

# **Voluntary Work with Refugees**

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## **Handbook**

### **1. Introduction**

Many organisations, particularly in the non-governmental sector, welcome volunteers who are willing to donate their time and skills. Organisations working

on behalf of refugees and asylum seekers tend to be quite overworked and understaffed and benefit greatly from voluntary work. Indeed, there are some groups that are completely run by volunteers at a grassroots level. Volunteers can offer valuable assistance in many ways. However without proper supervision and an efficient organisational structure, the experience for both the volunteer and the organisation can be unsatisfactory rather than rewarding and productive.

The objective of this information guide is to provide practical guidelines and information with regard to voluntary work for refugees, to both prospective and current volunteers, including organisations intending to recruit volunteers. It is the final product of a UNITED conference held in Zittau, Germany entitled "Goodwill Hunting - Voluntary Work in Support of Refugees" in February 2000. It brought together volunteers and employees from refugee organisations and was pan European in its focus.

## **2. The Volunteer - What Can You Expect to Gain from Volunteering?**

Depending on the length of your volunteer experience and the work you carry out you can gain practical skills and further your own personal development.

### **2.1 Practical Skills**

\* With most voluntary work there is some degree of administrative work to undertake. You can gain an understanding of how an office operates and learn and practice your reception, telephone and computer skills.

\* You will have a chance to improve your knowledge of the specific field of working with refugees. Depending on the work you do and the training the organisation offers you, you can learn about legal and policy aspects, human rights in general, how to lobby the authorities or how to run campaigns.

\* Some organisations may offer extra training in language skills or first aid.

\* You will gain an insight into the day-to-day running of an organisation or group.

### **2.2 Personal Development:**

\* General voluntary work is a good introduction to a working environment. If you have just finished school, or if you are doing a placement with an organisation as part of your studies, it is a good way to find out more about the nature of refugee work and whether you feel you are suitable for it long-term. There are always new skills to be learnt when working in a new environment with different people.

\* In some cases you may have an opportunity to work in an intercultural team with people from various backgrounds and cultures. If you are responsible for welcoming clients or are at reception it is important to develop certain communicative skills.

\* You can learn to work independently and take responsibility for certain tasks. If the organisation offers good supervisory support this will not be an overwhelming experience.

\* On reflection you will be able to evaluate your personal strengths and weaknesses and where there may be room for improvement.

\* If you are planning to continue working in this area you can develop valuable links and networks with similar organisations. The NGO community will have an opportunity to get to know you and your work. In essence you will develop a profile within the sector.

\* If you are working in a foreign country you will not only learn within the organisation, you will also have the opportunity to get to know a foreign country, its culture and people. You can improve your foreign language skills and make friends abroad.

### **3. The Organisation: Why Should we Have Volunteers?**

Let's be honest. With the exception of a lucky few most organisations working with refugees are poorly funded and overworked. There always seem to be many priorities that can not be forgotten about.

Volunteers, if selected according to the organisation's needs, can offer valuable assistance in both relieving the existing workload as well as taking on additional tasks, that otherwise may not be carried out.

Many organisations have well-managed programmes that exist entirely through the voluntary work of dedicated individuals. In order to establish a well co-ordinated and organised volunteer programme, a considerable amount of planning is required. In some countries it may be more difficult to find volunteers wanting to work with refugees and to establish a constant pool of available individuals. However in this case several organisations have established links with other countries and have developed programmes for foreign volunteers.

\* As with all institutions refugee organisations can also benefit from "new blood". New people bring new skills, ideas, enthusiasm and also a critical perspective to an organisation, that if taken on board can be used to improve existing methods or ways of working. Obviously it is important that an organisation commits to being receptive to any comments from volunteers.

\* When working with volunteers, who have previous experience of a similar type of work, either in another organisation or in another country, the mutual benefits can be especially valuable. The volunteer will probably have ideas and suggestions based on his or her past work. The idea of exchange programmes between refugee organisations of different countries is can be extremely beneficial to both the organisations and the individuals themselves i.e. ECRE's Twinning Project (see ECRE's website listed below).

