

# INVOLVE

Involvement of third country nationals in volunteering as a means of better integration



Final project report

Published by the European Volunteer Centre  
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This publication is supported by the European Commission in the framework of the INTI programme.

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## Table of contents

<b>Foreword and acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Background and rationale of the INVOLVE project.....</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1. Migration – integration – volunteering .....	7
1.2. The INVOLVE project .....	9
1.3. Definitions and glossary of terms .....	11
<b>2. Immigration and volunteering – a European panorama in 7 countries .....</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1. The Netherlands.....	13
2.2. Hungary.....	18
2.3. England .....	22
2.4. Germany .....	26
2.5. Austria .....	30
2.6. Spain.....	34
2.7. France.....	37
<b>3. Barriers to integration and criteria of good practices to overcome these .....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>4. Good practice examples in Europe .....</b>	<b>48</b>
4.1. The Netherlands.....	48
4.1.1. KANTARA – Bridge Builders.....	48
4.1.2. SAMAH- Empowering unaccompanied minors.....	50
4.1.3. IBNO Khaldoen – countering exclusion of the Moroccan immigrant community.....	52
4.1.4. Turkish Broadcasting Association in Zaanstad .....	54
4.2. Hungary.....	56
4.2.1. Hajdú-Bihar county Employment Agency.....	56
4.3. England .....	57
4.3.1. Theatre in Education .....	57
4.3.2. VolEmploy Mentoring Scheme for refugees .....	60
4.4. Germany .....	62
4.4.1. gEMiDe - gesellschaftliches Engagement von Migrantinnen, Migranten und Deutschen (civic activities of migrants and Germans).....	62
4.4.2. Integrationslotsen (integration pilots).....	63
4.4.3. Hand in Hand: MIT Migranten FÜR Migranten (MiMi) .....	65
4.5. Austria .....	68
4.5.1. MigrantInnenakademie (Competence courses for migrants) .....	68
4.5.2. Voluntary youth immigrant leadership.....	69
4.5.3. Zeit!Raum- association for socio-cultural work.....	71
4.5.4. Iftar for Women.....	73

4.6. Spain.....	74
4.6.1. “EL ENLACE” – Fortnight free bulletin .....	74
4.6.2. Asociación “NKABOMYE GHANA UNION” .....	76
4.6.3. “La Escuelita”. Complementary classes for young immigrants .....	77
4.7. France.....	79
4.7.1. EDL 14: School mentoring .....	79
4.7.2. Local councils – the example of the XIXth district in Paris .....	81
4.7.3. Expression for Young Immigrants- Peupliers à Palabres .....	82
<b>5. The contribution of volunteering to integration .....</b>	<b>84</b>
5.1. Volunteering as an instrument and indicator for integration .....	84
5.2. Volunteering and the Common Basic Principles of Integration .....	86
<b>6. Recommendations to policy makers at different levels and practitioners in mainstream and migrant organisations .....</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>7. Conclusions .....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>8. List of contacts per country .....</b>	<b>98</b>
8.1. The Netherlands.....	98
8.2. Hungary.....	100
8.3. England .....	102
8.4. Germany .....	104
8.5. Austria .....	108
8.6. Spain.....	110
8.7. France.....	112
<b>9. Bibliography .....</b>	<b>116</b>

## Foreword and acknowledgements

**T**his report is the fruit of the 18 months INVOLVE project on the integration of third country nationals through volunteering. Firstly, it presents the background of the project and its rationale – the increasing importance of integration policies in Europe and the surprising lack of comprehensive approaches and strategies by many European governments to address major challenges of immigration societies (**part 1**).

Secondly, it highlights the outcomes of the 7 national reports on immigration, integration and volunteering. These are included in a European panorama providing an overview of the situations in the Netherlands, Hungary, England, Germany, Austria, Spain and France. The INVOLVE partners have tried to address the lack of data on migrant volunteering through carrying out their primary and secondary research and through the organisations of three interlinked INVOLVE conferences, which were held in the life time of the project (**part 2**).

Both the findings of the national work of the partners and the INVOLVE conference conclusions have shown that migrants still face major barriers to integration and to involvement in volunteering. The barriers, and good practice criteria to overcome them, are identified in **part 3** of the report.

In order to promote successful practice throughout Europe to involve migrants in volunteering, and to facilitate and encourage their dissemination and transfer to other contexts, **part 4** showcases in depth projects that have been identified and presented by the national expert groups of the INVOLVE consortium.

**Part 5** draws lessons from these good practice examples and, based on this, summarises the ways in which volunteering promotes integration and contributes to the Common Basic Principles of Integration as put forward by the European Commission in its agenda for integration of third country nationals.

And finally, **part 6** puts forward recommendations to stakeholders at different levels (from local to European) and of different types (from government to the voluntary sector) on how to make better use of volunteering as both an indicator and instrument for integration. This leads to the final conclusions (**part 7**).

**Part 8** provides the contact details of all those involved in the national expert groups of the 7 participating countries in order to nurture networking and enable transnational dialogue.

This report has only been possible thanks to the involvement of all project partners and their commitment to making it a success. Special thanks go to the project coordinators who have drawn together the national reports, which served as a basis for this final INVOLVE report: **Angelika Münz** from CPC, **Willem-Jan de Gast** and **Miro Popovic** from CIVIQ (all from the Netherlands), **Luca Varadi** from Menedék (Hungary), **Ruth Wilson** from Volunteering England, **Susanne Huth** and **Duygy Yücel** from INBAS – Sozialforschung (Germany), **Dr. Christoph Reinprecht** and **Patrizia Gapp** from the Institute of Sociology from the University of Vienna (Austria), **Cristina Garcia** and **Cristina Gomez** from FUNDAR in Spain and **Dr. Bénédicte Halba** from IRIV in France. We are particularly grateful to the partners who organised and hosted the three conferences in Wolverhampton (Volunteering England), Valencia (FUNDAR) and Deventer (CPC and CIVIQ). Through their hospitality and organisational skill, they ensured that both partners and participating migrant and mainstream organisations could work in an inspiring and enabling environment. We would like to thank **Christopher Spence** (Volunteering England) for steering the consortium meetings and providing a stimulating thinking environment, and **Volunteering England** for providing the necessary administrative support.

Finally, we are grateful for the financial contributions made by all project partners and the European Commission (DG Justice, Freedom and Security, INTI programme), without which this project would not have been possible.

We hope the project results inspire the work of organisations throughout Europe, that they make a positive and useful contribution to discussions on meaningful integration policies and that they help in the long term to bring about the successful integration of third country nationals in European societies.

**Markus Held**

CEV Director  
INVOLVE project manager  
Brussels, December 2006.

# 1. Background and rationale of the INVOLVE project (June 2005 – December 2006)

## 1.1. Migration – integration – volunteering

Migration has become one of the most salient topics in international politics over the last years. According to latest UN figures, more than 191 million people in the world have left their countries in order to find a new home and to start a new life (GCIM 2005). They do so for a variety of reasons, including poverty; political persecution; environmental threat; war and conflict; to join family and community; to build a more prosperous life; to find dignity and liberty.

The EU has welcomed some 20 million “third country nationals”: persons with a nationality other than one of the EU-25. Many Member States have had to abandon their vision of not being an “immigration country” and to acknowledge that migration in many cases is here to stay. In addition, immigration is more and more seen to be a necessity in countries with an ageing society and labour shortages in certain areas of the economy. The EU has been developing an increasing number of policy initiatives in the field of immigration and integration.

Very often, the question of immigration is predominantly discussed in the light of border protection, the control of migrant influx to the EU, “desired migration” versus “illegal migration”, human trafficking etc. Regularly, the phenomenon of immigration triggers discussions on integration, which are rarely objective but influenced by fierce public debates on national identity and more generally the fear of the strangers “invading” the country.

At first sight, “immigration” appears to be a term defining a clear-cut issue. However, when looking at the data, the emerging term

of “migration management” (OECD 2006) captures more clearly the fact that governments at present have to manage migration flows of which immigration is just one component. Migration as a phenomenon has become much more complex, with movements involving ‘circular’ and ‘return’ migration. The number of countries of origin of migrants in Europe has increased markedly. In addition, the already settled traditional immigrant communities in Western European countries have experienced internal diversification owing to the different integration routes of second and third generations. Furthermore, there is undocumented migration the size of which is hard to define. These are the statistically “invisible” migrants. The new patterns of mobility are hardly taken into account in current integration policies, which tend to focus on an old paradigm, that of the immigrant who comes with the intention to settle and has to adapt and be assimilated into the host community.

The term **integration** is contested as well. There is an ongoing debate as to whether definitions should emphasise assimilation or multiculturalism - or if the two concepts have become outdated. The Common Basic Principles for Integration in the European Union define integration as a “dynamic, long-term, and continuous two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of the host society” (European Commission 2005). This approach may be a step in the right direction to solve this debate. It underlines that integration is a mutual and collective process and not the individual responsibility of the immigrant alone.

Interest in migrant **volunteering** has been rising in the past years especially in those countries with a strong civil society tradition and longstanding awareness of the key role that volunteering has for the social fabric and cohesion of society. Recognition of the fact that civic participation and voluntary action is an important cornerstone of a thriving democracy leads to a strong interest in whether immigrant communities are part of this cor-

### Learnings of the MEM-VOL project

The European Community previously funded the MEM-VOL research study ([www.mem-volunteering.net](http://www.mem-volunteering.net)). This showed the importance of migrants' involvement in voluntary and civic activities in the fight against social exclusion. It has been demonstrated that these activities foster inter-community relations, help to combat racism and intolerance, and develop the personal and professional skills of those involved. Indeed, the European Commission underlines that "meeting others is an important step in settling down and becoming a part of the host society and that interaction between different cultures and religions will increase tolerance and respect" (European Commission 2003: 22).

The major challenge identified by the MEM-VOL partners was the lack of knowledge, data and awareness about the involvement of third country national communities in civic life, and their attitude towards, and concepts of, volunteering.

A related problem is that networks and exchange of knowledge in the field of migrant volunteering is weak, especially on a transnational European level. There is a need for exchanges of experience between migrant organisations, NGOs and national, regional and local authorities in Member States.

An additional issue is that Member States'

nerstone and, if not, what must be done to encourage civic activities in these communities.

Voluntary action can be defined as the sum of all activities, which citizens do for each other unpaid and based on their free will. It is a resource for this two-way integration process, which has not yet received full recognition. The question as to how this resource can be further developed has been the central focus of the INVOLVE project.

integration policies continue to focus largely on integration to the labour market. While this is an important dimension of social inclusion, it does not address the exclusion of those migrants that are not (and will never be) involved in the labour market.

**Migration, integration and volunteering are subject to considerable public and political debate in Europe. The INVOLVE project aimed to link these debates and finding the interfaces, asking the question 'How can volunteering be better used in order to facilitate integration needed as a consequence of migration?'**

## 1.2. The INVOLVE project

The INVOLVE project was set up to explore innovative solutions to the question of the "social integration" and "active participation" of third country nationals – focusing on volunteering as an instrument.

The project partners addressed the lack of knowledge about migrant volunteering, including third country nationals' concepts of, and

attitude towards volunteering and investigated national policies and actions that facilitate these activities. Finally, a trans-European network of national contacts in the field of migrant volunteering was to be nurtured allowing for increased transnational dialogue between stakeholders.

The following 9 partner organisations have run the INVOLVE project:

- European Volunteer Centre, **CEV** – Project coordination ([www.cev.be](http://www.cev.be)).
- Community Partnership Consultants ([www.community-partnership.nl](http://www.community-partnership.nl)) and CIVIQ National Volunteer Centre ([www.civiq.nl](http://www.civiq.nl)), **the Netherlands**.
- MENEDEK – Association for Migrants, **Hungary** (<http://www.menedek.hu/>).
- Volunteering England, **England** ([www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)).
- "INBAS – Sozialforschung" Research Institute, **Germany** ([www.inbas-sozialforschung.de](http://www.inbas-sozialforschung.de)).
- University of Vienna, Institute for Sociology, **Austria** ([www.soz.univie.ac.at](http://www.soz.univie.ac.at)).
- FUNDAR, Foundation for Solidarity and Volunteering, **Valencia, Spain** ([www.fundar.es](http://www.fundar.es)).
- IRIV, Institute for Research and Information on Volunteering, **France** ([www.iriv.net](http://www.iriv.net)).

The Institute for Volunteering Research IVR in England ([www.ivr.org.uk](http://www.ivr.org.uk)) was responsible for the external evaluation of the project. Please refer to part 8 for the complete contact details of these organisations.

The project partners have run the following activities:

### National "Action research"

Each partner country has set up a national expert group of up to 10 experts in the field. These expert groups collected the research data feeding into the national INVOLVE reports (see "2. Immigration and volunteering – a European panorama in 7 countries"). Third country nationals were involved at all stages of the project. Representatives of the national expert groups contributed to the preparation of the three INVOLVE seminars, as well as participating.

This research collection was carried out through the use of existing literature, surveys of relevant stakeholders, personal interviews and, in the case of Austria, Hungary, the Netherlands, Germany, England and Spain, through small primary research projects.

The results and conclusions of this work were presented at each of the INVOLVE seminars, in order to instigate a transnational debate.

Themes of the research included:

- Facts and figures on volunteering and immigration in the 7 countries.
- The concept of integration and the attitude of migrants towards volunteering.
- Barriers that prevent migrants from volunteering.
- Good practice that helps overcome these barriers.
- Role of local, national and EU policies and programmes to support migrant volunteer involvement.
- Partnership models between stakeholders.

### 3 INVOLVE seminars

The three seminars brought together more than 70 stakeholders from migrant organisations, host-community “mainstream” organisations, public authorities at all levels, the media and, where possible, representatives from the corporate sector. Representatives of the national expert groups presented and analysed. Each of the seminars was given a special focus:

- **Wolverhampton (England), October 2005:** Identification of barriers to integration and to volunteering; identification of criteria for good practice to overcome these barriers.
- **Valencia (Spain), March 2006:** Presentation of good practice examples of projects that foster migrant volunteering, and discussion of their transferability.
- **Deventer (Netherlands), June 2006:** Formulation of recommendations towards policy makers and practitioners on how to enhance volunteering as a means of better integration.

### Final project report and website

The national action research papers and the reports of the three INVOLVE seminars can be freely accessed on the INVOLVE website [www.involve-europe.eu](http://www.involve-europe.eu).

**This final INVOLVE report gives an analysis of the national reports, presents key findings of the three seminars, and shows good practice examples through-**

**the results of the on-going “action research” in each country. They identified commonalities and differences as well as barriers to integration. They used the INVOLVE conferences as a forum to exchange good practice and to encourage the creation of transnational partnerships.**

**out Europe. Finally, it puts forward recommendations to policy makers at different levels and to practitioners both in “mainstream” and in migrant organisations on how to strengthen volunteering as a means of social integration of migrants and third country nationals.**

## 1.3. Definitions and glossary of terms

Due to the diversity of contexts in the different countries represented in the INVOLVE consortium, it is impossible to provide definitions and terms that fit the public debate and legal framework of all participating countries. For the purpose of this report, the following terms have been used as lowest common denominators.

### Immigrant / Migrant / Newcomer

A person who expects to stay in a country other than his/her country of nationality for a certain period of time other than for tourism or for seasonal work. Taking into account new forms of migratory flows, the term of “migrant” seems to be more suitable, reflecting the fact that immigrants might emigrate again. In this report, all three terms are used interchangeably (exception: France, see 2.7.)

### Third country national

Any person who is not a national of an EU Member State.

### 2nd generation immigrant

A person born in the host country and of whom one or both parents were born outside the host country.

### Refugee

Person living outside the country of his/her nationality because of the fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion and who is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it.

### Asylum seeker

A person who has applied for asylum status and whose application is under consideration.

### Volunteering

Refers to all different forms in which citizens do unpaid activities for others based on their free will and serving the general interest of society. Volunteering encompasses “voluntary action” (comprising informal volunteering and volunteering in an organised context), “voluntary work” (work done in an organised context for mainstream or migrant organisations) and “voluntary service” meaning fulltime and short term voluntary work (normally not more



than one year), often specifically targetted at young persons.

#### Good practice

Good practice within this project was taken to include projects and activities that foster the engagement of third country nationals in volunteering and contribute to better integration within the host society.

#### Mainstream organisation

Organisation available to all parts of society not explicitly targetting or run by specific social or ethnic groups. Examples are organisations such as the Red Cross or Volunteer Centres.

#### Migrant organisation

Organisation run essentially by migrants, focusing on advocacy work and / or providing social or cultural services for the migrant community (and sometimes for the host community as well).

#### Integration

A dynamic, long-term and continuous two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of the host country.

#### Assimilation

One-way process of adaptation: immigrants are supposed to give up their distinctive linguistic, cultural or social characteristics, adopt the values and practices of the mainstream receiving society, and become indistinguishable from the host country population.

#### Multiculturalism

Concept acknowledging the fact that different cultural or ethnic groups may co-exist within society without major efforts of rapprochement or mutual integration.

## 2. Immigration and volunteering – a European panorama in 7 countries

The INVOLVE project partners have set up in each of the participating countries expert groups that contributed to the action research on the link between integration and volunteering in the Netherlands, Hungary, England, Germany, Austria, Spain and France. Each group has produced a national report, which can be accessed on [www.involve-europe.eu](http://www.involve-europe.eu). Some main findings of the different reports will be presented hereafter, providing a panorama of immigrant volunteering and the framework in which it operates.

### 2.1. The Netherlands

The current population of immigrants in the Netherlands amounts to **19% of the total population of over 16 million people of which 1.7 million are of non-western foreign descent (10.4%)**. Demographic developments indicate a growth of the so-called second generation of third country nationals from non-western countries of which currently 48% are born in the Netherlands.

The largest immigrant communities are the Turkish, Surinamese, Moroccan and Antillean/Aruban ones, with the latter coming from Dutch overseas territories. New immigration is predominantly based on motives of seeking asylum and family formation, as well as family reunification. **Dutch integration policy is predominantly geared at third country nationals from non-western descent** with a specific focus on groups with social and economic disadvantages (referred to as ethnic minorities) including naturalised immigrants of the first, second and third generation. It has, thus, **a broader scope than merely third country nationals**.

One predominant feature is that **migration has become more dynamic** with different patterns applying to immigrating groups. More than 40 % of the immigrants who arrived in the Netherlands in 1995 left the country again within 7 years. Around 16% of this group re-

turned to the Netherlands within the same period of time, and 33% of the returnees emigrated again. Some immigrants can rather be considered as “**long-term passengers**”.

