

2. Volunteering for Cultural Heritage in Europe Cristina da Milano

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2.0 Volunteering for Cultural Heritage in Europe: Introduction

The VoCH project aims at investigating the role of volunteers within cultural heritage organisations in Europe: identifying different types of voluntary work and areas of activity in which cultural volunteers are engaged, with the objective of designing training and resources addressed both to volunteers themselves and to the people responsible for volunteer programmes within cultural organisations.

The main concept underpinning the project is a shared notion of what volunteering and cultural heritage mean.

The project's partners accept the Eurostat definition of *cultural heritage*, agreed upon by most EU governments, as a sector which encompasses the following domains: *heritage (tangible and intangible¹); archives; libraries; visual arts and architecture; performing arts; books and the press; cinema and the audiovisual sector.*

The role of volunteers is predominant in one or another domain depending on the particular cultural tradition of each country: therefore, it is possible that in some countries volunteers mainly operate in museums and in others within historical buildings or libraries. This project focuses on heritage as museums, art galleries, visual arts and historic sites and, to a lesser extent, libraries and archives. Within the scope of this project and report we have not considered performing arts, books and the press, cinema or the audiovisual sector, although we recognise that volunteers can also have an important role in these areas.

Volunteering is a very common activity which occurs in a variety of forms in Europe and in the whole world, which reflects different approaches and traditions.

According to Archambault², there are at least four different models – shaped by the historical role played in each country by religious, political and social subjects – which influence the conceptual and operational framework of volunteering in most European countries:

- Within the *Rhine model* (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands), the volunteering sector is characterised by the presence of institutional and professional organisations which operate in different fields (mainly leisure, culture and social care) according to religious, political or trade union affiliation;
- In the *liberal model* (Ireland and UK) the volunteering sector has a very strong symbolic importance, with roots in nineteenth century Christian socialist principles promoting a strong sense of social responsibility among the middle classes, allied with working class notions of cooperative culture and communal self-sufficiency. These philanthropic activities are often organised individually or locally as opposed to those promoted by the federal Government (as in the USA) or as part of common activities organised together with local communities (in Europe);

¹ Cultural heritage is not limited to material manifestations, such as monuments and objects that have been preserved over time. This notion also encompasses living expressions and the traditions that countless groups and communities worldwide have inherited from their ancestors and transmit to their descendants, in most cases orally. According to the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the intangible cultural heritage (ICH) – or living heritage – is the mainspring of our cultural diversity and its maintenance a guarantee for continuing creativity.

² E. Archambault, *Le bénévolat en France et en Europe*, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 2006, pp. 16-19
(<http://www.cev.be/data/File/Benevolat.FranceEtEurope.Archambault.pdf>).

- The *social-democratic model* (Finland, Norway and Sweden) is based on a very strong associative tradition, which relies more upon the importance of the single intervention than on the ideological-religious belonging;
- The *Mediterranean model* (Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain) reflects the rapid development of the volunteering sector in recent decades, mainly because of the shortage of public resources. Notwithstanding the recent changes, the sector is still strongly influenced by the predominant role of the Catholic Church.

The VoCH partners broadly agree with Archambault's models, and have also identified a fifth: that of an *emerging culture of volunteering*, which relates to former Soviet or communist countries. In this model, volunteering, particularly in cultural heritage, is in an early stage due to several factors. Difficult economic circumstances mean that many people have to work long hours, often at more than one job, leaving little time for volunteering. There is a lingering mistrust of state-promoted activities, with connotations of forced collective work, on the one hand, coupled with a sense that any services related to the common good, including heritage conservation, should be provided by the state. Where volunteering is developing, however, we found that there is a great desire for training and to learn from good practice in other countries.

Notwithstanding these differences, volunteering everywhere has common characteristics and can be defined, according to the European Volunteer Centre³, as an activity undertaken:

- Out of a person's free will, choice and motivation;
- Without concern for financial gain (non remunerated);
- In an organised setting (within NGO's, volunteer centres, more or less organised groups, etc.);
- With the aim to benefit to someone other than the volunteer and to society at large contributing to values of general interest (although it is recognised that volunteering brings significant benefit equally to the volunteer).

Furthermore, the European Volunteer Centre defines volunteering as:

- central to ideals of democracy, inclusion and active citizenship;
- a powerful tool for positive social and environmental change;
- a source of empowerment of the disenfranchised;
- a source of reconciliation and reconstruction in divided societies;
- a means of life-long learning.