\* Volunteers from the local community can be particularly valuable, in the sense that they not only assist an organisation in its day to day work, but they can also contribute to good relations and understanding between the local and the refugee communities. This is certainly the case where you have small communities in which refugees have been settled. A mutually supportive relationship needs to be encouraged. Experience shows that when local people are involved in the reception and settlement of refugees, incidences of racism and racist violence can be reduced. If we assume that many peoples' prejudice is based on ignorance one way to change peoples' views is through contact. In the absence of most governments' commitment to set up community structures between locals and refugees, non-governmental organisations can play a vital role in improving the situation. Existing groups, such as church or youth groups, can be targeted specifically when recruiting volunteers. However it must be clear that this can often be particularly difficult in communities where racism is already prevalent. It is important that volunteers can benefit from volunteering and are not expected to help for the sake of "being a better person".

#### **4. What is Important When Working With Volunteers?**

##### **4.1 For Organisations**

If an organisation wants to be seen to value and take their volunteers seriously, as well as wanting to actually gain from the volunteer's skills certain steps should be taken in order to achieve this.

\* First and foremost it is important to realise that volunteers should not be chosen on an ad hoc basis without any planning involved. Often volunteers find themselves having been accepted and then being asked what they think they could do. This places an unfair burden on the volunteer, as it is impossible for someone to know immediately what is required and what would work within an organisation or solidarity group. This is not to say that when volunteers have had a chance to get to know the organisation's work in time that they might have ideas for projects that they could carry out. It is also not fair to expect a volunteer to spend his or her day just photocopying or filing. Although this may be fine for a certain period and is probably very helpful to the organisation's staff, you may find that your volunteer leaves early. Hence, job descriptions should be designed and responsibilities negotiated.

\* Before you start recruiting volunteers there must be a clear decision from individuals co-ordinating the group or organisation to want to work with volunteers. In the long run it will not be particularly fruitful if at a lower level volunteers are taken on board when there is no commitment on behalf of the organisation to establish proper structures and procedures for dealing with volunteers.

\* Recruitment can be achieved through newsletters, the web, the radio, TV, educational establishments and community groups.

\* If you find that you have more volunteer applications than places, a record of applicants can always be kept. Alternatively, you can recommend individuals to other organisations.

\* In the case of organisations, the management staff should also be clear of the consequences of taking on volunteers as this means additional work in terms of recruiting, training, co-ordination and supervision.

\* Once this decision has been taken, specific areas in which volunteers can work should be identified. At the same time skills required to fulfil these tasks should be listed and a job description drafted. At a later stage it will make it easier to match the individual's skills and talents with the required jobs.

\* It should also be established how many volunteers at any one time an organisation or solidarity group could cope with. Physically there may only be space for a limited number of people, so priorities according to the importance of different tasks will have to be set. There may be times that are more suitable to take on volunteers than others. If the summer months are busier than in winter there will probably be a greater demand for additional help. Furthermore organisations should be clear about how long they wish volunteers to work with them. This will obviously vary depending on the nature of the work. If a piece of work is set, such as research, the timeframe will be limited, whereas if the work is of an ongoing nature a more long-term volunteer commitment will be required.

\* There must be clear decisions about who will be responsible for the volunteer/s; there may be an existing staff member or group member who is able to increase their load. However, the organisation should explore the possibility of appointing a volunteer co-ordinator. In order to work in a serious and committed manner there have to be persons responsible for:

(a) The selection and interviewing of possible volunteers (including checking up on references!)

(b) The co-ordination of several volunteers (this will obviously depend on numbers)

(c) The introduction to the organisation and the volunteers' tasks

(d) The proper supervisory support and feedback for volunteers - proper supervision (covering technical, practical and personal factors) of the volunteer is essential and the responsibility of the volunteer co-ordinator.