**Volunteering** is highly valued in the Netherlands: around **4 million people** (around 25%) **volunteer** on a regular basis. Research conducted over the past decade (predominantly at local level) indicates, however, that migrant volunteers still tend to be **under-represented in mainstream voluntary organisations** in spite of various efforts to promote inclusion. They **are nevertheless actively participating in society**: 76% of immigrants were involved in giving informal help compared to 65% of the native-born Dutch population. The research showed that second generation of immigrants was even more active (80%) than the first generation (74%). The total participation rate of foreign-born immigrants, thus, does not differ from the native-born population, provided the **definition of voluntary action** takes into account **informal help** to others and taking care of the extended family. The focus of migrant voluntary action, however, is geared towards close friends, family members and neighbours. In addition, there is a range of thriving associations in immigrant communities.

## Immigrant participation in volunteering and informal help<sup>1</sup>

	Migrants (Foreign-born Dutch)	Native-born Dutch
Volunteering (%) yes	22 %	43%
Informal help (%) yes	76%	65%

Especially young people of the second generation and women of Turkish and Moroccan descent tend to **face considerable barriers** to participation: These include differences in organisational cultures, communication patterns, lack of language competencies and, with respect to newcomers, unfamiliarity with local traditions of volunteering, and with specific

reference to women, traditional ideas about gender roles may hinder participation. Harsh public debates about integration and religion (mainly Islam) as well as the growing need for market orientation of voluntary associations in a changing welfare state have had a negative impact on migrant organisations and their ability to function effectively.

The highly professionalised and organised Western European **notion of volunteering** is often at odds with the attitudes that third country nationals have to volunteering:<sup>2</sup>

“ Voluntary action is helping and again helping. In Morocco, everybody is a volunteer, because everybody helps each other. You don't call it voluntary “work”, because it is part of life. ”

*Moroccan volunteer*

“ Volunteering exists, but not so organised. You help each other in the family, the neighbourhood, the clan. You have very large families, next to your immediate family and to help each other is an obligation, also from a religious point of view. ”

*Somalian volunteer*

“ When I came to the Netherlands, I thought – volunteering – what is it? Later I had the idea, that many people in Iran volunteer, only that it is not called as such, because we have another vision on it. People do a lot for each other and don't expect to get anything in return, since the major goal is that God is satisfied with you. ... Many people do something for the other without anybody knowing about it and actually it is more appreciated if no-one knows that I am helping people through the Red Cross..... It must be from heart to heart, that is the idea in Iran. There is no “show” element to volunteering. ”

*Iranian volunteer*

The challenge to **overcome existing barriers** and increase the level of volunteering of immigrants has been recognised by all stakeholders. Government and the voluntary sector have promoted good practice and a number of migrant organisations have developed new organisational forms to address integration. Key elements of good practice include governmental support for **programs addressing diversity in the voluntary sector** and promotion of **support structures for migrant organisations** at both the local and provincial level. Organisations set up by the second and third generation of immigrants successfully mobilise voluntary action of young people. The focus on community strengths (and less on the problems in communities) is key, along with presenting positive role models. Women's

organisations do a lot to empower their members and to bridge the gaps created by lack of education and employment through promoting training and pathways into labour.

Partnerships between migrant associations and business create chances for both better employment and entrepreneurship in migrant communities and implementation of diversity in companies. The setting up of their own media may also enhance participation of migrant communities. Policy makers and the voluntary sector, however, will need to address the challenge that immigration and integration is both a long-term and a two-way process. Only continuous investment in this process will help to increase the impact that volunteering of immigrants may have for their integration in society.

2.

### Specific country features

The Netherlands has a history of immigration that is centuries old. The Dutch society, therefore, has built up a long **tradition of integration** of newcomers in society. It is only in the last decade, however, that government officially acknowledged the Netherlands to be an immigration country. As a result, the earlier policy for “ethnic minorities” that evolved

over the past 30 years as a response to different waves of immigration transformed into an immigration and integration policy which is currently still in the process of further development and refinement. Integration policy is specifically targeted at newcomers and “ethnic minorities”.

### Governmental policies to facilitate migrant volunteering and integration

The goal of governmental policy in general is to equip the voluntary sector sufficiently so that it can respond to societal change. Government has given a lot of attention to the strengthening of migrant volunteering against

a background of demographic change and the growing impact of immigration on Dutch society. This has been done in particular in two policy areas: volunteering and integration.

### Volunteering

The Ministry for Health, Welfare and Sports, which is responsible for the development of policies on volunteering, defined as a priority area in its most recent policy document on

voluntary action (2005 – 2007) **the need to support migrant volunteering, especially in mainstream voluntary organisations.**

To this end, the Ministry supported the program “**Stap Twee**” (“**Step Two**”) which started in the International Year of the Volunteer 2001 and ran up to 2005. It aimed at increasing diversity in the voluntary sector and was implemented by the National Volunteer Centre, CIVIQ, and the Institute for Multicultural Development FORUM.

“**Stap Twee**” contributed on various levels to put migrant volunteering on the agenda:

- It raised awareness in the voluntary sector of the need for organisational change. Human resources in volunteer organisations in terms of volunteers and personnel need to become a mirror of the demographic changes in society;
- It contributed to a data base of good practice collected by the different stakeholders in the program, accessible on [www.civiq.nl/staptwee](http://www.civiq.nl/staptwee).
- It contributed to the development of methods and tools for increasing diversity in the voluntary sector.
- It contributed to new forms of co-operation between the mainstream and the migrant volunteer organisations. Whilst at the beginning of the program, mainstream organisations primarily perceived migrant organisations as a recruitment pool for volunteers for their own organisations, they slowly start to think about possible joint projects and co-operation.

Current general policy initiatives on volunteering aim to remove barriers to volunteering in the **legal framework** and improve the quality of local policies and volunteer support structures. In addition, current policies seek to stimulate research and support the recruitment of “new” target groups such as migrant communities as volunteers. It can be expected that these general policy initiatives will in the long term also benefit the development of migrant volunteering. On a more specific level, government wants to encourage volunteering of immigrant women since they belong to the most excluded groups of society.

The Ministry defines “**participation**” of all citizens as the major goal of its policy on volunteering and does not use the term **integration**. The most recent policy document (2005 – 2007) indicates that the Ministry has embarked on **broadening the traditional concept of volunteering**. It now uses the term “**voluntary action**” in order to acknowledge

the many different (cultural) forms of unpaid work which is done without obligation for the benefit of society and matches better the attitudes of migrants towards volunteering.

As a result of central government policy, **local and provincial governments have developed their own programs** to increase diversity in mainstream voluntary organisations in the past years. In addition, local governments of the four big cities have developed integration policies that support activities of migrant organisations, on the condition that these activities promote integration into society. This implies a **policy shift away from the subsidising of general running activities of migrant organisations**. On the local, provincial and national level, government also funds support structures for migrant organisations, which help to equip them with the necessary skills for organisational development and link them up with other networks and groups.

## Integration

The current integration policy under the responsibility of the Minister for Immigration and Integration puts a stronger focus on integration in the social and cultural domain than on integration in the economic domain. The **strengthening of social cohesion and shared citizenship** are key targets of integration policy. Current policy documents and governmental reports stress participation as an area of concern. However, they do

not elaborate but rather neglect the link between migrant volunteering and integration. Stemming from earlier integration policies, the Newcomer Integration Programs that emerged from the Newcomer Integration Act (1998) encourage the volunteering of new immigrants in order to familiarise them with society and improve their chances on the labour market.

## Civil society as opportunity structure – chances and challenges

The Netherlands has a thriving civil society in which volunteering has always been considered a cornerstone. This tradition has offered considerable opportunities to immigrant communities and created a favourable climate for the setting up of migrant associations. In addition, an impressive support structure for migrant organisations has emerged over the past

decades facilitated by government. Migrant organisations can make use of the potential and chances that such a strong civil society holds for them to empower their own communities. There are, however, a number of **challenges**, which both host society and migrant communities need to tackle in the near future:

- The current wave of xenophobia and the hardened public integration debate has contributed to a strong focus on assimilation in integration policy. There is an urgent need for higher awareness on the part of Dutch society that integration is a two way process and requires efforts from both sides. At present it is predominantly the immigrant who is held responsible for success or failure of the integration process.
- Resistance to change in mainstream voluntary organisations may constitute a strong and long lasting barrier to migrant volunteering. Encouragement of and investment in long-term transformation processes are necessary to overcome this barrier.
- Special attention is needed for third country nationals whose application for asylum status has been turned down as well as third country nationals applying for a residence status on other grounds than political asylum (i.e. medical grounds, humanitarian). Volunteering may help them to give meaning to their life and, therefore, should be considered as a basic right irrespective of their legal status.
- There are still pockets in the legal framework which downgrade volunteering: for instance people registered as unemployed may not freely volunteer unless they have been unemployed for a long time. This also affects third country nationals. The inherent message is that volunteering is of secondary value to society, which does not encourage participation through volunteering.
- Special attention needs to be given to the second and third generation of immigrants and women: they are key-holders to integration processes and at the same time threatened by exclusion.

## 2.2. Hungary

Hungary is different to the other participating countries in several respects with regard to volunteering, integration and immigration. The proportion of foreign citizens residing in the country for more than a year was stable over the last decade, at between around **1.2-1.6% of the population**. It should be strongly emphasised, however, that the profile of immigrants in Hungary is distinctive in that **more than 85% of the foreigners come from**

### Immigrants are younger and better educated than indigenous Hungarians.

The proportion of foreigners in the older age groups (over 60) is rather low, less than 10% compared to the 20% of the indigenous population. 45% of immigrants are younger than 29, whereas only 38% of Hungarians belong to this

### Integration of third country nationals is not on the policy agenda – let alone their integration through volunteering.

The only debate concerning “foreigners” and gaining special interest took place in the context of the 2005 referendum on dual citizenship of ethnic Hungarians living abroad – which was rejected. The debate on integration is, thus, still very much linked to **naturalisation and citizenship**. The Hungarian immigration

### Volunteering in Hungary

The voluntary sector is rather weak in Hungary because of the strict repression of social movements during the socialist period. Between 1993 and 2000 the number of employees of NGOs doubled, however it still in-

**European countries** (an overwhelming majority from Romania, Serbia and Ukraine) **and more than 60% of all of the immigrants are of Hungarian origin**. This means that a great proportion of the few immigrants in Hungary are ethnic Hungarians. They speak the language and are familiar with the Hungarian culture, and this means that ‘integration of foreigners’ takes on a particular meaning.

age group. Approximately 57% of all immigrants (over 18 years) have completed a secondary education, compared to 38% of the Hungarian population. About 25% of all immigrants (over 25 years) have a tertiary education, compared to 12.5% of the indigenous population.

legislation sets out three different procedures: one for ethnic Hungarians, one for citizens of countries of the EEA area<sup>3</sup>, and the third for foreigners from outside the EEA area with no Hungarian origins. Ethnic Hungarians are clearly advantaged with regard to obtaining Hungarian citizenship. The other element highlighted in Hungary in integration debates is the **situation of Roma minority** who form the most deprived group in Hungarian society.

involved less than 2% of the active Hungarian population. The **400,000 volunteers** engaging in organisations counted in 2003 worked 34,000,000 hours, which would be equivalent to 16,000 full-time jobs.

In a European comparison, volunteering in an organised setting is less common in Hungary than in other countries of Europe:

### Average yearly hours spent on volunteer work among persons aged 20 to 74<sup>4</sup>

	EE	HU	SI	FI	FR	BE	DE	UK	SE	NO
Volunteer work*	8	5	12	37	37	42	55	24	36	30
Among women	5	4	6	30	30	33	45	26	28	24
Among men	12	6	18	43	49	52	65	23	44	43

\*Volunteer work is work for an organisation or work directed to people via an organisation. It is done free of charge or for a minor fee.

On the other side, Hungarians are forerunners when it comes to non-organisational volunteering: the amount of time spent in **non-organisational voluntary action** (direct help given that is not arranged by organi-

sations) **is about nine times the amount of the organisational one**. Research has shown that almost 40% of the society was somehow involved in volunteering, of which 10,5% volunteered for organisations.

### Average yearly hours spent on informal help done for other households among persons aged 20 to 74<sup>2</sup>

	EE	HU	SI	FI	FR	BE	DE	UK	SE	NO
Informal help*	84	64	49	67	55	33	51	56	50	49
Among women	78	50	37	73	55	37	53	65	56	49
Among men	90	80	61	67	61	29	49	46	44	43

\*Informal help to other households is direct help given by persons not arranged by any organisation. This help is recorded only when mentioned in the diary that it was done for another household. Some help was not reported because it was given simultaneously with work for own household.

The fact that people tend to volunteer in an informal way can partially be explained by the widespread and strong mistrust in associations and organisations deriving from the high level of corruption and the bad experiences of the socialist period. The other explanation is the existence of activities based on reciprocity called **kaláka** in Hungarian: it is still common in Hungarian villages for men to help each oth-

er in turns to build their houses. This type of work can be understood as an alternative currency that can encompass different types of activities such as babysitting, agricultural work, cleaning, cooking, etc. This is the type of work what appears in the surveys as (voluntary) help done for acquaintances, friends, family members and also for the local community.

**The 2005 Law on Public Interest Volunteer Activities** legally recognises volunteers and their activities and allows for them to sign a bilateral contract with their organisations setting out the obligations and rights of the contracting parties. It is interesting to note that non-EEA citizens are specifically named in this law. It opens the **possibility for foreigners to volunteer irrespective of their status and nationality. Migrant volunteering is, thus, theoretically possible, the legal and policy environment is friendly**

**and positive towards it** – but the **lack of knowledge and awareness** of these possibilities both among immigrants and volunteer organisations still hinder further exploitation of these possibilities.

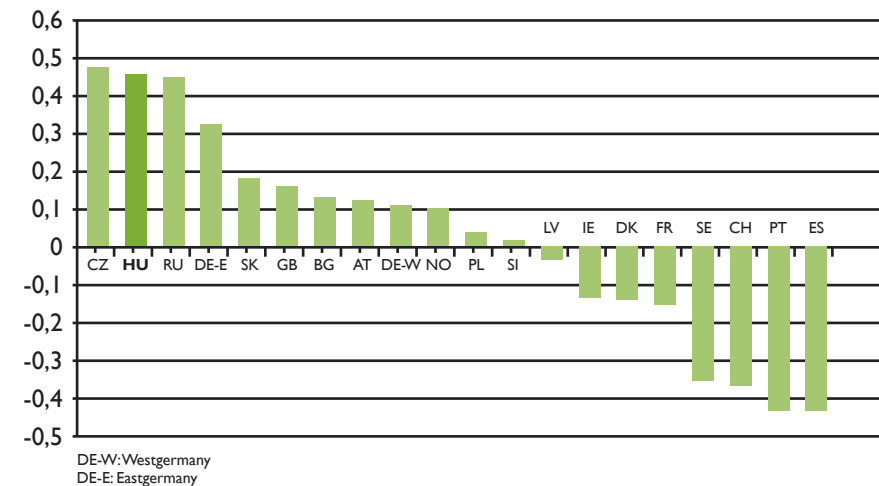
The Hungarian INVOLVE partners carried out small-scale **action research**. During the research, 29 NGOs either dealing with immigrant or refugee related issues or working with volunteers were contacted (including the National Volunteer Centre).

- Only one organisation reported having refugee volunteers. 5 organisations work with foreigners from Western Europe and the US (mostly students). All other organisations that answered the research question (18 out of 29) do not work with foreign volunteers.
- 10 of these latter organisations stated, however, that they had not thought about this possibility and were enthusiastic about developing strategies to involve migrant volunteers. This is evidence that raising awareness about migrant volunteering still is a major challenge in Hungary.

These results show that migrant volunteering still seems to be rare. However, it also indicates that organisations are positive about it and some do already have experiences that could be transferred to other contexts.

**Next to lack of public awareness, severe xenophobia** is perceived to be a major barrier towards migrant volunteering. In an international comparison, Hungary is second on the rank of countries according to anti-immigrant attitude (as shown in 2003 research of the International Social Survey Programme on national identity and anti-immigrant attitudes).

**Means of anti-immigrant attitude in different European countries, Database: ISSP (2003)**



**Raising awareness of the benefits of volunteering for the integration of migrants and the fight against the negative public image of migrants seem to be the main actions, which could develop this issue further.**

Additionally, **the concept of integration through volunteering and participation shall be extended to the Roma minority**, who also have to face hostile attitudes and in many cases live in much more precarious social situations than third country national immigrants.

## 2.3. England

### Immigration in England

In 2001, 3.5 million people living in Britain were born in countries outside of the European Union; this comprises 83% of all people born outside the British Isles, and just over 6% of the total population. Once, the word “immigration” would have been used to describe only people who came to spend the rest of their working lives in the UK. However, in recent decades the international movement of people has become more complex: some people spend a few years in Britain before returning home or moving on to another country. Others who are foreign-born may become citizens, and no longer see themselves as immigrants. At the same time, the term ‘immigrant’ may be used to describe the British-born children of immigrant parents.

**Immigrants / migrants / third country nationals are a very heterogeneous group and they differ across many dimensions – at least as much from each other as they do from the population at**

### Volunteering in England

The British government has a **strong commitment to volunteering**: Several departments have an interest in volunteering, fund projects – and have developed their own strategy on volunteering. A number of national volunteer organisations, such as Volunteering England and Community Service Volunteers; a number of refugee and black and minority ethnic agencies have a commitment to promoting volunteering nationwide. These include the Refugee Council and the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations (CEMVO).

**Generally speaking, there is a sound infrastructure for volunteering in the UK and England. Yet, there is no separate policy aimed at facilitating volun-**

**teering by immigrants.**

There is for example a big disparity between low-paid immigrants (earning less than £149.20 a week; e.g. 63% of Bangladesh immigrants) and high earners (earning more than £750 a week; e.g. 40% of the US immigrants). In general, new immigrants appear to be younger than the British Isles born population (mean age is 28, compared to 39) and less educated – which makes them likely to take up jobs that are low paid, dirty and dangerous.

