



**“MAKING IT MATTER – the impact of volunteering on social inclusion”**

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# **IMPACT MEASUREMENT TOOL MANUAL**

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## Introduction

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Volunteering presents an important part of social inclusion and, as such, is recognised in EU policy framework, especially after 2011 (EU Year of Volunteering). Still, the findings of various research indicate that the impacts of volunteering depend not only on the activities that take place, but also on the kind of support and conditions the government and volunteer involving organisations provide, especially since measuring systematically the impact of volunteering on health, well-being and social capital at macro-level is proving difficult due to the lack of comparable systematic data.

Volunteering is one of the most visible expressions of active citizenship, promoting solidarity, facilitating social inclusion and building social capital. The practice has shown that it has a very positive impact on people's well-being. Many individual volunteer stories speak in favour of this fact. However, there are not a lot of systematic measurements of what improved well-being really is.

This manual for measuring the impact is designed as a simple tool for regular monitoring and evaluation of impact of volunteering on social inclusion that is evidence based, linking volunteer experience and its benefits with the impact on overall people's well-being.

The manual has been produced as a result of partners work on the topic of measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion. As an intro to the topic, the manual contains key findings summarised from the Focus Research Report conducted, recommendations that came out as a result of it and that are defined through the Policy Paper, which advocates for creation and practicing open and inclusive policies at all levels. Those are the starting points that lead project partners to the development of the methodology of measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion described in the Manual.

The purpose of the process and the results of measuring the impact of volunteering is to encourage volunteer involving organisations to:

- carefully design more inclusive volunteer programmes;
- increase engagement of disadvantaged youth in volunteering;
- address the goal of social inclusion;
- contribute to the development of social capital.

The manual has been developed by merging knowledge of partners from countries with specific knowledge and experience in developing and supporting volunteering in order to create transnational tool applicable for volunteer involving organisations and volunteers.

The process of creating the manual has been interactive and participative and it had two main components:

## I. Development of the methodology on measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion

The *Making it matter tool* presents methods and indicators for measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion, with an emphasis on developing new practices in the field of disadvantaged youth volunteering. This tool is designed for volunteer involving organisations to demonstrate the impact that volunteering can have on different categories of disadvantaged young people, while at the same time supporting volunteers in reflecting on their personal achievements.

It's a simple tool, easily completed in several steps. The tool enables evaluation of the impact of volunteering on volunteers in several steps - **You Matter:**



It also enables volunteer involving organisations measuring the impact of volunteering in several steps - **Making it matter:**



## II. Piloting the methodology for impact measurement in each partner country

The partners from Croatia, Denmark, Ireland, Germany and Slovenia selected 11 organisations and 20 individual cases of volunteering (youth with fewer opportunities) that were included in the piloting process.

The methodology of piloting the measurement tool is based on applying written instructions from the manual in organisations, particularly in inclusive volunteer programmes. The process of implementation demands regular monitoring and mentoring of volunteers, tracking indicators defined in the methodology and putting newly developed instruments into practice.

After the piloting phase, the tool and the manual have been redesigned according to the feedback received through case studies. The piloting process resulted with valuable feedback that contributed to some improvements of the tool and it serves as an evidence of the impact volunteering has on social inclusion. The project team would like to thank all volunteers and volunteer involving organisations involved in the pilot process for their contribution in developing this manual and the tool.

Volunteering is a powerful tool for social inclusion by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of their background, so that they can achieve their full potential in life. The engagement of youth in diverse activities in local communities supports their personal and professional development and empowers them for active participation in society.

For volunteer involving organisations, this process and the results of measuring the impact of volunteering will contribute to improving social and organisational capacity for the development of high quality and community-oriented services that support the empowerment and inclusion of young people at risk of social exclusion through volunteering.

We invite you to use this Manual and the tool in order to demonstrate the benefits of volunteering and evidence the impact of volunteering on social inclusion.

**Making it matter project team**

“Volunteering ones time, sharing energy, expertise and passion, not only contributes to the social inclusion of others, but also empowers people to become more socially included themselves. This is especially important for disadvantaged young people, and a significant way to find their place and role in society as engaged citizens, contributing to building the Europe they want to see. As policymakers we need to ensure that there are no barriers to anyone wanting to volunteer, to be committed and also benefit in this way. Volunteering should be accessible to ALL and we need to ensure that it is!”

*Irena JOVEVA*

*MEP, Co-Chair of the EP Interest Group on Volunteering*

*(Renew Europe Group)*

## About the project

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Partner organisations from

Ireland - **Volunteer Ireland**,

Denmark - **FriSe**,

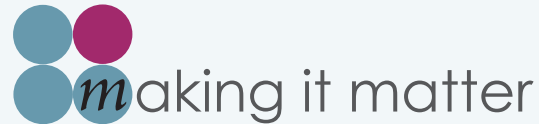
Germany - **BBE**,

Belgium - **CEV**,

Slovenia - **Slovenska Filantropija**,

Croatia - **Volunteer centre Osijek**

have implemented an Erasmus+ project



### “Making it matter – the impact of volunteering on social inclusion”

**Project “Making it matter”** enabled the creation of methods and indicators for impact measurement that will help volunteer involving organisations to understand the key benefits, and shape the most inclusive volunteer programmes. It also assists institutions and decision-makers to formulate policies and support programmes through comparable systematic data on the circumstances in which volunteering is useful for personal development, empowerment and inclusion of young people.

The project outputs:

1. The *research report* as a source of information for volunteer involving organisations and decision-makers that provides detailed picture of volunteering of disadvantaged young people and social inclusion in partner countries;
2. The *manual on measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion*, created and piloted in volunteer involving organisations, supporting organisations to demonstrate the benefits of volunteering;
3. The *curriculum* as a transnational educational tool supports the capacity building of volunteer involving organisations and volunteers;
4. A *Policy Paper* with the set of recommendations to improve the legislative and strategic framework for inclusive volunteering and influence the development of more opportunities for young disadvantaged volunteers;
5. *Three international events* involving decision-makers, researchers, practitioners, and volunteer involving organisations.

In the long term, the project contributes to the improvement of social and organisational capacities for the development of high quality and community-oriented services that support the empowerment and inclusion of young people at risk of social exclusion through volunteering.

## Focus Research Report Summary

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This *Focus Research Report* has been developed as one of the intellectual outputs of “*Making it Matter*” project, implemented under the Erasmus+ programme by six partner countries: Croatia, Denmark, Ireland, Slovenia, Belgium and Germany.

The **main objective** of the Focus Research Report is to give an overview of existing EU and national policies and practices that support the inclusion of disadvantaged youth through volunteering. To approach the topic comprehensively, the following **methodology** was used: desk research of existing policies on an EU and national level; research of volunteer-involving organisations through 413 on-line questionnaires and interviews with 11 disadvantaged youth volunteers and 9 volunteer coordinators.

### KEY FINDINGS OF THE DESK RESEARCH OF EXISTING POLICIES ON AN EU AND NATIONAL LEVEL

The desk research overview shows that EU institutions have stressed the importance of making volunteering more inclusive through relevant policy papers since 1983. Recent documents and strategies such as “*The New European Solidarity Corps*” and EU Youth Strategy 2019 – 2027 provide a specific view and strongly support the involvement of disadvantaged youth. EU institutions urge Member States to take all necessary measures to implement these policies.

Despite the existing EU policy framework on volunteering and social inclusion, the practice in Member states varies, which is clearly visible through analysis of the desk research among partner countries. Regarding the recognition of volunteering on a national level, the definition of volunteering, best practices for volunteer-involving organisations and national legal frameworks for volunteering:

- Countries with a long volunteering tradition (Ireland, Denmark and Germany) have no specific laws on volunteering. Volunteering is regulated through different law texts and is related to health, safety and data protection of volunteers, while Croatia and Slovenia as post-socialist young democracies have specific laws to regulate the practice of volunteering.
- The fact that all countries realise the need for national strategies relevant for the development of volunteerism (either they already adopted it or strive to adopt it) suggests that volunteering needs to be supported and recognised on a national level by relevant institutions.
- In general, there is a growing awareness about equal opportunities to participate in volunteering and about the social inclusion of disadvantaged people through volunteering. While disadvantaged youth have been included in the overall focus on social inclusion or youth projects and activities, there is a lack of specific motivational and regulatory measures for inclusive volunteer programmes for disadvantaged youth.

Although there are no national documents targeting volunteering of disadvantaged youth specifically, the practice in each country shows that there are good examples of involving disadvantaged youth. Such projects and activities are mainly implemented by leading organisations in volunteering or those organisations dealing with youth or the issues of social inclusion.



## KEY FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH ON EXISTING PRACTICE OF INVOLVING DISADVANTAGED YOUTH

The research conclusions on the existing practice of involving disadvantaged youth can be summarised as it follows:

- Most volunteer-involving organisations that participated already included disadvantaged youth volunteers and over 70% of them (except Germany) have experienced involvement of their beneficiaries as volunteers. Though for over 50% of organisations this has not been a result of conscious planning.
- Although 48.6% of participating organisations stated that their organisational articles contain values statement about diversity among volunteers, e.g. inclusion of disadvantaged groups as volunteers, 61.8% of organisations do not have a written policy about the involvement of disadvantaged or marginalised groups as volunteers.
- In general, more than 60% of organisations that participated in the research do not have a specific focus on recruiting disadvantaged youth or written policies about the involvement of disadvantaged groups.
- The most included groups of disadvantaged youth volunteers are those facing social and economic obstacles and those volunteers with cultural differences.
- The research results show that organisations felt that they were not able to involve some specific groups of disadvantaged youth, such as homeless youth, youth with mental disabilities, youth with psychiatric conditions, ex-offenders and ex-drug and alcohol abusers. This may indicate that there is a significant level of hesitation and fear of the unknown, combined with prejudice and stigmatisation of certain social groups that can lead to further exclusion.
- Disadvantaged youth volunteers tend to be long-term volunteers or ad-hoc volunteers for a longer period.
- Organisations face similar challenges and obstacles to increasing their involvement of disadvantaged youth: lack of organisational capacity and resources as well as knowledge on how to work with specific groups of volunteers. Thus, targeted support is needed and could be provided by national / local volunteer centres that are already recognised by volunteer-involving organisations as resource centres.

## KEY FINDINGS FROM THE INTERVIEWS WITH DISADVANTAGED YOUTH AND VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS

Volunteers and Volunteer Managers have recognised different benefits and effects of volunteering on volunteers:

- it increases confidence in themselves in general and their abilities, skills and knowledge;
- it gives them a feeling of belonging and being less alone;
- it increases physical and psychological wellbeing;
- it creates a wider social network, etc.

From the perspective of Volunteer Managers, it takes a lot of effort and dedicated engagement, as well as a structured approach to create the enabling and supportive environment that is one of the key pre-conditions for involving disadvantaged youth as volunteers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this research indicate that there is significant evidence in favour of inclusive programmes that support disadvantaged and marginalised youth to participate actively in volunteering.