(e) The resolving of grievances or complaints

\* Proper supervision (covering technical, practical and personal elements) of the volunteer is essential and is the responsibility of the volunteer co-ordinator.

If the above procedures are in place for paid employees or group members, this should not result in too much additional work for the organisation.

\* The organisation should be clear about what kind of training they can offer the volunteer. At least there should be an introductory training session in order to familiarise the volunteers with the organisation's work, staff, management structures and working methods. If you are working with foreign volunteers an initial training should involve cultural awareness and an introduction to the historical and political background of the country. In some cases language training will also be required.

\* Decide beforehand whether you can cover volunteers' expenses, such as travel fares and lunches or a small amount of pocket money. It is important that the volunteer knows whether he or she can claim these expenses and if so how to go about it.

\* Organisations should consider taking on volunteers from a wide pool of people such as refugees themselves, older people, people with disabilities, lesbians, transgendered people, gays bisexuals or people from materially disadvantaged backgrounds. A truly far-reaching and inclusive organisation will consist of a rich and varied team.

\* Finally, to once again prove your commitment to the volunteer, it is a good idea to have a beginner's starter pack which includes a contract between the volunteer and the organisation (please see chapter 5 for details).

#### **4.2 For Volunteers**

\* If you are not yet sure which organisation you would like to work with, it is advisable to think about what you want to gain from your volunteer experience. Do you wish to gain knowledge in a specific area? Do you want to improve your employment prospects by practising your computer and administrative skills? Do you want to travel and learn more about different cultures and countries? Do you want to give your time to working for social justice for marginalised? Your choice of organisation will depend on the kind of voluntary work you wish to engage in. You should also think about what you could offer, how do your skills match the organisation's profile and work?

\* When looking for an organisation try to find out as much as possible about what kind of work they do. Is it a big or small organisation? Do they have a volunteer programme? Is it completely run by volunteers? It is especially important to find out beforehand what kind of voluntary work you will be doing. It is possible that you find your voluntary work to be extremely boring.

\* Before taking up an offer ensure you are clear about your duties and your rights. (Please see chapter 5).

\* In refugee work it is vital that you maintain client confidentiality and the confidentiality of the organisation and at all times. There have been many incidents where attempts have been made to infiltrate refugee organisations by

information gatherers from oppressive regimes wishing to locate individuals who have fled. It must be stated however that maintaining confidentiality is a must in all sectors.

\* Time keeping is crucial. If a volunteer does not arrive at the organisation when they are supposed to, it will be decided that they are not dependable or responsible. If you are having difficulty with time management, new terms should be negotiated.

\* Think about how long you want to volunteer for and whether the organisation also wants someone for the same length of time. Find out how many hours you are expected to work and whether you will work in the evenings or at weekends.

\* Is the organisation offering you an introductory or even ongoing training? This is an additional benefit from doing voluntary work. Many organisations send their volunteers and employees to training seminars and workshops.

\* Will you have a personal supervisor, to whom you can go with any questions, comments or complaints? If you are working with marginalised groups, such as refugees, it can often help to have someone with whom you can regularly talk about your experiences and feelings. How often will your supervisor be available? If you are doing your voluntary work as part of your studies, your supervisor might have to write a report about you and also accompany you through the different stages of your placement.

\* Find out whether you have to pay for your expenses, such as travel costs and lunches. Some organisations have small amounts of money for these extra costs.

\* If you are going to go abroad to do voluntary work, it is advisable to find out about the city, town or village you are going to. You should also consider the safety of the place you will be living and working in. Can you go out alone at night or even during the day? In several cases volunteers have found themselves in risky situations because they were not aware of the dangers. You should also be aware of cultural differences that might affect you. Can women wear short skirts without being harassed? Can you go into a bar on your own? Most organisations that have experience with foreign volunteers include this kind of information either in their information packs or in their initial training.

\* When going abroad make sure you either have somewhere to stay, you have directions and know how to get to your final destination, or have enough money to pay for temporary accommodation. Some organisations organise group accommodation. Be aware that this accommodation can be very basic and you could be sharing with quite a number of people.

