

NATIONAL REPORT – CZECH REPUBLIC

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1 GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT VOLUNTEERING IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

1.1 History and contextual background

Volunteering in the Austro-Hungarian Empire¹ came into existence as a reaction to the poor living conditions of the people migrating to towns from the countryside during the urbanization that took place in the 19th century. Volunteering has its roots in public services where history has shown orphanages, educational institutions together with women institutions that were provided for by the voluntary and community sector.

Volunteerism was also linked to patriotism with the aim of strengthening Czech's national identity. Individuals volunteered in organisations that focused on and provided for educational services, cultural and environmental activities such as walking. These associations² were popular in society and it was an honour to obtain membership. There were more than 3,000 various associations in 1870 and more than 10,000 by 1890.

Voluntary activities were striving after 1918 when the independent Czechoslovakia was established. To highlight its political and social significance, the Czech branch of the YMCA was directly supported by the then President, President Masaryk.

The properties of voluntary organisations³ were confiscated after 1948, when communists came into power. These organisations either ceased to exist or were forcibly incorporated into the so called National Front that had been established with the proclaimed objective to build socialism. Many people were forced to take part in "voluntary" projects and soon started to dislike and resent this form of forced "voluntary" activity.

The situation changed after the Velvet Revolution in November 1989. Since 1989 people's attitudes towards volunteering have been changing, however the pace of change remains relatively slow. It is of little surprise that the Czech Republic is in this respect still very much behind many other Member States. It is however important to point out that the Act on Voluntary Service was passed in 2002 provides rules for the accreditation⁴ of projects in order to ensure the quality of services delivered within such projects. Work is currently under way to improve this particular Law⁵. Although it only applies to a very small number of accredited organisations, it can be said that the system of government accreditations and subsidies based on them work relatively well⁶.

1.2 Definitions

In the Czech Republic it is possible to make a distinction between two kinds of volunteering depending on whether a volunteer is or is not a member of the organisation he or she volunteers for. The first kind is also called 'mutually beneficial volunteering' as opposed to

¹ Czechoslovakia that split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993 had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire prior to 1918

² The existence of associations was permitted only after 1860. The Czech word "spolek" is unequivocal and corresponds roughly to the English "association" (which can mean so many things) or "club".

³ "Voluntary organisation" means any organisation with volunteers, most typically a NGO or a non-profit organisation. .

⁴ See 1.1.2 for more detail.

⁵ Hestia

⁶ Lékořice (Liquorice) Voluntary Centre.

the second kind which is called 'publicly beneficial volunteering'. The Law on Voluntary Service⁷ applies to the latter one only.

The criterion for describing activities that are considered publicly beneficial⁸ is based on the extent to which the activity helps one's community (e.g. scouts, maternity centres, horticulture associations, sporting clubs etc.) or the extent to which it is considered as helping others (e.g. day centre for senior citizens, hippo therapeutic club for children with disabilities, animal welfare groups etc.).

If a voluntary organisation has a publicly beneficial project that fulfils the demands set out in the Law, they are eligible to register the project with the Ministry of the Interior for accreditation and to then claim financial support. Accreditation is not compulsory though, so there are an unknown number of voluntary organisations engaged in publicly beneficial activities that are not accredited. It is possible for one organisation to have more than one project, some of which are accredited and some that are not as the Ministry accredits projects rather than organisations.

In this report a distinction will therefore be made between **accredited** and **non-accredited** projects. It should be noted that most volunteering (more than 1.2 million volunteers in 2007 according to the Czech Statistical Office) is non-accredited. Accredited volunteering is less popular (something over 10,000 volunteers) but it has the advantage of being clearly defined and well monitored.

1.3 Number and profile of volunteers

Total number of volunteers

It has been difficult to obtain reliable data in the Czech Republic on the total number of volunteers. A 1999 survey⁹ reported that in 1999, 8% of the total Czech population were volunteers. Out of a total population of 10,200,000 this means approximately 816,000 people volunteered. A later survey¹⁰ carried out in 2004 reports that there were 568,243 volunteers. More recently, the Czech Statistical Office, in their calculations of the economic value of volunteering reports there were 871,020 volunteers in 2006 and then suddenly 1,215,363 in 2007. It should be noted that variations in the methodology and terminology used to collect data on volunteering exists. As such, it would be reasonable to estimate that the actual number is somewhere in between the two figures.

Trends in the number of volunteers in the current decade and the reasons for the trend

According to a survey carried out by STEM¹¹ in 2004, out of a total number of 1018 interviewees, 32% reported they had volunteered for an NGO in the previous twelve months. This represents twice as many volunteers as was found in a similar survey carried out in 2000.