**Social inclusion** is defined as a process “Where a person or group of persons participates actively and equally in mutually developing communities regardless of differences in assumptions and functional ability, including contextual factors”.<sup>1</sup>

Inclusion support measures aim to ensure that the individual's and the community's interests are accommodated. Social, learning, physical and cultural barriers should not hinder an individual's participation.

Here, participation is about people actively engaging and contributing in volunteer work in whatever way they can. There are many forms of participation in voluntary communities.

The success of social inclusion programmes depends not only on the kind of volunteering activities on offer, but also on the kind of support and conditions that governments, volunteer development agencies and volunteer-involving organisations can provide. Even though there is an enabling political and social framework for the development of inclusive volunteering, as of yet there are no specifically developed mechanisms to encourage and support disadvantaged youth to volunteer, or to motivate and support non-profit organisations to create inclusive programmes.

Therefore, it would be important to consider the following recommendations:

### 1. Create and practice open and inclusive policies at all levels

The benefits of inclusive volunteer programmes include increased diversity, the development of a culture of solidarity and respect, increased civic participation in the community and decision-making, better and more representative services, better life conditions, and a sense of ownership and belonging for all members of the community. Therefore, it is important to create and practice open and inclusive policies at all levels and to use narratives that will challenge stereotypes, decrease exclusion, discrimination and alienation.

### 2. Create policies and specific measurements to develop a support system for inclusive volunteer programmes on a national and EU level

Such policies and measures will more directly lead to the improvement of practice in both quantity and quality, including the implementing of a system that monitors this improvement. The measures should specially address three mutually reinforcing issues: the challenge of motivating the disadvantaged, the need of volunteer-involving organisations for additional resources and the need for increased public awareness of the positive impact that volunteering can have on empowerment and inclusion.

### 3. Strengthen the role of national volunteer development agencies and volunteer centres

National volunteer development agencies and volunteer centres should be supported to embrace social inclusion as one of their core values and to invest more in the motivation, education and mentorship of volunteer-involving organisations so that they have a greater understanding of and capacity to deliver inclusive volunteer programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> The definition is taken from the report “Examination of the management's importance for inclusion”, carried out by the Rambøll Company in March 2019, Denmark.

#### 4. Design programmes that overcome psychological and physical barriers of specific groups

Volunteer involving organisations have similar challenges and opportunities across the EU. Inclusive volunteering programmes require special attention in terms of creating volunteer positions, providing additional support, overcoming barriers and tracking results. Training and support, such as mentoring and education, impact measurement tools, the design of tailor-made inclusion programmes, transnational projects, and quality standards should be developed for volunteer involving organisations. Some of the key barriers for successful inclusive programmes are; lack of empathy with vulnerable groups; lack of organisational resources; prejudice about abilities of specific social groups; inadequate suitable work environments; and lack of resources to provide the extra support volunteers may need. For such programmes to have the desired impact, they should consider the specific needs, constraints and other social characteristics of individual youth groups. Programmes need to be designed in a way to overcome psychological and practical barriers of specific social groups.

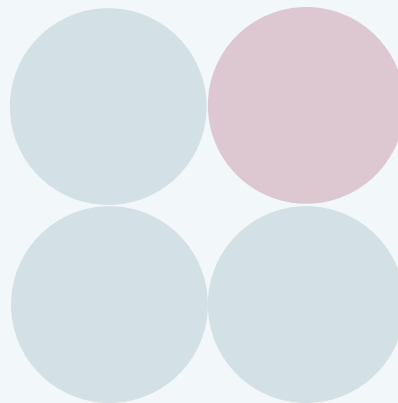
#### 5. Motivating volunteer-involving organisations to use impact measurement procedures

In this way, volunteer-involving organisation will collect specific data, evidence and testimonies regarding disadvantaged youth volunteers / volunteering in order to provide evidence regarding the improvement of wellbeing, social capital and socio-economic development that results from volunteering.

#### 6. Support development of transnational partnerships

Support development of transnational partnership in order to create more European-wide practices, improve infrastructure for sustainable volunteering opportunities for disadvantaged youth as a path to social inclusion and to reach more standardised indicators of the impact of volunteering at the macro level.

The full version of the *Focus Research Report* is available on: [https://df2253af-c034-4026-aac2-5d1c91f60490.filesusr.com/ugd/3ec99c\\_24a743bc40e54094b89bd6f07051ca7a.pdf](https://df2253af-c034-4026-aac2-5d1c91f60490.filesusr.com/ugd/3ec99c_24a743bc40e54094b89bd6f07051ca7a.pdf)



# Policy Paper on Inclusive Volunteering

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## MAKING IT MATTER - the impact of volunteering on social inclusion

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1. Introduction
2. Recommendations
3. Annex I Rationale for the Policy Recommendations

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Engagement of disadvantaged youth in diverse activities in local communities supports their personal and professional development and empowers them to actively participate in society. However, disadvantaged youth are still facing different social, economic, educational, physical and / or cultural barriers and are volunteering less than other young people – a loss for themselves and society at large.

EU institutions have stressed the importance of making volunteering more inclusive through policy papers since 1983. Recent initiatives and strategies such as the *European Solidarity Corps* and the *EU Youth Strategy 2019 - 2027* strongly support the involvement of disadvantaged youth.

Despite EU policy frameworks and recommendations, the practice in Member States varies and there are few specific national documents targeting volunteering of disadvantaged youth. There is also a lack of mechanisms specifically developed to encourage and support disadvantaged youth to volunteer, or to motivate and support non-profit organisations to create inclusive programmes.

Therefore, it is important to create and practice open and inclusive policies at all levels on national and EU level and to use narratives that will challenge stereotypes, discrimination, alienation and decrease exclusion. This will help increase diversity, develop a culture of solidarity and respect, increase civic participation and create ownership and belonging for all members of a community.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

During the “Making it Matter” project significant evidence was gathered in favour of inclusive programmes that support disadvantaged and marginalised youth to participate actively in volunteering in whatever way they can. The success of social inclusion depends not only on the kind of volunteering activities on offer, but also on the kind of support and conditions that governments, volunteer development agencies and volunteer-involving organisations can provide.

Therefore, it’s important to consider the following recommendations:

1. **Remove psychological and physical barriers**

Create and support inclusive programmes to overcome key barriers to provide the extra support disadvantaged volunteers may need. Inclusive programmes require special attention in terms of identifying volunteer roles, volunteer management, additional support and infrastructure. It’s also important to increase public awareness of the positive impact that volunteering can have for both communities and disadvantaged youth.

2. **Develop a support system**

Support local organisations to include disadvantaged youth as volunteers. The support should address three mutually reinforcing issues: the challenge of motivating the disadvantaged youth; the need of volunteer-involving organisations for additional resources, knowledge and methods; and new partnerships between organisations, and between organisations and municipalities. Such measures will lead to more coordinated efforts and the improvement of practice in both quantity and quality.

3. **Strengthen national volunteer organisations and volunteer centres**

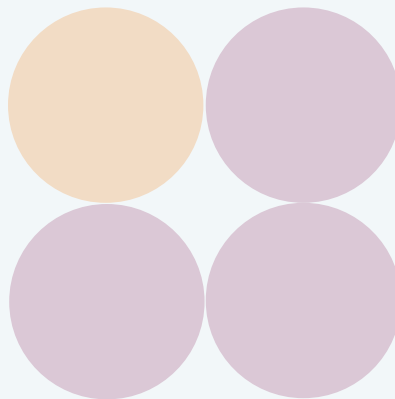
National volunteer organisations and volunteer centres should be supported to embrace social inclusion as one of their core values and to invest more in the motivation, education and mentorship of volunteer-involving organisations. In this way, they will increase their understanding of the issues and their capacity to support the delivery of inclusive volunteer programmes by the local organisations they work with.

4. **Gather the impact and show the value**

Support and assist volunteer-involving organisations to monitor the impact that their inclusive programmes bring to the volunteers and the organisations. They should be supported with the adequate resources and the necessary tools to do so. In this way, organisations will collect data and testimonies regarding disadvantaged youth volunteers in order to provide further evidence regarding the improvement of wellbeing, social capital and socio-economic added value of volunteering.

5. **Together we are stronger**

Support the development of transnational partnerships and networks in order to share practice, knowledge, and develop new methods to create more successful programmes and ways to include disadvantaged youth as volunteers. In this way, they will further increase their understanding of the issues and their capacity to support the local organisations implementing inclusive volunteer programmes.



## 2. Annex I Rationale for the Policy Recommendations

### THE POTENTIAL IS GREAT FOR ALL INVOLVED

The goal of *"Making it Matter"*, a project co-financed by the Erasmus+ programme involving partner organisations in six countries, is ultimately to support, through volunteering, the empowerment and inclusion of young people at risk of social exclusion.

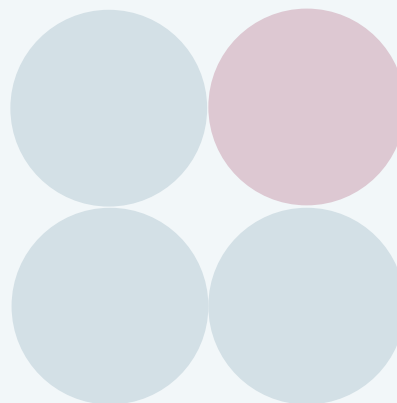
The partnerships' shared experience and knowledge as well as our extensive research, shows that volunteering for disadvantaged youth is a powerful tool for social inclusion that ensures equal opportunities for all, regardless of their background. It increases young people's confidence in general, and in their abilities, skills and knowledge. It generates a sense of belonging, fights loneliness and it increases their physical and psychological well-being. Their social networks and social capital also improve. Youth outside the labour market or the education system can gain access to and / or tools to help them find a job or acquire a formal education.

The project research also found that many disadvantaged youths want to volunteer, and many volunteer-involving organisations are implementing inclusive programmes successfully and are interested in doing more. Most volunteer-involving organisations (over 70%) already include disadvantaged youth as volunteers, although this has not been a result of conscious planning - 60% of organisations do not have a specific focus on recruiting or written policy about the involvement of disadvantaged groups as volunteers. The benefits for the organisations when involving disadvantaged young people could be more diversity amongst and increased awareness of the young people's resources and added value.

Furthermore, inclusive volunteer programmes help develop the local community and reduce gaps between citizens – stereotypes are broken, a culture of dialogue is established, and there is better communication about taboo subjects.

However, disadvantaged youth still face different barriers and the organisations need resources, knowledge and support because it takes a lot of effort and dedicated engagement, as well as a structured approach to create a supportive environment to involve disadvantaged youth as volunteers.

A much more coordinated effort is therefore needed to improve infrastructure, approaches, knowledge and methods, to establish new collaborations, to create & extend networks and to expand efforts towards disadvantaged youth that need additional support to start volunteering.