In the period up to the early 1990s, emigration away from the UK was greater than immigration. In 2004 an estimated 223,000 more people migrated to the UK than migrated abroad. Study or work are the main reasons for migration. In 2003 more than one quarter of all in-migrants (135,000 people) came to study in the UK, more than one fifth (114,000 in-migrants) came for work-related reasons and had a specific job to go to (www.statistics.gov.uk).

**teering by immigrants.** In the “Compact” agreement, however, Government and the voluntary and community sector agree to tackle discrimination, to ensure that volunteering is **open to all**.

**In the UK, 26.4 million** people volunteer informally and **17.9 million** people volunteer formally, contributing together in 2003 **3.8 billion hours of voluntary work**. Home Office research suggests that **British born people are more likely to be volunteering (informally or formally) than those born abroad**.

Two studies found that between **22 and 29% of refugees and asylum seekers had volunteered in the UK** –those with higher

qualifications being more likely to volunteer. There are a growing number of reports exploring volunteering by refugees and asylum seekers but **no research** has been identified which focuses on **volunteering by** other new immigrants and **third country nationals** in general.

Existing research indicates that volunteering by people from **black and minority ethnic**

### The INVOLVE research

To further explore these issues, the INVOLVE partners in England have looked at the wider research, and made two visits to find out more about volunteering by third country nationals – one to South Holland, Lincolnshire, and one to a migrant organisation in West London. They interviewed a range of people, volunteers and professionals working with volunteers and migrants. They also drew on information provided at the INVOLVE conference in Wolverhampton, October 2005, and by the England INVOLVE expert group.

Through the limited sample of the research

**communities and by refugees and asylum seekers is likely to be informal**, and therefore under-reported. They tend not to see their activities as volunteering, but rather as ‘doing what comes naturally’. Based on this, it is likely that many third country nationals do volunteer in England and make a very valuable contribution.

the INVOLVE expert group England found that **more established immigrants may volunteer more**, especially within their community but also with other organisations, and that others **who have been here less time are more likely to volunteer informally**, if they volunteer. Pressures of low paid work, lack of English language and lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities and benefits are very real barriers, in particular for newer arrivals, yet those who volunteer report many benefits, including improved language and work-related skills.

### Volunteering by third country nationals

Interviewees made it clear that many third country nationals struggle to make a living, and this has an impact on their ability to volunteer.

- They may have to work long hours in very difficult conditions for little pay. Their time to learn English and volunteer is very limited.
- Often they do not know about volunteering opportunities and benefits, and lack the language and time to find out.
- New immigrants in rural areas are particularly isolated, and therefore encounter more barriers to volunteering. In some rural areas there is almost no voluntary sector infrastructure to offer support.
- Employers are unlikely to assist migrant workers with opportunities to learn English and integrate in other ways.
- New immigrants are often in deprived communities, where their arrival can fuel animosity among existing residents. People may fear taking an active role as a community volunteer in these circumstances.

### Migrant community volunteering: benefits and barriers

Migrant networks and organisations are a key factor in enabling people to settle and get work. Migrant community organisations rely on volunteers – however, they are often under-resourced.

- Community volunteers often have many commitments, personal, work-related and voluntary.
- Community volunteers may have to deal with difficult and sometimes traumatic issues relating to poverty, harassment, ill health, depression, immigration difficulties and other problems. This can lead to stress, and tension within communities.
- Because of poverty, volunteers may move or experience other disruption to their lives – it is therefore hard for them to make a regular commitment.
- Community organisations often lack the resources to provide training, support and expenses to volunteers.
- Community organisations can be inexperienced in volunteer management, and frequently do not have a paid worker who can manage volunteers.
- Community organisations may lack awareness of and contact with the volunteering infrastructure (such as Volunteer Centres).

### Volunteering outside the migrant community sector

People who volunteer may do so for many reasons – to help others, to learn English, to gain skills and experience. Research suggests that, for third country nationals who volunteer outside migrant and black and ethnic minority-led organisations, improving their English and their employment prospects can be an important motivation.

Some organisations in England have worked

hard to include refugees and people from black and minority ethnic communities. Their experience shows that organisations achieve success in involving third country nationals as volunteers through being **open to change** at different levels, and through involvement in partnerships and networks in order to build diversity in volunteering. Good practice includes:

- **Whole agency commitment to diversity** and volunteering.
- **Creative marketing and outreach**, with awareness of importance of word of mouth recommendations.
- **Flexible recruitment** and volunteer management styles, responsive to the needs and interests of volunteers.
- **Appropriate support**, supervision and payment of expenses.
- **Partnerships**, involvement of intermediary/support organisations.

There are many good projects within the refugee sector that provide a model for offering support to new arrivals, often involving volunteers: these ways of working should be

extended so that other new arrivals can benefit. For this reason, some examples of refugee projects are included in the good practice section (see 4.3.)

### Legal and policy barriers

The INVOLVE England research indicates that the main policies and legal provisions that hinder volunteering by third country nationals are:

- Lack of infrastructure and other support for migrant workers and migrant organisations.
- Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checking procedures.
- The failure of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate to distinguish between unpaid employment and volunteering.

In addition, negative government policy combined with media and public hostility lead to segregation, rather than integration.

### Volunteering and integration

The limited research that could be carried out in England revealed different understandings of 'integration'. For many, employment stands out as an important indicator of integration. A Brazilian migrant worker interviewed for the INVOLVE research said:

"Integration means we are all from different countries but getting on well together. Some people don't want to integrate. The English don't want to integrate and some of the migrants don't want to integrate."

An Indian interviewee talked about having multiple identities, based on faith, mother tongue and nationality, and the need to balance these with adopting British values: "*Most communities integrate well as long as they are willing to share values*". A Moroccan volunteer said it was not about integration, it was to do with rights, responsibilities and equality for all humans, and observing these wherever you are.

An important perception of integration put forward by many working in the migrant and refugee sector was that the **integration**

**process must be seen as starting on the day of arrival.** Although some people may be only short-term migrants, many aspire to stay longer or return, and many do settle. Their early experience in England can have a major impact on their longer-term well-being, experience and contribution.

**Organisations that had involved third country nationals as volunteers, reported that their work often evolved as a result in ways that were seen as beneficial. The existence of migrant-led organisations also appears to make a positive contribution to integration.** The initiative of individuals and community groups in actively seeking out pathways to integration is of great importance: taking control of and making choices about one's activities is key.

The INVOLVE England research therefore suggests strongly that volunteering, whether migrant-led or more 'mainstream', plays a key role in enabling individuals, communities and organisations to integrate.

## 2.4. Germany

In Germany, according to the Federal Office of Statistics, 15.3 Million persons have a “migration background” (19% of the German population) meaning that they are either foreigners (9%); ethnic Germans born abroad (such as “Spätaussiedler”); naturalized Germans born abroad or second generation immigrants of German nationality (10%). **Third country nationals amount to 68.3% (4.6 Million persons) of the total foreign population.** 26.1% (1.8 Million persons) of the third country nationals in Germany are of Turkish nationality, 14.3% hold the nationality of one of the successor of the former Yugoslavia, and 7.5% are nationals of a county of the former Soviet Union. 34.2% of the Turkish population

and 20.7% of nationals from the former Yugoslavia were born in Germany, but only 3.4 of those from the former Soviet Union. 29.1% of the third country nationals in Germany live there for more than 20 years (46.1% of the Turks and 38.1% of the nationals of the former Yugoslavia).

Since the new immigration and integration act came into force in January 2005 there is a public debate on the rights and duties of migrants regarding their integration into the German society. After having denied being an immigration country, for over 40 years Germany now faces the reality of more than four decades of immigration and an absence of integration programmes.

The following institutional developments in Germany have to be seen in this context:

- The former Federal Office for Asylum Seekers and Refugees was restructured and renamed as the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in 2004. It is in charge of integration measures and project funding (community based projects).
- The new Commissioner for Integration (appointed in 2005) is now located in the Chancellery (before they were in the German Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth). The position has been upgraded from the post of state secretary to state minister.

In this context **the importance of promoting migrant volunteering – both in mainstream organisations and migrants’ organisations – as a means of better integration is recognised widely in Germany.** But at the same time there is a major **fear of the development of parallel societies** of migrants through their ethnic organisations and networks. The Turkish and Muslim communities in particular face this reproach. The question whether migrant organisations foster integration into society or whether the bonding social capital contributes to further segregation of migrants within their own community is fiercely discussed in Germany. As research shows, however, (see below) **mi-**

**grant organisations do play a role in empowering migrants and in opening routes to informal and non-formal learning.**

The topic of migrant volunteering is quite high on the agenda, especially at the local and regional level. In addition, the German Commissioner for Integration and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees recognise the **impact of volunteering on participation in community life and integration of migrants.** Some states and municipalities have already set up policy strategies or programmes to promote migrant volunteering both in mainstream associations and migrants’ organisations.

Regarding governmental policies on volun-

teering and integration of migrants, there are already **targeted policies** linking both areas at local, regional and national level. Within the framework of the new integration act, the Federal Office funds language lessons and ori-

entation courses for Migration and Refugees. Since 2003 the Federal Office is in charge of funding projects aimed at the integration of migrants who are ethnic Germans or of foreign nationality.

In this framework the **concept of integration into community life is targeted at:**

- Building up contacts between the host country population and migrants.
- Improving acceptance within the host country population.
- Strengthening identity.
- Facilitating migrants’ potential for self-help.
- Introducing local services and offers such as associations, education centres, and youth clubs.
- Development of integration measures through pilot projects.

To achieve these objectives local level initiatives are funded to promote participation in community life. Projects set up and run by local networks including voluntary initiatives are preferred for funding.

There is no common definition of integration yet in Germany. The meaning varies between assimilation of migrants into the host society and multiculturalism. Mostly it is defined as a two-way process between migrants and the host society aiming at enabling equal opportunities for participation in social, economic, cultural and political life and allowing at the same time for cultural variety. Commitment to the basic values and the constitution

of the German society is seen as a basic requirement.

In 2003 the German **working group on migration/integration within the German Network on Civic Activities** (Bundesnetzwerk Bürgerschaftliches Engagement BBE) was set up to bring together experts from different levels and professions to analyse and to discuss the issue of migrant volunteering, and to promote and facilitate migrant volunteering both in German mainstream volunteer organisations and in ethnic associations and networks. This working group meets four times a year and agreed to act as the German National Advisory Group for the INVOLVE project.

The main topics discussed during the last meetings were:

- Involving migrants’ organisations in discussions.
- Qualification and training needs of migrants’ organisations.
- Barriers to migrants’ participating in German organisations.
- Ethnic mainstreaming in German associations.
- Outcomes of the survey on volunteering of the Turkish population in Germany.
- Networking between municipalities, German associations and migrants’ organisations.



In the last five years there has been quite a lot of **research on migrant volunteering**, networking and social capital building in Germany. Yet, there is still a high demand for further research since most of the studies have a more explorative and qualitative character, and are limited to several migration groups or regions.

Research shows that migrants volunteer mostly within their own communities and networks and less in German or volunteer organisations. Migrant organisations are perceived to play an important role when it comes to identity building, to the creation of bonding social capital, the advocacy of migrant rights and the bridging between migrants and the host society. In this respect, research also revealed the integrative potential of effective, professionally led migrant organisations. Migrant groups that set up effective organisational structures to lobby for their interests tend to be more integrated into the host societies than groups with a lower organisational capacity.

Attitudes **towards volunteering differ** between the migrant population and Germans: As in other countries volunteering is generally defined in Germany as an activity done in a more or less organised and formal context. However, migrants tend to volunteer informally. E.g. there is **no wording** in Turkish that would reflect the **notion of “volunteering”** as Western societies tend to define it. The notion of “gönüllü” comes closest and means “do something with your heart”.

The 2001 **report on the state of the art on migrants’ volunteering by INBAS-Sozialforschung** (commissioned by the German Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth) summarised for the first time research studies in Germany on the issue of migrant volunteering.

In the framework of the 2002-2003 MEM-VOL project (see I.I.) that was initiated by

INBAS-Sozialforschung action research on good practice was combined with a collection of research findings on migrant volunteering in five EU Member States.

In 2004 the national **survey on volunteering of Turkish migrants** (on behalf of the German Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth) was carried out by the Foundation Centre for Studies on Turkey (Stiftung Zentrum für Türkeistudien) in addition to the second national survey on volunteering.

This study shows that **64% of the Turkish population** is already active in associations, organisations and informal initiatives (a level comparable to the 70% of Germans active). However, **only 10% engage in volunteering** (compared to 33% of Germans). The higher their level of education and the longer they have stayed in Germany the more likely they are to volunteer. Interestingly, 50% of the interviewees state that they would be interested in volunteering if asked or if they had the opportunity to do so – a **huge potential** to be tapped into. 35% of the active Turks are involved in both mainstream and migrant organisations, 40% only in Turkish organisations, 16% only in German mainstream organisations, and 9% in international organisations.

Between 2004 and 2006 INBAS-Sozialforschung carried out a feasibility study on intercultural and informal learning, participation and integration through volunteering<sup>6</sup> (on behalf of the German Ministry for Education and Research). This study combined research at the individual, organisational and regional level through

- Biographical case studies with migrant volunteers to identify activities, learning characteristics, motives and barriers to becoming a volunteer;
- A survey among migrant organisations to collect different forms and developments of migrant volunteer organisations, and structures to promote or to hinder intercultural and informal learning; and
- Network analyses to investigate networking and partnerships of migrant volunteer organisations, mainstream volunteer organisations and other German institutions.

2.

The findings show, that migrants **develop skills** through volunteering that have a major importance for their integration process in respect of different dimensions such as cultural (language, values, standards and rules); structural (position in education, labour market and other relevant areas of society); social (interaction and participation); and emotional (identification and the feeling of belonging) integration.

As regards organisations, migrant associations and groups which are committed to foster integration of their target groups were subject of the research. In most of these organisations the framework conditions concerning finances, personal, and premises are insufficient. This hinders learning processes and acquiring of skills by the migrant volunteers. Through targeted support of migrant organisations and adequate training measures the framework conditions could be improved explicitly. Thus the organisations could be stabilized and exchange and cooperation structures could be developed, which are major conditions for migration organisations work for integration.

Migrant organisations gain access to multiple resources through networking and coopera-

tion such as information, access to premises and to project funding, support in organisation management and in planning and organizing activities, events and festivities.

Social recognition is the critical point when it comes to **building social capital** and networking of migrant organisations with mainstream organisations and public bodies. There are distinct barriers that hinder networking and contacts with German institutions mostly because of mutual ignorance, prejudice and the lack of recognition.

A main result of the study is that it is most important to **initiate trans-cultural exchange processes between migrant organisations and mainstream organisations and German public bodies** to develop networking and to access resources and thus to foster integration.

The newest developments concerning integration and civic participation in Germany are the following:

- Summit on integration by the German Chancellery (Integrationsgipfel) in July 2006 including migrants' organisations; a national integration plan is to be developed by summer 2007 by working groups that will be set up in October 2006.
- Conference on Islam by the German Ministry of the Interior (Islamkonferenz) in September 2006 including Muslim organisations as a start up for a two- to three-years process to develop a societal contract with Muslims in Germany.
- Meeting of the subcommittee of the German Bundestag in October 2006 on volunteering and integration.

## 2.5. Austria

In 2001, foreign citizens in Austria accounted for 9% of the 8 million population, 15% of the population had a migration background. The migrant population is heterogeneous regarding national origin, social positioning, and cultural identity. 45% of immigrants come from former Yugoslavia and, 18% were Turkish. A further 10% were from Asia, Africa and America. As well as these 'new' migrants, 16% of foreign residents in 2001 have been born in Austria – adding a “second generation” aspect to integration debates.

Naturalisation in Austria for first and second-generation immigrants is difficult due to the rather strict provisions based on the “*ius sanguinis*” principle. The **laws governing the integration of immigrants into Austrian society is perceived to be the least favourable in Western Europe.**

In Austria at present there is **no uniform definition for integration** in the public discourse. As in other countries, there are different understandings of this complex concept with a range of meanings from “assimilation” to “cultural diversity” used as the basis of in-

tegration. There seems to be some consensus in contemporary research, however, that a central element to integration is **reciprocity**. Both migrants and the host country population need to be involved in the process. In the public opinion a unidirectional understanding of integration predominates. Immigrants have to adapt and to assimilate. This way of thinking is connected with increasing tendencies of xenophobia and racism, which are exploited also in political debate and election campaigns. On the legislative and administrative level, the practical experience of integration in Austria is characterised by **inconsistencies between federal and provincial government policies**. While the legal framework regarding residence, access to labour market, and naturalisation is one of the most restrictive in the EU, local governments differ a lot in the execution of federal integration policy. In Austria, integration was reflected in the context of labour migration for a long time, immigrants have been seen as guest workers that do not need to integrate. An essential change in immigration policy goes back to the early 1990s, after

2000 (installation of right-wing government) the integration debate in Austria focused on the perceived “failures of integration” and “the integration deficit of immigrants” leading to the formulation of an “integration agreement” unilaterally forcing immigrants to participate in German courses but not putting a focus on other empowering measures. There is a continued intensification of restrictions regarding all aspects of immigration policy. This concerns also naturalisation policy. Since 2005 immigrants who would like to become Austrian citizens have to pass a test of German language competences and knowledge of Austrian culture.

In Austria, **integration is not at all connected to volunteering of third country nationals**: volunteering generally has come only recently onto the government's agenda, and even then its presence is limited. The 2001 UN International Year of the Volunteer served as a catalyst for volunteering and since 2003 the Austrian Council for Volunteering has been promoting volunteering in Austria and trying to strengthen the awareness about the importance of volunteering – however, no link has been made to third country national vol-

unteering. It appears to be that neither on the provincial or the federal level migrant volunteering is perceived as a means for integration. Furthermore there are no specific regulations concerning migrant volunteering; volunteering is strictly based on a legal status (right of residence), there is **no access to volunteering for asylum seekers**.

**There is almost no representative data about the extent and the background of migrants volunteering.** What is known from the existing literature is that **volunteering of third country nationals happens primarily in an informal context or in migrant (self) organisations**. In many cases volunteering is used as a strategy for self-help and self-empowerment to overcome difficulties, which are linked to the ethnic background of the volunteer. Up to now, migrant organisations were neither perceived as political nor as social actors. Their key role in integration - providing a set of important functions, such as protection, assistance and compensation for social and economic barriers, cultural identity building and the possibilities of establish ties with the host society – have not been recognised.