Hestia reports the number of individuals volunteering is on the increase. It was noted that individuals are becoming increasingly concerned about their environment, society and communities rather than about obtaining money and fame that may have been more prevalent in the past.

⁷ Act 198/2002 Coll.

⁸ Hestia

⁹ Facts and Figures: Volunteering in the Czech Republic. EVC/CEV, Brussels: 2007.

¹⁰ The survey is only mentioned in a text on calculation of the value of voluntary work by Tomáš Novák.

¹¹ The Centre for Empirical Research

The Czech Statistical Office reports a great increase in the numbers of volunteers from 840,067 in 2005 to 1,215,363 in 2007.

Gender

The STEM 2004 survey confirms there are more women than men involved in volunteering in the Czech Republic (39% of women compared to 29% of men responded that they had volunteered).

In 2006 105 persons contacted Hestia, the National Voluntary Centre, with the aim of volunteering. Hestia confirms 89 were women and 16 were men¹².

Age

There is no systematic quantitative evidence for this issue. Interviewees report that most volunteers (including those who are associated with accredited projects) are less than 34 years of age (up to 75%). In two cases the 16-24 age group was chosen as the most populous one, in one case it was the 25-34 age group. The 45-54 age group is by far the smallest group (one interviewee estimated as little as 2%).

Out of the 105 persons that contacted Hestia in 2006, 61% of the applicants were between 18-27 years, 29% were between 28-35 years, 6% were between 36 and 50 years and 3.8% of applicants were older than 51.

Geographical spread of volunteering

The only data available concerning the geographical spread of volunteering are those concerning the distribution of members available from the Alliance for the Development of Volunteering, an association of voluntary organisations involved in a programme promoting volunteering. The Czech Republic is divided into 13 regions plus the capital Prague. The data shows that the geographical spread of volunteering is uneven. For example, there are regions with only one voluntary organisation associated with the Alliance, and some regions with 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 voluntary organisations, and in one case Prague has up to 12 organisations.

From a total of **366 accredited projects** that are currently underway in the Czech Republic, 143 are accredited as nationwide projects while others operate more locally. In terms of the geographical spread of the latter ones, the highest number of accredited projects is taking place in Prague which is leading with 44 projects. Prague is followed by the Moravian-Silesian Region with 39 projects and Central Bohemia with 31 projects. Regions with fewer projects include Liberec (5), Karlovy Vary (4) and Pilsen (4). 14 projects are accredited for taking place abroad¹³.

Education levels

There is limited information available on the educational levels of individuals volunteering. Some information has been captured in a case study carried out in Hestia for the Facts and Figures Report. Out of 105 persons that approached Hestia in 2006 expressing an interest in volunteering, 26% had achieved a high school degree, 23% had achieved a university diploma and 19% had a leaving certificate from a training college. Hestia reports that 33% of the people who were interested in volunteering were still studying.

The interviewees reported that individuals who had achieved a degree or were still studying were more likely to volunteer.

¹² Facts and Figures

¹³ Ministry of the Interior

Volunteer involvement by sectors

A book called '*Donorship and Volunteering in the Czech Republic*' by Pavol Frič et al. was published in 2000. This publication consists of a survey and an analysis of the data collected. Although the data was collected in a period that one interviewee described as "the pre-history of volunteering", the research is still valid. As such this country report draws on its research evidence when presenting the statistical portfolio of volunteering in the Czech Republic. A similar survey and publication with up-to-date information is due to be published in 2010.

Frič's (2002) survey, showed that out of 366 volunteers 37.5% volunteered in social services, 16.9% in sport and recreation, 15.4% in health issues, 13.5% in education and research, 12.8% in culture and arts, 12.6% in charity organising, 12.4% in ecology, 8.6% in religious organisations, 6.7% in community development, 5.5% in international activities, 5% in protection of rights and interests, 4% in professional organisations and trade unions and lastly 1.1% in politics.

The 2004 survey carried out by STEM reports 29% of volunteers volunteered for sport organisations, 11% in the Voluntary Fire Brigade, 11% in church organisations, 6% in fishermen associations, 6% in horticulture associations, 4% in humanitarian organisations, 3% in organisations focused on healthcare and 32% in none of the aforementioned.

The situation in **accredited** volunteering is very different. The vast majority of the 366¹⁴ accredited projects deal with potentially disadvantaged groups (120 with people with disabilities, 89 with the socially disadvantaged, 69 with senior citizens, 51 with ethnic minorities, 40 with the unemployed, 26 with victims of domestic violence, 22 with ex-offenders, 22 with drug misusers, 6 with immigrants and 122 with children. The remaining projects deal with projects covering cultural issues (25), followed by natural, ecological and humanitarian disasters (14), ecology (12) and development projects and programs abroad (9).