## **5. Duties and Rights of Volunteers and Organisations**

Before taking on volunteers or before volunteering both parties should be clear about their rights, obligations and duties. It can be very useful to draw up a contract in which they are all laid out before the volunteer starts work. The North of England Refugee Service (NERS) who is based in the UK has over 50 volunteers at any given time. They have taken the initiative to design a starter pack for volunteers as an introduction to the organisation and to the specific tasks the volunteer will be undertaking. The most universally useful elements of this pack are outlined below:

- \* Background of the organisation
- \* Core operational values
- \* Mission statement - aims and objectives
- \* Details of the particular tasks of the organisation
- \* Health and safety regulations
- \* Expense claim form
- \* Grievance/disciplinary procedure
- \* Policy on equality and treatment of clients and staff
- \* Reception desk manual

The pack is written and designed to be easy to use. No assumptions are made about what the volunteer knows and it outlines all office procedures from welcoming, dealing with clients, dealing with volunteer requests, maintaining the welcoming room and message taking.

This pack also includes a "contract of deployment" or agreement which clearly delineates the rights and obligations of volunteers and the organisation itself. It is then signed by both the volunteer and the volunteer co-ordinator.

(Contact the Volunteer Co-ordinator, at NERS, for further information on this pack:  
North of England Refugee Service (NERS), 19 Bigg Market, 1st floor, GB-Newcastle NE1 1UN,  
phone +44-191-2220406, Fax +44-191-222023)

## **6. How to Motivate a Volunteer**

How can an organisation motivate a volunteer and maintain their support? Some individuals commit themselves to work in the non-governmental sector due to altruistic reasons, however, from the above it is apparent that there are other reasons when you consider what is to be gained from the volunteer experience.

Motivating a volunteer can be achieved through many means, some which have been discussed earlier in this document. However, to reiterate, a contract can act as the first step to motivate a volunteer for it illustrates that the organisation respects their skills and dignity.

A volunteer needs to work in a friendly environment, with an equitable policy. The management should not be permitted to abuse its power and needs to be receptive of any comments from the volunteer, regarding ways in which tasks can be accomplished to a better degree. Hence, transparent management



structures need to be maintained in which volunteers are able to participate or have a decision-making role.

If a volunteer continues to steadily acquire expertise and develop their social and communication skills, they are more likely to perform to the best of their abilities and actually stay. Moreover, this can be achieved by encouraging them to attend training seminars and conferences and they should be provided with financial support to do this.

In regard to employment prospects and opportunities, the organisation needs to guarantee they will act as a reference for volunteers and consider them for future paid positions should they arise.

## **7. Specific Aspects of Refugee Work**

The nature of the refugee experience is both multi-faceted and complex. A staggering number of people have been forced to leave their home or country of origin in the last years of the twentieth century. According to UNHCR (1998) persecution, war, and famine have uprooted over 50 million people.

The refugee experience is permeated by violence, danger, uncertainty and hardship. When refugees arrive in their country of refuge they require assistance and care in order to deal with the serious harm they have suffered, and to begin their life again. Indeed, specific services are needed if a refugee is expected to succeed. Hence, government services and particularly non-governmental organisations (including solidarity groups) provide vital resources and assistance to refugees and displaced persons in need.

The various services that are provided are interdependent and include:

### **Service Provision**

*Administration*

*Advice and referral on education & employment, health issues and welfare entitlements*

*Befriending*

*Childminding*

*Counselling for Victims of torture, rape & other trauma*

*Fundraising*

*Legal advice and representation*

*Organising leisure and social events*

*Social work*

*Teaching language classes*

As stated previously, refugee work is diverse and it does not only involve service provision. Many organisations are engaged in anti-racist struggles, policy development and campaigning. We have summarised some of these activities below:

## **Advocacy & Policy Work**

*Advocacy*

*Anti-racist work*

*Campaigning*

*Information provision and public awareness*

*Lobbying*

*Organising protests and direct actions*

*Policy development*

*Research & documentation*

This list is not exhaustive and volunteers can become involved in all these different aspects of refugee work depending on their skills and suitability.