2.1. Volunteering and the EU

At a European level⁴, the role of volunteering has recently grown in importance, both actual and perceived, as a tool aimed at solving difficult problems: in fact, volunteers are engaged in a diverse range of activities such as provision of education and social services, mutual aid, advocacy, campaigning, management, community and environmental action. Within the EU, some progress has been made in recognising the social, cultural and environmental

³ *Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe 2006*
(http://www.cev.be/Documents/CEVManifesto_EN_IT_NL.pdf).

⁴ At an international level, the importance of volunteering has been recognised by the United Nations which, through the UNV (United Nations Volunteers), promote and harness volunteerism for effective development (www.unesco.org).

value of volunteering, and of involving voluntary organisations in the political decision-making process.

The 'Resolution on Volunteering' adopted by the European Parliament in 1983 recognised the general-interest nature of voluntary activity, that the development of an adequate infrastructure is central to effective policies on volunteering, and invited the European Commission to pay systematic attention to volunteering. It also called for a 'statute for voluntary work' covering the reimbursement of expenses and social insurance for volunteers. Declaration 38 on voluntary service activities, attached to the final act of the Treaty of Amsterdam, recognises the important contribution made by voluntary service activities to developing social solidarity, and the European Commission's 1997 Communication on Promoting the Role of Voluntary Organisations and Foundations in Europe stresses the important role of volunteerism in job creation.⁵

More recently, the European Commission has acknowledged the importance of a culture of consultation and dialogue with civil society organisations in a series of papers.⁶ However, much work still needs to be done to recognise the economic value of volunteering (as measured by hours of time freely given multiplied by national minimum wage levels), to ensure that EU funding, policies and programmes are volunteering friendly, and to establish an adequate infrastructure throughout Europe to support voluntary action.

2.1.1 Volunteering in Europe: some figures

Many countries do not include volunteering figures in their national statistics: although volunteering cannot and must not replace regularly paid jobs, it does contribute in a significant way to sustain national economies. As very recent data show, millions of citizens in Europe are actively involved in volunteering activities⁷:

- In the UK 23 million people volunteer every year, providing a workforce equivalent to 180,000 full-time workers; the economic value of formal volunteering has been estimated in EUR 65 billion per year (7.9% of GDP);
- Belgians devote 5 hours per week to non-paid voluntary activities, which is equivalent to around 200,000 full-time jobs;
- In France, time dedicated to volunteering activities in 2002 was equivalent to 716,000 full-time jobs;
- In Poland in 2004 around 5.4 million citizens (18.3% of the population) volunteered. The estimated economic value amounted to EUR 124 million;
- In Germany 23 million citizens (36% of the population) are involved in volunteering activities;
- 33% of Irish adult population (around 1,287,000 citizens) operate in the voluntary field.

A recent European study on the use of free-time by communitarian citizens has analysed volunteering as an activity which takes place during people's free time.⁸ In the context of this study, volunteering has been considered as an activity undertaken by someone within an organisation.

⁵ For further information on legislation relating to volunteering see Appendix 3.

⁶ The Commission and Non-governmental Organisations: Building a Stronger Partnership, Discussion Paper (2000); White Paper on European Governance (2001); Towards a Reinforced Culture of Consultation and Dialogue – Proposal for general principles and minimum standards for consultation of interested parties by the Commission, Consultation Document (2002).

⁷ *Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe 2006*

(http://www.cev.be/Documents/CEVManifesto_EN_IT_NL.pdf).

⁸ European Commission 2004, *How Europeans spend their time. Every day life of women and men*, http://epp.eurostat.cec.eu.int/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-58-04-998/EN/toc.pdf

The study shows that, on an average basis, men are more engaged than women in volunteering and that France and Germany are the countries where this sort of activity is more common, compared with the other analysed countries. From the research it emerges that European men and women devote between three and six per cent of their free time to volunteering (tables 1 and 2).

Percentage of total free time %										
	BE	DE	EE	FR	HU	SI	FI	SE	UK	NO
Television and videos	45	32	48	47	56	39	39	34	44	29
Socialising	17	22	13	18	14	21	17	23	21	34
Reading	9	12	14	9	8	9	15	11	9	11
Sports and exercise	5	9	6	9	5	10	9	8	4	8
Resting	10	6	7	2	8	11	6	8	8	4
Hobbies and games	5	8	2	5	3	3	4	6	5	4
Volunteer work and help	3	5	5	6	3	2	5	4	5	3
Entertainment/culture	3	4	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	4
Other/unspecified	3	3	4	2	3	4	4	3	3	4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 1. Free time activities of women aged 20 to 74 (Source: Eurostat 2004)