## Why measuring the impact of volunteering matters?

The European Economic and Social Committee in 2016 (INT/721EESC-2013-6135) stressed the importance of social impact measurements for third sector (social enterprises, volunteer involving organisations, NGOs). At that time, key recommendations stressed the need of standardised indicators of impact of third sector at the macro-level, standardisation of practices and methods at the organisational level. They concluded that attention must be dedicated to developing methods and indicators for measuring the impacts generated by the specific nature and distinctive traits of third sector: participation, societal change and creation of relationships.<sup>2</sup>

Third Sector Impact found that volunteering can have positive impact on the socio-economic development in Europe. However, systematic reviews of research do not support unconditional and general claims about improvement of health, wellbeing, innovation, social capital, empowerment, or economic development. Only by using the best available sources of data and suitable methods, can we understand under which circumstance the volunteering can have positive impacts. It is important to “collect data, evidence and testimonies” and “use data, evidence and testimony to get political attention”.<sup>3</sup>

Recently, impact measurement has been an important topic among civil society organisations and academics. However, measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion as important component of individual wellbeing is yet not explored and affirmed. The existing measurement tools are mostly focusing on general impact of volunteering on volunteers, organisations and communities and use traditional approaches to evaluation based on the financial benefits of volunteer activity, particularly the financial benefits to the organisation.

In recent years, the focus on impact measurement has grown in general. It has been widely recognised that measuring impact demonstrates an organisation's accountability and dedication to achieving its mission and goals. Besides that, it serves as a basis for further fundraising and report to relevant stakeholders, especially in times of shrinking funding opportunities.

*VolontEurope* in its *Position paper on Measuring the Impact of Volunteering* states several reasons why measuring the social impact is relevant.

Measuring the social impact of volunteering is important as it:

- Showcases the value of volunteering through enhanced communication and reporting of community actions and involvement;
- Increases accountability of the action of civil society organisations through proper tracking of resources spent on community initiatives;
- Ensures the quality of volunteering is measured and improved through improved internal management and more effective benchmarking;
- It enables to analyse performance with a more critical approach, supporting the understanding of intended and unintended benefits, which might influence the strategy in allocation of future resources;
- Increases sustainability of projects as it will support the case with funders who are increasingly looking beyond the traditional annual report and including financial, social and environmental indicators as evidence of impact and sustainability;
- It supports evidence-based decision making for policy makers, funders and investors.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee on social impact measurement (own-initiative opinion) 2014/C 170/03 ([https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.C\\_.2014.170.01.0018.01.ENG](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.C_.2014.170.01.0018.01.ENG))

<sup>3</sup> <http://thirdsectorimpact.eu/news/giving-third-sector-visibility-deserves>

<sup>4</sup> de Bonfis, L.; King, L.: *Measuring the Impact of Volunteering - Position paper*, VolontEurope, March 2018. ([https://volonteuropa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Measuring-impact-Paper\\_Final.pdf](https://volonteuropa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Measuring-impact-Paper_Final.pdf))

General studies on the impact of volunteering have identified a series of stakeholders and dimensions in which volunteering has a great potential to impact it: volunteers (effects and impact on personal level); volunteer involving organisations (effects and impact at institutional level); direct beneficiaries/social services users; the wider community (family members, friends of beneficiaries, local NGOs, etc.).

So, why does measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion matters? The most important reason why measuring impact of volunteering on social inclusion matters is because it can give a clear picture of the enhanced changes that have happened through volunteering on a personal, organisational and community level.

Evidence on the quality of the services and organisational results became of high importance for the beneficiaries, the potential volunteers and the community, but also for donors and other relevant stakeholders. The new context requires clear proof that the work of an organisation and its projects are actually contributing to the desired expected change.

Measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion:

1. demonstrates the effects of your inclusive volunteer programmes on different levels (individual, organisational and community level);
2. demonstrates the impact of inclusive volunteer programmes to donors;
3. provides evidence that can be used in other project applications;
4. increases the visibility and credibility of your organisation by promoting the measurement results;
5. improves the volunteer management practices;
6. Motivates volunteers for their future volunteer engagement.





## The Importance of Measuring Impact

As social organisations, your mission and purpose are central to your existence. Delivering on that mission is why you carry out your work, so having definitive proof of how you are achieving your aims is paramount. When impact measurement is carried out effectively, it will not only provide access to finance but also support your organisation's overall effectiveness. The question is not whether to measure impact, but how to do it effectively and efficiently, and how to ensure that it is embedded into your organisation.

## Telling your Story to Stakeholders

Communicating your work effectively builds engagement with stakeholders. Stakeholders increasingly want to see the return on their investment, whilst the wider community wants to know how your work is progressing and what it means for service users. Telling a good story needs facts and impact, not just output, i.e. the stories behind the numbers. Numerical data is essential in order to make the most of your outcomes, however the stories behind those numbers bring your work to life. It is even better if these stories can be readily re-told e.g. *"Because of our work three more families now have a place to live"*

## Access to Finance

Demonstrating impact is becoming increasingly important to funders and opens doors to funding streams that organisations may not have considered or been considered for. Embedding and implementing relevant impact measurement will ensure your organisation stands out in competitive funding processes. Demonstrating exactly how you deliver on your mission can make the difference between securing funding and missing a valuable opportunity.

## Monitoring Performance

Measuring impact is a very visible way of judging the success of your organisation. It is a signal to funders and service users that your organisation cares about improving service delivery and is willing to be held accountable for its performance. This transparency increases engagement from funders and can also help to motivate employees and volunteers as they see the progress they are contributing towards and the impact of their contribution.

## Outcome and Impact Measurement and Reporting

As the move from output to outcome and impact measurement moves forward, being ready with your relevant impact indicators and data will help to ensure your competitive advantage over those organisations that have not embedded and implemented impact measurement."

*Paul Collins*

*Outcomes and Impacts Manager*

*Volunteer Ireland*

## Glossary

In terms of measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion, we bring you several descriptions and definition of key terms relevant for better understanding of the topic:

### Social Inclusion

**Social inclusion** is the act of making all groups of people within a society feel valued and important.<sup>5</sup>

**Social inclusion** is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society - improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.<sup>6</sup>

From a youth perspective **social inclusion** is the process of individual's self-realisation within a society, acceptance and recognition of one's potential by social institutions, integration (through study, employment, volunteering or other forms of participation) in the web of social relations in a community ...<sup>7</sup>

**Social inclusion** is a process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities for all. The multi-dimensional process aimed at creating conditions which enable full and active participation of every member of the society in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic, and political activities, as well as participation in decision making processes. Social inclusion may also be interpreted as the process by which societies combat poverty and social exclusion.<sup>8</sup>

**Social exclusion** consists of dynamic, multi-dimensional processes driven by unequal power relationships interacting across four main dimensions - economic, political, social and cultural - and at different levels including individual, household, group, community, country and global levels. It results in a continuum of inclusion / exclusion characterised by unequal access to resources, capabilities and rights which leads to health inequalities.<sup>9</sup>

5 Source: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/social-inclusion>

6 Source: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/social-inclusion>

7 Source: <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/youth-partnership/social-inclusion>

8 Source: <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/independent-living-support-disabled-elderly/27360>

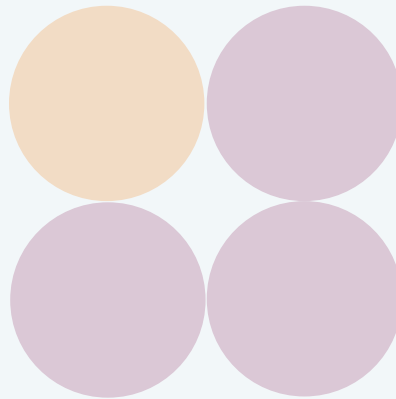
9 Source: [https://www.who.int/social\\_determinants/themes/social-exclusion/en/](https://www.who.int/social_determinants/themes/social-exclusion/en/)

## Social Exclusion

**Social exclusion** is the act of making certain groups of people within a society feel isolated and unimportant.<sup>10</sup>

The main aspects of **social exclusion** can be summarised as follows, although the list is not exhaustive:

- experiencing poor living conditions (in terms of housing, nutrition, clothing, physical safety);
- being unable to participate in the social and political life of one's community (not out of choice but as a result of obstacles encountered);
- being unable to enjoy cultural and recreational activities (as a result of obstacles encountered);
- suffering from health conditions deriving from poor living standards and experiencing obstacles to accessing health care and social services when needed;
- suffering from an emotional and psychological sense of exclusion and isolation from the community and / or from society at large (worsening wellbeing).<sup>11</sup>



<sup>10</sup> Source: <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/social-exclusion>

<sup>11</sup> EACEA's Report – Youth Social Exclusion and Lessons from Youth Work

## Impact Measurement

**Impact measurement** stands for the process of quantitatively and qualitatively evaluating the impacts of an organisation.<sup>12</sup>

**Social Impact Measurement** is a process of understanding how much social change occurred and can be attributed to an organisation's activities.<sup>13</sup>

The European funded third sector Impact project used two components approach to define **impact** (Sivesind, 2015). Firstly, impact is defined as: "the direct or indirect, medium to long-term consequences of the activity of volunteers or of the third sector organisations on individuals or on the community, ranging from neighbourhoods to society in general" (Sivesind, 2015). This part of the definition implies that impact can occur at different levels, from the individual level to society level, that short-term and long-term impact can be measured, and that impact may follow directly or indirectly from the volunteering / third sector organisation. The second part of the definition states that: "Impact goes beyond and above the outcome that would have happened without the third sector activity" (Sivesind, 2015).

To **measure social impact**, it is necessary to explore the meaning of well-being. Although there is no consensus around a single definition of well-being it can be summarised as the state of being comfortable, healthy and happy.

Researchers from different disciplines have examined different aspects of well-being that include the following: Physical well-being; Economic well-being; Social well-being; Development and activity; Emotional well-being; Psychological well-being; Life satisfaction; Domain specific satisfaction; Engaging activities and work.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Source: <https://youmatter.world/en/definition/impact-measurement/>

<sup>13</sup> Source: <https://www.sopact.com/social-impact-measurement>

<sup>14</sup> The European funded Third Sector Impact project: <https://thirdsectorimpact.eu/>

## Self- assessment or self- evaluation

The tool designed for volunteers and volunteer involving organisations is based on the self-assessment or self-evaluation process. Such process enables organisation or volunteer to compare existing practice or volunteer experience with defined parameters and indicators for measuring the impact of volunteering and thus recognise the areas, which are good or those where improvements are desirable. It also helps to measure the real impact and underlines the example of good practice.

“Self-assessment is assessment or evaluation of oneself or one’s actions, attitudes, or performance.”<sup>15</sup>

“Assessment refers to the act of determining or estimating the value of something and making appropriate judgments on issues. It is used interchangeably with words like evaluation, examination etc.

