

7. Recommendations

7.1 Recommendations of Working Group 1: Citizenship

- The concept of volunteering ought to be promoted through formal and non-formal methods, such as citizenship education and peer training.
- It is necessary to identify the types of voluntary activities that provide added value to society, and eventually establish guidelines.
- Young people must participate in the design and administration of voluntary activities in order to reflect young people's view points. This would help to safeguard young people's autonomy, responsibility and motivation in the context of volunteering.
- The above should be reflected from a global perspective with a view to what Europe can contribute on a global level.

7.2 Recommendations of Working Group 2: Obstacles

- The main recommendation for removing obstacles to young people's participation in voluntary activities is to build a European volunteering infrastructure.
- The purpose of this infrastructure would be to remove inconsistent practices and provide quality standards.
- The centre should have a brand name equated with quality.
- The European volunteering infrastructure would provide the following services in general:
 - Offer tools to countries and organisations that do not meet quality standards

- Support networks of volunteers, voluntary organisations, sending and hosting organisations
 - Fund projects
 - Carry out and fund research to gain a greater understanding and a better knowledge of voluntary activities
 - Facilitate the development of new forms of volunteering
 - Help build partnerships between sending and hosting organisations
 - Promote awareness for volunteering, in particular to the private economic sector
 - Provide training on all aspects of volunteering, including mentoring, supervision, recruitment and monitoring.
- The European volunteering infrastructure should provide the following services to organisations:
 - Provide minimum standards on sending and hosting
 - Work on removing the legal obstacles to volunteering
 - Provide standard application forms.
 - The European volunteering infrastructure should provide information:
 - Information should be provided to all actors on all aspects of volunteering
 - Information could take the form of booklets, Internet, databases, etc.
 - Information should be provided in all languages.
 - The European volunteering infrastructure should have a particular focus on young people:
 - It should provide tailor-made information to young people
 - It should ensure, in cooperation with national administrations, that laws are adopted on volunteering of young people
 - In cooperation with the national administrations it should also work towards the removal of obstacles
 - It should fund projects involving young people
 - It should offer support to young people (e.g. on filling in applications, etc.)

7. 3 Recommendations of Working Group 3: Recognition and Promotion

- No unduly restrictive overarching definition should hinder voluntary activities of young people.
- Individual activities need to be defined within the larger framework of this definition.

- Potential skills acquisition needs to be defined.
 - Acquisition processes (learning processes) should be identified.
 - Young people's voluntary experiences need to be recognised both in formal and informal manner. Formal refers to access to employment and formal education systems, whilst informal access refer to status and recognition by families, peer groups, schools, work place, local communities etc.
 - There should be a commitment to carry out evaluative research in order to improve and demonstrate quality.
 - Voluntary activities should become part of career guidance and counselling in order that young people are aware of the possibilities for all forms of learning.
 - All recommendations need a concerted effort by all Ministries and other authorities concerned.
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