Percentage of total free time %										
	BE	DE	EE	FR	HU	SI	FI	SE	UK	NO
Television and videos	44	34	48	45	51	40	41	37	49	35
Socialising	13	18	11	15	15	18	14	18	16	26
Reading	10	11	12	8	8	7	12	10	8	9
Sports and exercise	7	8	9	13	6	11	10	10	6	9
Resting	8	5	7	2	8	12	7	7	5	3
Hobbies and games	85	12	3	6	4	5	6	10	8	7
Volunteer work and help	3	5	5	6	4	3	5	4	3	3
Entertainment/culture	3	4	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	4
Other/unspecified	4	3	4	3	2	4	4	3	3	4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 2. Free time activities of men aged 20 to 74 (Source: Eurostat 2004)

According to other studies, volunteers are usually between 35 and 55 years old. The lowest percentage of young people is to be found in the so-called 'young democracies' of central and eastern Europe, where volunteering is considered as a negative issue, since people associate it with the idea of forced and collective job⁹.

2.1.2 Resources and programs

The European Volunteer Centre (CEV)¹⁰

The European Volunteer Centre (CEV) is a European umbrella association of 43 National and Regional Volunteer Centres across Europe, that together work to support and promote voluntary activity. The members of CEV represent thousands of volunteer organisations, association and other voluntary and community groups at local, regional and national level. Together they work to: influence policy; strengthen the infrastructure for volunteering in the countries of Europe; promote volunteering and make it more effective.

⁹ Cafèbabel.com. La rivista europea, 2006 (<http://www.cafebabel.com/it/article.asp?T=T&Id=9334>).

¹⁰ <http://www.cev.be/home.htm>

CEV's origins lie in an initiative by the two Belgian Regional Volunteer Centres, Vlaams Steunpunt Vrijwilligerswerk and l'Association pour le Volontariat who, together with le Centre National du Volontariat (France), the National Centre for Volunteering (UK), and the Centro Nazionale per il Volontariato (Italy), organised a meeting in Lucca in 1989 for the representatives of National and Regional Volunteer Centres in eight European countries. The outcome of the meeting was a joint declaration for increased European cooperation: the European Volunteer Centre (CEV) was founded in February 1990 on the basis of this declaration, and in 1992 was officially granted the status of 'international non-profit organisation.'

In 2006 the CEV published the Manifesto for Volunteering in Europe¹¹, which is addressed to EU institutions in order to promote and recognise the role of volunteering in Europe.

European Voluntary Service Programme (EVS)

At present, the largest single source of support for volunteering from the European Union comes in the form of the European Voluntary Service Programme (EVS), which is part of the Youth Programme 2007-2013.¹²

The European Voluntary Service (EVS) provides 'young Europeans with the unique chance to express their personal commitment through unpaid and full-time voluntary activities in a foreign country within or outside of the EU. In this way, it seeks to develop solidarity, mutual understanding and tolerance among young people, thus contributing to reinforcing social cohesion in the European Union and to promoting young people's active citizenship.'¹³

An EVS project has three phases:

- Planning and preparation;
- Implementation of the Activity;
- Evaluation (including reflection on a possible follow-up).

Non-formal learning principles and practice are reflected throughout the project. Activities normally last between six and nine months for long-term programs¹⁴ and include a variety of projects in the field of environmental protection, art, culture, people's care (children, elderly, disabled people), sport, and free time. Volunteers are not paid but their expenses are covered by the European Commission, which provides them also with an insurance policy. Their learning experience is formally recognised through a Youthpass¹⁵.

¹¹ http://www.cev.be/Documents/CEVManifesto_EN_IT_NL.pdf.

¹² This is the new EU Programme in the field of youth and is the successor of the YOUTH programme (2000-2006). The Youth in Action Programme makes an important contribution to the acquisition of competences and is therefore a key instrument in providing young people with opportunities for non-formal and informal learning with a European dimension. It encourages the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities and addresses young people aged between 13 and 30 (http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth-in-action-programme/doc82_en.htm).

¹³ http://ec.europa.eu/youth/program/sos/index_en.html

¹⁴ There are also short terms programmes (minimum 3 weeks – maximum 6 months) addressed to young disabled people or young people belonging to ethnic minorities or living in difficult social/economic conditions.

¹⁵ From 2005, an additional aim of the SALTO Training and Co-operation RC has been the development and implementation of a special European level validation instrument for YOUTH/Youth in Action. Its aim is the development and implementation of a special European level validation instrument for YOUTH/Youth in Action as a package of different instruments for the Actions 1.1 (1), 2, 1.2 (3), and 4.3 (5) (Youthpass) and with this fostering of the recognition of non-formal learning within the YOUTH/Youth in Action Programme in order to support the employability of young people

Volunteers are chosen regardless of their ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation, political opinion, etc. No previous qualifications, educational level, specific experience or more than basic language knowledge should be required. A more specific profile of the volunteer might be drawn up if justified by the nature of the tasks of the service or by the project context but even in this case selection on the basis of professional or education qualifications is excluded.