## **8. Refugee Resources for Learning**

There are innumerable sources for learning about refugees and it is easy to obtain material from local, national and international agencies and organisations. Remember that all of the sources that we list and quote in this document will have links with other sites, therefore, you should have a snowballing effect.

\* Contact your national or local refugee organisation, many distribute refugee information packs to the general public for free or for a small fee. We have included a list of national refugee councils or organisations in section 8.3 of this document. (This list does not aim to be complete but provides a start for an exploration of (internet) resources

\* The UNHCR is an excellent place to start learning about refugees. Their website (listed below) includes all relevant definitions, statistics, and articles on refugee law and policy, refugee health, women and children, people with disabilities, older people and victims of torture. It also includes daily reports from refugee producing countries around the world.

\* In addition, the UNHCR produces a CD Rom called Refworld (a section of it is on the website) which includes country specific reports, publications, images and maps. Moreover, it supplies all the international legal instruments that govern the condition of asylum-seekers and refugees in the Europe i.e. the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees; the 1967 Protocol; the Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status; the Schengen Agreement; the Dublin Convention; the Manifestly Unfounded Procedures and other international human rights instruments that are becoming increasingly vital to refugee protection.

\* The European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) (listed below) is also a valuable resource. It has an extremely large number of country reports, policy positions, press releases, speeches, research papers and contacts.

\* ECRE has two information exchange networks: Elena and ECRAN. Elena is a network of legal practitioners throughout Europe, which exchange information and best practice upon request. ECRAN is a network for the exchange of advocacy techniques and devising policy strategies. These networks extend into Central and Eastern Europe.

\* The EU Networks on Integration of Refugees (listed below) supplies information on integration of refugees in the European Union countries: publications (good practice guides, refugee perceptions report, etc.), a database of projects and contacts.

\* The Danish Refugee Council (listed below) has published a number of useful reports on the legal and social condition of asylum-seekers and refugees throughout Europe. They too have produced a number of reports on specific refugee policies.

\* In order to gain a fuller picture of the refugee situation, it is necessary to look at more alternative or radical sources as well such as anti-racist or refugee-run organisations. They have their own literature that has been written from another perspective and mostly by direct experience. Of course UNITED has a range of infoleaflets and infoposters on asylum and refugee issues in Europe, listed below. UNITED also maintains a website I CARE together with the magenta Foundation(see 8.3) which has reports, discussion groups, calendars, a bulletin board and videos on refugees and anti-racism.

\* If you are seriously considering working long-term in this field, you should consider undertaking a training course or college/university course on asylum-seekers and refugees or human rights in order to take refugee learning to another level. Nevertheless, remember that you will learn more by directly working with refugees.

### **8.1 Useful References**

Amnesty International (1997)  
Refugees: Human Rights have no Borders  
Amnesty International Publications, London.

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Fekete, Liz. (2000)  
The dispersal of xenophobia - A special report on the UK and Ireland  
[www.irr.org.uk/dispersal](http://www.irr.org.uk/dispersal)

Forbes-Martin, S. (1991)  
Refugee Women  
Zed Books, London.

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Goodwin-Gill, G. (1983)  
The Refugee in International Law  
Clarendon Press, Oxford.