Similarly, self-assessment is the ability to examine yourself to find out how much progress you have made. It is a skill that helps individuals monitor their own work or abilities, find out what their weaknesses and strengths are, and self-diagnose relevant solutions.

The purpose of self-assessment is to help the individual know the extent of his abilities and to improve upon them without the need of a performance appraiser.”<sup>16</sup>



<sup>15</sup> <https://www.cleverism.com/skills-and-tools/self-assessment/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.lexico.com/definition/self-assessment>

## Disadvantaged youth or youth with fewer opportunities

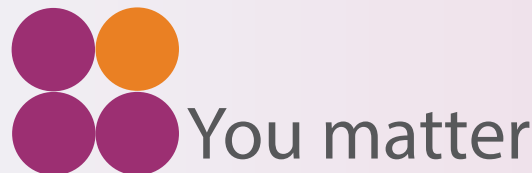
As defined in Erasmus and the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy from 2014, disadvantaged youth or youth with fewer opportunities are young people who are at a disadvantage compared to their peers because they face one or more of the exclusion factors and obstacles in the following categories:

- Disability: young people with mental (intellectual, cognitive, learning), physical, sensory or other disabilities etc.
- Health problems: young people with chronic health problems, severe illnesses or psychiatric conditions etc.
- Educational difficulties: young people with learning difficulties, early school-leavers, lower qualified persons, young people with poor school performance etc.
- Cultural differences: immigrants, refugees or descendants from immigrant or refugee families, young people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, young people with linguistic adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties etc.
- Economic obstacles: young people with a low standard of living, low income, dependence on social welfare system, young people in long-term unemployment or poverty, young people who are homeless, in debt or with financial problems etc.
- Social obstacles: young people facing discrimination because of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc., young people with limited social skills or anti-social or high-risk behaviours, young people in a precarious situation, (ex-)offenders, (ex-) drug or alcohol abusers, young and / or single parents, orphans etc.
- Geographical obstacles: young people from remote or rural areas, young people living on small islands or in peripheral regions, young people from urban problem zones, young people from less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities) etc.

This definition focuses on the situation young people are in, to avoid stigmatisation and blame. The overview of the factors gives an indication of the type of exclusion situations being considered in this project.

# You Matter

## individual level of impact young volunteers



### Description of methods and indicators

In exploring social inclusion and factors of exclusion, the *You Matter* tool defines four areas of inclusion that are measured, focusing on the benefits of volunteering important for the personal development of volunteers and empowering them to participate actively in society. These four areas of inclusion focus on self-esteem, relationships with others, community relations, and knowledge and skills;

1. **Self-image** – refers to a personal change, psychophysical improvements and how do volunteers perceive themselves. It focuses on the level of achieved self-respect, social and emotional development, proactive behaviour, personal responsibility, etc.
2. **Me and others** – refers to the relations volunteers tend to create with other people, measured by following indicators: sense of belonging, social network created, positive identities and relations, etc.
3. **Me and community** – through this level we want to measure volunteer's improvements in understanding social responsibility, dedication to values, readiness to continue volunteering, readiness to undertake actions and to be involved in the community, etc.
4. **Knowledge and skills** – as one of the most recognised benefits of volunteering refers to the level of improvement of skills and competences through volunteering in general, communication, new experiences, etc.

In each of the four defined areas there is a set of six statements that indicate the level of impact.

The tool is designed to fit a variety of individual contexts and different disadvantaged youth groups. It's not designed for targeting specific youth disadvantaged group (e.g. only young people with disabilities). The intention was to make it accessible to various disadvantaged youth groups and to give a general overview of the impact volunteering can have on one's well-being.

## Guidelines on how to use the tool

The *You Matter* tool has been designed as **the process of self-evaluation of volunteers and when needed with the support of mentors.**

**Self-evaluation is a process for systematically exploring, analysing, and evaluating one's volunteer experience and its impact on one's personal development.** The goal is to engage volunteers in the performance evaluation process and open communication channels for impact related issues.

Since the tool has been, primarily designed to assess the impact that volunteering can have on disadvantaged youth, in many cases volunteers would be in the need of additional help in implementing the tool. Therefore, the role of mentor is important to make the process user-friendly.

Mentors should support volunteer to:

- Reflect on their feelings and thoughts about their volunteering experience
- Analyse the results and write a short conclusion with recommendations together with volunteer
- Consider progress and development
- Thoroughly understand their volunteering experience, learning outcomes and the impact as a result
- Think about next steps

This process of evaluation can be undertaken **after a certain volunteer experience (minimum 10 hours of volunteering)**. It can also be done retrospectively, after the volunteer engagement finished already. If done occasionally, during long term volunteering, in certain periods (e.g. every 6 months), it can present volunteers journey toward social inclusion, showing improvements and effects of volunteering and helping volunteers to note down their developments.

In responding to the statements, volunteers should **refer to the changes happened in their lives since they started volunteering.**









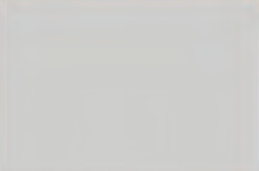

Each statement is graded: *strongly agree*, *agree*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *disagree*. In addition, each grade is followed with the certain score:

<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
15	10	5	0

After the volunteer answers each statement, he / she or the mentor should put the score next to the statement, according to the graded answer on the statement. When one set of statements is finished, the results need to be summarised for each area individually. The overall score per area can vary from 0 to a maximum of 90 points.

In some cases, mentors can consider creating paper cards using smileys or colours that can help volunteers answer the statements.

*Example:*

strongly agree	agree	neither agree or disagree	disagree
			
			

## You matter tool

### You Matter – volunteering and personal development

#### To be completed by a volunteer (mentor, when needed)

The following statements are about your volunteering experience. About the effect, your volunteering experience has had on you. Firstly, think about your life before you started volunteering. Then compare it with how your life has changed since you started volunteering. There are four areas with statements; the change in your self-image (how you see yourself), the change in your relationships with others, the change in your relationship with your community and the change in your knowledge and skills.

Name of the volunteer:	
Please, tick the age category you fit in:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 - 20</li> <li>• 20 - 25</li> <li>• 25 - 30</li> </ul>
Name of the volunteer involving organisation:	
Period of volunteering:	
Number of volunteer hours:	
Short description of the volunteer's role / position:	

Please complete the following sentences for the first three areas:

### “Since I started volunteering ...”

#### 1. Self-image

	<i>Strongly agree (15)</i>	<i>Agree (10)</i>	<i>Neither agree nor disagree (5)</i>	<i>Disagree (0)</i>
I have changed in a positive way				
My mental and / or physical health have improved				
I feel better about myself				
I have a more active social life				
My self-confidence has improved				
I recognise better my needs, strengths and challenges				
<b>OVERALL SCORE</b>				

## 2. Me and others

	<b>Strongly agree (15)</b>	<b>Agree (10)</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree (5)</b>	<b>Disagree (0)</b>
I spend more time with other people				
I am able to make friends more easily				
I can approach people easily				
I feel accepted by others				
I am able to trust others				
I feel appreciated for the effort I put into my work				
<b>OVERALL SCORE</b>				

## 3. Me and community

	<b>Strongly agree (15)</b>	<b>Agree (10)</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree (5)</b>	<b>Disagree (0)</b>
I want to help others				
I want to do more for the community				
I recognise the needs of people around me and those of my community				
I feel I am part of the community				
I feel responsible for what happens in my community				
I feel I can make a difference in my community				
<b>OVERALL SCORE</b>				

Indicate how applicable the following statements are for your volunteering experience on a scale from **1 to 5** (1 – not applicable to 5 – very applicable).

## “How much I have learned...”

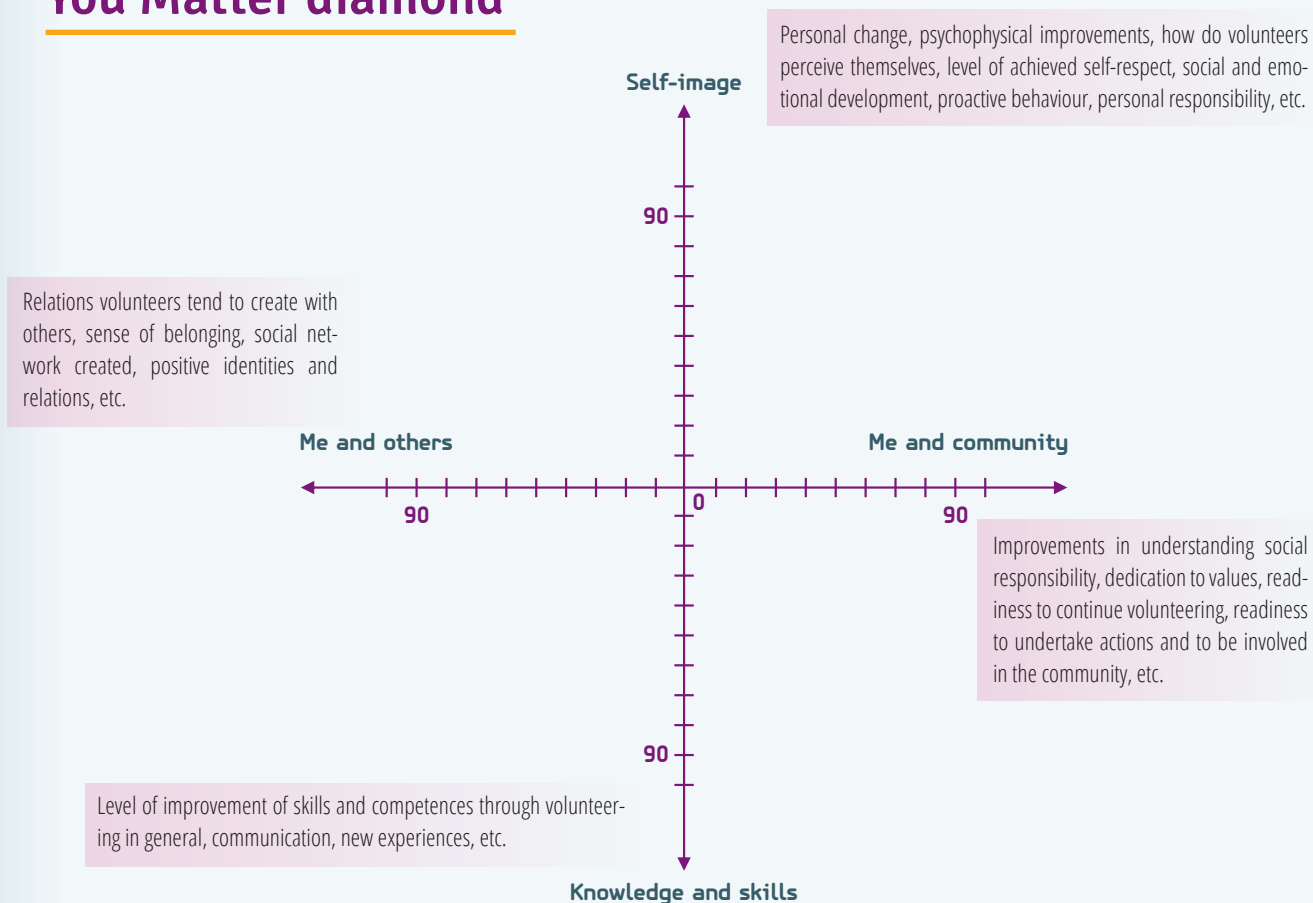
### Knowledge and skills

When considering knowledge and skills, think broadly about different skills, e. g. using language in different situations by listening, speaking, writing; understanding others; expressing your ideas, feelings, opinions; organising and managing your volunteer tasks, recognising your own learning abilities; volunteering in a team; dealing with people coming from different social and cultural background; taking risks; turning ideas into actions; to be creative and innovative; searching, collecting and analysing information; using different devices; solving problems; calculating or planning; thinking critically and logic; understanding social processes; etc.