Each volunteer has to go through different phases of training and evaluation, organised by different institutions depending on where the events take place:

Pre-departure training:

Pre-departure training gives volunteers an opportunity to talk about their expectations, develop their motivation, and obtain information on their host country and on the Youth in Action Programme. It can also be an opportunity for volunteers to meet and speak to former EVS volunteers. Duration is on average three days.

On-arrival training:

On-arrival training takes place upon arrival in the host country. It introduces volunteers to their host country and their host environment, and helps them to get to know each other. Duration is on average seven days.

Mid-term evaluation (compulsory only for Services lasting more than 4 months):

Mid-term evaluation provides volunteers with an opportunity to evaluate their experience so far, as well as to meet other volunteers from different projects throughout the host country. Duration is on average two and a half days.

Evaluation of the activity:

The evaluation of the Activity addresses the realisation of the EVS Activity: aims, objectives, motivation, expectations, and tasks performed during the Service. It brings together the volunteers and their sending organisations with the aim of reflecting on what happened during the EVS Activity and assessing the support and communication provided by the sending organisations. It also aims to facilitate reintegration of the volunteers into their home country. Duration is on average three days.

The issue of cultural heritage conservation has also been dealt with in Europe through a programme involving volunteers which is called 'Volunteers for Europe's cultural heritage'¹⁶. The programme is managed by the German Foundation 'Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft' and by the Polish Foundation 'Stefan Batory'; its aim is to encourage young people to help preserve Europe's cultural heritage in border regions within the framework of an international volunteer service. The programme supports projects in Central and Eastern Europe that give young people an opportunity to acquire practical and theoretical skills in monument conservation.

and youth workers; the reflection upon the personal non-formal learning process; the social recognition of youth work.

¹⁶ Foundation 'Erinnerung, Verantwortung und Zukunft', Corinna Jentzsch, e-mail jentzsch@stiftung-evz.de, +49 (0)30 259297-86; Foundation 'Stefan Batory', Sylwia Sobiepan, e-mail: wolontariat@batory.org.pl, +48 22 536 02 70.

2.2. Volunteering and lifelong learning

Lifelong learning is a cradle-to-grave process and can be defined as all purposeful formal, informal and non-formal learning activity undertaken on an ongoing basis with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competence in a personal, social, civil or employment-related perspective.¹⁷ Within volunteering, *informal* and *non-formal* learning are the most relevant.¹⁸

The former is a kind of learning which encompasses a great variety of skills and competences, including 'lifestyle' – that is, the condition which enhances individual's will to learn or to realise activities which promote social development as well as personal and social improvement. The latter is a kind of learning during which the transmission of knowledge and competences happens in an unintentional way; furthermore, the process takes place outside of formally recognised educational institutions.

The Lisbon Strategy, which was implemented in 2000 following the Lisbon Council by the European Member States, intends to deal with the low productivity and stagnation of economic growth in the EU, through the formulation of various policy initiatives to be taken by all EU member states. It broadly aims to 'make Europe, by 2010, the most competitive and the most dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world.'¹⁹

In order to achieve this result, the EU has set some objectives which belong to three strategic issues strictly related to lifelong learning:

- To increase the quality and the efficiency of education and training systems in Europe;
- To facilitate access for everybody to education and training systems;
- To open up European training and education systems.

These aims are strictly connected to some basic issues such as:

- Self-realisation and self-development (cultural capital)
- Active citizenship and integration (social capital)
- Skills and competences for professional development (human capital)

Since 2000 the Grundtvig Action of the *Socrates Programme*, aimed at enhancing the European dimension, innovation and quality of adult education, has supported many actions throughout Europe in the field of adult education: now, the new *Integrated Programme in Lifelong Learning 2007-2013* provides for a specific, stand-alone Grundtvig programme for adult education. Also the *Citizenship in Action* programme, which runs from 2007, enables civil society, youth and cultural organisations, trade unions, etc., to organise activities for the development of active and participatory citizenship.

To date, the results achieved by the Lisbon process are still largely insufficient. The minimum level of adult participation to lifelong learning activities to be achieved by 2010 is 12.5 % of all adult population: the European average figure is 9.6% but there are countries where this percentage rises up to 32.1 % (Sweden) and others where it is considerably lower (in Italy it is only 6.1%).²⁰

¹⁷ European Commission (2001), *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality*, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/lll/life/communication/com_en.pdf .