Profile of volunteers by employment status

There is no available data in relation to the profile of volunteers by employment status. Estimates from an interview report the profile of volunteers by employment status is 70% students, 20% working people, 2% senior citizens and 8% unemployed.

Time dedicated to volunteering

According to Frič's (2000) survey of 366 volunteers, each volunteer dedicated on average of 341 hours in total during 1999.

According to the Czech Statistical Office, each of the 1,215,363 volunteers volunteered on average 64 hours each in total during 2007.

1.4 Number and types of organisations engaging volunteers

Definition of voluntary organisations in the Czech Republic

Voluntary organisations are non-profit non-governmental bodies and their existence largely depends on the involvement of volunteers¹⁵.

Voluntary organisations are thus a subgroup of all NGOs and they are therefore classed as such in statistical terms.

¹⁴ When all the subgroups are added up they do not make 366 since some projects cover more areas.

¹⁵ Facts and Figures

Number of voluntary organisations and trend

At present there is no information on the number of voluntary organisations in the Czech Republic.

As mentioned above there are 336 accredited projects in the Czech Republic. The latest figures show that there are at least 121 voluntary organisations involved in these projects.

Information only on the number of NGOs (whether working or not with volunteers) exists. However, it would seem safe to assume that the number of voluntary organisations increases or decreases together with the number of all NGOs.

According to the information portal www.neziskovsky.cz¹⁶ (that promotes the non-profit sector), there were 49,108 civic associations¹⁷ in the Czech Republic in 2002. By 2009, this number has risen to 66,206.

The Ministry of the Interior reports a higher figure of approximately 80,000 civic associations¹⁸. It should however be noted that many of these organisations are currently inactive. The reason for this is that although civic associations must be registered when they are created, there is no obligation to report their dissolution.

Reliable data can be obtained in the case of **accredited** voluntary projects only (it has been already mentioned that one organisation can have more than one accredited project): 10 projects were accredited in 2003 (the Law was passed a year earlier, in 2002) and this number gradually increased to 366 projects in 2008.

Distribution of voluntary organisations per sector

There is no information available with regard to the distribution of voluntary organisations per sector.

Types of organisations engaging volunteers

Frič's survey shows, the following types of organisations engaging volunteers include civic associations, churches, church institutions, public-benefit companies, foundations, municipalities, state institutions, trade unions, private companies.

As for organisations **accredited** by the Ministry, these are mostly civic associations, church legal entities and companies of public benefit.

1.5 Main voluntary activities

Only empirical findings dealing with individual volunteers are available in the case of **non-accredited** volunteering:

In 1999¹⁹ volunteers provided services and individual care for their fellow citizens (19%), organised various events and campaigns (14%), volunteered in groups and clubs (13%), were engaged in manual labour (12%), visited people in the community (e.g. lonely, elderly 8%). Some of them rendered their services as committee or board members (5%), provided administrative support (4%), provided info-service (3%), tuition and training (3%), counselling (3%), provided therapy (3%) or raised funds (2%).

The majority of **accredited** projects deal with potentially disadvantaged groups. After that there is quite a large drop to the number of projects involving cultural issues, and an even

¹⁶ "neziskovsky" is an informal term for neziskové organizace (non-profit organisations)

¹⁷ By far the most frequent type of NGOs in the Czech Republic.

¹⁸ With a legal status of a civic association

¹⁹ Frič. 366 volunteers.

further drop in the number of projects revolving around the following issues: is, natural, ecological and humanitarian disasters, ecology and development projects and programs abroad.

2 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Main public bodies and other organisations involved in volunteering

The Section of Crime Prevention Programmes and Voluntary Service²⁰ is located within the Crime Prevention Department of the Ministry of the Interior. This is a small department²¹ administering **accredited** (and therefore far less numerous) volunteering projects only.

The Crime Prevention Department arranges the accreditation of organisations that have met the necessary criteria, and provides financial support to these organisations, maintains a public list of accredited organisations, monitors them etc.

Financial support from the Ministry of the Interior is provided to the accredited organisations. Allocation of funds is based on the following criteria:

- Activity that is compulsory according to the Law (insurance etc.),
- Minimizing volunteers' expenses (meals, bus tickets),
- Support of the voluntary organisation (co-ordinators etc.).

Government Council for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations.