	<b>Very applicable (15)</b>	<b>Applicable (10)</b>	<b>Neither applicable nor inapplicable (5)</b>	<b>Not applicable at all (0)</b>
I was able to use my skills and knowledge				
I was able to upgrade the skills I already had				
I developed new skills				
The things I learned have made an impact				
I had new experiences (I otherwise would not have had)				
I communicate more easily				
<b>OVERALL SCORE</b>				

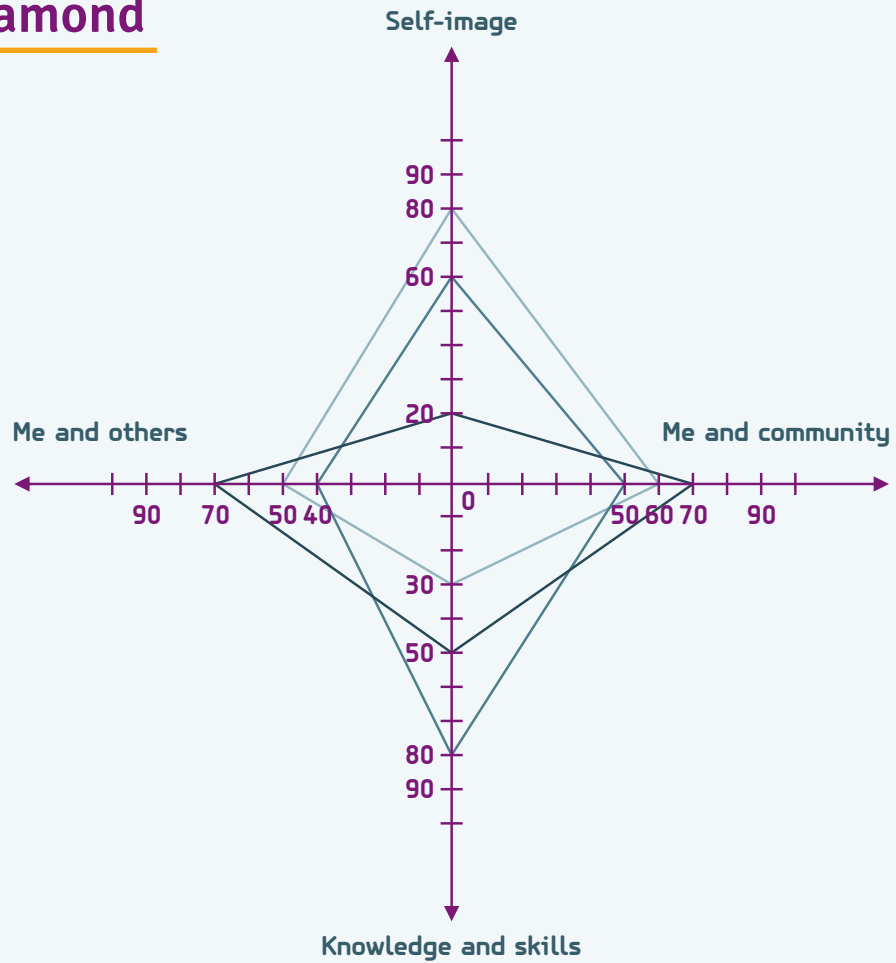
The scores are aggregated and graphically presented in the form of a diamond, obtained through a coordinating system and presenting four areas from the *You Matter* tool.

## You Matter diamond <sup>17</sup>



<sup>17</sup>The overall score in each area can vary from 0 (central) to 90 (end of coordinates) points shown in coordinating system marked with the points. Mark the scored points on each coordinate presenting the certain area and after that connect the marked places. You will get your own diamond shape (examples below) which clearly shows where were the effects of volunteering stronger or weaker.

# You Matter diamond examples



## Scoring system and presenting the results

The results can be summarised in the following areas according to the number of points scored and thus easily communicated with volunteers:

<b>0 - 30</b>	The volunteering experience may be positive but does not significantly affect personal development. Adjustments in volunteer position or performance may be considered.
<b>31 - 60</b>	The volunteering experience has positive effects on personal development and social inclusion. In order to use all potentials of volunteering on social inclusion, lower scored areas should be focused on and interventions can be made accordingly.
<b>61 - 90</b>	This volunteering experience is meaningful. The benefits of volunteering are measurable and present important value in volunteer's life. There is a reason to believe that valuable changes have happened as a result of volunteering toward better social inclusion. In this case, volunteering is significant part of one's wellbeing and a good life style choice.

## Analysing the results

The mentor and volunteer together complete the final step. The Mentor writes a short conclusion of the results (according to their joint analysis and score in each area) and next steps. It is recommended that the mentor supports the volunteer for the next steps.

### How can a mentor support volunteer in the next steps?

- proposing volunteer activities that can contribute to improvements in the areas with a lower score
- providing more personal support and encouraging volunteer in implementing his/her tasks in order to achieve higher score in certain areas
- motivate and empower the volunteer to talk about the effects of volunteering and to take next steps
- assigning a more experienced volunteer to volunteer together to better cope with the demands of volunteer engagement
- organise additional education relevant for the volunteer engagement, etc.

CONCLUSION	Suggestion: try to give conclusions for each area.  E.g. As a volunteer, I'm currently having a positive experience and learning the importance of contributing to my community, but there are still more ways that I can build on my skills and talents.
NEXT STEPS	E.g. As a volunteer I will continue to...  I will talk to my mentor about how I can improve on...  I will pick three skills to work on, they are...  Maybe I could volunteer an extra hour a week in order to improve...  I could consider some other/additional tasks to help my personal development.

Volunteer gets a "You matter" mark that serves him as a reminder of their achievements and accomplishments through volunteering and as an incentive for them to continue volunteering.



The Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth monitors voluntary work of young people and recognises it as an important part of youth participation, which in addition to gaining experience and socialisation enables active participation in decision-making, empowering the youth to impact developments in society. Furthermore, it is emblematic for volunteering that “no one is left behind”, ensuring that everybody, including the most vulnerable social groups, is integrated into society. A special mention should be given to youth work, which is based on volunteering, with one of its priorities being the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities and young people with disabilities.

We are a society of equal citizens and it is only right that we have equal opportunities in integrating and co-creating it. Youth work, organised and aimed for youth activity and for young people, in which young people through their own efforts contribute to their integration into society, means that the young people are not only users but also creators and implementers of content, further promoting social inclusion and fostering awareness of belonging and the pursuit of things for the common good, enabling each young individual to contribute to the development of the broader community. Through volunteering young people develop a sense of solidarity with people in need and tolerance of all unconventional groups of people.

Volunteering can also be a great opportunity to teach young people in many aspects, while at the same time a method of developing active citizenship. It should nonetheless be pointed out that young volunteers have many times proven themselves to be a model social group, which accepts all sorts of deviations in society, is capable of understanding all involved, of reacting quickly and of breaking stereotypes. It can be said that young volunteers represent a new, growing group of socially engaged and inclusive citizens that will soon be able to accept the responsibility of taking on very demanding tasks and also carry them out.”

*Tin Kampf*  
*Former Director of the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth*  
*Ministry of Education, Science and Sport*

## Piloting the tool

### – case studies and feedback from volunteers and their mentors

Once the tool has been designed and finalised for testing, partners from Croatia, Germany, Ireland, Denmark and Slovenia have selected 20 volunteers, young disadvantaged people, for piloting process.

Age category	Number of volunteers
15 - 20	4
20 - 25	5
25 - 30	11

Those volunteers come from different organisations from partner countries and are involved in various inclusive volunteer programmes. It is important to highlight that most of the volunteers that were involved in piloting process were long-term volunteers in the following organisations:

Slovenia	Slovenian Association of Disabled Students
	Slovene Philanthropy
Ireland	Victim Support at Court
	Special Olympics Ireland
	University College Dublin, Volunteer Programme
	Event Volunteers (Volunteer Ireland and Fingal Volunteer Centre)
Croatia	Association of children and youth with disabilities "The bell"
	Local volunteer centre "The bell"
	Association for therapy and activities with help of horses "I CAN"
	Network of associations "Zagor"
Germany	STERNENFISCHER volunteer centre: "Kieztandem project"
	Initiative CouRage gegen sexuellen Missbrauch
	Melinda Vigh
Denmark	Recycle house Bjerringbro
	Red Cross: The Children's Club for children in the age 6 - 12
	Wefood

The project team received some very valuable feedback according to which the tool was adjusted and improved in its current form, as described in the manual above.

In general, the tool was very well accepted, and many volunteers and their mentors liked it for its simplicity, usefulness, the fact that it was not time consuming.



"The tool is simple and easy to use. Everything was clear and understandable."

*Volunteer, Croatia*

"Good starting point for evaluating the volunteer experience."

*Volunteer, Slovenia*

"Simple to use and good to reflect on one-self, something I definitely don't do enough."

*Volunteer, Ireland*

"Volunteers were very positively surprised with the results. It helped them to define the potential for improvements. It's an excellent and simple tool for volunteers, not time consuming, which is important to maintain the motivation through the process."

*Mentor, Local volunteer centre "The bell", Croatia*

The tool is appreciated especially because it gives possibility to mentors and volunteers to open a dialogue about the individual statements, which then shows a clear picture of the effects volunteering has, as well as next steps and potential improvements for one's well-being.

"The results gave me a new perspective on my volunteer work."

*Volunteer, Slovenia*

"It has been great to spend my free time on something more meaningful and on doing something for others. I find myself becoming more social and better at getting in touch with others. I have learned something about myself and about my boundaries. It turned out that it is not as difficult as I thought which has given me the courage to try some more volunteer work."

*Volunteer, Denmark*

"Using the Making it Matter tool to reflect on our volunteering experience and what our initiative does for us personally was a strong experience. I understood that we need to develop such a system permanently among us. Sometimes you fall into a hole and feel helpless and question the meaning of it all, and this reminder of your impact really helps to set yourself a clear horizon."

*Volunteer, Germany*

"I can see that I have actually gotten a lot out of being a volunteer. It is a community where you can see directly what a difference you are making."