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- Guild, E. (1996)  
The Developing Immigration and Asylum Practices of the European Union.  
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- Hathaway, J. (1990)  
The Law of Refugee Status  
Butterworth.  
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Reconceiving International Refugee Law  
Nijhoff Law Specials, NI sp.30).  
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- Joly, D. (1996)  
Heaven of Hell? Asylum policies and refugees in Europe  
London, Macmillan.  
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- Kalin, W. (1991)  
Refugees and civil wars; only a matter of interpretation?  
in the International Journal of Refugee Law, Vol. 3, No. 3, pp. 435-451.  
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Legal and social conditions for asylum seekers and refugees in Western  
European Countries  
Danish Refugee Council.  
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- Liebaut, F. & Hughes, J. (1999)  
Legal and social conditions for asylum seekers and refugees in Central Eastern  
European Countries  
Danish Refugee Council.  
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- Meijers, H. (1993)  
A new immigration law for Europe?  
Utrecht NCB, 1993.  
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- Swedish Government Official Reports ('94)  
The key to Europe - A Comparative Analysis of Entry and Asylum Policies in  
Western Countries  
Ministry of Culture, Stockholm.  
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- UNHCR (1995)  
An Overview of Protection Issues in Western Europe: Legislative Trends and  
Positions Taken by UNHCR, European Series  
UNHCR Regional Bureau for Europe.  
UNHCR (1995)  
UNHCR and its Partners in Europe Briefing Handbook  
UNHCR, Geneva.  
-
- UNHCR (1998)  
The State of the World's Refugees: A Humanitarian Agenda  
Oxford University Press.

## 8.2 UNITED for Intercultural Action Information Resources on Refugees

### Publications

Seminar Report of the UNITED Conference held in February 2000:  
"Goodwill Hunting: Voluntary Work in Support of Refugees"

### **8.3 Useful Websites**

Amnesty International [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

Centre for Refugee Studies (Canada) [www.yorku.ca/crs](http://www.yorku.ca/crs)

Danish Refugee Council - Dansk Flygtningehjaelp  
[www.drc.dk](http://www.drc.dk)

Dutch Refugee Council -Vluchtelingen Werk  
[www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl](http://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl)

EU Networks on Integration of Refugees  
[www.refugeenet.org](http://www.refugeenet.org)

European Council on Refugees and Exiles - ECRE  
[www.ecre.org](http://www.ecre.org)

Human Rights Watch  
[www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)

Finnish Refugee Council - Suomen Pakoisapu  
[www.pakolaisapu.fi](http://www.pakolaisapu.fi)

Greek Refugee Council  
[www.gcr.gr](http://www.gcr.gr)

I CARE - Internet Centre Against Racism Europe  
[www.icare.to](http://www.icare.to)

Irish Centre for Migration Studies  
[migration.ucc.ie/immigration](http://migration.ucc.ie/immigration)

Norwegian Refugee Council - Norsk Flyktningerådet  
[www.nrc.no](http://www.nrc.no)

Portuguese Refugee Council - Conselho Port. para los Refugiados  
[www.cidadevirtual.pt/cpr](http://www.cidadevirtual.pt/cpr)

REFLEX / Réseau No Pasaran!  
[www.ecn.org/nopasaran](http://www.ecn.org/nopasaran)

Refugee Council (Great Britain)  
[www.refugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk)

Scottish Refugee Council  
[www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk)

Swiss Refugee Council -Schweizersche Flüchtlingshilfe  
[www.sfh-osar.ch](http://www.sfh-osar.ch)

UNHCR  
[www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch)

United States Committee for Refugees  
[www.refugees.org](http://www.refugees.org)

UNITED for Intercultural Action  
[www.unitedagainstracism.org](http://www.unitedagainstracism.org)

## **9. Voluntary Work - Where to Start Looking?**

This section is not designed to be the definitive guide to refugee organisations that take on volunteers. Rather, it is supposed to inform the volunteer where to start looking.

\* You can always write, email or telephone an organisation or group you wish to work with, and ask them if they take on volunteers. Remember give them your CV and explain what you would like to work at, and gain from your volunteer experience. There may be a formal application form or procedure.

\* The European Commission (EC) in 1996 set up the European Voluntary Service Programme (EVS). It offered young people an opportunity to work for 6-12 months in a non-profit project abroad. In May 2000 it incorporated the Youth Programme of the Directorate General of Education and Culture, and it is now simply called the Youth Programme and can be accessed through the EC's website (listed below). The same conditions still apply; however, volunteers can also travel outside EU member states.