Volunteering of third country nationals is currently still **facing important barriers** in Austria:

- Too little or no targeted core funding for migrant organisations.
- Lack of social security and insurances for volunteers.
- No accessibility for asylum seekers to volunteering.
- Lack of awareness of volunteering opportunities and lack of public recognition of good practice in migrant volunteering.
- Lack of access to mainstream volunteering organisations.
- Weak implementation of European anti-discrimination directives.

Primary research with older migrants (aged above 50) suggests that there is a **high potential for volunteering amongst migrants**: between 64% and 82% state that volunteering is important for them, nearly 50% would get involved if asked or if they had the opportunity. When asked about voluntary engagement, migrants tend to report neighbourhood help as main activity (nearly 33% do so), which contributes to the fact that **migrant**

### The INVOLVE research

To counterbalance the lack of research on migrant volunteering, the Austrian INVOLVE partners have conducted an **exploratory study** based on interviews with migrant volunteers active in migrant or mainstream volunteer organisations. The Austrian expert groups served as a reservoir to identify 23 interviewees.

The research was based on the above-mentioned official definition of volunteering including a “certain degree of organised setting” for the voluntary activity. The interviewed volunteers represent a broad variety of volunteer activities in different fields. All of the interviewed volunteers have been involved for more than 2 years, and some for more than 15 years.

**Motivations** are both personal and altruistic: very often they are connected with volunteers own life experiences. One interviewee reported that the need to learn the German language has been a major barrier for him to integrate. He is now organising German courses for migrants. Creating a positive image of migrants in Austria was also mentioned by interviewees, an expression of the need to inform the host society about migrant cultures and to promote intercultural exchange. Personal motivations such as acquiring certain competences, meeting others or having fun were also motivations generally stated by

**volunteering might be under-reported** as generally an “organised setting” is deemed to be an element for a volunteer activity excluding spontaneous neighbourly help out. Research suggests as well that **migrant volunteering happens to a great extent in migrant organisations** – there is a big potential to open mainstream volunteering to migrant volunteers.

the interviewees. The interviewees also suggest that the main difference between their experience of volunteering and that of native Austrians was the absence of an experience of discrimination, which often underlies migrant volunteering.

**Recognition** appears to be crucial when it comes to the role volunteering plays in integration. Interestingly, the interviewed migrants indicated that success in integration as the best form of recognition. But it is not enough to have a limited recognition of the way in which migrants contribute to their communities while integrating, rather there needs to be widespread recognition throughout the public and the host society.

The most important **Barriers** to volunteer appear to be time and money: “You have to be able to afford volunteering”. The payment of travel and subsistence expenses for volunteers can counterbalance this barrier but migrants are still very often in precarious financial situations, which often prevents them from getting involved. In some cases women had to give up their volunteer engagement because their husbands did not see the benefits for them to get involved. Cultural differences in the perception of volunteering are, thus, still an issue. The missing long term funding of migrant organisations is perceived as an additional

barrier: funding is often project based which makes longer term planning difficult. In some cases migrant organisations have to compete with mainstream organisations that are better aware of funding and application procedures. Generally, there is a lack of information provided by government on funding opportunities and procedures to apply.

Accordingly, the respondents **suggest** longer term strategic funding for migrant organisations. The payment of expenses and insurances for migrant volunteers will also be an incentive for more migrants to get involved. There should be training programmes for migrant organisations that want to effectively involve migrants into volunteering: there is potential for more organisations to involve volunteers but it is not realised because migrants do not feel able to actively engage or simply because they know too little about the host community’s legal provisions and important stakeholders.

Migrant organisations should be better

linked to peer **networks** and networks with mainstream organisations: Pooling energies and sharing resources is especially important for smaller migrant organisations. Even if networking between migrant and mainstream organisations is deemed crucial, many respondents feel that it is still underdeveloped. In terms of creating mutual understanding and making integration a two-way process this form of collaboration clearly needs to be better exploited.

The interviewees see **volunteering as a major instrument towards integration**: it empowers migrants who learn how to organize, who get better acquainted with the local community and build social networks among themselves as well as with key people in local communities, for example, when applying for funding or campaigning for migrants’ rights. Additionally it leads to a better recognition of migrants by the host community: One interviewee stated that

“ My volunteer engagement has opened doors – I have met very interesting people and I feel that I am well accepted in my community now. ”

Finally, women and migrants especially who do not have good knowledge of German can fight isolation through getting involved in volunteer activities.

### The INVOLVE project has strengthened ongoing activities in the following fields:

- Opening of mainstream-organisations towards immigrants / third country nationals.
- Including migrant volunteering in the official reporting about volunteering in Austria.
- Involving immigrants in special volunteering activities on the local level, i.e. conflict management in parks, dialogue between ethnic groups.
- Research activities in the field of migrant volunteering.

## 2.6. Spain

The Spanish case is quite particular because over the past two decades, this country has ceased to be country of emigration and **has become a country of immigration**. Spain has become the gateway for immigration flows from Africa and from Latin America. While in 1985, the date when Spain joined the EU, only around 250.000 foreign nationals were registered, representing by 2005 8.5% of the Spanish population, that is some 3.730.610 people. Relative to the other countries in this report, immigration is a much more recent phenomenon so that the debate on integration policies in Spain are much less developed.

As in other European countries, immigrants are a **highly heterogeneous group**, but four countries, Morocco, Ecuador, Romania and Colombia, are the source of more than 50% of the immigrants to Spain. Many immigrants come to work in the so-called “underground economy” and find themselves with precarious employment conditions. Predominantly immigrants are found in industries like agriculture, services, and construction. The exploitation of these immigrants is often linked to their **situation of irregularity**, which makes them

particularly vulnerable. To remedy the various problems irregular immigrants face and cause, the Spanish state has introduced since 1986 **6 regularisation or extraordinary documentation processes** (1986, 1991, 1996, 2000, 2001 and 2005).

The change of the Spanish government in 2004 has brought about some significant modifications in the way immigration and integration are tackled: the responsibility for immigration policy was transferred from the Ministry of Home Affairs to the **Ministry of Employment and Social Affairs**, through the creation of the **Directorate of Integration of immigrants and the Secretary of Immigration and Emigration**.

**National Plans for Integration of immigrants** do not develop measures in order to promote volunteering among migrants. Two National Plans between 1994 and 2004 developed actions in response to the economic, housing, social and cultural needs of immigrant population, as well as racism-prevention and policies actively promoting intercultural coexistence. The following administrative measures were created in both Plans:

- **The High Council for Immigration Policy** (Consejo Superior de Política de Inmigración), which is in charge of co-ordinating the authorities of the different public administrations at national, regional and local level which relate to or coincide with policy for the integration of immigrants.
- **The Forum for Social Integration of Immigrants**, where immigrants’ associations and organisations working in the field of integration of immigrants as well as public administration at different levels come together. The Forum is to be consulted about global plans and programs at State level affect the social integration of immigrants.
- **The Permanent Immigration Observatory** provides information and advice on integration issues collaborating closely with research centres, NGOs and immigrants associations in Spain. This enables all of the above to update continually the facts and figures used in their immigration projects.

The third Plan named **National Plan for the Citizenship and Integration** for 2007-2010 is currently in the consultation process with the above-mentioned agencies being involved. These plans develop coherent policy activity towards immigration and integration and have shown that government tackles the phenomenon more and more as a structural one that needs specific attention.

The **government of the Autonomous Communities** also have important powers in issues relative to the social integration of immigrants: health, education, social well-being, vocational training and employment are areas where the autonomous communities have shared or exclusive competences. The 17 Autonomous Communities have developed their own plans of action, which add in many cases more administrative processes and immigration forums to deal with immigrations. **The policy landscape for integration issues is therefore scattered and complex.**

**An example of participation of migrants promoted by an Autonomous Region is the Canary Islands Forum on Immigration** that creates a channel for participation, consultation, dialogue of the regional government with bodies and institutions involved in the process of integrat-

ing immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons resident in the region. The council consists of **four representatives** of migrant or refugee associations and **five representatives** of non-governmental social or volunteer organisations with projects to assist immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers. This forum has been given a legal framework and is directly consulted by the Canary Island Government Ministry for Employment and Social Affairs and offers immigrants the opportunity to express their points of view on the dynamics of the migratory phenomenon and the living conditions of immigrants in the region at the highest level.

On the **local level, both mainstream and migrant volunteer organisations offer** information about resources, legal assistance, Spanish classes, vocational training, medical treatment, employment advice services and raise awareness of the local population about the positive contribution immigrants make to the host community. However, **migrant organisations are still in the beginning of being set-up**, structured and networked at regional and national level. The most important voluntary organisations in Spain, both in size and level of governmental influence are mostly composed of Spanish nationals.

### Volunteering in Spain

Volunteering in Spain has also only quite recently received comprehensive and structured attention by government. This interest led to the development of several Plans on Volunteering in the 1990s. However there is **no data available in Spain on immigrants**

**volunteering – the link between volunteering and integration of immigrants has not yet been established.** The recent Third State Plan on Volunteering (2005-2008) at a national level has not mentioned immigrants as a target for promoting volunteering.

## The INVOLVE research

In the framework of the INVOLVE project, the Spanish national expert group has undertaken an explorative **fieldwork based on a questionnaire survey** (500 questionnaires were returned and analysed) about volunteering of immigrants. ARACOVA (migrant associations), the Catalan Federation of Social Volunteering, the Regional Government of Balearic Islands, the Regional Government for Immigration of the Valencian Community and 162 local associations have participated. The Spanish Red Cross collected statistical data from regional offices about the participation of im-

migrant volunteers. The results highlight the following features:

The **Spanish Red Cross** has registered at the beginning of 2006 3.274 volunteers, of which 63% are collaborating actively and regularly. The profile of the foreign volunteer in the Red Cross Spain is that of a woman between the ages of 20-40, with medium-high level education. Half the foreign volunteers in the Red Cross are from Argentina, Colombia, Morocco, Ecuador, France and Venezuela. Providing social services is the area of work with the largest number of immigrant volunteers (33%).

In the case of **immigrant's organisations and local associations**, the following aspects were researched:

### ■ The profile of immigrants volunteers

The percentage of females in volunteering is higher than that of males. The most common age is the one comprising working age people: from 26 to 45 years. Most of the immigrants have been in Spain for over 5 years, which shows that voluntary work starts once settled in the country.

### ■ The concept of volunteering for immigrants

While the official definition of volunteering uses an “organisational framework” as one element of volunteering, many immigrants think of volunteering as an activity where they give time for a service they find useful – regardless of in which context it is done.

### ■ Motivation for volunteering

More than half of the responses in the questionnaires cited altruism and providing help for others. Similar proportions of respondents state the opportunity to learn as major motivation.

### ■ Personal Barriers for Volunteering

In terms of their personal perception about barriers that hinder their participation as volunteers, almost half (46%) state lack of economic resources, for a third (33%) it is lack of personal motivation and the rest (21%) emphasise that the main cause is family responsibilities.

### ■ Volunteer Organisations Barriers

From the volunteer organisations' perspective most of the interviewees (56%) felt that the lack of information on volunteering opportunities is the main barrier for immigrants to get involved.

### ■ Integration through volunteering

Practically all interviewees (92%) believe that participating in volunteering is a way of integrating into the host society. If this is to happen, however, interviewees felt that in many cases the individual immigrant's perception needs to change to be positive about volunteering (43%), that policies in the country where they live need to pay special attention to volunteering and integration (26%), that the immigrants' immediate environment needs to support volunteering (19%). A small percentage of respondents considered that there should be intervention from European policies (4%).

## 2.

## 2.7. France

### A focus on migrants and immigrants in France

The terms “migrants” and “ethnic minorities” do not fit the French context. It makes more sense to speak about “immigrants” and “foreigners”. “Immigrants” are persons of foreign descent and born outside France. According to this definition, people are seen as immigrants even if they acquire French citizenship. A “foreigner” is not necessarily an immigrant as some foreigners (not having French citizenship) were born in France. There are **4.31 million** immigrants in France (**7.4%** of the total

population). This has been a constant number since 1975, which is when the ‘open doors’ approach to immigration ended in France. France is no longer a land of immigration. On the other hand, there are **3.67 million foreigners (6.3%)**, persons living in France without having French nationality. **13.2% of these immigrants are so called “third country nationals”** with a country of origin other than an EU Member State.

### Immigration and integration policy in France

Immigration and integration are closely linked. However, immigration policy is still very much bound up with conditions of entry and stay in France, the control of migratory flows and the struggle against illegal immigration. **Integration policy** has focused mainly on employment measures; housing (to counterbalance the concentration of immigrants in certain ar-

reas); education (with a specific focus on learning French for immigrant children); opening up of social services for every immigrant regardless of his / her legal status; special attention to immigrant women and unaccompanied under age immigrants; and co-development measures preparing returning immigrants for building a new life back in their countries of origin.

A public service for welcoming immigrants has been established with the **Contract for Welcome and Integration** (Contrat d'accueil et d'intégration, **CAI**).

The CAI comprises 4 areas:

- A contract signed by the newly arrived, laying down the conditions for their permanent residence in France (target: 100,000 signed contracts).
- Special training for immigrants.
- Personalized mentoring schemes for the newcomers.
- Specific attention and measures for immigrating women.

The Court of Auditors in France has strongly recommended improvements in public information **concerning the rights of immigrants** (education, housing, health etc.) and better statistics so they can provide more detailed data taking into account ethnic background. There has been so far a **“republican taboo”** prohibiting the collection of specific data related to religion or race - this is considered as confidential and is seen to carry the potential to stigmatise people belonging to minority groups and making “positive discrimination” impossible. Finally, the Court of Auditors recommends a **better coordination between different policy activities**

### Volunteering and immigration in France

The number of volunteers in France has risen from 7.9 million in 1990 (19% of the French population over 18 years old) to **13 million in 2003 (28)**. Little is known - again due to the “republican taboo” on gathering data - about the **number of immigrant volunteers**. Ethnic origin is not separately recorded when counting volunteers. 30% of men aged over 15 are volunteers and 22% of women. The biggest age group is that between 35 and 55 years. Volunteers tend to be employees with a higher

degree and / or practicing a religion. While volunteering (“bénévolat”) mostly happens within not for profit organisations, new forms have been developed in order to strengthen the participation of citizens at local level: **local councils** have been established through which citizens can participate in decision making processes. **Specific councils for foreigners**, who often get involved on a voluntary basis, ensure that they are consulted on issues that concern them (an example of this took place

within government relating to integration, such as social policies, education policies, development cooperation, immigration law and anti-discrimination strategies. A new **National Agency for Social Cohesion and Equal Opportunities** was created in January 2006 after the riots in the suburbs to revive the so-called “Policy of the City”. This Policy was launched in 1991 to bridge the gap between poor areas in the suburbs and more privileged areas. In the latest framework, a **specific voluntary service** has been promoted to open new learning and participation pathways to youngsters, with a focus on young immigrants and immigrants’ children.

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in the 19<sup>th</sup> district of Paris, where 15% of the population is of foreign origin). These councils not only deliberate policy questions on immigrant rights, but also organise events to promote intercultural dialogue with the French-born, ‘indigenous’ citizens, such as common public debates or cultural festivities related to immigrant or French traditional feasts. Some qualitative information has been gathered as to the **profile of immigrant volunteers** and the main fields of their involvement. Immigrants are reported to prefer **volunteer placements with links to their country of origin and cultural immigrant associations**. Mentoring is another important area of involvement: helping other immigrants to solve problems with the neighbourhood, or with the public administration (for instance, Malians in Montreuil are very active in helping other Malians to solve their day to day problems). Volunteer mentors also provide information on the rights and duties of residents in France.

Volunteering is in principle open to both immigrants and French born citizens. However, setting up an organisation has not always been

easy for immigrants. Until 1981, the law with regard to not for profit associations did not apply to this group, and it set up a special authorisation procedure for immigrant organisations. For the past 25 years, however, immigrants have been free to create associations on an equal footing with French born citizens. Despite this, very little is known about associations of immigrants. Some research has been conducted into associations involved in co-development: immigrants getting involved in **“Organisations of International Solidarity”** for the development of their country of origin. Volunteering within these organisations has been promoted by the National Agency for Development (Adri), the National Fund for Social Action and Struggle Against Discrimination (Fasild) and Panos, a private institute. These immigrants are encouraged to contribute to the development of their country of origin through developing constructive relations with their family or villages and creating networks. More than 33% of Malians and Senegalese report being involved in this kind of organisation, as volunteers or donors.

When immigrants get involved in volunteering, the following **areas of engagement** are predominant:

- Organising French lessons for fellow-immigrants.
- Cultural events in order to raise public awareness of their culture and create a positive image in the host society (enabling French citizens to travel to other countries and to discover other cultures without actually moving).
- Mediation activities between inhabitants of local communities preventing inter- or intra- cultural conflicts.
- Mentoring schemes: immigrant employees accompany unemployed immigrants showing ways to gain skills and join the labour market.
- Counselling services by and for immigrants providing information on rights and duties, social services, housing, health related issues etc.

### Main barriers to overcome to promote volunteering among immigrants in France

Immigrants share some of the barriers to volunteering with native French people, such as lack of time, lack of information on volunteering opportunities, bad experiences with volunteer organisations and lack of financial security).

However, there are **specific barriers** that need to be addressed by mainstream volunteer organisations, immigrant organisations and policy makers if volunteering by immigrants is to be promoted:

- **Legal status** appears to be a major barrier, preventing immigrants with unclear or provisional legal residence status from getting involved (fearing visibility in the community, official control and possibly negative consequences). However, immigrant organisations involved in advocacy work to secure legal protection of immigrants have succeeded in recruiting more volunteers – especially those in precarious situations (the clients and communities they campaign for).
- **Language** is clearly perceived as another barrier, especially in mainstream organisations where speaking French is, implicitly or explicitly, a condition for involvement.
- **Lack of self-esteem** prevents many immigrants from volunteering. They often have a negative image of themselves that is reinforced by negative media coverage. They do not feel that they can help others or that volunteering would be beneficial for them.
- **Cultural:** French organisations have cultural barriers which make them hesitant to welcome foreigners as volunteers and to commit to diversity within their organisation.