¹⁸ G.Spagnolo (2006), *Strategie europee per l'apprendimento permanente*, www.indire.it.

¹⁹ http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/lisbon_strategy_en.htm

²⁰ European Commission 2007, *Progress Towards the Lisbon Objectives in Education and Training 2007*, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/progressreport_en.html

	1995:	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
EU (27 countries)	:	:	:	:	:	7.1 ^(e)	7.1 ^(e)	7.2	8.5 ^(b)	9.3	9.7	9.6
EU (25 countries)	:	:	:	:	:	7.5 ^(e)	7.5 ^(e)	7.6	9.0 ^(b)	9.9	10.2	10.1
EU (15 countries)	:	:	:	:	8.2 ^(e)	8.0 ^(e)	8.0 ^(e)	8.1	9.8 ^(b)	10.7	11.2	11.1
Euro area	4.5	5.1	5.1	:	5.6 ^(e)	5.4 ^(e)	5.2 ^(e)	5.3	6.5 ^(b)	7.3	8.1	8.2
Euro area (13 countries)	:	:	:	:	5.5 ^(e)	5.2 ^(e)	5.2 ^(e)	5.3	6.5 ^(b)	7.4	8.2	8.2
Euro area (12 countries)	4.3	4.9	5.0	:	5.5 ^(e)	5.2 ^(e)	5.2 ^(e)	5.3	6.5 ^(b)	7.3	8.1	8.2
Belgium	2.8	2.9	3.0	4.4	6.9 ^(b)	6.2 ⁽ⁱ⁾	6.4	6.0	7.0	8.6 ^(b)	8.3	7.5 ^(p)
Bulgaria	:	:	:	:	:	:	1.4	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
Czech Republic	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	5.6	5.1 ^(b)	5.8	5.6	5.6
Denmark	16.8	18.0	18.9	19.8	19.8	19.4 ^(b)	18.4	18.0	24.2 ^(b)	25.6	27.4	29.2
Germany	:	5.7	5.4	5.3	5.5	5.2	5.2	5.8	6.0 ⁽ⁱ⁾	7.4 ⁽ⁱ⁾	7.7	7.5
Estonia	:	:	4.3	6.3	6.5	6.5 ^(b)	5.4	5.4	6.7	6.4	5.9	6.5
Ireland	4.3	4.8	5.2	:	:	:	:	5.5	5.9 ^(b)	6.1	7.4	7.5
Greece	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.0	1.2	1.1	2.6 ^(b)	1.8	1.9	1.9
Spain	4.3	4.4	4.4	4.2	5.0	4.1 ^(b)	4.4	4.4	4.7	4.7	10.5 ^(b)	10.4
France	2.9	2.7	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.7	7.0 ^(b)	7.0	7.0	7.5
Italy	3.8	4.1	4.6	4.8	5.5	4.8 ^(b)	4.5	4.4	4.5	6.3 ^(b)	5.8	6.1
Cyprus	:	:	:	:	2.6	3.1	3.4	3.7	7.9 ^(b)	9.3	5.9 ^(b)	7.1
Latvia	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	7.3	7.8	8.4	7.9	6.9 ^(p)
Lithuania	:	:	:	:	3.9	2.8	3.5	3.0 ^(b)	3.8	5.9 ^(b)	6.0	4.9 ^(p)
Luxembourg	2.9	2.9	2.8	5.1 ^(b)	5.3	4.8	5.3	7.7	6.5 ^(b)	9.8	8.5	8.2
Hungary	:	:	2.9	3.3	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.9	4.5 ^(b)	4.0	3.9	3.8
Malta	:	:	:	:	:	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.2	4.3 ^(b)	5.3	5.5
Netherlands	13.1	12.5	12.6	12.9	13.6	15.5	15.9	15.8	16.4 ^(b)	16.4	15.9	15.6
Austria	7.7	7.9	7.8	:	9.1	8.3	8.2	7.5	8.6 ^(b)	11.6 ⁽ⁱ⁾	12.9	13.1
Poland	:	:	:	:	:	:	4.3	4.2	4.4	5.0 ^(b)	4.9	4.7
Portugal	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.1 ^(b)	3.4	3.4	3.3	2.9	3.2	4.3 ^(b)	4.1	3.8 ^(p)
Romania	:	:	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.4 ^(p)	1.6	1.3
Slovenia	:	:	:	:	:	:	7.3	8.4	13.3 ^(b)	16.2	15.3	15.0
Slovakia	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	8.5	3.7 ^(b)	4.3	4.6	4.3
Finland	:	16.3	15.8	16.1	17.6	17.5 ^(b)	17.2	17.3	22.4 ^(b)	22.8	22.5	23.1
Sweden	:	26.5	25.0	:	25.8	21.6	17.5 ^(b)	18.4	31.8 ^(b)	32.1	32.1	:
United Kingdom	:	:	:	:	19.2	20.5 ^(b)	20.9	21.3	26.8 ^(b)	29.4	27.5	26.6 ^(p)
Croatia	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	1.9	1.8	1.9	2.1	:
Turkey	:	:	:	:	:	1	1	1	1.2	1.1	1.9	2
Iceland	14.1	15.7	16.5	19.3	20.2	23.5	23.5	24.0	29.5 ^(b)	24.2	25.7	:
Norway	:	16.5	16.4	:	:	13.3	14.2	13.3	17.1 ^(b)	17.4	17.8	18.7
Switzerland	:	29.5	29.8	33.3	31.1	34.7	36.0	34.4	24.7 ^(b)	28.6	26.9	:

