

Strategic Partnership for Adult Education
“Ways to enhance active aging through volunteering –
WEActiveVol”
ERASMUS+ Programme
Project number 2016-1-PL01-KA204-026166

Project meeting in France
21-22 February 2017

Overview of legal frameworks and statistic data regarding
volunteering in Poland

Volunteering in Poland

- Definition of volunteering
- Legal Framework – general characteristic
- National recommendations promoting/supporting senior volunteering
- Statistic data on volunteering

Official definition of volunteer defined by law:

“a person who voluntarily, and with no remuneration provides services based on regulations specified in the law”

Article 2.3 of the Act on Public Benefit Activity and Voluntarism (2003, with further amendments 2010)

Other definitions are also used in Poland:

The Volunteer Centres Network

A volunteer is “ a person who voluntarily and without compensation provides benefits for organizations, institutions, and individuals beyond family and friendship ties”

The Klon/Jawor Association

Volunteering is “devoting one’s time to unpaid social activity done of one’s own free will for non-governmental organizations, religious and social movements”

Central Statistical Office

A volunteer is “an individual who voluntarily and without remuneration devotes time to provide services or produce goods for organisations, institutions, individuals, community or natural environment”.

Legal Framework – general characteristic

- The issue of volunteering is regulated by **the Act of 23 April on Public Benefit and Volunteer Work** (2003, with further amendments 2010), Section III Volunteer Work.

- The Act addresses **several key issues from NGO perspectives**
 - defines the status of “public benefit work and organizations”;
 - introduces 1% mechanism which gives to every citizen a possibility to donate 1% of its income tax to a selected NGO;
 - defines rules and responsibilities of Public Benefit Activity Councils;
 - provides a procedural framework and rules for cooperation for NGO cooperation with public authorities

Legal Framework – general characteristic

Legal framework for individual volunteers

- Voluntary activities can be performed on behalf of the following beneficiaries:
 - ❑ **NGOs** whose statutory goals include the provision of public benefic activities (wide range of areas, ranging from social care to the protection of consumer rights);
 - ❑ **public authorities;**
 - ❑ **organizations controlled or supervised by public authorities.**In all cases - the exception of business activity applies.
- The person undertaking volunteering has to be **duly qualified** and **meet the requirements** for the type and scope of services provided.
- The scope, manner and time of provision of services by volunteers should be specified in an **agreement concluded with the beneficiary.**

Legal Framework – general characteristic

Legal framework for individual volunteers

- Upon the demand of the volunteer, the beneficiary is obliged to issue a **written confirmation and opinion** on benefits provided.
- The **non-negotiable entitlements** of a volunteer include: right to information on health and safety risks connected with the provided services; safe and hygienic conditions of services provision; reimbursement of travel expenses and allowances; casualty insurance.
- The beneficiary may also cover **other costs** (costs of trainings, general health insurance, third party insurance in relation to the provided services).

The regulations concerning volunteer work are independent of the Labour Law regulations (civil law principle shall apply).

National recommendations promoting/supporting senior volunteering

On 24 December 2013 the government adopted the **so-called “senior package.”**

➤ Long-term Senior Policy in Poland for years 2014-2020:

- set of necessary policy actions in the senior policy in Poland, which is addressed to a wide audience (society, public authorities at all levels, the private sector and non-government and social partners);
- key areas for action in the senior policy are: health and independence; professional activity; educational activity, social and cultural activities; silver economy and intergenerational relations;
- one of the overall objective: developing and supporting social activity of older people (including civic engagement and volunteering).

National recommendations promoting/supporting senior volunteering

- Government Programme for Social Participation of Senior Citizens for 2014-2020 (ASOS):
 - ❑ The main goal of the Programme is improvement of the current situation of senior citizens by social participation.
 - ❑ Projects can be performed in the four priority areas as follows: Priority I Education of older citizens, **Priority II Social participation promoting integration within senior generation and between generations (Action 1: Social activity of seniors, including volunteering, Action 4: Building social networks based on intergenerational volunteering)**, Priority III Social participation of older citizens, Priority IV Social services for older citizens.
 - ❑ Budget: 40 mln PLN per year (around 9 mln EUR per year).
 - ❑ The subsidies are offered to non-governmental organizations, Universities of Third Age, senior clubs, senior branch organizations etc.

Statistic data

- There is no official and regular data collection regarding the involvement in volunteering within the Polish society.
- The research on the organization of the third sector and social life are conducted by the voluntary sector itself, by the Public Opinion Research Centre (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej CBOS) or by the Central Statistic Office (Główny Urząd Statystyczny GUS).

Social Diagnosis 2015, Conditions and quality of life of Poles

- In 2015 unpaid work or services for persons outside the family or for a social organization was performed by **27%** of respondents. In 2013, there was a little bit less than **25,6%** of respondents.

Klon/Jawor Association, Social activity of Poles, Report on research from 2013

- ❑ According to data from 2013, around **18%** of Polish adults carried out voluntary activities through NGOs, while **27%** of Poles undertook activities for local community or people outside own household.

- ❑ Formal volunteering through organizations: more popular among young people up to 26 years old (**21%**) than among people aged over 50 – **15%**; usually people with higher education (**30%** of volunteers); inhabitants of villages/small towns (**20%** of volunteers).

- ❑ Informal volunteering: **41%** of the surveyed people with higher education; women are more often involved than men.

Central Statistical Office of Poland

Volunteering through organizations and other types of unpaid work outside own household, Report on research from 2011

- ❑ Volunteering rate in Poland – around **30%**, includes direct volunteering (which dominates; unpaid work directly to family outside own household, to friends, acquaintances, strangers, community, natural environment) – **26%**, and **10%** of organization-based volunteering.
- ❑ Organizational volunteering, profile of volunteer: completed higher education, young (15-24 year old), students or working professionals, residents of the biggest cities, as well as men.
- ❑ Direct unpaid work more often involves people aged 55-64 years (**36%** of them), self-employed (**30%**), hired workers (**29%**), persons with higher education (**29%**) and women (**27%**).

Thank you for attention

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