational barriers), and that it moreover concerns *fragile participants who are in need extended support and monitoring* in order to ensure that the experience is a beneficial one – both in relation to the participant him- or herself and in relation to the cause in aid of which the volunteering experience is organized and implemented.

In the light of these two observations it is an apt question why we should include young people with fewer opportunities in cross-border volunteering, as it may divert precious efforts and resources from the cause, which the volunteering project is set up in support of. Two lines of argumentation were fielded in favour of inclusion. One is essentially a moral argument which posits inclusion as a duty in a democratic society: we are obliged to ensure that all young people, irrespective of their personal resources and societal backgrounds, are given equal opportunities for participation in such an experience. The second argument concerns the potential for learning and personal development that participation in cross-border volunteering contains. Both from anecdotal evidence and – albeit as yet only limited – research it emerges quite clearly that so called disadvantaged groups may benefit substantially from participation in transnational mobility projects in terms of skills acquisition and personal development, provided these stays abroad are properly implemented and monitored.

6. Obstacles and opportunities

Volunteering as a social practice is not equally developed in all countries. Some have a long and established tradition of citizens’ voluntary engagement in charitable causes, in others volunteering (understood as the involvement of participants’ own free will, according to own choices and motivations, and without financial gain) is a more recent development, and organizational structures as well as legal provisions are still only partly, or not at all, in place. Cross-border volunteering may be difficult to implement in conditions where the necessary infrastructure is still under construction, and particularly for participants coming from the group of “young people with fewer opportunities”, whose ability to cope with adverse situations is often reduced. Therefore the development of national volunteering and the provision of adequate framework conditions are necessary prerequisites for engaging in cross-border volunteering. Yet involvement in cross-border volunteering may also be used intentionally as a way of underpinning national activities and strategies. However, this must be done with due consideration of the nature of the target group involved.

We should be aware of the fact that besides the “typical” non-profit NGOs working in the field, there are also commercial providers of volunteering experiences abroad. These providers mediate the contact between young people wanting to volunteer and hosting organizations and institutions abroad. For this they charge a fee, which can be quite significant. Young people with fewer opportunities are often excluded from participating in these schemes, as they cannot pay the fee.

One of the key elements in the efforts to include young people with fewer opportunities in cross-border volunteering is related to the motivational aspect, as they often have fears and anxieties of a nature that act as a formidable barrier to their participation. They will not necessarily actively seek out information and

pursue opportunities. Therefore organizations working with cross-border volunteering will have to adopt targeted, pro-active and inventive approaches to recruitment, if they aim to involve participants from this target group. Personal contact in their own social environment – e.g. by street workers – may be an effective means of recruitment. Given the heterogeneous nature of the target group, it is moreover necessary to develop strategies for addressing specific profiles of this, as widely different approaches are required.

Another potential barrier for inclusion are the selection procedures of the volunteering organization themselves, which may be biased in the direction of mainstream participants and fail to take other target groups into consideration. This may happen out of a misguided intention to “protect” less robust target groups from what is considered a too demanding challenge. Whereas there should always be a match between participants and modes of participation, however, in some cases selection may be undertaken on the basis of prejudices against a specific target group, and thereby a priori exclude persons who might have benefitted from the experience. Therefore it is important to highlight and disseminate success stories of the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities to shift the focus from limitations to possibilities.

As well as adopting differentiated strategies for recruitment, it is also necessary to consider different forms of volunteering for different profiles within the target group – it is not a case of “one-size-fits-all”. Long-term individual stays abroad may only be an option for a limited number within the target group, and genuine and efficient inclusion strategies therefore also entail offering different modes of participation. This may not only be reflected in e.g. the duration of the experiences, but also in e.g. “buddy systems” that may allow a physically disabled person to participate together with a voluntary helper, or group volunteering to provide peer support and allay feelings of isolation and homesickness while abroad. To groups for whom physical mobility is not a realistic option, means of cross-border collaboration using ICT may furthermore be developed to give them an opportunity for incorporating an international dimension in their volunteering activities, even though they are not able to leave their home environment.