*Volunteer, Denmark*

Even though volunteers, without the help of mentor, can use the tool, one of the feedbacks stated that it was challenging to use the tool through self-evaluation process in an organisational context where there is no volunteer management or mentoring system in place. A dialogue and exchange with such a person would provide better understanding of one's development. In some other cases, where mentors were involved, their role has been recognised as very important through the whole process.

"I have always welcomed the reflections and support of my volunteer manager throughout my time as volunteer. It helped me to better understand myself, others and what volunteering gives me as a person. The Making it Matter tool adds something new and opens new perspectives on what I can achieve and how it can be better."

*Volunteer, Germany*

"In the process of implementing the tool, the role of mentor was very important. Through relaxed and friendly atmosphere and discussion, volunteers were encouraged to continue in the same directions in those areas where the scores were higher. They were also provided with guidelines on how to achieve better effects in those areas scored lower. Many volunteers were not aware of their contribution to local community through volunteering and thus were motivated by mentor to see the real value of it."

*Mentor, Association for therapy and activities with help of horses "I CAN", Croatia*

"I think the four categories and the questions that sit within them are very specific and clear from an analysis perspective but the skill of the mentor in interpreting what is being asked and how they draw that information from the volunteer is the key to the success of this analysis."

*Mentor, Ireland*

Many volunteers and their mentors who participated in the piloting phase saw the usefulness of the tool, the way it highlights the effects of volunteering on one's well-being and the impact volunteering has on social inclusion and thus suggested to make it more accessible through development of an on-line application.

"The Diamond is a great way to illustrate what the experience has been and what it could be - if it could be even better."

*Volunteer, Ireland*

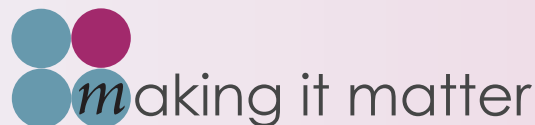
"It is a worthwhile tool for measuring impact and would be very useful to show funders the value / benefits the volunteers gain from their role within the organisation. This could go hand in hand and support other statistical analysis of the work carried out by the organisation.

*Mentor, Ireland*



# Making it matter

## Organisational level of impact



### About the tool - methods and indicators

Implementing inclusive volunteer programmes and involving disadvantaged youth as volunteers is not an easy task. There are many challenges that organisations face and it takes patience and effort invested in order to have a quality inclusive volunteer programme. Those organisations that developed these programmes witness not only the benefits for volunteers, but also for themselves.

Our *Focus Research Report* conducted prior to development of this tool has shown the most common benefits recognised by organisations:

- **The opportunity to give everyone a possibility to be a part of a social community and providing an active effort** (over 60% in every country)
- **Diversity brings the organisation value, joy and new dimensions** (over 50% in every country, specifically in Ireland and Germany with over 60%)
- **More volunteers and resources within the organisation** – equal to other volunteers (around 50% in every country)
- **New competencies, perspectives and experiences** (around 50% in all countries, except 30% of organisations in Denmark and almost 70% of organisations in Germany)
- **By including the activity's own target group as volunteers, organisations can better achieve the target group's interests and needs** (over 30% in every country)

Guided by these findings, but also with a fact that there are other similar researches, but not the tools that can help in defining the impact of volunteering on social inclusion, we wanted to explore how involving disadvantaged youth as volunteers can impact social inclusion, especially on the organisational level.

In defining the parameters for measuring the level of inclusion on organisational level, we were focused on the following:

1. **Quality of the provided service** – referring to the level of innovation (how innovative are our services), new services for beneficiaries, etc.
2. **Quality of volunteer programmes** – refers to the number of volunteers, volunteer activities, quality of activities, new activities and level of innovation, etc.)
3. **Quality of relations within the organisation** – the level of team spirit, connectedness among employees, relations with volunteers, etc.
4. **Organisational policy** – refers to the organisational documents, value statements and how inclusiveness is perceived in our organisation and organisational documents, infrastructural and technical improvements for easy access, etc.
5. **Organisation and the community** – better understanding of community needs, public image and visibility and recognition in the community.

These indicators served as basis for setting up and formulating statements that are very important part of the tool and evidence the changes and the impact volunteering has on social inclusion, on organisational level. The statements are followed by the list of possible evidences.



## Guidelines on how to use the tool

The process of measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion, for organisations involving disadvantaged youth as volunteers, has been designed as **self-evaluation and team process in your organisation**.

This process can be undertaken after a certain period of implementing inclusive volunteer programme. It can also be done retrospectively or used periodically (e.g. every 6 months) in order to follow and mark the improvements and development in certain areas.

As described above, the tool has been designed through **statements** fitting into 5 parameters mentioned previously, each area including 3 to 4 statements. In responding to the statements, organisation teams should **refer to the changes happened in their organisation since they started implementing inclusive volunteer programme**.

The team should go through all of these statements in order to get the complete result. There needs to be evidence for all statements. In the tool, you can find examples of possible evidence. Bear in mind that the listed ones are not the only relevant evidences, if your organisation has some other relevant resources that evidence the statement, feel free to write them next to the suggested ones.

Each statement is coloured in another colour, graded and each grade is followed with the certain score:



After the team agrees upon the answer to each statement, they should put the score next to the statement, according to the graded answer on the statement. There are 17 statements altogether, but coloured in different colours. The overall score can vary from 0 to maximum 340 points.

## Making it matter tool

### Making it Matter – how do inclusive volunteer programmes affect your organisation?

#### To be completed by organisation

It is recommended to do the assessment of the statements as a result of organisational dialogue rather than individual representative of the organisation. The following statements refer to your organisation, inclusive volunteer programme and the effects your volunteering programme has had on the quality of services provided, the quality of the volunteer programme, your organisation's policy, quality of relations within organisation and relations with the community.

Think about your organisation before implementing an inclusive volunteer programme and whether or not your organisation has changed. Do these changes correlate with more diversity and inclusivity in the organisation?

Name of the organisation:	
Number of disadvantaged young (aged 15 to 30) volunteers involved:	
Please select the youth groups involved as volunteers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Young people with disability</li><li>• Young people with health problems</li><li>• Young people experiencing educational difficulties</li><li>• Young people with cultural differences</li><li>• Young people facing economic obstacles</li><li>• Young people facing social obstacles</li><li>• Young people facing geographical obstacles</li></ul>
Period of implementing an inclusive volunteer programme at your organisation:	
Short description of the inclusive volunteer programme:	

Please specify the accuracy level of the following statements.

**NOTE:** There are some statements that might not refer to all organisations (e.g. statements on employees in case the organisation doesn't have employees) which you can skip then and adjust the overall result.

<p><b>Since we started with an inclusive volunteer programme. . .</b></p>		<p><b>20</b></p>
<p>Our organisation has improved the quality of existing services.</p>		
<p>Our organisation has developed new types of services for beneficiaries.</p>		
<p>Our services have become more attractive and more easily accessible</p>		
<p>Our beneficiaries are more satisfied with our services</p>		
<p>Our organisation has increased number of volunteers</p>		
<p>Our organisation has increased number of volunteers coming from disadvantaged groups.</p>		
<p>Our organisation offers more volunteering opportunities (new forms of volunteer activities and roles)</p>		
<p>Our organisation has significantly improved supervision and support systems for volunteers.</p>		
<p>Our organisation has developed written policies / documents on inclusiveness</p>		
<p>Our organisation has clearly defined goals and outcomes on inclusive volunteering.</p>		
<p>Our organisation has invested into infrastructural and technical improvements to make it physically and virtually more accessible and open for volunteers with different needs.</p>		
<p>Employees and volunteers are more willing to invest additional efforts for inclusive volunteering</p>		
<p>Employees and volunteers have a better communication</p>		
<p>Employees and volunteers have a better team spirit</p>		
<p>Our organisation has become more aware of the community needs</p>		
<p>Our organisation has become more visible in the community</p>		
<p>Our organisation has a better public image</p>		
<p><b>OVERALL SCORE</b></p>		





**Suggested evidence**

10

0

*Evaluation reports, beneficiaries' feedback*

*Organisational records, reports*

*Number and diversity of participants*

*Beneficiaries feedback, evaluation report*

*Organisational records*

*Organisational records*

*Calls for volunteers, number and variety of volunteer opportunities*

*Records on evaluation, volunteer feedback*

*Written documents*

*Written documents*

*Proof of investments, reports, photos*

*Statements form employees and volunteers, reports*

*Statements from volunteer coordinators, organisational managers, employees and volunteers*

*Statements from volunteer coordinators, organisational managers, employees and volunteers*

*Records on needs assessment, records on new activities and services, planning reports*

*Social network data, web data, media records, number of participants*

*Statements form the community, stakeholders*

AREA	SCORE
<b>Quality of the provided service</b> (4 statements)	
<b>Quality of volunteer programmes</b> (4 statements)	
<b>Organisational policy</b> (3 statements)	
<b>Quality of relations within the organisation</b> (3 statements)	
<b>Organisation and the community</b> (3 statements)	
<b>OVERALL SCORE</b>	

**Are there any other organisational effects that you recognise from implementing inclusive volunteer programmes? Please describe.**

**Can you give some examples of how organisational achievements link to inclusive volunteer programmes? What matters?**

### Scoring system and communication of the result

Once when all statements have been answered, scores should be summarised according to the colours of the statements, each representing a certain area. The overall score in each area will vary from 0 to a maximum of 80 points depending on the number of statements. The tool shows more precise results on how implemented inclusive volunteer programmes impacted social inclusion on an organisational level. At the end there is an overall score and final result.

The results can be summarized as it follows:

AREA	SCORE	EXPLANATION
<b>Quality of the provided service</b> <i>(4 statements)</i>	0 - 40	The score shows that implementing volunteer inclusive programme has some effects on the quality of the services. Lower scored statements should be considered as potential for improvement.
	41 - 80	Developing and implementing an inclusive volunteer programme was good organisational decision. The programme is producing valuable effects for the quality of organisational services.
<b>Quality of volunteer programmes</b> <i>(4 statements)</i>	0 - 40	The result indicates that inclusive volunteer approach has positive influence on the overall volunteer programme of your organisation. Lower scored statements should be considered as potential for improvement.
	41 - 80	An Inclusive volunteer programme has substantial impact on the quality of the overall volunteer programme.
<b>Organisational policy</b> <i>(3 statements)</i>	0 - 30	The inclusiveness has positively affected the organisational policy. Lower scored statements should be considered as potential for improvement.
	31 - 60	Inclusive approach has substantially influenced the overall organisational policy and culture. The organisation culture is enriched with diversity.
<b>Quality of relations within the organisation</b> <i>(3 statements)</i>	0 - 30	The result shows that inclusiveness in volunteer programme positively impacted organisational inter relations. Lower scored statements should be considered as potential for improvement.
	31 - 60	Inclusiveness and diversity have a valuable contribution to the inter-relations and cohesiveness in the organisation.
<b>Organisation and the community</b> <i>(3 statements)</i>	0 - 30	The score indicates that the organisation's position in the community is improved. An Inclusive volunteer programme has contributed to better relations in the community.
	31 - 60	Inclusiveness in involving volunteers has significantly improved the organisational credibility, accountability and integrity in the community.
<b>OVERALL SCORE</b>	0 - 170	The overall result is indicating that to a certain extent there are positive effects of inclusive volunteer programme for the quality performance of the organisation. Special attention should be brought on the lower scored areas in order to design set of interventions on inclusiveness and diversity to have higher positive impact on the organisation.
	171 - 340	Developing and implementing an inclusive volunteer programme was good organisational decisions. The programme is valuable to your organisation and the result shows evidence of significant impact on the overall organisational performance and wellbeing.