The **role of volunteering for immigrants** with regard to integration is well known to specialist (volunteer and immigrant) associations but still does not seem to be recognised at policy and public opinion level. Immigrant organisations in particular often feel accused of **fostering “ghettoisation”**. Unfortunately there is not enough data on immigrant volunteering in mainstream organisations – but their engagement in immigrant organisations clearly **contributes to their skills development, higher self-esteem, the creation of social networks and interaction between immigrants and the host community.**

**Volunteering has so far not been on the agenda of policy makers as a means**

**of better integration of immigrants, and too little is known about this due to statistical problems with regard to immigrant volunteering. The INVOLVE project and the dissemination of its results can be a way to change this in France and to further promote volunteering as an instrument and indicator for integration. At a practical level, to strengthen the link to integration and to raise its profile both with immigrants and French society at large, volunteering could be included in training and information courses offered in the framework of the CAI.**

## 3. Barriers to integration and criteria of good practices to overcome these

The panorama of situations in different countries has shown that there are manifold facets to the definition of integration in Europe and that concepts and realities of volunteering vary to a great extent from country to country. In addition, migrants are far from being a homogeneous group, and migrant volunteering is on the agenda of hardly any of the countries researched.

The INVOLVE partners have explored how volunteering can contribute to the better integration of migrants who are third-country nationals, and the better integration of the societies of which they are part. The way integration is understood depends not only on the country concerned, its history and traditions regarding immigration and integration policies, but also on the perspective of different stakeholders: governments tend to prioritise the **acceptance of a “set of rules”**, which are a condition of integration, whereas the voluntary sector and migrants themselves put the focus rather on a **rights based approach**. In the rights based approach, a sense of belonging, safety and welcome, fair and equal treatment and having access to services and employment balance the rather “obligation-based” approach of governments.

### Indicators of integration

How can integration be measured? In what way can good practice within volunteer organisations foster integration? A significant difference between governmental and voluntary sector approaches to integration is that for the former, integration only starts when the migrant is granted legal permission to reside in the country. Voluntary sector organisations and migrants themselves underline that the process of integration to the host society starts **on the day of arrival** regardless of the status that the migrant will or will not be

In order to discuss barriers towards integration and criteria for good practice to overcome these barriers, the INVOLVE partners have agreed to base their work on the European Commission’s definition that **Integration is a “dynamic, long-term, and continuous two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of the host society”**.

This definition provides a basis from which it is possible to identify criteria for good practice. It means that different stakeholders that need to **adapt** their practice in order to foster integration: this includes the host society (government, civil society and the corporate sector) **and** the migrant population. Good practice fosters therefore dynamism, and must contribute on a long-term basis. Integration needs to be understood as a continuous process.

given, and regardless of the possible duration of their stay. Given especially the lengthy and cumbersome asylum procedures with their uncertain results, time should not be wasted waiting for the final decision: time is precious when it comes to integration and much can be lost if migrants experience hostility and frustrating treatment in their first months of stay.

When it comes to indicators of integration, the following indicators are proposed:

- Employment.
- Access to education.
- Attainment of the host community language.
- Contact with migrant community organisations.
- Contact with host society.
- Citizenship.
- Political participation.
- Standard of housing.
- Reporting of racial, cultural or religious harassment.
- Volunteering.**

Interestingly, the British government has named **volunteering** in its integration policy strategy 2005 as one of the indicators for integration. Volunteering does not only contribute to different indicators of integration (see 5.), it is an **indicator of integration in itself**, as it fosters social bonds between members of a society and creates a feeling of belonging. It has a major role to play in efforts to promote integration by governments, the voluntary sector and business.

### Barriers towards integration

If volunteering is an indicator of integration, it is surprising that many governments in Europe are not incorporating this in their integration policies. There is a range of barriers to migrants getting involved in volunteering, **barriers on an individual level**, on an **organisational level** (both in “mainstream” volunteer organisations and migrant community organisations) and at **policy level**. The following barriers have been reported by delegates participating in the INVOLVE project:

#### A

##### Barriers on an individual level:

- ▶ Poor knowledge of the host community language.
- ▶ Perceived lack of education and skills needed for volunteer placements.
- ▶ Lack of a network of family, friends, neighbours, colleagues who already volunteer and who could act as an intermediary towards volunteer organisations.
- ▶ Being unfamiliar with the concept of volunteering in the host community, because of own different traditions of voluntary action and/or lack of experience with the functioning of a civil society in the country of origin (this applies especially to first generation immigrants).

- ▶ Priority of paid work, since this is a key reason for migration for non-refugees. In addition, paid work renders status whilst volunteering does not.
- ▶ Being too busy with responsibilities of caring for family members or other informal help.
- ▶ Poverty, not being able to pay expenses related to volunteering.
- ▶ Lack of confidence to volunteer.
- ▶ Fear of prejudice.
- ▶ Gender roles; not being allowed by family members to volunteer.
- ▶ Fear of tokenism.

*In the case of refugees:*

- ▶ Anxiety about the future.
- ▶ Fear of deportation.
- ▶ Depression.
- ▶ Feeling of being in transit, not knowing whether commitment is appropriate.

*In the case of undocumented migrants:*

- ▶ The fear of being caught and deported.

#### B

##### On the organisational level:

###### In mainstream volunteer organisations:

- ▶ Impersonal recruitment – lack of targeted outreach into immigrant communities.
- ▶ Formalised selection and recruitment procedures owing to ‘professionalisation’ of volunteer organisations.
- ▶ General organisational routines, such as planning, meeting, reporting, which may appear as overly formal and off-putting. Lack of contact, knowledge about and experience of immigrant communities and existing diversity within communities.
- ▶ Excluding and rigid definitions of volunteering that do not match with the concepts of volunteering which migrants have (organisational ↔ informal volunteering).
- ▶ Prejudice.



- ▶ Lack of intercultural competences.
- ▶ Lack of attention to building relationship, organisations too focused on meeting targets.
- ▶ Fear of and resistance to change with respect to the running of the organisation and the composition of the membership.
- ▶ Lack of childcare facilities, which can hinder women's involvement.
- ▶ Gender roles; men and women working together which may hinder participation of some women.
- ▶ Lack of attention to recognition and rewarding of volunteers.
- ▶ Lack of suitable work placements for migrants which value their skills.

*With respect to undocumented migrants:*

- ▶ Fear of the consequences of involving immigrants without legal status and therefore not wanting to take any risks.

#### **In migrant organisations:**

- ▶ “Bureaucratization” of legal provisions for organisations to obtain legal status or funding; lack of knowledge and capacity of migrant community organisations to obtain this status or respective funding.
- ▶ Lack of resources (time, human resources, finance) to invest in organisational development.
- ▶ Lack of leadership and volunteers with skills and networks to build the organisation.
- ▶ Organisational structure, which may not be appealing to the younger generation.
- ▶ Gender roles; women not participating at all levels of the organisation.
- ▶ Lack of cross-sector contacts which could help open up new areas of activities and work.
- ▶ Cultural and religious values which may hinder co-operation with other groups and organisations both from the host community population and from other immigrant communities.
- ▶ Experience with and/or fear of being misused as a recruitment pool for immigrant volunteers by mainstream volunteer organisations.
- ▶ Prejudice.
- ▶ Lack of trust among the general public as a result of hostility to immigration.

## C

### **On the policy level:**

- ▶ Legal status questions: prohibition of ‘unpaid work’ or ‘volunteering’ for some groups of migrants.
- ▶ Legal barriers for immigrants whose status has not yet been decided and who seek residence permits on the grounds of labour or asylum.
- ▶ Overlong procedures concerning asylum applications and the mental insecurity with which refugees have to live, which may hinder voluntary commitment.
- ▶ Lack of public attention to the role volunteering may play in integration.
- ▶ Lack of a targeted volunteering infrastructure.
- ▶ Rules and regulations pertaining to the combination of benefits and volunteering: specifically those where citizens receiving social benefits are not entitled to volunteer.
- ▶ Lack of a developed integration policy at local level in which volunteering has a strong role.
- ▶ Lack of a co-ordinated approach to promoting volunteering as a means of integration between different governmental agencies responsible for integration and volunteering.
- ▶ “Democratic impatience” (Penninx); expecting integration to take place within a few years, not embarking on a generational process.

## D

### **On a “societal” level:**

- ▶ Barriers here are related to the public debate on integration and migration: very often these debates are linked to terrorism and criminality rather to the positive effects that migration can have. This creates a barrier between migrants and the host community and can have a negative effect on their willingness to integrate.
- ▶ Important and popular sections of the media have tended to take a hostile stance towards asylum seekers and other immigrant groups. Reporting is very often unbalanced and inaccurate, with the potential to increase community tension.

## Criteria for good practice

In the context of the INVOLVE project a variety of projects have been identified which promote the involvement of migrants in volunteering – they will be presented in the next chapter. They include all or at least some of the following **common features**:

### Accessibility:

Volunteering needs to be easily accessible for migrants. This can mean providing information in the language of targeted migrant groups and the payment of travel expenses for volunteers. Mainstream organisations in particular need to be more creative with regard to recruitment. This requires knowledge about migrants' attitudes towards volunteering as well as their social habits.

### Diversity:

Developing targeted programmes and financial support to increase diversity in (mainstream) voluntary organisations and to recruit migrant volunteers. Diversity needs to be promoted as a win-win situation for both sides: mainstream organisations will learn from their migrant volunteers and benefit from the skills, competences and creativity they bring.

### Clarity and quality of the volunteer placements:

Both the organisation and the migrant volunteer need to have a clear understanding of what volunteering is about (in general), what the volunteer placement consists of (concretely) and about the objectives of the volunteer placement. The clearer the context of the placement is, the higher will be the probability of success for both sides. Individual attention and guidance may be necessary especially for migrants who are not familiar with the organisational environment they are working in. Finally, time needs to be invested to match the migrant volunteer's needs and expectations to those of the organisation he or she will volunteer with.

### Skills development:

Volunteer placements should develop migrant volunteers' skills and potential to integrate. They should also take advantage of the skills the migrant volunteers bring with them such as previous work or voluntary experience, the knowledge of a foreign language, another culture etc.

### Valuing:

Acknowledgment of the role and the achievements of migrant volunteers by the organisation and the wider public are crucial to counterbalance the lack of confidence and the negative public perception of migrants in society (recognition can happen through thanking ceremonies, awards, etc.).

### Visibility:

Good practice gives higher visibility to migrants and their contribution to the host society through volunteering – it highlights the benefits to wider society and to the migrant him- or herself (information campaigns, publishing articles in local papers on successful projects, etc.).

### Community empowerment:

Good practice links volunteer placements to the local community life to foster integration. Migrant volunteer placements can facilitate direct contact between the local community and the migrants and can enable migrants to make a real difference to the place in which they live.

### Networking – building, bonding and bridging social capital:

Social capital is defined as the sum of ties between citizens, both the informal and formal interpersonal networks they create, and the shared feelings of social belonging, trust and reciprocity. Through being part of social networks, people can create opportunities for themselves in the medium- or long-term. A distinction is made between bonding and bridging social capital. The latter, in the case of immigrants, refers to networks that are formed across ethnic boundaries. The generation of both bonding and bridging capital is vital for migrant communities in different phases of the integration process (even if government policy very often focuses merely on the bridging aspect of social capital). Migrants' organisations play a key role in welcoming and giving help to new migrants. They can help in giving information about volunteering opportunities both within the migrant and the mainstream volunteer sector. Finally, they may help host community voluntary organisations to better understand migrants' problems and needs, and to better organize the services they provide. Good practice can, therefore, focus both on networking within the migrant community and between migrant and mainstream organisations.

### Sustainability:

Develop a long-term perspective: integration will not be attained through one-off projects but needs long-term commitment from both the voluntary and the government sector. Promoting diversity needs a long term and sustainable strategy.

### Transferability:

Good practice examples may be transferable to other contexts: they can be applicable to other migrant target groups, to other geographical areas or to a wider range of mainstream organisations.

## 4. Good practice examples in Europe

The following is a sample of good practices presented in the 7 national INVOLVE reports. You can find more good practice examples on [www.involve-europe.eu](http://www.involve-europe.eu).

### 4.1. The Netherlands

#### 4.1.1. KANTARA – Bridge Builders

Kantara (“Bridge builders”) is located in Amsterdam-West in the borough Baarsjes. It was initially set up as a volunteer initiative by a group of Moroccan young people and has been transforming into a volunteer group consisting of young people from various ethnic background living in the neighbourhood.



#### Objectives:

To contribute to the improvement of relationships between Moroccan Amsterdammers and those of other ethnic background. In doing so, volunteers want to empower people of the neighbourhood, promote integration and increase participants’ interest in politics and different cultures.

#### Participating volunteers:

The volunteers are mostly second-generation immigrants, young and well educated. Men and women are equally involved. On average, ca. 20 men and 20 women volunteer for Kantara, with men tending to volunteer to a greater extent in small-scale activities than women. When setting up activities, around 20 native –born Amsterdammers participate. Specific activities are organised for women only, such as women’s days, which around 120 women from the neighbourhood attend. Kantara has seven board members, five of whom are of Moroccan origin.

#### Involving volunteers:

Kantara is a network- based organisation, meaning that volunteers organise themselves around topics and events. The association works with the concept of “bridge builders”. Bridge builders are people who want to support the goals of the association and who are willing to volunteer for one or more activities of Kantara. Interested volunteers can bring in their own ideas and connect the voluntary work to their interests, study or work. Volunteers are recruited through personal contacts, which works best. They do not have to commit themselves long-term, but can immediately get involved with starting on one activity.

#### Funding:

Support comes from the local authority. In addition, co-operation is sought with foundations and other non-profit organisations in order to make use of each other’s resources. In addition, Kantara regularly offers possibilities for students to do research in the context of their university projects.

#### Activities:

Between eight and ten activities are organised per year. Basically activities focus on 1) the organisation of **public debates** on issues, which are relevant to the neighbourhood; 2) the organisation of **excursions** in order to familiarise newcomers and settled Amsterdammers with the history of the city and surroundings.

Examples include:

“Newcomers days” (trip to Urk and a farm); a visit to a graveyard, where Moroccan soldiers are buried who fought as part of the allied forces in World War II; organisation of public debates on issues such as living together, education, the labour market and women, anti-Islamism and anti-Semitism.

#### Results of the work – contribution to integration:

The founder members of the association (of Moroccan origin) have opened up the group to accommodate people from different backgrounds in the neighbourhood (predominantly from Arabic background, non-immigrant Dutch and young people of mixed origin). The process of opening up happened gradually and without strategic planning. According to the bridge-builders, integration is not an explicit issue during their activities. They also think, that it is impossible to measure the integrative effects of their work. However, the volunteers strongly believe, that they do make a change. For instance, the public debate between young people and the police helped to contribute to more sensitivity within the police force in their behaviour towards young people.

#### Challenges:

These lie in the time pressures on young people if they have a paid job and in addition, small children. Volunteering then becomes difficult, although Kantara offers a very flexible approach. Sometimes husbands can also pose a barrier to volunteering by women.

#### What can one learn from this project?

Kantara gives volunteers ownership of the activities in which are involved. In addition, volunteers take action on issues that matter to them and the neighbourhood, which is highly motivating. Since Kantara works with different activities, it can involve many different people. Recruitment is done through word of mouth, which tends to be the most effective way in volunteer recruitment. In addition, its approach to volunteering is specifically attractive to young people, who want to try out their skills and capacities without seeking immediate long-term commitment. Kantara is therefore an association of predominantly young people. In 2004 Association Kantara received the Volunteer Award of the borough Baarsjes for its good work.

Contact details:

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[http:// www.kantara-brug.nl](http://www.kantara-brug.nl)

#### 4.1.2. SAMAH- Empowering unaccompanied minors

**Samah** is an association for unaccompanied minors, based in Amsterdam. This small volunteer-involving organisation was set up in 1999 and is an independent association under the wings of Humanitas.



##### Objectives:

To improve the position of unaccompanied minors and young adult asylum seekers (until age 23) in society and stimulate their participation and integration in society. In the case of asylum seekers with a negative decision on their request for asylum and facing removal, SAMAH gives support and helps to identify and organise returnee options and reintegration, mostly in the country of origin. To this end, SAMAH works with eight paid staff members and with several hundred volunteers across the country, including many young asylum seekers.

##### Target Group:

The potential target group of SAMAH is young adult asylum seekers (age 18 to 23) and unaccompanied minors. In 2004, there were about 12.000 unaccompanied minors and 16.000 young adult asylum seekers in the country. Most of them have been waiting for years on a decision on their request, either in refugee centres, in small living units or they live alone. They are a highly isolated group and are neither allowed to get education nor to work, apart from 12 weeks a year. Given their age, they are in strong need of self-development, development of skills, contact with others and development of a perspective for the future. They are all third country nationals, with most of them coming from different African countries, China, Iran and Afghanistan. Many of them do not have a chance to get asylum status. An increasing number of them decide to stay in the country without legal status.

##### Involving the volunteers:

SAMAH recruits young people through the refugee centres or through welfare institutions which look after the young refugees. Many of the young refugees start to volunteer for SAMAH in different projects. In addition, SAMAH has stimulated the setting up of self-organisations through the national AMA-Council (AMA stands for unaccompanied minor), which represents the interests of the young refugees. There are about 40 volunteers involved in the AMA-Council with outreach to around 300 young refugees in the country.

##### Funding:

Most funding is project based coming from various sources, such as foundations and non-governmental organisations.

##### Activities:

SAMAH operates a national helpdesk for young refugees and social workers. They stimulate networking and develop volunteer projects with the young people such as:

- A sports project stimulating young people to get involved in sports, coach teams and volunteer for the sports association. In addition, training is offered with the idea, that in the

case of removal, the returnees might develop a professional perspective at home through the international contacts of the Dutch sports associations.

- Think Peer, a project which twinned up young Dutch people from non-immigrant background with young refugees in order to help them understand the Dutch society and integrate more easily.
- "Girls active": a project to stimulate young girls, some of them single raising mothers, to volunteer.
- Beyond Borders, a project set up together with young refugees in order to develop perspectives for potential returnees. Co-operation is sought with companies, schools and individuals to sponsor training and the setting up of job opportunities in the country of origin.

##### Results of the work – contribution to integration:

The young volunteers start to learn Dutch, develop more self-confidence, with a more positive idea about the Netherlands, and start developing plans and perspectives on education and work in the Netherlands. Through the various volunteer activities they get in touch with Dutch institutions, make friends and slowly become more self-reliant. At the same time they are prepared for life after a potential turning down of their asylum request, in which case the skills they have acquired through volunteering may help them in their country of origin.

##### Challenges:

**For the young refugees:** living with the threat of removal and detention. Several hundred are currently in detention and many end up traumatised after repeated and disrupted deportation attempts (owing to the absence of the necessary laissez passer papers at the airport).