Even though we only have little research on the general profile of participants in cross-border volunteering activities, it would seem that it is generally concerned with self-reliant and resourceful young people with a distinct capacity for adaptation and interaction as well as taking independent action. This is not the case for young people with fewer opportunities, however, and they consequently need a much more extensive “scaffolding” around them in terms of support and monitoring for the experience to succeed. This “scaffolding” should not just cover the time that is spent abroad. It is equally important to provide adequate preparation before departure, and to follow up on the experiences once the participant has returned. This is important for all types of participants, but especially so for young people in a precarious situation. The “engineering” of cross-border volunteering is more demanding than national volunteering activities because it requires close cooperation between the sending organisation at home and a hosting organisation abroad. Preparation can to a certain extent be of a general nature, but it is most effective when it is targeted especially to the environment where the volunteer is about to spend a period of time. Similarly, for monitoring and mentoring during the stay, it is helpful if those in charge in the host country have received information on the participant and his or her particular needs and competences, and that there is an ongoing contact with the sending organisation during the whole time. The mentor-role is crucial when dealing with less robust participants, and it is a great asset if the person assuming this role already

prior to the arrival of the participant has acquired an understanding of what is required to fulfil this function. This can have happened either through written information material or specific mentor-training. Often former participants in cross-border volunteering make particularly effective mentors, as they have a personal experience of what being away from home means, and can react with empathy and understanding.

7. Learning opportunities and pedagogical challenges

Participation in transnational mobility experiences can, if handled correctly, be a very powerful pedagogical tool for young people with fewer opportunities, providing a unique environment for acquiring knowledge, skills and competences as well as favouring personal development. Like any other tool, however, it can also produce negative effects if handled incorrectly. Participants may return home having acquired little or only few benefits from the experience, and with feelings of defeat and dejection, rather than with new possibilities and broader horizons.

Learning outcomes of cross-border volunteering can be divided in three categories. The first of these is concerned with the acquisition of *intercultural skills and competences* (e.g. foreign language proficiency, increased understanding of people with other cultural backgrounds, specific knowledge about another country) arising from the transnational nature of the experience. The second category concerns *skills and competences related to the particular field in which the volunteering experience is implemented* (e.g. care of the elderly, restoration of building and monuments, organisational aspects of NGO-work etc.). The third is concerned with the *personal development of the participant* (e.g. increased independence, self-reliance, adaptability, the ability to take an initiative, the development of social skills etc.). These are nourished by the experience of having to cope with issues and problems of a new and unknown nature in a foreign environment.

Two more factors are important when discussing the learning potential of cross-border volunteering and young people with fewer opportunities. One is the provision, through the transposition of the participant to a foreign environment, of a “free space” where he or she can act unencumbered by the (negative) expectations of the surroundings. Many disadvantages rooted in prejudices (e.g. towards ethnic minorities, disabled persons) and tend to become self-fulfilling prophecies since patterns of behaviour quite often are socially (rather than individually) determined. Once participants are removed from these expectations to a more neutral environment, they have the possibility to “reinvent” themselves and bring other aspects of their personalities into play. The other concerns the general boost to the self-confidence of participants when they experience that they have something to give to others. Many from the target group are suffering from a low self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy vis-a-vis society, and the fact that they can contribute actively to the wellbeing of others can provide a counterbalance to these feelings and perhaps initiate a virtuous circle (“helping yourself by helping others”).