(:) not available; (e) estimated value; (b) break in series; (i) see explanatory text; (p) provisional value.

Table 3. Percentage of the adult population aged 25 to 64 participating in education and training (Source: Eurostat 2003)

It is interesting to note that Eurostat data from the Labour Force Survey on lifelong learning carried out in 2003 shows that nearly one European out of three declared to have attended some type of informal learning in the previous twelve months; furthermore, in the 2003 Eurobarometer survey on lifelong learning, respondents asserted that they learned more often in non-formal and informal settings rather than in formal education and training settings.²¹

²¹ 'Questions on adult education in Europe' interview to Helen Keogh, 25 September 2006, www.indire.it

Supra-national and national objectives of building a lifelong learning society are creating a strong demand for a more coherent and flexible qualification systems: many governments are responding with legislation, and with the establishment of awarding bodies with responsibility for qualification systems and the development of qualification frameworks. Furthermore, it is important to note that there is a growing movement throughout Europe for recognition, accreditation and certification of learning outcomes independent of when, where or how they have been achieved.²²

CEV underlines the importance of recognising those qualifications and competences which might have been acquired through non-formal or informal learning experiences such as volunteering: Article 11 of the Manifesto urges the institutions of the EU to 'Support certification schemes for volunteers aimed at recognising the development of competencies through volunteering in the educational systems of the member States and to develop a European framework for validating informal and non-formal learning.'

2.3. Role and perspectives of volunteering in Europe

It is widely recognised that volunteers are engaged in a diverse range of fundamental activities. Furthermore, according to the *Manifesto*, volunteering can:

- Provide integration and social inclusion;
- Contribute to the implementation of EU policies;
- Stimulate active and responsible European citizenship;
- Be a source of reconciliation and reconstruction in divided societies;
- Provide informal and non formal learning opportunities;
- Represent a significant activity regarding its economic value and its impact on the Gross Domestic Product in many European countries;
- Develop new services in a creative way.

However, the *Manifesto* also affirms that, in order to deliver these services, recognition, facilitation and promotion of volunteering are essential. Support from all stakeholders – civil society, government at all levels - is needed: especially from the EU, which is a key actor in this regard and can effectively contribute to develop a stronger role for volunteering in Europe.

2.4. Volunteering in the cultural field

In today's vision of society it is widely accepted that sustainable development can be achieved only through an harmonious relationship between communities and cultural heritage: it appears therefore quite evident that in order to achieve economic and social development our societies need effective, active participation of citizens to this process and that citizens themselves should be deeply aware of the role and meanings of cultural heritage.

²² In December 2004 a decision was adopted on a single framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences. The decision established a new transparency tool called Europass, which integrates qualifications and competences across all lifelong learning in an ICT-based portfolio. In mid-2005 the Commission launched a consultation on a European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Its objective is to create a European framework to enable qualifications systems to relate to each other, both at a national and at an international level (see *Ibid.*).

As has already been underlined, volunteering represents an important resource and a meaningful indicator of participation and awareness as well as of personal and social development: in a word, volunteering is one of the bricks which compose the complex building that we call 'active citizenship'.

Furthermore, cultural institutions – and particularly museums - have dramatically changed in the last few years. They produce public services and have a social function which is much more enhanced today than in the past. They have to cope with new audiences and new ways of communicating, they promote social cohesion and inclusion, as well as cultural mediation for visitors who come from different backgrounds and cultures, or who have different previous knowledge and use diverse interpretative strategies.

Therefore, museum professions are also changing rapidly, in order to cope with the institutional and social changes that their organisations are facing.²³ This overall change of organisations and competences affects the work of volunteers within these organisations, since also their roles and 'duties' are becoming more complex.