**For SAMAH:** An increasing number of young people become illegal, homeless and then tend to disappear out of sight. Volunteer organisations will not take them any more as volunteers owing to insurance problems and the concern that they will get into troubles with authorities. The organisation has to work with limited means on many issues, varying from giving personal help to political lobbying and project design. Sustainability of projects is often difficult owing to short term funding.

##### What can one learn from this project?

SAMAH is the only organisation in the Netherlands stimulating self-organisation and participation of third country national unaccompanied minors. Its dual approach to help young refugees to integrate into society by volunteering and at the same time offer support and perspectives in case of removal helps to empower the young people who live under greatest difficulties with the ambiguity of not belonging anywhere. A handbook that gives volunteer-involving organisations advice on how to recruit unaccompanied minors is available from the organisation. SAMAH has received various awards for its good work, i.e. the volunteer-involving sports project and pathways into labour.

## Contact details:

✉ **SAMAH**  
 C/o Landelijk  
 Bureau Humanitas  
 P.O. Box 71  
 1000 AB Amsterdam  
 ☎ +31-(0)20-523 11 00  
 Fax: +31-(0)20-622 73 67  
<http://www.samah.nl>

#### 4.1.3. IBNO Khaldoen – countering exclusion of the Moroccan immigrant community

**Ibno Khaldoen** is a Moroccan volunteer organisation, based in the borough Amsterdam-East/Watergraafsmeer, set up in 1992 with the objective of providing a meeting place for the Moroccan immigrant community.

##### Objectives:

The organisation wants to empower its members to become self-reliant and to improve the position of the Moroccan community in the Dutch society. Since the organisation is based close to the Mosque El Kabir, it can use the facilities of the mosque. It therefore has outreach to many members of the Moroccan community who come to the mosque but otherwise do not make use of any of the facilities of health and welfare organisations in the borough. Ibno Khaldoen especially wants to activate young unemployed members of the second generation, women and the older generation whose number is growing in the Moroccan community.

##### Participating volunteers:

The core group of volunteers consists of 30 – 50 highly active people who engage in the numerous activities of the project. The board consists of 5 volunteers, three men and two women. In addition, there are working groups of ca. 8 volunteers who have a co-ordinating function for the various activities. Dutch (non-immigrant) volunteers give Dutch lessons to elderly immigrants and newcomers as well as literacy lessons. Many of them are students in teacher training or other educational areas.

##### Involving volunteers:

The organisation recruits volunteers through its community networks as well as through advertisement (flyers) on a neighbourhood level. There is a mix between formalised volunteering within Ibno Khaldoen (in organised activities) and informal volunteering in the Moroccan community, predominantly mutual aid and giving help. This voluntary action remains invisible outside the community and also does not reach all members. The organisation therefore wants to carefully start formalising the informal help by for example setting up an official “volunteer group”, to which mainly sick members in need could make an appeal for help. A greater visibility of and recognition for this informal voluntary action is likely to contribute to involving more

women for whom this could be a first step towards a structured pathway into labour since they are anyway already familiar with this type of help. The idea is that this new recruitment approach could tie in with developments around the upcoming Social Support Act, which intends to strengthen volunteering and family care.

##### Funding:

Funding comes from a variety of sources, such as the local borough, city council, foundations, membership donations etc.

##### Activities:

There is a range of activities next to the usual daily meeting possibilities which are:

- Stimulating parents to participate at schools and organising meetings with teachers and students to this end.
- Information on health care, giving help with respect to changes in the health insurance law and other legal changes.
- Organising computer lessons, mentoring programs for young people, debates around young people and Islam and helping young people to settle their debts.
- Language lessons on various levels for women in combination with information on education, health care, cooking etc. including lessons to elderly illiterate women to learn reading and writing.

##### Challenges:

Like many migrant organisations Ibno Khaldoun is faced with the issue of a growing group of elderly in the Moroccan community needing care. The elderly don't seek help from the mainstream Dutch organisations owing to lack of trust and language problems, as well as the expectation that the younger generation will continue to give care. This requires new forms of co-operation and intervention. Another great challenge is the hardened climate in society around the issue of Islam and integration. Ibno Khaldoun is based in the borough in which Van Gogh was murdered which therefore was faced with being suddenly thrust into the public limelight as an organisational representative of both the Moroccan community and the Islam. The organisation notes increasing discrimination, with the result that both young and old members turn their back on society. Also radicalisation among young members needs to be addressed. Ibno Khaldoun considers itself to be a “poldermosque”, seeking to balance tensions and find compromises between conflicting notions around integration.

##### Results of the work – contribution to integration:

Ibno Khaldoun reaches out to young people, women and the elderly in the Moroccan community who face social exclusion on many levels of society. Since Ibno Khaldoun works in co-operation with a network of co-operating institutions such as city council departments, health and welfare organisations, neighbourhood centres, the University of Amsterdam and the local support centre for migrant organisations. It builds bridges to these organisations which otherwise would not easily be accessible for its members. The organisation welcomes people from

other ethnic backgrounds as colleagues on the staff, as well as among the volunteers, which creates a welcoming environment.

#### What can one learn from this project?

Ibno Khaldoun shows that caring for ones own community is a contribution to the wider community (neighbourhood, city) and can help to foster social cohesion and integration. The organisation is preparing strategically for changes which are going to come in the field of health and welfare with the help and partnership of other institutions. In an increasingly polarised society around issues of Islam and integration it continues to mediate against all odds. It is for this reason also that there are regular international study groups of predominantly young people from both inside and outside Europe that visit Ibno Khaldoun for dialogue on issues of the growing diversity in Europe, Islam and integration which contributes to a transnational outlook and exchange.

#### Contact details:

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Fax: +31-(0)20-694 24 45  
@ info@ibnokhaldoun.nl  
http://www.ibnokhaldoun.nl

#### 4.1.4. Turkish Broadcasting Association in Zaanstad

**Type:** Charitable association, migrant organisation.

#### Target Group

The Turkish migrant community in the region of Zaanstad.

#### Geographical scope of action:

The region of Zaanstad (North Holland).

#### Objectives of the project:

To enable members of the Turkish community to participate in Dutch society.

#### Description of activities:

- Weekly radio broadcasting
- Organisation of activities that bring together the inhabitants of Zaanstad, for example, by way of a health education project combined with a cooking course, which attracted both members of the Turkish, Dutch and Surinamese community.

- Interreligious meetings: for example visit of Turkish migrants to a local synagogue for the purpose of dialogue and exchange
- Broadcasting and organisation of courses to enhance political participation

#### Numbers of volunteers:

- There are six male volunteers involved in the Turkish Broadcasting Association.
- The number and gender participation depends on the type of activities organised.

#### Financial support of the project:

- Funds are received from foundations which support welfare work.
- Small grants are provided by the Zaanstad City Council.

#### Problems and/or support actions that hinder and/or favour the voluntary work of male/female immigrants:

The organisation of political decision-making procedures in the host society does not fit the expectations and needs of the migrant community. There are regular misunderstandings and there is a great need to listen to the advice of the migrant organizations.

#### In what way is this project innovative?

The broadcasting activities have a high outreach into the community. They provide easy access to information and are extremely important especially for illiterate people in the Turkish community.

#### In what way is the project transferable?

All activities of the organization are easily transferable and replicable elsewhere and by other immigrant groups (broadcasting, health education, support of political participation, inter-religious dialogue).

#### What can be learned from this project?

The use of radio broadcasting and the making of own news to enable listeners to participate in society is special and highly effective.

#### Contact details:

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1503 CC Zaandam  
☎ +31-(0)6-481 33 124 (Mr. Hüsnü Polat)  
Fax: +31-(0)75-635 58 30  
@ hpo@zaanradio.nl

## 4.2. Hungary

### 4.2.1. Hajdú-Bihar county Employment Agency



#### Objectives of the project:

Providing volunteer workplaces for asylum-seekers at the Labour Centre.

#### Participants of the project:

Hajdú-Bihar county Labour Centre carries out the project. The target group are those asylum-seekers participating in the CHANCE project, where they get language and labour market orientation training. The asylum-seekers are living at the Debrecen Reception Centre.

#### Geographical scope of action:

The city of Debrecen.

#### Number of the participants:

4 male asylum-seekers.

#### Reasons for setting up this project:

To demonstrate that it is possible to volunteer at a governmental organisation, to provide a volunteering opportunity for asylum-seekers who are not yet entitled to work and to raise the awareness of the whole society of the importance of volunteering.

#### Funding of the project:

The project has no extra funding.

#### Description of activities within the project:

The volunteering asylum-seekers support the Hungarian employees at the Labour Centre. As far as possible, they do work that is in line with their skills. They also practice the Hungarian language.

#### Main results of the project:

The asylum-seekers enjoy the volunteer work, and there is an excellent relationship between them and the Hungarian employees at the Labour Centre. Instead of spending all their time in the Reception Centre (refugee camp), they are allowed to leave to the city and form relationships with the host society. On the other side, the people of the city of Debrecen are able to meet asylum-seekers, who help them to find work. This has a positive impact on the harsh prejudice towards foreigners. As result, other governmental organisations are also interested in the possibility of setting up volunteer workplaces.

### What kind of problems were encountered that hinder the involvement of immigrants as volunteers?

One female, Muslim asylum-seeker was willing to volunteer, though after the first day of work she was not allowed to go to work again, since her husband did not let her meet with foreign men.

### What is innovative about this project?

The setting up of volunteer workplaces at a governmental organisation.

#### Contact details:

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4024 Debrecen, Piac. u. 54.  
☎ +36-52-507 416  
Fax: +36-52-418 229  
@ jaczkut@lab.hu  
<http://www.hajdummk.hu>

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## 4.3. England

### 4.3.1. Theatre in Education

Project promoted by the **Refugee Council**, a voluntary agency that works to promote the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. Over 50% of its staff are refugees.



#### Objectives of the project:

- To provide professional, accessible and interactive education for young people on a subject that is widely misunderstood – the experiences of young asylum seekers in the West Midlands region.
- To promote genuine community and peer integration amongst young people.
- To provide highly skilled, accredited performance arts training for young asylum seekers.

#### Participants of the project:

- 20 young asylum seekers ages 11-20 years.
- 10 Refugee Council Volunteers (7 of whom are asylum seekers).
- 10 Refugee Artists.
- 600 young people and their teachers who attend the Project.
- 1 volunteer coordinator/ project manager.
- 1 seasonal creative arts worker.

**Number of the participants:**

42 participants, 37 of whom are immigrants from countries including Iraq, Togo, Congo (DRC), Afghanistan, Vietnam, Rwanda, Gambia, Uganda, Somalia.

**Reasons for setting up this project:**

- To promote positive awareness of the issues in a creative way which genuinely engages young people and gives them the opportunity to share their own thoughts and feelings in a safe environment.
- To provide valuable performance arts opportunities and life skills training to a group of young people at risk of social exclusion and provide them with the opportunity to express their hopes, fears and feelings about being a young asylum seeker in the UK.

**Funding of the project:**

The Refugee Council ran on a zero budget for 6 months – a completely voluntary project. After a successful pilot they have received funding to run the project for one year with finance to pay for performance arts accreditation for all the young people involved in the project, assisting them with both life-skills and employment opportunities. They have also received funding to pay for refugee artists to run creative art workshops – enabling good employment opportunities and work experience for this skilled group of professionals.

**Description of activities within the project:**

A piece of forum theatre based on the experiences of young asylum seekers and their families living in the West Midlands was produced following writing focus groups and play readings with refugees and asylum seekers. Young asylum seekers and refugees were then recruited and trained to be part of Theatre in Education. This involved acting in the short piece of forum theatre mentioned and creating and performing a piece of creative dance produced by the young people themselves in conjunction with a professional dance artist. With additional creative art activities and the use of multimedia technology they then successfully took the project into secondary schools in the West Midlands, receiving substantial praise and positive feedback for the work.

**Some of the next steps will be to:**

- Employ Refugee Artists to run creative art workshops for the project, enabling sustainable skilled employment for this group of underemployed professionals.
- Perform Theatre in Education workshops in secondary schools to students aged 11-16 years.
- Develop Theatre in Education Project as a resource tool that can be used by other artists and teachers in schools to raise positive awareness about the experience of asylum seekers living in the UK.

**Geographical scope of action:**

West Midlands Region

**Main results of the project:**

- Improved confidence, problem-solving and creative thinking skills for all the young people involved.
- Improved integration and understanding amongst and between asylum communities through engaging in the project.
- Improved integration amongst young people who participated in or attended a performance of the project.
- Improved English language skills for the participants of the project.
- New volunteer, study and work opportunities for the participants.
- More positive awareness and understanding of the issue of asylum in the UK and the West Midlands Region amongst young people.

**What were attitudes of immigrant persons towards volunteering?**

The participants were very interested in the project and volunteering at the beginning because it gave them an opportunity to meet new people, learn new skills and express their feelings in a creative way. Following the pilot, the participants are even more positive about volunteering, with some engaging in new volunteer opportunities with assistance. All are keen to be involved in the next stage of the project. Many friends of the project participants have since contacted the Refugee Council and asked to volunteer and be involved in the next stage.

**What kind of problems were encountered that hamper the engagement of immigrants to volunteer?**

Many of the participants were still navigating their way through the complex asylum process in the UK and a few experienced significant difficulties with their cases during the project. One volunteer had to leave the project being threatened with deportation and immediate eviction from his housing and suffering significant ill health as a result. Other participants, especially one female Muslim participant initially lacked confidence to fully participate in the project, but through different learning techniques and practical activities she was empowered and became one of the project's most active and dynamic members.

**What are the elements of good practice that made this project a success?**

- Genuine engagement with asylum and refugee communities, using the creative arts as a medium for expression and voice.
- Genuinely participatory project that was led, developed and performed by refugees and asylum seekers themselves.
- Excellent organisation, administration and professionalism from the Volunteer team at the Refugee Council. Activities happened according to an agreed structure and timeline.
- Choosing a dynamic, indirect educational tool to advocate and educate on a controversial issue that some young people may be hostile to.
- Using Refugee artists to run creative art workshops, providing good role models for the participants of the project themselves.
- Having a Volunteer Coordinator and volunteers who had both interest and experience in the performing arts.



- Developing good relationships with other agencies and community organisations so that the pilot could run at minimal cost.

#### What is innovative about this project?

There is no other theatre project focused on the experience of living in the West Midlands as an asylum seeker. The arts accreditation for the young people involved and the integration between young people from different communities through this project is also innovative. The use of devised theatre, dance and art in schools on the issue of asylum is also unique to this project.

#### In what way is this project transferable?

This project is extremely transferable to other countries/regions and groups. Theatre and the other performing arts are well known as excellent tools for communication and education, engaging people in an issue without preaching how people should think about a complex issue. The performing arts are international in their appeal and impact and the structure and aims and objectives of this project could easily be used in another country.

#### Contact details:

✉ **Refugee Council**  
 First Floor, Smithfield House,  
 Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6BS  
 ☎ +44 (0)121-622 09 07  
 @ eleanor.harrison@refugeecouncil.org.uk  
 http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

#### 4.3.2. VolEmploy Mentoring Scheme for refugees

Project promoted by the Volunteer Centre Westminster (VCW), a mainstream volunteer organisation.



#### Objectives of the project:

The aim of Volemploy project is to improve integration and employability of adult refugees in the City of Westminster and beyond through a volunteering and mentoring scheme.

#### Participants of the project:

In June 2003 VCW established a project to involve refugees and asylum seekers in volunteering with a view to recruiting and supporting 86 individuals with in the funding period of three years (June 2003 to March 2006). In fact, the project has involved 479 refugees and asylum seekers during this period of time (260 female, 208 male, 11 did not disclose their gender).

At the moment the project is involved in improving integration and employability of adult refugees through a mentoring scheme. This project started in April 2006 with a target of matching 20 mentees to 20 employee volunteer mentors.

#### Reasons for setting up this project:

This project sets out to ensure that refugees in the City of Westminster experiencing isolation, depression and suffering the impact of negative media representation, can use their skills positively to volunteer within their local community and receive effective support and training during their volunteering. As this can improve their English language skills, and employability prospects, counter depression and isolation by social contact and a sense of doing a worthwhile activity, providing a positive picture of refugees in the wider community.

#### Funding of the project:

June 2003 March 2006: Department of health, opportunities for volunteering (OFV) of government; Continuation of the project from April 2006 to March 2009 by Big National Lottery fund.

#### Geographical scope of action:

City of Westminster (London).

#### What were attitudes of immigrant persons towards volunteering?

Most of refugees and migrants would like to volunteer; all they need is clear information on the available opportunities and an explanation of the benefits of volunteering, which are not clear to many of them.

#### What kind of problems were encountered that hamper the engagement of immigrants to volunteer?

In the case of asylum seekers: Do not know what the future holds and most of them get worried about their cases, but still like to volunteer.

#### In what way is this project transferable?

The needs of all refugees and migrants in terms of volunteering are the same, so the methods and practice used is transferable to all countries/regions where there is a supportive volunteering policy in place.

#### Contact details:

✉ **VCW, VolEmploy mentoring for refugees**  
 53 – 55 Praed Street  
 London, W2 1NR  
 ☎ +44 (0)207-402 8144 or general -402 8076  
 @ Johannes@volunteercentrewestminster.org.uk  
 http://www.volunteer.co.uk  
 (“refugee project final report”)

## 4.4. Germany

### 4.4.1. gEMiDe - gesellschaftliches Engagement von Migrantinnen, Migranten und Deutschen (civic activities of migrants and Germans)

Promoted by the Bund Türkisch-Europäischer UnternehmerInnen e.V. BTEU e.V. (Turkish-European Employers' Association).



#### Objectives of the project:

Integration, participation in civil society, promoting and fostering self-help of migrants and ethnic Germans.

#### Number of the participants:

1 female project manager of Turkish origin, 100 migrants, ethnic Germans, naturalised Germans of which 95 are women mostly from the Asia Minor region.

#### Reasons for setting up this project:

The gEMiDe project operates at local level. It started with a Turkish-German women's group and developed to a multinational group mostly involving women.