It is important that organisations providing cross-border volunteering and young people with fewer opportunities work systematically with the learning potential in these stays and take measures to ensure that this potential is fully exploited. Thereby they can create a “win-win”-situation, where both the participants and the charitable cause, which the volunteering project supports, derive substantial benefit

from the experience. This means both identifying learning objectives and creating a framework that is conducive to the achievement of these. This framework may take the form of quality assurance systems that encompass the whole learning environment, i.e. the periods before and after the transnational experience as well as the stay abroad itself, as indicated in the European Quality Charter for Mobility, which was adopted as a recommendation to the Member States by the European parliament and the Council in 2006¹. Preparation should thus not only comprise e.g. practical matters, but also linguistic, cultural, psychological and pedagogical issues. After the experience, it is important to evaluate both on intended and non-intended learning outcomes, to ensure that participants are able to translate experiences (both positive and negative) into constructive learning, and to help the participants act on the outcomes by providing (or helping to provide) relevant guidance.

The recognition and/or documentation of skills and competences acquired during a cross-border volunteering experience is especially pertinent for disadvantaged target groups, who often have only little formal education and few relevant experiences that can promote their active participation in society and their employability. In some cases, a volunteering experience abroad may be officially recognised as a part of a formal education trajectory by means of APEL (accreditation of prior experiential learning), if it is undertaken within a field that is relevant to this. A proper documentation of learning processes and outcomes is also an important asset when seeking employment, but it needs to be more than a mere certificate of attendance. Therefore procedures for recognition and documentation of learning outcomes should be an integral part of all cross-border volunteering projects. There have been developed robust methods that can help in this process. An example of a European-level method is the Youthpass, which is unfortunately at present only available to cross-border volunteering inside the Youth in Action Programme. This – or similar methodologies – should be made available to all providers of cross-border volunteering.

In terms of developing learning in cross-border volunteering as well as other qualitative aspects of this, providers of volunteering experiences often act alone and without having recourse to the experiences of others. This means that many go about “reinventing the wheel” and that much useful knowledge is lost because it is too fragmented and anchored in individual persons rather than structures. This makes it vulnerable as valuable know-how is lost when people move on and leave the sector. Both sending and hosting organisations should therefore strive to establish platforms – also across borders – where they can exchange relevant knowledge, material and good examples of practice to facilitate cooperation and the creation of synergies.

8. The role of policy-makers

European countries differ widely in respect of the legal framework they have for volunteering activities. In some countries – notably the Scandinavian countries – volunteering is seen as an issue for civil society, and interference from the state in the shape of legislation is therefore kept to an absolute minimum. In other states, legislation concerning volunteering is more extensive and detailed. At the far end of the spectrum we have countries where volunteering is as yet not covered by legislation and consequently exists in a grey zone, where the legal status of volunteers and volunteering in connection with e.g. fiscal issues, social

¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32006H0961:EN:HTML>

security and pensions is not clarified, and may give rise to problems. The status of volunteers, volunteering activities and volunteering organisations should therefore be defined and embedded in national legislation along with at least minimum provisions concerning rights and responsibilities of both participants and providers.

Few national legislative frameworks make specific reference to cross-border volunteering and tackle the issues that are particular to this, despite the fact that this is a widespread phenomenon. National strategies for volunteering should also take this into account. At European level, a charter outlining minimum quality criteria for cross-border volunteering could be considered. This could help to ensure a common understanding and an alignment of expectations between sending and hosting organisations in different countries.

In the light of the existence of commercial companies offering cross-border volunteering experiences against a fee and for profit, policy-makers should also intervene to formulate ethical criteria for cross-border volunteering to ensure the authenticity of the experience.

9. The role of research

“Cross-border volunteering and young people with fewer opportunities” is not a well-researched subject. There is practically no research that goes to the core of this activity, and only little that touches adjacent fields – e.g. cross-border volunteering in general or transnational mobility as a pedagogical tool for disadvantaged groups. Therefore much of the knowledge that we have in this field is based on the anecdotal evidence from practitioners, and not underpinned by quantitative and qualitative research. Cross-border volunteering involves a significant number of participants every year, and it is the subject of important policy-initiatives by the European Commission and the Council of Europe. Research, therefore, needs to be encouraged actively in order to fill the many gaps in our knowledge and provide the necessary basis for the development of policies and practices based on strong evidence. A particular focus of concern should be the position of volunteering at a time of economic crisis, where social and business economies are shrinking, and where volunteering – also cross-border volunteering – may be misused as free labour for economic gain and/or take the place of paid employment. Research should help draw clear lines of demarcation between volunteering and other forms of placements/internships to prevent exploitation.