The overall result will show you the effects of your inclusive volunteer programme in general that can serve as your orientation where are you heading to and how are you performing in general. Looking closer to the results per each area can give your organisation a good sense in which areas you were better at and which are those that can be improved. The last two open questions can also contribute to it. At the end, you can write a short conclusion, connecting effects of your inclusive volunteer programme and its impact on social inclusion at the organisational level. You can also discuss some next steps in your organisation in order to achieve the full potential of inclusive volunteer programme.

CONCLUSION	<p>Suggestion: try to give conclusions for each area.</p> <p>E.g. As an organisation, we scored high in the area <i>organisation and the community</i>, which shows that we have been recognised within our community and contributed to the inclusiveness with our inclusive volunteer programme. We will continue in the same direction. At the same time, we have lower score in the <i>organisational policy</i> area and that opened a dialogue on possible improvements.</p>
NEXT STEPS	<p>E.g. As an organisation, we are committed to develop new organisational policies on...</p> <p>We could consider additional educations in the area of...or exchange of practice with some similar organisations.</p> <p>We will contact local volunteer centre for consultations and to discuss...</p> <p>We will pick three issues to work on in the following six months and then go through the tool again. Those are...</p>

The results can also be easily communicated by volunteer involving organisation towards relevant stakeholders and used for other purposes in order to show the effects and impact of your inclusive volunteer programme on social inclusion of disadvantaged youth.

Organisation gets a “*Making it matter*” mark that serves as a reminder to achievements and accomplishments through developing inclusive volunteer programme and as an incentive for its further implementation.

## Piloting the tool – case studies and feedback from volunteer involving organisations

Once the tool has been designed and finalised for testing, partners from Croatia, Germany, Denmark and Slovenia have selected 11 volunteer involving organisations developing and implementing inclusive volunteer programmes and involving disadvantaged youth as volunteers, for piloting process.

Slovenia	Slovenian Association of Disabled Students
	DIC Legebitra
Croatia	Association of children and youth with disabilities “The bell”
	Local volunteer centre “The bell”
	Association for therapy and activities with help of horses “I CAN”
	Network of associations “Zagor”
Germany	Freiwilligen-Agentur Halle-Saalkreis e.V.
	Kein Abseits e.V.
Ireland	Event Volunteers (Volunteer Ireland and Fingal Volunteer Centre)
Denmark	Body and Mind
	Club on Side
	Muhabet Aarhus

Organisations that were involved in the piloting phase are mostly organisations with long experience in developing and implementing inclusive volunteer programmes and managing from 5 up to even 150 volunteers. Volunteers that those organisations are involving come from different disadvantaged youth groups, mostly facing social obstacles, young people with disability, health problems, experiencing educational difficulties, cultural differences or economic obstacles.

The project team received some very valuable feedback according to which the tool was adjusted and improved in its current form, as described in the manual above.

In general, the tool was perceived positive due to its simplicity and the fact that it was not time consuming.

“It was clear, understandable and simple. The team considers the results were very positive, especially since during the process the tool enabled to identify the areas for improvements. It is a good tool for evaluating the work of organisation.”

Association of children and youth with disabilities “The bell”

*Local volunteer centre “The bell”, Croatia*

“It is a simple tool, yet provides also a lot of thought around policy and practice as well as evidence for supporting the statements.”

*Slovenian Association of Disabled Students*

However, the most common feedback and appreciation of the tool comes from the possibilities it provides to employees for opening dialogue on the quality of their programme and services and reconsidering possible improvements.

“The results made our organisation feel secure in those areas where we scored high, while giving us additional incentive to improve those areas where the scores were lower. The tool is understandable and easy to use.”

*Association for therapy and activities with help of horses “I CAN”*

“It was lauded that the tool creates a clear and comprehensive score which leaves enough space and occasion for discussion and interpretation. Analysing the statements and results was seen as very helpful to understand what the establishment of inclusive volunteer programmes do to the organisation and how they change it. This dimension was not considered (or not with all the indicated elements) in the conception and implementation of the programmes.”

*Freiwilligen-Agentur Halle-Saalkreis e.V.*

“Testing this *Making it Matter* tool was eye-opening for us and led to a fruitful discussion about the quality of our programmes and their effects on how we organise ourselves.”

*Kein Abseits e.V.*

Some organisations suggested to make the tool more accessible through development of an on-line application.

“A sense of belonging is a vital concept for development and preservation of mental health, communities and society as a whole (Hagerty, 1992) thus it is pivotal to create an enabling environment for everyone to feel safe, respected and connected with one’s community.

An Inclusive community is therefore a concept which promotes equal treatment and opportunity of each and every individual regardless of one’s differences. In an inclusive community its every member has the right to participate in a decision-making process and one’s uniqueness is recognized as an asset that enriches the whole community with creativity and innovation. As a result, the goal of an inclusive community is to find means to facilitate diversity and channel them into a productive quality. In order to build an inclusive community, it is important to work on eradication of discrimination via various educational programs, awareness rising campaigns and positive role models promotion. Moreover, a community wishing to be inclusive should not focus solely on individual resilience but also invest its resources into creating quality public policies aimed towards eliminating causing factors of well-being infringements. Hence, it is essential to foster empathy and humility among community members, and concentrate on elimination of poverty, unemployment, lack of affordable and safe housing and discrimination. By doing so, not only the existential needs of all community members would be met, but they would also feel appreciated and accepted. Inclusive communities should also be reflexive and continuously re-evaluating their priorities to respond to societal changes. Furthermore, effective integration mechanisms of newcomers should be in place and immigrants should be seen as a potential, rather than a problem thus it is important to work with established community members and novices.

To sum up, inclusive communities respect and value differences while assuring societal, economic and cultural development. Even though they might seem as utopia at first, empirical examples contradict this notion and demonstrate multiple benefits both for inclusive communities and its members (Mani, 2005).”

*Marko Kovačić,*

*Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, Croatia*

## Measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion – community level

For those organisations, such as volunteer centres acting as resource community organisations the project team recommends taking on the task of measuring the impact of volunteering on social inclusion on the level of the whole community.

This level and this set of indicators present an additional level of impact measurement and mostly refer to organisations with appropriate resources and those interested in measuring the impact on the community level. The findings of such a comprehensive assessment should encourage inclusiveness in the community and work on increasing the number of inclusive volunteer programmes.

When measuring the impact of volunteering on the community level, organisation should think of comprehensive approach and identify the key stakeholders:

- members of the close living environment of disadvantaged youth involved as volunteers (e.g. families, welfare institutions, educational institutions, etc.);
- local decision and policy makers;
- organisations and institutions dealing with the topic of social inclusion and those developing inclusive volunteer programmes (staff and Volunteer Managers);
- feedback from beneficiaries of volunteer services, etc.

In order to define concrete results and to measure the level of volunteering impact in the community, different methods and approaches can be used with different stakeholders:

1. **Interviews** – done with volunteers / individuals, Volunteer Managers or representatives of organisations, relevant stakeholders, etc.
2. **Questionnaire** – that can be designed for various groups of stakeholders, assessing the situation prior to and after implementation of inclusive volunteer programmes and involvement of volunteers.
3. **Focus groups** – with decision and policy – makers and representatives of organisations and institutions dealing with social inclusion and implementing inclusive volunteer programmes.
4. **Case studies** – e.g. short descriptions of piloting organisations.

The conclusion results from volunteers and volunteer involving organisations can be summarised from case studies implemented. In that sense, the overall picture of improved well-being on individual and organisational level will be presented.

Those findings are important as first steps in measuring the impact of volunteering on the community level and they will serve as a basis for organising focus groups with other relevant stakeholders and setting indicators to formulate topics and questions for discussion:

- The level of satisfaction of the service users with the quality of provided services;
- The number of volunteers and inclusive volunteer programmes developed;
- increased personal development marked through the tool that has some positive effects in the community well-being (relations, contacts, trust in the community, feeling of belonging to the community, etc.);

- new and innovative opportunities for disadvantaged youth in the community (new specialised organisations developed and established, networking opportunities in the community, etc.)
- local policy improvements or changes (adopted local policy papers, strategies, plans, etc. promoting, recognising and supporting volunteering and inclusive volunteer programmes)

From the indicators named above, questions can be formulated and discussed through focus groups or interviews in order to give a comprehensive overview of the impact of volunteering on social inclusion. It can take a substantial amount of resources, energy and time invested to measure the impact of volunteering on social inclusion but in that way the whole community can contribute from the process while having the clear picture of the importance and social value of volunteering and directing future community actions towards improving social inclusion.

“Efforts to increase diversity in volunteer communities are important for many reasons. It is well known that taking part in volunteer activities has many positive effects, including increased personal and professional growth. It is, therefore, important that everyone who wishes to participate has the opportunity to do so. Focusing on diversity in recruitment can also open many doors for NGOs, both in terms of finding more potential volunteers and in terms of the scope of the organisation. New volunteers bring new perspectives and skills with them, which can create opportunities to take on projects that the current volunteers are not interested in or qualified for.

Increased diversity in the volunteering can also lead to increased social cohesion in a more general sense because spaces are created where people can meet and be united for a common goal, rather than focusing on differences of opinion, ability, or ethnicity. This means that prejudices are challenged, and attitudes are changed.

Having varied perspectives in an organisation’s volunteer community can also mean that the NGO becomes better equipped to meet the needs of its members and beneficiaries. Many of the strategies that NGOs can utilise to strengthen their commitment to diversity will strengthen the entire volunteer community and the organisation as a whole. For example, it is not only volunteers with mental health challenges who benefit from a safe and welcoming work environment – this benefits everyone.

Navigating civil society can be a challenge for some, so actively making an effort to introduce volunteer activities to different social groups can mean that more people are motivated to participate. Volunteer centres are, thus, one step closer to meeting their goal of access for all, and local organisations can solve a prevalent problem: how to attract new volunteers.”

*Thorbjørn Lautrop Nielsen, Manager  
Volunteercenter Vesterbro Copenhagen*



## Communicating the results of measuring the impact of volunteering

Communicating the results of a volunteering impact assessment, gives the opportunity to the wider community and different stakeholders to have a better understanding of the changes that organisation is making on individual, organisational and community level.