#### Funding of the project:

The city of Hanover finances  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a working place for the project manager; the project manager co-ordinates the voluntary activities, is in charge of supervision and conflict management

#### Description of activities within the project:

Catalogue of the voluntary work activities which are developed:

- Work in favour of women and older migrants, counselling.
- Workshops, seminars, conferences.
- Humanitarian help, concerts.
- Leisure time activities with kids.
- Literacy courses.
- Befriending (going for a walk, accompanying to the doctor or to the hair dresser etc.).
- Helping with filling out forms, administrative paper work, translation services.
- Visits in hospitals.
- Childcare.
- Information: changes in laws, new opening hours of civil services.
- Informing youth and their families on crime and drug prevention.
- Working with schools and parents.

#### Geographical scope of action:

City of Hannover.

#### Main results of the project:

gEMiDe bridges the gap between migrants interested in volunteering and Germans that are in need of help, lonely or just interested.

#### What were attitudes of immigrant persons towards volunteering?

Most immigrants have no idea of formal volunteering in associations and organisations, but they are experienced in self-help activities, mutual help within the family and neighbourhood. Especially migrant women take the chance to volunteer for older or lonely people or families in need by e.g. befriending or practical help.

#### What are the elements of good practice that made this project a success?

The Slogan of the gEMiDe project is "integration does not start with politics but in everyday life". Through their involvement in civic activities migrants are empowered to participate in society. Main elements are: no paternalistic approach; volunteers are colleagues, not clients; communication at eye level; involvement of families.

gEMiDe is a low threshold project. All participants are considered as equal. Migrants are encouraged to bring in their knowledge and to share experiences. They are placed in projects and initiatives where they come into contact with the German population to promote intercultural learning and to overcome barriers in everyday life.

#### What is innovative about this project?

Support action: networking with local civil services and other initiatives, participating in the nationwide network on civic activities (Bundesnetzwerk Bürgerschaftliches Engagement BBE), practically oriented language courses, cultural activities.

#### Contact details:

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 30451 Hannover  
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 Fax: +49-(0)511-213 53 29  
 @ gemide@bteu.de, huelyafeise@hotmail.com  
 http://www.gemide.net

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### 4.4.2. Integrationslotsen (integration pilots)<sup>7</sup>

Promoted by the city of Osnabrück.

#### Objectives of the project:

Migrants who already volunteer should be trained and supported, and support networks of migrant and mainstream organisations should be implemented. The project's context is:

- A lot of migrants volunteer in the field of integration.
- There are no support structures for migrant volunteers yet in comparison to mainstream volunteer organisations.
- Volunteer support and counselling is very complex.

- The question if migrant volunteering is a means of integration or on the contrary leads to segregation is of utmost importance.
- Efforts towards training and networking for migrant volunteers are considered as integration measures.

#### Participants of the project:

**Project partners:** Caritas youth migration service, city of Osnabrück volunteer agency and integration office, Arbeiterwohlfahrt migration service

**Target group:** newly arrived immigrants participating in integration and language courses and German and migrant volunteers

#### Number of the participants:

The 15 integration pilots come from 10 different countries; three of them were born in Germany and have no migration background, the other 12 come from Eritrea, Ghana, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine. Most of them (12) are female. Three of them were younger than 30 years, 11 between 30 and 50 years old and one older than 50 years.

#### Reasons for setting up this project:

For newly arrived immigrants it is essential for integration to meet the host population in every day life and to get to know institutions and organisations – mainstream and migrant organisations – on the local level. Thus, newcomers should be accompanied by an integration pilot living in the city for several years.

#### Funding of the project:

State of Lower-Saxony, City of Osnabrück.

#### Description of activities within the project:

The pilots underwent a basic training aiming at biographical work, fostering communication skills, dialog with different experts in the field of integration and interaction with possible locations for volunteer placements for migrants.

There are monthly meetings of the pilots. They mostly act as bridges and/or supplemental to the official migration services. One helps a child with homework. Most of the others work in the framework of the migration services, e.g. accompany newly arrived migrants to civil and social services. Furthermore, the volunteers are aiming at meeting with newly arrived immigrants to visit festivities and events, and to introduce them to civil and social services, associations, organisations, religious communities etc.

#### Geographical scope of action:

City of Osnabrück

#### Main results of the project:

In the first phase of the project 15 pilots were trained to help and accompany newly arrived immigrants especially to civil and social services.

#### What were attitudes of male/female immigrant persons towards volunteering?

**Recruitment:** three pilots were approached in a German language course by the teacher; the three German participants came through advertisement in the local press or through the volunteer agency; the other nine pilots were already well known for his/her engagement in migrant organisations and initiatives and thus approached by the project manager directly.

**Motivation:** Primarily the participants wanted to realise his/her individual helpfulness and to relay their own experiences to ease the start for newcomers in Germany. The German participants were furthermore interested in starting a dialogue with other cultures.

#### What are the elements of good practice that made this project a success?

- Improving the pilots' knowledge about German migration and integration services and their personal skills as there are e.g. communication skills and self-esteem.
- Increasing networking between migration services, mainstream volunteer organisations and self organisations of migrants.
- Helping newly arrived migrants to orientate, to get in contact with the host country institutions.
- Increasing intercultural dialog and knowledge.

#### What is innovative about this project?

The most innovative feature in this project is to combine networking on local level between mainstream organisations, migration services and migrant organisations with support structures for reception and support for newcomers.

Contact details:

✉ **Freiwilligen-Agentur Osnabrück**  
<http://www.freiwilligenserver.de>

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#### 4.4.3. Hand in Hand: MIT Migranten FÜR Migranten (MiMi)

Hand in Hand: With migrants in favour for migrants: the intercultural health care project in Germany – location Frankfurt am Main promoted by the city of Frankfurt am Main, Stadtgesundheitsamt in cooperation with Ethno-Medizinischen Zentrums e.V. in Hannover (nationwide coordinator of the project).

#### Objectives of the project:

The MiMi health care project was set up on behalf of the federation of company health insurance funds in Germany (Bundesverband der Betriebskrankenkassen). In close cooperation with the municipalities it is implemented in several cities in Germany. It is a project for intercultural health care and prevention. Immigrants who are well integrated are trained as health care mediators. These volunteers are then in charge of informing their migrant communities in cooperation with representatives of the health care system in both German and mother languages in a cultural sensitive way about health care and prevention.

**Participants of the project:**

Stadtgesundheitsamt Frankfurt am Main (local health authority) and Maisha e.V. -Selbsthilfegruppe afrikanischer Frauen in Deutschland (self-help initiative of African women in Germany).

**Number of the participants:**

30 women and men from 12 countries (e.g. Ethiopia, Eritrea, Ghana, Morocco, Somalia, Russia, Togo, Turkey, and Ukraine) speaking 20 different languages.

**Reasons for setting up this project:**

Migration is not by itself a reason for bad health, but migration increases the risk of health problems since migrants face considerable mental and psychological strains. Besides, migrants' efforts to integrate into the host country society health care and prevention plays a minor role in migrants' awareness. In addition, prevention is of little importance in a lot of their home countries. So it's of great importance to introduce migrants to health care services and to promote self-help in this field to ensure equal access of migrants to the health care system.

**Funding of the project:**

Federation of company health insurance funds in Germany (Bundesverbandes der Betriebskrankenkassen) and Stadtgesundheitsamt Frankfurt am Main (local health authority).

**Description of activities within the project:**

Well-integrated migrants with good knowledge of the mother language and the German language are trained as health care mediators. The trainings cover for three months period themes like health deficits, risks, but as well resources of migrants. Contents are: the German health care system, nutrition, mental health, pregnancy, HIV/AIDS prevention, drug prevention, children's health care, long term care for older people, tooth and mouth hygiene. After the training the intercultural volunteer health mediators offer multi-language health campaigns in terms of conferences, events, and counselling in associations, organisations and city quarters. They receive remuneration for organising and participating in these campaigns.

**Geographical scope of action:**

City of Frankfurt am Main (There are six more locations in Germany where the project is implemented).

**Main results of the project:**

In 2005, 19 informative meetings were held with more than 300 migrants in city quarters, church communities, mosques, doctor's practices and mental health surgeries. The mediators brought in their mother language competencies as well as special health care materials in Arabic, English, French, Russian, and Turkish in order to inform other migrants about the German health care system and to motivate for health care prevention.

**What are the elements of good practice that made this project a success?**

First of all, those migrants undergoing the training to become a health care mediator benefited by the project. They had the chance to improve their knowledge and competencies. Second those migrants visiting the informative meetings gained detailed information about the health care system in Germany and were empowered to set up self-help activities. Third the cities benefited from the project. They can now rely on well-trained migrants building bridges between their ethnic communities and the social and health care system. The mediators help to reach migrants groups and the health insurance funds thus have the possibility to introduce targeted measures for these groups.

**What is innovative about this project?**

„With migrants in favour for migrants“ is the motto and concept of the project. Migrants' resources were integrated into the conception of the project. Only a common and intercultural approach offers the possibility to reach the target group. Increasing the knowledge of the health care system leads to more and equal access to services for migrants. Especially health care prevention for women and children helps to recognise health risks and deficits in due time and thus to minimise further illnesses and costs.

**In what way is this project transferable?**

This kind of mediator project could be transferred to other countries in terms of referring to well-integrated migrants' knowledge and competencies. They have much better access to migrants' communities and know cultural characteristics and attitudes towards health care. Offering multi-language informative meeting by members of migrants' communities help:

- Health care authorities to reach migrants.
- Migrants to overcome barriers to take up health care services and prevention measures.

Contact details:

<http://www.gesunde-staedte-netzwerk.de/frankfurt/main.htm>

## 4.5. Austria

### 4.5.1. MigrantInnenakademie (Competence courses for migrants)

Project promoted by the Vienna Integration Conference Networking Office.

#### Objectives of the project:

- Breaking down of integration barriers for immigrants with information, education and literacy improvement of accessibility to the host society.
- Empowerment for immigrant organisations: strengthening of organisational abilities, accessibility to local support resources; knowledge transfer; networking.
- Reducing the gap between the resources and professionalism of organisational management between immigrant organisations and organisations of the host society.

The migrant's academy represents an institution for education and knowledge transfer. The project consists in providing seminar courses to concrete subject areas. One type of seminars concerns the building up of migrant organisations.

The participants acquire competence and knowledge in project management, funding resources, challenges on the labour market, legal requirements and regulations for organisational law, aliens law, right of residence, citizenship, specific topics e.g.: financial supports in culture area. Another seminar theme is about migrants and media. Then focus lies on the possibilities of the use of media for the migrant organisation.

#### Participants of the project (project partners and target groups):

- Target group: Immigrants associations, voluntary activists or multipliers.
- Promoter: Vienna Integration Conference Networking Office (WIK-VB).
- Trainers: Representatives from local authorities, executive authorities, key support institutions from corresponding areas (e.g. Culture, Trade), lobby groups, NGOs.

#### Number of the participants:

Groups by 20 participants.

#### Funding of the project:

Vienna Integration Conference Networking Office (WIK-VB) is funded by the Municipality of Vienna.

#### Geographical scope of action:

Vienna.

#### What kind of problems were encountered that hamper the engagement of immigrants to volunteer?

The lack of financial, organisational, human resources and know-how in modern not-for-profit management.

### What are the elements of good practice that made this project a success?

Vienna Integration Conference networking Office (WIK-VB) is a self-organised representative of immigrants who provides training in the competences needed by migrants. The competence courses help migrants and their organisations to be better organised and managed and empower the immigrants' organisations. It is the first organisation of this kind in Austria.

#### Contact details:

✉ **Vienna Integration Conference Networking Office**  
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☎ +43-(0)1-606 41 29  
Fax: +43-(0)1-641 84 20  
@ akademie@wik-vernetzungsbuero.at  
<http://www.wik-vernetzungsbuero.at>

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### 4.5.2. Voluntary youth immigrant leadership

Project promoted by the Wiener Hilfswerk/Vienna (Austria) – Welfare organisation from Vienna.

#### Objectives of the project:

The long-term cooperation between “Anno ‘93” and Wiener Hilfswerk culminated last year in starting the project “Qualification for youth leadership”. The youth trainers are experts in Croatian folklore music but not in leading a group of 30 to 50 youngsters. Wiener Hilfswerk participated in the IFS European Programme, exchanging experience with other eight member organisations of IFS (International Federation for Settlement and Neighbourhood Centres). In March 2005 two representatives of “Anno ‘93” were sent to a training session for youth workers and youth leaders to Finland. In May 2005 the practical part took place in Debrecen in Hungary as a seminar. Qualification for youth leadership, advisory service, international partnership (International Federation for Settlement and Neighbourhood Centres, IFS).

#### Participants of the project:

Voluntary youth immigrant leader, Association „Anno ‘93“ (Croatian Folklore group).

#### Number of the participants:

3 male /4 female voluntary youth leader

#### Funding of the project:

By Wiener Hilfswerk and partly by government.

### Description of activities within the project:

Decision of Wiener Hilfswerk to take part on the IFS Youth Programme came in 2004. The programme started in March 2005 with a training session for youth workers and youth leaders in Finland. The two youth leaders from Vienna became audited youth leaders. In May 2005 the practical part of the youth programme took place in Debrecen in Hungary. Meanwhile, experts from Wiener Hilfswerk and the educated youth leaders were coaching other colleagues from "Anno '93", they introduced a system of mentors. Language of communication in the association is Croatian. The team of seven voluntary leaders of the Croatian folklore group "Anno '93" is on the point to reorganise the diverse initiatives (e.g. remedial teaching in Croatian language), to organise an international folklore festival with guests from participating countries on the IFS youth programme and to organise musical lessons in Croatian. The reflections about voluntary work and the leadership were meanwhile a standard in the voluntary work of "Anno '93".

### Geographical scope of action:

Province (town) of Vienna/Austria.

### What were attitudes of immigrant persons towards volunteering?

The main motivation for volunteers to get involved was the wish to work for and with their Croatian community in Vienna, to exchange of experience with other communities, to build capacity in immigrant communities and to promote their native tongue.

### What are the elements of good practice that made this project a success?

For a group of young people from the Croatian community, mainly teens and those beginning school, this is the only opportunity to meet other children from Croatia. Parents trust the voluntary youth immigrant leaders. Due to the lack of their own premises volunteers are using the resources of a big mainstream welfare organisation. This cooperation has been functioning for 10 years now.

### What is innovative about this project?

There is the possibility for migrant volunteer youth leaders to work on an international level by exchange projects.

#### Contact details:

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 ☎ +43-(0)1-512 36 61-421  
 Fax: +49-(0)1-512 36 61-33  
 @ iljic@wiener.hilfswerk.at  
 http://www.nachbarschaftszentren.at,  
 http://wien.hilfswerk.at

### 4.5.3. Zeit!Raum- association for socio-cultural work

Zeit!Raum is promoted by different partners: The City of Vienna, departments of the municipality, MA13 – department of the municipality for work with children and adolescents outside school, other communities and also the European Union (for the "First Aid in Integration" project).



#### Objectives of the project:

- Integration of migrants and third country nationals to the host society avoiding assimilation and promoting acceptance, social justice, equal opportunities, cultural diversity, democracy and humanity.
- Peaceful coexistence and solidarity among the different migrant groups and among the different majorities.
- Public awareness of minority groups, their problems, their requests and ideas.
- Strengthening the talents and skills of the different target groups, raise awareness of the society and the public of their problems, skills and ideas. Create tools for self-help.

#### Participants of the project:

- Youth projects: Target group: adolescents and children mainly of socially disadvantaged and/or emigrational background, and in special projects (SECRET GARDEN) girls and young women.
- Refugees, asylum seekers and young undocumented migrants.
- Project partners are young organisations, refugee and asylum seeker organisations, organisations working with unemployed people and schools.

#### Number of the participants:

- In the youth projects numbers are fluctuant.
- Project "First Aid in Integration" (research project for the development of standards for labour market integration for asylum seekers): 112 asylum seekers in job training courses.
- "Tempus" (accommodation, support and integration of asylum seekers and refugees): about 200 persons.
- In the gender sensitive Kindergarten "fun and care" there are 101 children.

#### Description of activities within the project:

Zeit!Raum 15 and Zeit!Raum 22 (referring to the 15th and 22nd district of Vienna) offer a widespread program of social-educational and leisure-time activities for children and adolescents, from the age of 3 up to 23. All activities are free, easy to participate in and focused on the different cultural backgrounds and needs of the children and adolescents. Art, sport, political-participation projects, as well as school help, "cross-cultural" cooking, dance workshops and parties are important items in our program. The gym of the local school can be used in the framework of the project. Finally, there is a special project for girls and women working in

a garden. Zeit!Raum organizes trips to other districts of Vienna, to museums, to castles, to the Danube etc. for children and adolescents that normally do not have the opportunity to visit recreational areas. Finally, out-door camps also outside the country are organized (for example the “peace camp” near Derby in the UK summer 2005).

Volunteers have been involved in the organisation of these events, especially organising inter-cultural parties in shopping malls; cooking for children in order to show their special “cooking culture”; organising dancing workshops, and promoting political participation collecting the political demands of immigrant youngsters that were then sent to governmental agencies.

#### Geographical scope of action:

Referring to the youth work: the 15th and the 22nd district of Vienna.

Other projects (such as asylum- work, research projects and event management) work for/in entire Vienna and Austria.

#### What were attitudes of immigrant persons towards volunteering?

Many migrant volunteers were former participants as children in one of the projects. In some cases parents also volunteered. Word of mouth, advertising and personal experience clearly were the main features for these volunteers to get involved.

#### What kind of problems were encountered that hampered the engagement of immigrants to volunteer?

The negative perception of immigrants in the host community were clearly off putting for many migrant volunteers in the first place. In other cases, especially female volunteers had to fight against negative perception of their engagement in their family (father, husband, etc).

#### What are the elements of good practice that made this project a success?

The special focus on Muslim girls and women who often face difficulties in their culture when wanting to volunteer. “Secret Garden” is targeted at these immigrants giving them a space to meet and to engage in social and cultural activities.

The immigrants participate in the planning of the activities and identify with the work. Most of them remain in contact for a long time to the project. They then serve as “Role model” for other immigrants. Peer education is clearly another feature: Immigrants work with immigrants.

Contact details:

✉ **ZEIT!RAUM association for socio-cultural work**

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@ office@zeitraum.org

http://www.zeitraum.org

#### 4.5.4. Iftar for Women

Project promoted by the Forum for Muslim Women in Austria.

##### Objectives of the project:

Approaching (female) opinion makers who work in different fields such as politics, NGOs, Inter-religious dialogues and science and connecting them personally to Muslim women. Such an encounter does not only help to relieve tensions but also helps to look at things from another perspective and to discover common concerns.