Once research has been instigated, steps should furthermore be taken to ensure that researchers and practitioners are brought in close contact – e.g. through initiatives such as this seminar. This will help ensure that research activities reflect the real concerns of the people in the field as well as catering to the knowledge requirements of policy makers. Outcomes of this research should form the basis of development work that can translate them into practical knowledge and material that is applicable to the activities of practitioners and can help raise the quality of these.

10. Recommendations

On the basis of the discussions summarised above, the participants at the seminar formulated the following recommendations:

1. Young people with fewer opportunities often have fears and anxieties that inhibit their participation in cross-border volunteering activities. Therefore providers need to work systematically with motivational aspects in order to get them involved.
2. Taxonomies and clear definitions of the concept of “young people with fewer opportunities” should be developed at operational level to enable the formulation of concrete and action-oriented strategies for inclusion and mainstreaming.
3. Different types of cross-border volunteering should be offered to give different options to target groups with special needs. This could include e.g. group-volunteering and “buddy-systems”, where physically disabled volunteers are accompanied by a volunteer helper.
4. Organisations need to develop and encourage innovative forms of involvement in international volunteering activities using ICT in order to facilitate the inclusion of target groups for whom physical mobility is not a realistic option.
5. Former participants in cross-border volunteering should be systematically engaged as a resource in the process of recruiting and preparing new volunteers as well as functioning as mentors for incoming volunteers from abroad.
6. National volunteering should be developed as a necessary prerequisite for cross-border volunteering, but volunteers from abroad can also be used to underpin and develop national activities and strategies.
7. Organisations involved in cross-border volunteering both in sending and hosting capacities should cooperate both nationally and across borders to ensure timely and adequate provision of preparation, mentoring and debriefing for participants. This is especially important when dealing with less robust target groups.
8. Organisations should systematically utilize the learning potential of cross-border volunteering to ensure a win-win situation, where both the cause and the participant derive substantial benefits from the volunteering experience.
9. Organisations working with cross-border volunteering should strive to develop and use quality assurance systems encompassing both the period before, during and after the volunteering experience to secure the consistent quality of the learning process.
10. Provisions for recognition and/or documentation of knowledge, skills and competences acquired during a cross-border volunteering experience should be integrated into activities and provided for participants as a matter of course.
11. Robust and uncomplicated methods for recognition and/or documentation of learning outcomes should be made available to all providers of cross-border volunteering in Europe.
12. Organisations working with cross-border volunteering should establish joint platforms for the exchange of knowledge and good examples of practice to facilitate cooperation and the creation of synergies.
13. The role of mentors in the hosting organization is crucial both for the well-being and the learning process of participants in cross-border volunteering. Consequently, mentors should be offered special training opportunities to help them fulfil their role.

14. Organisations offering opportunities for cross-border volunteering need to adopt a more pro-active role in reaching and including young people with fewer opportunities.
15. Organisations working with cross-border volunteering should consider different approaches to involving young people with fewer opportunities to reflect the heterogeneous nature of the target group and the different levels of readiness for a cross border volunteering experience in this.
16. Organisations working with cross-border volunteering should exchange and disseminate success stories on the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities in order to highlight possibilities rather than limitations and thereby avoid bias in the selection process.
17. The status of volunteers, volunteering activities and volunteering organisations should be defined and embedded in national legislation along with at least minimum provisions concerning rights and responsibilities of both participants and providers. Specific reference should be made to cross-border volunteering.
18. A European-level charter for cross-border volunteering could be considered to ensure commonly accepted minimum quality criteria, and to ensure the alignment of expectations between sending and hosting organisations in different countries.
19. Member States should intervene and regulate to ensure ethical standards for cross-border volunteering, especially in the light of the existence of commercial providers of cross-border volunteering experiences.
20. The role of research should be emphasized and encouraged to provide the necessary knowledge for the development of evidence-based policies and practices.
21. Gaps in research provision in the field of cross-border volunteering should be identified and filled.
22. Contacts and collaboration between researchers and practitioners should be intensified and appropriate development work undertaken to ensure that outcomes of research are translated into useful knowledge and material that is applicable to the activities of practitioners.
23. Research should be instigated to address the “grey zones” at the intersection of volunteering and the social and business economies respectively to draw clear lines of demarcation between volunteering and other types of activities (placements, internships).