Reasons for communicating the results of impact measurement include:

- it increases visibility of the organisation in the community and proves the quality work of the organisation;
- it motivates volunteers for the engagement in organisation and also obtains motivation of existing volunteers;
- the results can also motivate other staff members to be committed to further development of inclusive volunteer programme;
- it can attract new beneficiaries and create space for developing new services;
- it shows effectiveness and concrete results of your inclusive volunteer programme and services to donors.

Efficient communication of the impact assessment results is vital not just, for better understanding of organisational work and achieved results, but based on those results organisation creates platform for attracting different stakeholders, volunteers and potential beneficiaries as well.

To whom communicate the results of measuring the impact of volunteering:

- **existing volunteers** to show the change that happened, and the difference made through their involvement, but also improvements in their personal lives and well-being;
- **potential volunteers** to show the meaning and effects of an inclusive volunteer programme and to provide space for their personal development;
- **beneficiaries** of your services to show the value of volunteering;
- **internal staff** to show the outcomes and effects of their work and commitment to the inclusive volunteer programme;
- **other organisations and institutions** in the community to show the organisation's contribution in the field of social inclusion and to provide example of good practice;
- **decision-makers and policymakers** to show the importance of investing relevant resources in the field of impact measurement and social inclusion.
- **donors** to show the effectiveness and quality of the organisation's work.

When communicating the results of an impact assessment, bear in mind the target group, the aim of the communicating the results, the context you are communicating in and types of data to be presented. Depending on these factors, you can choose different ways, strategies and tools of communicating the results of impact measurement:

- focused presentations;
- leaflets / posters / banners;
- Piktochart / infographics;
- mailing list of relevant stakeholders;
- summaries on web site and social media pages;
- reports;
- video presentations,
- personal stories, etc.

## About partners



**VOLONTERSKI** centar Osijek

### Volunteer Centre Osijek, Croatia

Volunteer Centre Osijek (VCOS) was established in 2006 to support an open, democratic society based on activism, solidarity, cohesion and mutual trust. The mission is to inspire and support active participation of citizens, development of civil society and volunteerism.

VCOS works on strengthening active citizenship, civil society, volunteerism, social inclusion and integration by initiating and organising diverse activities and by using different methodologies in local communities, such as: promotion of democratic and EU values; direct support of sustainable infrastructure development; mobilisation of community through capacity-building of active individuals, initiatives and organisations; development and implementation of education for civic involvement; supporting empowerment and social inclusion of excluded groups; supporting integration of migrants / refugees; advocacy in order to influence public policy relevant for civil society; enhancement of networking and cooperation among different stakeholders based on dialogue and mutual trust; publishing and researching etc.

The work of VCOS is based on the principles of building and nurturing dialogue and trust with different stakeholders, merging different resources from the community in strengthening social capital, transferring knowledge and skills to the community, and creating activities based on community needs. Always, VCOS strives to be innovative in its action, to be a promoter of a positive change within community, and to create an environment and opportunities for lifelong learning and personal growth and development.

VCOS is one of the founders and an active member of the Croatian Volunteer Development Centre<sup>18</sup> (*previous name: Croatian Volunteer Centres Network*), the key national organisation in the process of volunteerism development in Croatia. VCOS is also a member of the Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) and EUCLID, the European network to empower civil society & social enterprise, Croatian youth network (MMH) and the Regional platform of civil society organisation MOTUS.

Web site: <http://vcos.hr/english>

<sup>18</sup> CVDC web site: <http://www.hcrv.hr/>



## Volunteer Centre and Self-Help Denmark (FriSe), Denmark

FriSe is a national Volunteer Centre with 62 local volunteer centres and 13 self-help organisations as members. FriSe is independent of government, party political and religious interests and is dedicated to the development of civil society and volunteerism in Denmark. FriSe envisions a strong and diverse civil society, where everyone has the opportunity to make a voluntary effort and to get help and support in doing so. FriSe works to strengthen the local infrastructure and to promote and support volunteering through:

Capacity building and consultancy to already existing volunteer centres and help to establish new volunteer centres around the country

Partnerships and networking with key stakeholders across all sectors

Visibility & dissemination of social volunteer work

Interest safeguarding & advocacy

Amongst other things, FriSe works for an inclusive and responsible community and has a special focus on increasing the level of voluntary work and has, in the last years particularly, focused on inclusion and diverse recruitment in relation to different target groups, such as ethnic minorities and physically and mentally disabled individuals. FriSe has been involved in a national project focusing on social inclusion in voluntary work among ethnic minorities and is now engaged in an effort for newly arrived refugees, many of whom are young people.

Furthermore, FriSe run the national online database Frivilligjob.dk and Volunteering.dk – two databases for volunteers to find volunteer opportunities amongst the many different organisations in Denmark. In 2017 there were nearly 924,907,000 million visitors on Frivilligjob.dk and nearly 16,000 sent applications to one of the many organisations using the site to recruit volunteers.

FriSe runs different projects in relation to self-help or support groups towards specific target groups such as adults and children with ADHD or men in vulnerable situations in the form of cohabitation break, unemployment and stress.

Web site: [www.frise.dk](http://www.frise.dk)



## Slovene Philanthropy, Slovenia

Slovene Philanthropy, an association for the promotion of voluntary work, is a **humanitarian organisation** operating in the public interest since 1992. **The organisation's programmes aim at increasing the quality of life in the community as well as advocacy for the socially disadvantaged.** The central activity of Slovene Philanthropy is the promotion of volunteering. The core belief of the organisation is that through volunteering we can all contribute to a better and more tolerant society, based on the respect of all people regardless of their personal or living circumstances. Slovene Philanthropy offers trainings for volunteers, mentors and organisers of volunteering activities.

The work of the organisation is focused on informing, advocating, networking and implementing programmes in areas where national institutions are not yet active or not active enough, but have room for great improvement through additional - voluntary - people power. This work includes aid to refugees, children and young migrants, aid to the homeless and other persons lacking health insurance in accessing healthcare services, advocacy of migrant worker rights, and the promotion of inter-generational cooperation. At the field of migration, Slovene Philanthropy leads many different activities on a voluntary and professional level, especially for children, unaccompanied minors, asylum seekers and refugees.

Web site: <https://www.filantropija.org/en/>



## Bundesnetzwerk Bürgerschaftliches Engagement (BBE), Germany

The National Network for Civil Society (BBE) is a "tri-sectoral" network linking associations from the Third Sector, business/work-life and federal/community institutions. It was founded out of an initiative of the National Council of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV 2001) on 5th June 2002. BBE meanwhile consists of 265 member organisations including the Churches, unions, corporations, foundations and governmental institutions as well as the full scope of the German civil society associations on a national level (with many of them being sectoral umbrella organisations).

The aim of the network is to strengthen civil society and civic engagement. The key objective is the improvement of the general legal, organisational and institutional conditions for volunteering and civic participation. BBE strives to encourage and support concrete projects for actual practice in civil society, as well as to raise and activate political awareness.

On a European level the BBE is actively involved within the European Volunteer Centre (CEV) and the European Network of National Civil Society Associations (ENNA).

Web site: <http://www.b-b-e.de/bbe-english/>



## Volunteer Ireland, Ireland

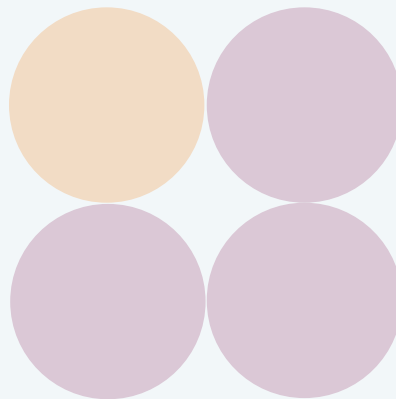
Volunteer Ireland is the national volunteer development agency and a support body for all local Volunteer Centres and Volunteer Information Services in Ireland. Volunteer Ireland supports 21 Volunteer Centres and 8 Volunteer Information Services across Ireland.

Volunteer Ireland's vision is people connected to and participating in their communities to build a better Irish society. To deliver this vision, Volunteer Ireland has set the following three external strategic aims to increase awareness and quality and access to volunteering.

Volunteer Ireland provides support to volunteer-involving organisations and volunteers across Ireland. The support is provided nationally through I-VOL ([www.ivol.ie](http://www.ivol.ie)), the national database of volunteer opportunities to people who are interested in volunteering around the country. A network of Volunteer Centres and Volunteer Information services are affiliated to Volunteer Ireland and work with county-based regional and local volunteer-involving organisations and volunteers around the country. Volunteer Ireland develops and supports best practice in volunteering and Volunteer Centres, including the evaluation of Volunteer Centres according to a quality standard framework. Volunteer Ireland manages the Quality Standards for Volunteer Centres and the Investing in Volunteers Quality Mark for volunteer-involving organisations.

Volunteer Ireland is a founding member of the Governance Code working group, which has developed a tool to help charities in Ireland improve their governance. Volunteer Ireland is a member of IAVE, the International Association of Volunteer Effort and CEV, The Centre for European Volunteering.

Web site: <http://www.volunteer.ie/>





## Centre for European Volunteering (CEV), Belgium

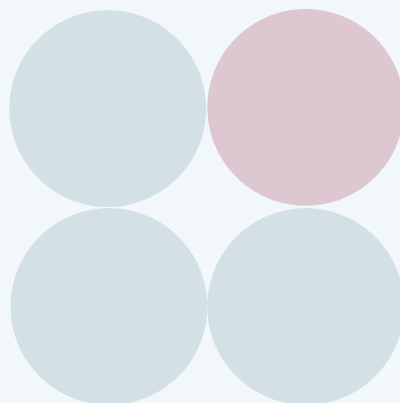
The Centre for European Volunteering (CEV) is the European network of over 60 members from all 28 EU countries. Associate members are volunteer-involving organisations or organisations that promote and develop volunteering in a specialised field or a specific type of volunteering as well as volunteer support agencies. Those organisations act on a local, regional, national, EU, and international level.

Through the network, organisations work together to promote and support volunteering through advocacy, knowledge sharing and capacity building and training. In this way, organisations reach out to the many thousands of volunteers and volunteer organisations who see volunteer centres as a source of support bringing the European dimension to their work.

CEV channels the collective priorities and concerns of its member organisations to the institutions of the European Union and the Council of Europe. Together with other European networks active in volunteering, CEV exchanges policy, practice and information in order to ensure effective and coherent follow up to European Year of Volunteering 2011 and ensure its legacy through the implementation of the Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe (PAVE) and the follow-up "Helping Hands – Hope for Europe" report.

CEV's vision is a Europe in which volunteering is central in building a cohesive and inclusive society based on solidarity and active citizenship. The mission is to contribute to the creation of an enabling political, social and economic environment in Europe where the full potential of volunteering can be realised.

Web site: <https://www.europeanvolunteercentre.org/>



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