This complexity is reflected also in the different characteristics of volunteers, who cannot be considered an undifferentiated group.

Volunteering assumes diverse features according to volunteer's age and status, i.e. individual volunteers or volunteers working within an organisation; furthermore, the organisations themselves dealing with the cultural field can be very different from each other (friends of museums, historical associations, social groups, etc.).

Notwithstanding these differences, some international organisations have settled general principles regarding rights and duties of volunteers and their relationship with the institutions they work for in documents which, in most cases, have the form of a Code of Ethics.

2.5 International organisations and volunteering

Since cultural heritage is one of the area where identities and social cohesion can and should be constructed, and is also a field which is fast developing in terms of employment and of relevance for people's life,²⁴ this link between cultural heritage and volunteering appears to be quite strategic, not only at a European level but also at an international one.

UNESCO

The UNESCO report, *Our Creative Diversity*,²⁵ observing the discrepancy between the ends and means of heritage conservation throughout the world, recommends that international efforts be made to mobilise the goodwill of volunteers of all ages to work as 'Cultural Heritage Volunteers' under professional guidance and alongside professional staff. Their permanent mission would be, 'to contribute to the preservation and enhancement of the human heritage, whether tangible or intangible, using available modern techniques, in

²³ A. Garlandini (ed.), *Professioni museali in Italia e in Europa*, proceedings of the II national conference of museums, Rome 2 October 2006, ICOM-Regione Lazio 2007.

²⁴ According to recent data, the economy of culture in Europe is a growing sector: almost 6 million people work in this field (they represent 2,4% of all workers) and the field itself contributes 2,6% of the EU gross product (see European Commission, *The Economy of Culture in Europe*, 2006, http://ec.europa.eu/culture/eac/sources_info/studies/economy_en.html).

²⁵ UNESCO 1996, *Our creative Diversity*, action 3, <http://www.unesco.org/culture/policies/ocd/index.shtml>

order to disseminate useful knowledge, enrich humanity's awareness of the heritage and promote a deeper mutual understanding and respect between cultures.'

This task of organising this new effort should be entrusted to the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), whose field of competence should be expanded to include cultural heritage activities.

The idea underpinning the UNESCO report is that this volunteer effort should give priority to the most threatened forms of human cultural heritage (deteriorating monuments and objects; disappearing languages or forms of artistic expression; records and oral testimonies of historical significance; and traditional know-how in a variety of disciplines), and should concern the whole world, particularly developing countries.

'Cultural Heritage Volunteers' would be recruited among all age groups and talents and involve young people (especially students and young workers) as well as mid-career and senior-citizen volunteers (architects, artists, craftsmen, archivists, librarians, teachers, etc.) who may wish to contribute their time and expertise. The volunteers would come from various countries, without discrimination as to race or gender, and their participation in volunteer activity is meant to be flexible for the modes and the length of their commitment.

The participation of young volunteers is encouraged through innovative educational designs providing training credits to their students:

- In an educational setting (at primary, secondary or university levels) as a period of 'internship' or 'field-work';
- In a professional/vocational training curriculum as a year of training or apprenticeship.

A flexible funding system has been envisaged, in order to combine:

- A minimum level of stable funding;
- Bilateral or multilateral funding of specific programmes, on the basis of project by project agreements between donors (countries, foundations, NGOs, etc.) and host countries and institutions;
- Match-funding or joint financing involving international, regional or national organisations, as well as private and public donors.

ICOM (International Council of Museums)

ICOM recognises the importance of volunteers and, since its creation, has tried to define their role and to regulate their activities within museums as well as their relationship with museum professionals.

The Code of Ethics approved in Seoul in 2004²⁶ states: 'The governing body should have a written policy on volunteer work which promotes a positive relationship between volunteers and members of the museum profession.' The document also affirms that 'the governing body should ensure that volunteers, when conducting museum and personal activities, are fully conversant with the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums and other applicable codes and laws.'²⁷

²⁶ 1.17 *Museum Personnel and Volunteers*, <http://icom.museum/ethics.html#intro>

²⁷ 1.18 *Volunteers and Ethics*, <http://icom.museum/ethics.html#intro>

WFFM (World Federation of Friends of Museums)

The World Federation of Friends of Museums adopted a Code of Ethics in Oaxaca in 1996²⁸ which recognises volunteers' motivations as well as their important, strategic role within museums:

Friends and volunteers of museums pursue noble objectives in cultural development. They bring to museums their support, their knowledge, their experience and their competence. In so doing, they contribute to the advancement both of museums and of museology. Their commitment is the voluntary expression of a solidarity that actively engages their role as citizens in the community.