The Government Council for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations is a permanent consultative, initiative and coordination body of the Government of the Czech Republic. As part of its duties, the Council is responsible for volunteering.

Organisations that promote volunteering, facilitate co-operation and exchange of information

Hestia

Hestia was founded in 1993 and plays a dual role of both the national voluntary centre and the educational centre in the country. The mission of Hestia is to 'positively enhance interpersonal relationships. It employed ten people in 2007.

Hestia's main activities include research, training and education on volunteering; publications; monitoring associations for volunteers and volunteer professionals; makes national and international contact with institutions engaged in similar activities and initiatives; publicises activities and promotes the organisation of regional activities, works with volunteers, provides legal advice to organisations and individuals and provides additional services including the insurance and training for the voluntary co-ordinators.

Alliance for Development in Volunteering

The main programmes that Hestia runs are freely used by Hestia's partner organisations throughout the country, according to the needs of the region. Involvement in at least one of Hestia's programme is the main condition for regional voluntary centres being allowed to become members of the Alliance for Development in Volunteering.

²⁰ Oddělení programů prevence kriminality a dobrovolnické služby

²¹ Hestia

Other Initiatives: Organisations and Information Network

There are other organisations that involve volunteers with their own network of voluntary centres all over the country. The largest and best known are:

The Czech Catholic Charity that runs more than 200 charitable homes throughout the country as well as aid centres and consulting rooms. It is a member of the international catholic charity, Caritas Internationalis (CI).

People in Need is a humanitarian organisation working on both the national and international level, focusing its mission on social integration and defence of human rights. The promotion of this organisation is ensured by the Czech Television.

Adra, a Czech agency of the international ADRA organisation (Adventist Development and Relief Agency), founded in 2002, concentrates its action in 7 voluntary centres throughout the country providing voluntary help in the event of natural catastrophes (floods in 2002), running asylum houses and diverse social programmes.

The Major Information Network is provided by www.neziskovky.cz, and it provides information about the NGO sector. More specialised and volunteer-targeted information can be found at www.dobrovolnik.cz (run by Hestia)²².

Affiliation with European umbrella organisations/networks

Hestia is affiliated with International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE), European Volunteer Centre/Centre Européen du Volontariat and Big Brothers Big Sisters International.

- People in Need is affiliated with Alliance 2015 and Eurostep.
- The Czech Catholic Charity is under the umbrella of Caritas Internationalis.
- Adra is a member of ADRA European Union.

2.2 Policies

National strategy/framework for volunteering

In 2007 the Government Council for Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organisations started working on a project called "Creation of as much free space as possible for the activities of citizens and the non-profit sector and for fair co-operation of the state, self-administrative units and the non-profit sector"²³. After a spirited start the programme is now receiving little attention: the economic crises and the fall of the Government in March 2009 are considered to be the main reasons why the project has been brought to a halt.

National targets and reporting arrangements for volunteering

There are no national targets at present. The Ministry of the Interior has expressed the need to adjust the Law so that it corresponds to the current needs and developments of volunteering in the Czech Republic.

There is no comprehensive system or reporting arrangements to monitor **non-accredited** volunteering apart from numbers of volunteers being recorded by the Czech Statistical Office.

²² "Dobrovolník" means volunteer in Czech.

²³ Vytvořit maximálně svobodný prostor pro aktivitu občanů a neziskového sektoru a pro rovnocennou spolupráci státu, samospráv a neziskového sektoru

Accredited volunteering is monitored by the Ministry of the Interior.

International policies

The Law on Voluntary Service was adopted a year after the 2001 United Nations International Year of Volunteering. It was considered to be a reaction by the Czech Republic in response to appeals from the EU and it served to highlight the reality of volunteering at that time.

During the early 1990's many foreigners wanted to volunteer in the Czech Republic. Since there was no permit for such voluntary work, individuals were required to obtain tourist visas and renew them every three months by traveling abroad to renew their entry stamp. In preparation for the Czech Republic joining the EU, the European Volunteer Center (CEV) worked with the CZ to solve this problem. The Law on Voluntary Service adopted various principles used in the EU (e.g. sending and hosting organisation)²⁴.

2.3 Programmes

Key national programmes that stimulate volunteering at national level

The "Volunteering of Unemployed People" programme was launched in 2000 and is receiving financial assistance from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. As part of this programme, the unemployed are allowed to participate in voluntary activities without losing their entitlements to social welfare payments. There are approximately 2049 accredited NGOs participating in the programme²⁵.

If a person's income is not sufficient enough to cover his or her basic needs²⁶ and he or she works as a volunteer, the benefits rise by approximately CZK 1,000 (40 euro).