Programme

Sunday, 11 December 2011

Arrival of participants, registration, informal evening

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Monday, 12 December 2011

08h45 **Registration**

09h00 **Welcome and Introduction**

Chair: **Marta Medlinska**, Coordinator of EU-CoE youth partnership

Welcome addresses by representatives of partner institutions:

Ulrich Bunjes (Head of the Youth Department of the Council of Europe)

Karin Lopatta-Loibl, Youth Policy Unit, Directorate-General for Education and Culture,
European Commission

Maria-Carmen Pantea, Convener

- Introduction into the topic
- Presentation of the Seminar: Objectives, Programme
- Introductions of Participants, Chairs, Seminar team

10h15 *Coffee break*

10h30 **Panel I: Obstacles and opportunities. Incentives and Disincentives**

Panellists:

Anisa Ymeri (Forum for Free Thought/Albanian Corpus of Volunteers)

Nelli Gishyan (Federation of Youth Clubs of Armenia)

Questions for debate:

- How to draw vulnerable young people closer to the non-formal education/
youth work and, consequently, volunteering? What does it imply in terms of motivation,
preparation and, ultimately, selection?

- Obstacles and opportunities to volunteering in countries without established cultures of volunteering/ with weak political and institutional support for volunteering. What are the realistic proposals for an institutional/ policy change?

12h00 *Lunch*

13h30 **Jutta Koenig-Georgiades**, European Year of Volunteering 2011 Task Force, European Commission, Overview of the activities of the European Year of Volunteering

13.50 **Panel II: Learning opportunities and pedagogical challenges**

Panellists:

Soren Kristensen (Free-lance researcher and reporter)

Adélaïde Trousselard (Dynamo International)

Questions for debate:

- What support is needed to underpin learning processes and opportunities for personal development in cross-border volunteering for this target group? And who should provide this support?

15h00 *Coffee break*

15h30 **Panel III: Rights and responsibilities**

Panellists:

Ana Condrat (National Youth Council of Moldova, CNTM)

Nicolae Procopie ("Youth for the Right to Life" Association, Moldova)

Esther Maestro (Cibervoluntarios)

Questions for debate:

- What can we demand from young people from disadvantaged backgrounds when participating in cross-border volunteering?
- What are the responsibilities of organizers vis-à-vis participants?

17h00 Presentation of activities of participating volunteers organisations

18h00 End of Day I

19h30 *Dinner outside*

Tuesday, 13 December 2011

9h00 **Panel IV: Proposals for future developments in cross-border volunteering**

Panellists:

Kateryna Shalayeva (PEYR)

Jo Deman (European Youth Forum)

Celine Barlet (EYV2011 Alliance)

Questions for debate:

- How can research contribute to increasing the visibility of barriers to participation in volunteering? What areas need to be further explored?
- How could organizations contribute at making cross-border volunteering more inclusive for disadvantaged youth?
- How can we strengthen contacts and cooperation between researchers and practitioners?

10h30 *Coffee break*

11h00 **Plenary session: Short Conclusions, Evaluation and Follow-up**

Chair: Hanjo Schild, EU-CoE youth partnership

12h00 *Lunch*

Departure

Annex: Presentations and key sources of information and knowledge can be downloaded from the site of the EU-CoE youth partnership at this link:

<http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/research/thematicseminars.html>