### **9.1 Volunteer Websites**

Association of Voluntary Services & Organisations

[www.avso.org](http://www.avso.org)

Human Rights Internet

[www.hri.ca](http://www.hri.ca)

Youth for Europe

[europa.eu.int/comm/education/youth.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/youth.html)

## **10. Checklist**

### **10.1 Checklist for Organisations**

This is a checklist of considerations that need to be taken on board before engaging a volunteer. It is in part inspired by a questionnaire from a training course on the Management of Trans-National Voluntary Projects (European Youth Council, Budapest, 27-2 to 5-3-2000) and the NERS volunteer information pack (mentioned above).

#### **Information to volunteers**

1. My organisation distributes to new volunteers a welcome pack containing all the fundamental practical information about our organisation and the refugee community.
2. My organisation provides all our volunteers with a working schedule for the duration of their voluntary work.

#### **Preparation and training of volunteers**

3. My organisation provides all its volunteers with an induction session before they begin working.
4. My organisation provides language tuition when it is needed.
5. My organisation provides all its volunteers with the required amount of training in order for them to complete set tasks successfully.

### **Rights and duties**

6. My organisation will sign an agreement explaining our volunteer's rights and duties and our obligations to them.
7. My organisation has a policy on equality and the treatment of clients, staff and volunteers.
8. My organisation has a defined grievance and disciplinary procedure for volunteers.
9. My organisation will reimburse travel and lunch costs to volunteers.

### **Supervision and support of volunteers**

10. My organisation makes sure that all our volunteers are supervised on an ongoing basis (technical, practical and personal aspects of our volunteers' engagement).
11. My organisation plans regular one-to-one meetings with all volunteers.
12. My organisation has a specific plan of activities to promote the inclusion of volunteers in my organisation.

### **Safety and Security**

13. My organisation exposes its volunteers to an appropriate, acceptable and agreed level of risk in their activities.
14. My organisation makes sure that the premises and the equipment used by the volunteers are "fit for use".

### **Decision-making**

15. My organisation is receptive to comments from volunteers regarding ways in which we can mutually better accomplish our respective tasks.

## **10.2 Checklist for Volunteers**

This is a suggested checklist of considerations that need to be taken on board before engaging in voluntary work.

### **Information for volunteers**

1. Will your organisation provide you with an information pack on the fundamental practical information about its activities and the refugee community?

2. Will your organisation provide you with a daily schedule for the duration of your voluntary work?
3. Will the organisation provide you with an induction session before you begin working?
4. Will the organisation provide language training if it is needed?
5. Will the organisation provide you with the required amount of training in order for you to complete set tasks successfully?

### **Rights and duties**

6. Will the organisation sign an agreement whereby they outline your rights and duties and their obligations to you?
7. Does the organisation have a policy on equality and the treatment of clients, staff and volunteers?
8. Does the organisation have a grievance and disciplinary procedure for volunteers?
9. Will the organisation reimburse your travel and lunch costs?

### **Supervision and support of volunteers**

10. Will the organisation supervise you on an ongoing basis?
11. Will the organisation set aside time to have regular one-to-one meetings?
12. Will the organisation plan activities to ensure your social inclusion in the organisation?

### **Safety and Security**

13. Will the organisation expose you to inappropriate and unacceptable level of risk in your activities?
14. Will the organisation's premises and equipment be "fit for use" for you?

### **Decision-making**

15. Will the organisation be receptive to your comments and suggestions? Will you be incorporated into the decision-making structure?

## **UNITED for Intercultural Action**

### **European network against nationalism, racism, fascism and in support of migrants and refugees**

Postbus 413, NL-1000 AK Amsterdam, Netherlands

phone +31-20-6834778, fax +31-20-6834582

[info@unitedagainstracism.org](mailto:info@unitedagainstracism.org), [www.unitedagainstracism.org](http://www.unitedagainstracism.org)