Other nationwide programmes

Young people between 16 and 26 can submit their voluntary projects within the framework of the Make a Connection Programme and secure funds up to as much as CZK 30,000 (1,200 euro) in support of it.. It is a shared activity of the Foundation for the Development of Civic Society²⁷ and Nokia. Since 2007, 477 projects have been implemented with the participation of 3,454 young volunteers²⁸.

Programmes run by Hestia include:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters International Volunteer Programme. (Started 2001)
- Make a Connection Volunteer Programme
- Volunteers in Hospitals Programmes
- Volunteering for Senior Citizens
- Volunteering of the unemployed people
- European Volunteer Service

²⁴ Hestia

²⁵ Facts and Figures

²⁶ The amount necessary is determined by the Law 110/2006 Coll.

²⁷ Nadace rozvoje občanské společnosti

²⁸ Official site of the project: <http://www.pripojse.cz/podporene-projekty/>

- ENGAGE - an international campaign, aimed to increase the extent and scale of employee engagement in the development of healthy and sustainable communities
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) - a new programme with the aim of promoting corporate volunteering in the Czech Republic
- ETELA Donatory Programme
- LLL (Lifelong Learning) for Social Workers (training)
- Volunteer Management in Social Services Facilities (training)
- Training of Inspectors of Social Services Quality Evaluation

Programmes promoting/supporting volunteering at regional and local level

Information concerning the number and nature of programmes promoting/supporting volunteering at regional and local level is limited. Only one programme can be tracked down on the Internet, and it is currently being delivered in the Vysočina²⁹ Region and aimed at the development of volunteering in social services and health care, and voluntary neighbourly help in small communities in Vysočina. The scheme is called “Volunteering and Co-ordination of Social Help in Communities 2009”³⁰. CZK 1,400,000 (56,000 euro) from the total budget of 2,500,000 (100,000 euro) is earmarked for the development and support of volunteering.

Programmes promoting/supporting volunteering at transnational level

The “Youth in Action Programme” of the European Voluntary Service offers opportunities for young people between the ages of 18 and 30 to participate in, and become familiar with voluntary activities abroad.

3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

3.1 General Legal framework

Specific legal framework which exists with respect to volunteering

The Czech Law on Voluntary Service applies only to projects that have been accredited by the Ministry of the Interior. Other forms of voluntary activity may (and most of them do) still take place outside the scope of this Law.

The Law states what responsibilities the involved parties (volunteer, sending organisation, hosting organisation) have, deals with the voluntary contract, reimbursement of expenses, welfare protection of volunteers, volunteering abroad and foreign volunteers in the Czech Republic.

The appendix to the Law is rather important since it lists all the other existing laws that are affected by its content. These are:

- The Labor Code: the length of time spent volunteering. Full- time (over 20 hours per week) will be considered as a period of employment for the purpose of receiving state welfare payments;

²⁹ “Vysočina” means Highlands.

³⁰ Dobrovolnictví a koordinace sociální výpomoci v obcích 2009

- Social Welfare: the pension insurance code – the length of time spent volunteering over 20 hours per week will be taken into account for the purpose of receiving compulsory pension contributions;
- Public Health-Care Code: The health-care of volunteers is paid in large part by the State;
- Exemption from income tax and tax on donations.

Self-regulation in relation to volunteering

The Law sets out a number of rules which volunteers must follow if they wish to participate in accredited programmes.

3.2 Legal framework for individual volunteers

The Law on Voluntary Service refers to volunteers who are involved in accredited projects only. Foreign volunteers who are involved in accredited projects have the status of students. The Law does not apply to people volunteering in non-accredited programmes.

Support schemes and incentives

There is one support scheme in operation. A volunteer in receipt of state aid because she or he is living in conditions defined officially as 'in poverty', will get slightly higher social benefits (approximately CZK 1,000 i.e. 40 euro).

There are no real incentives for volunteers set out in the Law. The provisions of the Law ensures volunteers are not penalised for their work (e.g. do not lose state welfare payments etc.)³¹.

Taxation rules on reimbursement of expenses and rewards or remuneration for individual volunteers

Accredited volunteers do not pay income tax or gift tax on the reimbursement of travel expenses, cost of meals and tickets etc.

A volunteer can deduct the value of his or her voluntary activities from the tax base as a donation (it is in single percents only). Such a deduction **is not** limited to accredited projects only.

3.3 Legal Framework for organisations engaging volunteers

Obligation in terms of notification of volunteers

There is no legal obligation for organisations to notify the details of volunteers to the public authorities.