As members of the museum community, and at the heart of the museum's public, friends and volunteers constitute a privileged audience, able to represent the public's interests to the best advantage of museum institutions.

Moreover, the status of friends and volunteers in museums implies certain obligations toward the institution of which they bear the name and to which they declare adherence. They agree, therefore, to meet a number of requirements conducive to ensuring a fruitful collaboration.

It is important that the institution, for its part, acknowledges the value of their contribution and assists in its implementation, in that a fully productive collaboration depends on the quality of their mutual relationship.²⁹

The Code provides also a very clear definition of friends and volunteers: they are those 'who contribute in any way to the support of museums, to their development and to their public presence and influence... They act on a voluntary and non-remunerative basis. Their support is moral, financial or consists of voluntary work or expertise. Benefactors, donors, volunteers, museum board members and members of museums are all considered friends of museums.'

Friends and volunteers do not expect financial or other sort of benefits: they operate for 'the satisfaction of contributing to the maintenance and development of the institution to which they belong and to the satisfaction of the public which it serves.'

Section 2 of the Code stresses the importance of co-operation between volunteers and the museum, as well as a clear recognition of the different role played by volunteers and museum professionals: 'Friends and volunteers carry out their activities in an open manner and in a spirit of co-operation with the institution of which they are partners. . . the goals they set, the sphere within which they operate, and the programmes they adopt should be developed with the participation and agreement of the museum authorities and in accordance with the museum's mission.'

The Code also underlines the importance of setting clear rules to be respected by volunteers, such as the acceptance of the institution's requirements and regulations and the need to be loyal to the institution and to respect confidential information.

Section 5 defines the areas of competence of volunteers and their specific tasks, which have to be clearly defined and 'to be designed for the specific character of each institution, its mission and individual goals, and for the programs it offers'.

²⁸ <http://www.museumfriends.com/codeofethics.asp>

²⁹ *ibid.*

Two very important principles are set in this section of the Code:

- The first one is the definition of areas of operation limited to permanent staff: 'When carrying out voluntary work in areas of operation controlled by permanent staff, particularly in curatorship, research and publicity, friends and volunteers should act only with the agreement of the relevant staff. They should respect the obligations to which permanent staff is subjected.'
- The second one is avoiding overlapping: 'In areas of operation not limited to permanent staff, friends and volunteers may discover a fertile ground in which to launch their initiatives. They must be careful their activities do not overlap with staff responsibilities'.

The European Museum Forum

The European Museum Forum is an independent organisation founded in 1977 by Kenneth Hudson and registered as a charitable trust in the UK. It is guided by an international committee composed of 15 experts from 12 countries and 34 National Correspondents. EMF's activities in museum field are many and varied, but probably the most important is the organisation of the European Museum of the Year Award competition (EMYA). This event includes the publication of a brochure describing the entrants and winners of the EMYA and the organisation of a three days' Annual Meeting to support the Awards Ceremony.

Through this event, EMF has gathered significant data about museums' activities in the last decades, some of which specifically relates to the issue of volunteering in museums. EMF has elaborated the data and the information which it received from 120 museums which participate to the EMYA selection for Awards in 2008 and 2009. It is of course quite a limited sample, which on the one hand does not necessarily reflect the national complexity of each country, but on the other hand can be useful to draw a picture of the current European trends. The full report is included in Appendix 4.

EMF also responded to the importance and the relevance of the issue of volunteering in the museum and cultural heritage community by making it the subject of their annual workshop, held in October 2007 in Bertinoro, Italy.³⁰

'Volunteers in cultural heritage and museums: promoting active citizenship' addressed diverse subjects including *Working with volunteers: what does it mean for the organisation; what does it mean for the volunteers? What are the different ways in which volunteers work in a cultural organisation? Recruiting, managing, motivating volunteers; Training, recognition, accreditation of volunteers*. The workshop produced a conclusive document, presented to the Council of Europe, stating good practice principles (see Appendix 4).

Conclusion

The role of volunteering in the cultural field is crucial, not only from the point of view of international institutions, but also from the community of those who work in and for museums and cultural heritage. They clearly perceive – notwithstanding national differences due to legal, social and economic peculiarity of each country – that volunteering can play an important role as 'bridge' between them and the rest of the community, which is much more significant than simply being an instrument to cope with lack of financial or human resources.

³⁰ <http://www.ibc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/voch/voch.htm>

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- ICOM - International Council of Museums (<http://www.icom.org>)
- WFFM - World Federation of Friends of Museums (<http://www.museumfriends.com/>)