Taxation rules

In the case of NGOs generally, there is no tax up to the income of roughly CZK 300,000 (12,000 euro) a year³².

In the Czech Republic NGOs (and therefore almost all organisations engaging volunteers) are exempt from VAT.

Taxation in the case of fundraising largely depends on how an organisation receives the money. In the case of a sponsorship agreement, it is the voluntary organisation who pays the tax, however, if it is a gift the donor pays the tax. Grants are not taxed.

³¹ Readers interested in more information are directed to the appendix to the Law in 3.1.

³² Hestia

3.4 Legal framework for profit-making organisations

There is no such specification in the Law.

Specific support schemes

There are no specific support schemes in operation.

3.5 Insurance and protection of volunteers

It is the sending organisation, who has the ultimate responsibility, but this can be adjusted through an agreement and the sending and receiving organisations can share the responsibilities.

In the case of **accredited** volunteering, it is the Ministry of the Interior who covers the cost of insurance and protection of volunteers.

4 ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF VOLUNTEERING

4.1 Funding arrangements for volunteering

National budget allocated to volunteering

There is no available information on the funding arrangements for **non accredited** volunteering. According to a Government website³³, CZK 6,600,000,000 (264,000,000 euro) was allocated to the non-profit sector in 2007, which corresponds to 0.006 % of the state budget.

The 2009 budget of the Ministry of the Interior is CZK 61,802,385,000 (2,472,095,400 euro)³⁴ and CZK 12,653,000 (506,120 euro) was assigned to **accredited** volunteering projects.

According to the Government³⁵, in 2007, three sectors each received more than 20% of the national budget allocated for the non profit sector. These were:

- Active policy of employment, social counselling (22.35%),
- Social services (22.01 %)
- Amateur sport (20.41%).

The Education sector received over 5% (8.48%). Less than 5% of the money was allocated to the following sectors:

- Health (3.92%),
- Culture and historical heritage (3.81%),
- Youth leisure activities (3.80%),
- Agriculture, forestry, fishing (3.28%),
- Industry and other economy (2.50%),
- Research and development (1.66%),
- Protection of environment (0.84%),

³³ http://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rnno/publikace/rozbor_2007_pro_web.pdf

³⁴ http://www.mfcr.cz/cps/rde/xbcr/mfcr/475_2008_SR_P3_pdf.pdf

³⁵ http://www.vlada.cz/assets/ppov/rnno/publikace/rozbor_2007_pro_web.pdf

- Community services, living and local development (0.18%).
- Other sectors received 6.76%.

The biggest single recipients of money from the national budget were umbrella organisations: The Czech Association of Physical Education, Civil Society Development Foundation and the Mountain Rescue³⁶, who succeeded in getting almost 16% of the allocated government money in 2007.

Sources of funding for voluntary organisations

There is a comprehensive chapter on the sources of funding of voluntary organisations in EVC/CEV's 2007 *Facts and Figures*. The report explains that in the non-governmental sector as a whole, organisations are funded via public budgets from where most of their funding comes from, and the rest of their funding comes from companies, foundations and individual donors. The Czech Act on volunteering offers the possibility of financial support to accredited NGOs. The Czech Ministry of Interior is obliged to cover the expenses of accredited NGOs that are connected to volunteer management, pension insurances payments for volunteers, travel and office expenses. These expenses are covered up to 70% of the whole amount in the form of advance payments on condition that the duration of the voluntary work exceeds 20 hours per week. For smaller social NGOs, a "Global Grant" was set aside and is administered by NROS (Civil Society Development Foundation).

The report further notes that the Foundations represent another stable financial source for other NGOs. However, foundation assets are generally small. The largest amounts of distributed finances come from income obtained by foundations from the government's Foundation Investment Fund (NIF). The foundations obtain their resources from the same donors as the rest of the NGOs. Diversification of financial resources in NGO budgets exists in terms of the number of sources. NGOs normally have three to four separate sources of funding. The problem lies in the disproportionate amounts provided by these separate sources. In general, one or at the most two sources provide over 80% of all the income for an NGO. NGOs are usually financially secure for several months, or at the most for the coming year. A passive stance of NGOs in fundraising leads to an absolute reliance on government, regional and local subsidies (in 2003, 36% of surveyed NGOs constructed their fundraising portfolio on public subsidies only). These figures come from a survey carried out in 2003.³⁷ In 2005 the non-profit sector benefited from 122.3 million euro from the National General Budget and 50 million euro from the regional budgets.

Results of the 2003 Current State of Fundraising in Non-Profit Organisations survey (of which 453 NGOs participated in) are also presented on the Internet³⁸. As previously mentioned, 36% of funds came from the state, regional and local authorities (ministries, regions, towns and villages). Income generated by organisations' own activities made up 20%. Other sources were: business (11%), foundations and foundation funds (10%), individual donors (7%), membership fees (6%), public collections (2%), foreign embassies (2%) and other sources (5%).

Hestia and the Voluntary Centre in the town of Ústí nad Labem³⁹ both work as umbrella organisations and are held in high regard by NGOs and state authorities (Ministry of the Interior). Data from Ústí nad Labem 2003 survey showed an even higher than average

³⁶ Český svaz tělesné výchovy, Nadace rozvoje občanské společnosti and Horská služba

³⁷ Current State of Fundraising in Non-Profit Organisations

³⁸ http://www.neziskovky.cz/Files/Soubory/neziskovsky_sektor_CR/vyzkum_FR_Spiralis.pdf

³⁹ DCUL – Dobrovolnické centrum Ústí nad Labem

dependence on state (51%), regional and local (10%) subsidies. While at the same time a significant sum (18%) of funding was received from the European Union. The rest was received from private sources (11%), foundations and foundation funds (4%) and own sources and membership fees (3%).

Hestia reports that funding allocation is inconsistent and leaves organisations in difficult positions when trying to secure funding. Many of the organisations need to identify alternative sources without any guarantee of securing financial support.

As to the transparency of funding arrangements, the extent to which the process is considered to be transparent is open for debate. Hestia sees the overall picture and says that the funding mechanisms are not transparent and that voluntary organisations do not know what to expect – the inconsistencies in state funding make it difficult for voluntary organisations to plan ahead.

4.2 Economic value of volunteering

Income generated through volunteering

As shown by the results of the 2003 survey of 453 NGOs, of the income generated through volunteering, 20% comes from the organisations' own activities and 6% from membership fees.

Economic value of volunteering

According to the findings of a Volunteering across Europe project that was published in 2006, volunteering in the Czech Republic corresponds to 1% of full-time employees.

Value of voluntary work as a share of GDP

The non-profit sector accounts for 1.6% of the GDP according to data provided by John Hopkins⁴⁰. However, a pilot study carried out by the CVNS (Brno Research Centre) in 2004 in collaboration with the Czech Statistical Office, estimated that the contribution of the non-profit sector did not exceed 1% of the GDP⁴¹.

Provision of social services

The number of non-profit organisations successfully tendering for the provision of public contracts to provide Social Services of General Interest (SSGIs) is very low. In 2007 non-profit organisations obtained less than 1% of the contracts (0.91%) and less than 1% of the funding (0.84%)⁴².

Job substitution or the risks that volunteering is replacing employment

Hestia reports that there is a risk that certain voluntary activities are in part replacing services that should be provided by the state. It reports that the Law states that a volunteer should not substitute a professional, but in practice this could happen.

5 CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS

Most interviewees reported that the benefits of volunteering were well documented in the Czech Republic and are likely to be similar to those recognised by many Member States.

⁴⁰ And quoted by Volunteering across Europe

⁴¹ Ibidem.

⁴² Hyánek, Vladimír - Prouzová, Zuzana - Škarabelová, Simona. *Neziskové organizace ve veřejných službách (Nonprofit Organisations in Public Services)*. Brno: 2007.

5.1 Key benefits for volunteers, community and direct beneficiaries

Volunteers

According to an information portal for volunteering⁴³ in the Czech Republic, people from socially disadvantaged groups can find a way, through volunteering, to integrate into society. The evidence also points to volunteering helping unemployed people gain experience that they can use later at work. Voluntary activities are also recognised for supporting people with disabilities integrate into communities and society. Where different age groups volunteer together, (e.g. young people and older people) this is believed to be an important way of addressing inter-generational problems by encouraging greater social dialogue between the different age groups. Another important benefit of volunteering is that it helps volunteers to develop a sense of being valuable members of society

An interviewee from the Association for Civic Education and Democracy⁴⁴ highlighted how important volunteering is for young people. Benefits include learning new skills, being involved in new and different life experiences, positively engaging with society and developing new perspectives and values.

Community

One interviewee⁴⁵ who runs an association operating in a hospital noted that people who volunteer in hospitals have a better understanding of how hospitals work and a better understanding of hospitals from a patient's perspective. It was noted that because of their volunteering experience, people tend to appreciate their own health and have a greater appreciation of hospital staff.

Direct beneficiary

The fact that people care enough to be willing to give up their time to volunteer is considered to be the most important added value from a direct beneficiary's perspective. Interviewees noted that recipients of volunteering may be inspired by the care shown by volunteers, and that then these recipients may in turn be inspired to volunteer in the future.

Contribution to economic and social policy goals at national level

As reported above, volunteering helps people to positively and actively engage with society which is an outcome that would surely be sought after by any government.

5.2 Factors that motivate individuals to volunteer

The main factors that motivate individuals to volunteer include the opportunity to experience new opportunities that may influence their future lives or career choices.

In addition, volunteering is attractive for its diversity. Volunteers meet new friends, generate new experiences, find new solutions to problem, gain new perspectives and also have fun. Increased self-confidence is considered to be a very important and significant outcome of volunteering.

Frič's survey found out that from 366 volunteers 95% answered the question: "What are the positive features of volunteering for you?". 77% stated increased self-confidence, 71% said it was a valuable way to spend free time, 63% said keeping themselves in shape and 45% reported that they volunteered for recognition and prestige.

⁴³ www.dobrovolnik.cz or www.volunteer.cz

⁴⁴ <http://www.svod-cz.info/>

⁴⁵ Lékoiřice

6 VOLUNTEERING IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

6.1 Recognition of volunteer's skills and competences within the national educational and training system

Voluntary organisations do issue certificates to volunteers confirming that they have volunteered. These certificates are generally not recognised (as e.g. informal learning) by the national educational and training system.

Hestia, the National Volunteer Centre, delivers nationally recognised courses that are accredited by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as a part of lifelong learning in the social services area.

Volunteering and education institutions

The role of volunteering is not generally recognized by the different levels of education. Hestia reports that volunteering in educational institutions is not systematic. In the university sector, the level of volunteering that takes place depends on the capabilities of faculties and single departments. Within the university sector some volunteer groups do exist. For example in the Faculty of Health and Social Studies in České Budějovice or at the university in Olomouc.

6.2 Education and training opportunities for volunteers

The extent to which volunteers engage in education and training opportunities varies and is largely dependent on the skills required for a particular voluntary activity. Where volunteers do engage in education and training, this is typically provided by the sending organisation, although in some cases it is contracted elsewhere. For example, Hestia organises training sessions for organisations and individual volunteers. Agnes (Agency for the Non-Profit Sector)⁴⁶ also offers training, although this is on wider issues associated with NGO management.

7 EU POLICIES AND VOLUNTEERING

The Ministry of the Interior reports that the impact of most EU policies on volunteering is limited. In the case of the Czech Republic, the EU's impact on policies on volunteering can be seen as motivational rather than tangible. The policy most visible in the Czech Republic in relation to volunteering is that of the Youth policy.

There is no evidence that EU Internal Market policy would impact on the financing of voluntary organisations in the Czech Republic.

⁴⁶ <http://www.agnes.cz/>

8 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR VOLUNTEERING

8.1 Challenges for volunteering

On one level, mistrust and apprehension nourished by tabloid media has been identified as the main challenge to the development of volunteering. Concerns have been voiced that the state of the post-totalitarian society is unhealthy and patterns of the past era are still present. As such, it is noted that the notion of volunteering is unacceptable for many people. It was also reported that the state policy regarding volunteering is relatively fragmented⁴⁷.

A further key challenge highlighted relates to a distinct lack of understanding of what volunteering is all about. Here, it is important to understand the expectations of potential volunteers and the volunteer involving organisation in order to ensure problems and misunderstandings are addressed in a positive way.

A further key challenge is linked to the requirements of the Czech Law on Voluntary Service that prevent individuals from being members of organisations for which they volunteer.

It was reported that the challenges for volunteering are being addressed one by one. There is evidence to suggest that more people are participating in volunteering.

It can be generally said that all the interviewed parties were positive about both the present situation and the future of volunteering.

8.2 Opportunities for volunteering

In line with what has been discussed in relation to the state of society, it is the rise of new generations and a corresponding shift in values that is viewed as the most significant opportunity for the development of volunteering in the Czech Republic. The opportunity to learn (and to see in practice) from other Member States⁴⁸ has been considered an important contributing factor for the development of volunteering in the future.

In addition, promoting the benefits and value of volunteering through education and training opportunities and has been highlighted as a significant opportunity.

⁴⁷ Hestia

⁴⁸ The Netherlands was named as an example.

SOURCES

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⁴⁹ Donorship and Volunteering in the Czech Republic.

⁵⁰ Non-profit Organisations in Public Services.

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DCUL (regional centre, the town of Ústí nad Labem)

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Lékořice (volunteering centre at the Thomayer hospital, Prague)

Hestia (both a voluntary centre and the most important umbrella organisation, Prague)