##### Participants of the project:

Muslim Women and opinion makers from various social fields.

##### Number of the participants:

5 Austrian and 30 Migrant women; 30 non-Muslim opinion makers as target group.

##### Description of activities within the project:

The opinion makers were invited to an Iftar-dinner (the meal with which the fasting is broken during the month of Ramadan), 30 guests joined the event. The offered meals were prepared by Muslim women from various origins (Austria, Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Tunis, Bosnia, Taiwan, Germany and Poland). Guests and hosts enjoyed the meals in a relaxed atmosphere. Dinner was preceded by a Koran recitation by a Hafez and a short explanation of the fasting month Ramadan and the aims and the work of The Forum Muslim Women in Austria. Some cultural-musical contributions (Turkish and Arabic religious songs as well as modern English songs) rounded off the program.

##### Geographical scope of action:

Vienna.

##### Main results of the project:

Women, who have an important role in particular social circles, could gain authentic impression of Muslim women and also personal experience which they could transmit to their respective environment. This will contribute to reduce stereotypes and prejudices.

##### What kind of problems were encountered in setting up the project?

Generally speaking, due to the voluntary nature of the work and the fact that all members are employed and have family responsibilities, the work is involved with enormous personal efforts and requires a great deal of additional time. The lack of financial support is a challenge as funding applications are very time-consuming and there are no targeted funding possibilities for this kind of action with a religious background.

##### What is innovative about this project?

Close co-operation of Muslim women from diverse countries and ethnic backgrounds, which ensures cross-cultural learning. Existing knowledge of the European-Christian culture is an

integral condition for establishing bridges between cultures and religions. The relaxed atmosphere of having dinner together lead to the breaking of the ice...

Contact details:

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 Markhofgasse 20/4/5  
 1030 Wien  
 ☎ +43-(0)1-664 147 620  
 @ frauen@derislam.at

## 4.6. Spain

### 4.6.1. "EL ENLACE" – Fortnight free bulletin

Enlace is a publication available in written and digital format written by immigrants for immigrants in the Canary Islands. It is promoted by the Ibero-American Development and Integration Centre (Centro para el Desarrollo y la Integración Iberoamericana, CDI), a migrant organisation.

#### Objectives of the project:

To facilitate and speed up the process of immigrants' social and employment integration, reducing vulnerability caused by ignorance of bureaucratic and socio-economic procedures, providing information on regulations, rights and obligations and on the social, sporting and cultural activities run by the immigrant associations on the island.

#### Participants of the project:

- Beneficiaries: Third country national immigrants and returned emigrants.
- Volunteers running the publication: Immigrants, in general qualified technical experts (qualifications in law, medicine, teacher training, etc.) who with their voluntary work put their knowledge, know-how, time and effort to the service of this initiative.

#### Reasons for setting up this project:

The lack of accessible and understandable information for immigrants that helped them know about and defend their rights, and helped them to comply with their civic duties.

#### Funding of the project:

Members and collaborators of the immigrant association which promote it. Partial support by *Cabildo Insular* (local government corporation at island level) in Tenerife.

#### Description of activities within the project:

The bulletin is distributed in key centres, where immigrants access information and meet. The coordinating organisation provides:

- Information on the regulations which in general affect immigrants' new lives such as immigration law, social services, employment rights etc.
- Legal advice and information about specialised NGOs where necessary.
- Free use of office equipment such as photocopier, telephone, etc.
- Networking meetings between different NGOs involved in service providing for and by migrants to pool resources and ensure joint action.
- Campaign and encourage professional work: Migrant and mainstream associations shall have special coordinators to place immigrants efficiently and effectively in the host society.
- Social events to cultural exchange.

#### Geographical scope of action:

Tenerife Island with prospect to extend to other Canary Islands.

#### What were attitudes of immigrant persons towards volunteering?

The attitude is enthusiastic and highly dedicated as the participating immigrants feel that they make a real change to the lives of their fellow citizens that share the same migration background.

#### What kind of problems were encountered that hampered the engagement of immigrants to volunteer?

Immigrants report that first they are concerned with meeting their basic needs, and that volunteering must be seen as something to be considered only when this is done. Other obstacles to participation include difficult and long working hours and the lack of resources (to pay expenses, etc.).

#### What are the elements of good practice that made this project a success?

It provides direct support to improve immigrants' living conditions ensuring that information on regulations reaches the community they affect.

#### What is innovative about this project?

Enlace has been the only means of written communication, on paper and digital format (on a specific website), made by and for immigrants in the Canary Islands. It uses an easy-to-understand vocabulary – and reports to the authorities on issues of exclusion and acts of discrimination.

#### In what way is this project transferable?

This practice can be easily transferred to areas with a migrant communities infrastructure and "pioneer" migrants available and wanting to support their own communities with expert advice on the issues mentioned above.



**Contact details:**

✉ **Centro para el Desarrollo y la Integración Iberoamericana, CDI**  
 CDI, c/. Juan Pablo II 26A, 2B, Santa Cruz de Tenerife  
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 Fax: +34-822 026 952  
 @ elenlace@el-enlace.com / elenlace123@hotmail.com  
 http://www.el-enlace.com

**4.6.2. Asociación “NKABOM YE GHANA UNION”**

The migrant organisation “NKABOM YE GHANA UNION” wants to promote Ghanaian solidarity, well being and integration in the host society, by participating in community development and social cohesion in the neighbourhood.

**Participants of the project:**

Partners from the promoting association, collectives of Ghanaian immigrants, indigenous population from the neighbourhood community.

**Reasons for setting up this project:**

The desire of the immigrants themselves to become the main actors in their integration process, unlike the proposals and integration policies coming from the host society itself.

**Description of activities within the project:**

The activities are carried out to help maintain group identity, facilitate familiarity with the surrounding environment and life in the community. In general they are leisure activities with a marked social component, seeking integration through contact and relations with the host community and familiarity with the geography of neighbourhood and surrounding areas. Events organized include:

- Inauguration ceremony of the association, inviting all the people in the area to participate.
- Celebration of Ghana Independence Day, for all the residents of the area, presenting cultural aspects such as dress, cuisine, art and history.
- Participation in and celebration of local festivals such as Canary Islands Day.
- Organisation of trips to different areas of the island to facilitate familiarity with the region and interaction with its people.
- Visits to old people's homes and hospitals to show solidarity and offer support.

**Geographical scope of action:**

Local scope: San Matías, Taco, San Cristobal de la Laguna in Tenerife.

**Main results of the project:**

A partnership with a local neighbourhood association emerged. The participation in civic activities with other groups and the intercultural exchange ensured that the organisation is perceived as part of the local community.

**What were attitudes of immigrant persons towards volunteering?**

The participating group of immigrants see volunteering as the natural way of carrying out their organisation's activities, in the framework of living in the community and socially integrating with their immediate human and physical space. From this perspective, voluntary actions are a reflection of a commitment to their social community and personal interest in participating in common development.

**What kind of problems were encountered that hamper the engagement of immigrants to volunteer?**

The main challenge for these volunteers to get involved has been to find physical space to work and meet, which in the case of this association has provisionally been solved by using the local “citizens’ centre”.

**What are the elements of good practice that made this project a success?**

The concept of integration behind this good practice is that of real interaction in the neighbourhood. It is their strong belief that this kind of local action needs to be the first step to achieve better knowledge and understanding between people, to better rapprochement and coexistence of citizens in the area they live and in society at large.

**Contact details:**

✉ **NKABOMYE GHANA UNION**  
 c/. San Agustín – CSOC, San Matías,  
 San Cristóbal de la Laguna (Tenerife)  
 ☎ +34-649 149 540

**4.6.3. “La Escuelita”. Complementary classes for young immigrants**

Project offered by Spanish Red Cross office in Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

**Cruz Roja Española**

**Participants in the project:**

- Beneficiaries: Underage immigrants of any origin, nationality or social condition aged between 6 and 14, in primary or secondary education.
- Professionals and technicians involved in the project: volunteers (immigrants and non immigrants), mostly university students in the degrees of Teaching, Pedagogy, Psychology and Social Work.

**Geographical scope of action:**

Main urban area in the Tenerife Island (Canary Islands, España). Regional impact.

**Objectives of the project:**

To offer a steady extracurricular support programme for those immigrant students experiencing learning problems.

**Description of the activities within the project:**

The main activity of this volunteering initiative is extracurricular support, by giving complementary classes to their subjects for four hours a week. In addition, some other complementary activities are held to enhance the pupil's performance and foster intercultural coexistence. They participate in excursions; visit museums, exhibitions and typical places; enjoy multicultural meals made by themselves with the help of their parents; and perform plays. Every child attending *La Escuelita* is individually assigned to a volunteer tutor, who is in charge during the whole process of evaluating the educational progress and behaviour. The tutor is also constantly in touch with the pupil's parents. It is being considered to extend services to Spanish children, in limited numbers, to improve the process of social integration through multicultural coexistence.

**Number of participants:**

This project is performed by 12 volunteers, out of which a quarter (25%) are immigrants. The pupils are all 30 from foreign backgrounds.

**What kind of problems were encountered that hamper the engagement of immigrants to volunteer?**

The main hindrance for the immigrants to cooperate is the lack of knowledge of the Spanish school system and of their new environment. The fact that the users and some of the volunteers share a non-Spanish origin creates links between them and serves to integration purposes.

**What is innovative about this project?**

It is remarkable that this project is not confined to the formal learning, but extends to coexistence, knowledge of the environment, and civic education to achieve integration into society. It is also noteworthy that the parents are directly involved in the learning process and in the activities. Likewise, the inclusion of a group of Spanish children is very positive to attain our goal. Success in their educational career and non-formal learning outside enhances the integration process of the participating children.

**Funding of the project:**

Immigrants Programme of the Spanish Red Cross Office in Tenerife.

**Contact details:**

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Fax: +34-922 246 744  
@ inmitfe@cruzroja.es  
<http://www.cruzroja.es>

**4.7. France****4.7.1. EDL 14: School mentoring**

Providing school mentoring to children mostly from migrant families and integrating parents in the activity of the social centre.

**Participants of the project:**

Project partners: volunteers at the social centres  
Target groups: children from 6 years to 16 years.  
40 people, 10 male/30 women, 20 immigrants/20 non-immigrants

**Reasons for setting up this project:**

This project was developed at the same time as the creation of a new social centre in response to the need expressed by many families, mainly immigrants, for school mentoring for their children. Parents were asked to join the board of the social centre and to organise the activities, to participate at meetings, etc.

**Funding of the project:**

Funding is provided through a specific agreement with the organisation responsible for "Family Social Security" (Caisse d'Allocations familiales). A very low fee is required of participants (10 euros for the year + 5 euros for being a member of the association).

**Description of activities within the project:**

Twice a week, from 17h to 18h30, volunteers mentor children mainly belonging to migrant families. The main idea is to involve local inhabitants, the majority of whom are immigrants. A training course is offered to the volunteers to enable them to build their skills in mentoring children (each volunteer assists two or three children).

**Geographical scope of action:**

Porte d'Vanves, a district of Paris

**Attitudes of immigrant persons towards volunteering:**

As their involvement directly benefits their own children, immigrants do not consider themselves to be volunteers. However, they join regular meetings, give their opinions, and provide advice – on a voluntary basis.

**Problems encountered that hinder the involvement of male / female immigrants as volunteers?**

Many immigrants do not feel confident to get involved as volunteers. Young people are more likely to volunteer, as they are in France for their studies and feel more confident of their skills.

**Elements of good practice that made this project a success?**

Education is a crucial area in which to encourage the involvement of immigrants, as this is an important way in which they can help their children to succeed in the host country. Engaging in this kind of activity is also a way for these parents to better understand the structure of formal education in France and the different roles of institutions (teachers at school) and educational associations (volunteers or professionals in associations). Finally, getting engaged together with other immigrant parents that face similar problems creates mutual understanding and support empowering the self-help capacity of these parents.

**What is innovative about this project?**

Education is no longer only the field of professionals. Organising school mentoring is a way to ensure that, although immigrants may find the French education system very different and confusing, they can contribute indirectly by joining associations whose main goal is to organise support activities.

**Contact details:**

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**4.7.2. Local councils – the example of the XIXth district in Paris**

The project aims is to encourage the involvement of non-European foreigners living in the XIXth district of Paris to be involved in the city life and so to become more integrated in the city. The initiative is the responsibility of the local councils created in each of the 20 districts in Paris.

**Participants of the project:**

Local municipality: assistant to the mayor responsible for citizenship + members of the committee for foreign non-European residents

Target groups: 25.528 people from third countries (mainly Africa: 6.250, Algeria: 4.533 and China: 2.763)

**Number of the participants:**

36 members: 12 members in the Committee for Non-European Foreigners all immigrants, half men/half women; 12 members of the municipal staff, mainly men; 12 members of local associations, mainly men.

**Reasons for setting up this project:**

A law passed in France in February 2002, the so-called “loi Vaillant”, which aims to promote local democracy and citizenship. Paris, together with other cities with over 80,000 inhabitants (such as Avignon in the South, Rouen in the West), created local committees for citizens (121 in Paris). This is voluntary work: members are elected for 3 years and must participate in regular meetings, and work on specific matters relating to day to day life in their district.

**Description of activities within the project:**

Regular meetings to give opinions on the life in the district in 5 different commissions: Education, Health, Culture and Leisure, Access to Rights and Women. In addition, some concrete projects were launched: mediation between parents and teachers; annual day for foreign residents' citizenship; citizen campaign for the right to vote in municipal elections.

**Geographical scope of action:**

XIXth district of Paris (172,587 inhabitants)

**Main results of the project:**

Non-European residents have the opportunity to be associated more closely with local life in their city. Their awareness and understanding of different public services is improved. Their voice is heard in a specific context, through regular meetings with representatives of the municipality and representatives of associations (all French).

**Attitudes of immigrant persons towards volunteering:**

This is a particular type of volunteering. It is closely linked to civic rights, as non-European cannot vote in local elections in France. Immigrants were very happy that the initiative gives them the opportunity to be able to have a voice in different areas, and to be understood.

### Problems encountered that hinder the involvement of immigrants as volunteers?

Lack of information: this kind of participation structures tends to be known only by immigrants who are already well integrated. Furthermore, the councils have only a consultative role, which might put people off to get involved.

### What is innovative about this project?

The innovation in the project is in the composition of the committee (1/3 immigrants, 1/3 municipal staff, 1/3 associations representatives). The municipality is managing the committee, but it is chaired by immigrants.

### Transferability of this project:

This initiative could be transferable to any country especially in those where non-European cannot vote in local elections. The local level is the first level at which people are involved and should be able to participate.

#### Contact details:

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@ david.greau@paris.fr

### 4.7.3. Expression for Young Immigrants- Peupliers à Palabres

The idea is to enable young immigrants or immigrants' children to express their attitudes to their native countries, or their parents' native countries, and their feelings about their host country.

#### Participants of the project:

National Youth Institute, National Council of French Cities, Caras, Leo Lagrange, High Council for Malians in France, City of Paris, Regional Council in Ile de France.

#### Target group:

Young people aged from 14 to 25 years.

#### Number of the participants:

150 youngsters at the first meeting, 30-50 youngsters in the following 11 meetings.

#### Reasons for setting up this project:

In Africa people meet and speak under trees, the idea was to make youngsters express themselves under a virtual tree to exchange ideas on various topics such as citizenship or racism or day-to-day problems.

### Funding of the project:

City of Paris, Regional Council, Injep.

### Description of activities within the project

12 meetings called "peuplier à palabres" have been organised in different cities in Ile de France bringing together young immigrants (most of them facing social "problems" at school, with the police, etc.), representatives of mainstream youth associations and representatives of local authorities. The idea is to create a forum for young people to express themselves publicly – not only when riots or acts of delinquency raise public awareness on immigration issues.

### Geographical scope of action:

Ile de France (12 million inhabitants).

### Main results of the project:

Young people were able to speak about many of the problems they face. They can express their feelings in the company of others who understand their experience.

### Problems encountered that hinder the involvement of immigrants as volunteers?

The young people were not aware of the opportunities for involvement and volunteering. Often they don't see the value of an activity done for no financial benefit, volunteering is seen as a luxury for privileged people.

### Elements that made this project a success?

The meetings were organised by a young woman born in Cameroon, who therefore understood the target communities. The project had a very clear idea about whom it wanted to reach and include: youngsters with foreign roots.

### What is innovative about this project?

The concept is quite poetic: discussion under a tree (Peupliers à palabres). The youngsters are very happy to have a way to express themselves publicly: In many cases it was their first contact with representatives of government and they felt being taken seriously by government and the neighbourhood population.

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## 5. The contribution of volunteering to integration

### 5.1. Volunteering as an instrument and indicator for integration

The concept of integration that we have referred to in this report is that of a dynamic, long-term, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and members of the host society. The above-described good practices indicate that volunteering can contribute to this process with respect to the socio-economic and socio-cultural dimensions of integration. Volunteering clearly is **an indicator for integration and has a role to play with regard to many of the other indicators for integration:**

**Volunteering enables the immigrant to acquire basic knowledge of the host society, including the language, housing, education, health, social services, etc.**

The project examples show, that immigrants can learn and develop knowledge of the host society by getting involved in voluntary work under the guidance of volunteers or professionals of the host community who show them the way. Matching immigrants and non-immigrants as peers or in a mentoring relationship in volunteering can work very well as the broad application of this concept in the Netherlands for example reveals. Volunteering

can become part of the newcomer integration programs in order to learn the language and explore civic organisations of the host society. If the concept of volunteering in the host community has been practically introduced, it can make it easier for immigrants to set up their own organisations ultimately. This can be understood as a first and substantial step to integration.

**Volunteering enables the immigrant to participate in society through non-formal and informal education.**

Education is the key for access to the labour market and participation. Volunteering contributes to building skills among those who have not had much formal education, or have been underachieving or interrupted their educational career for various reasons. It can, in addition, contribute to life-long learning for everyone, independent of educational background. Migrant organisations invest a lot in building skills among their membership and furthering education through teaching and training their members. They can in this way contribute to compensatory education and training for young people, as well as for wom-

en, who have been identified as being the most disadvantaged and excluded. The important issue here is that they can access these groups which apparently mainstream organisations fail to reach and offer them educational activities that match their needs. The “bonding” aspect of social capital does have a crucial function here. By involving, in addition, volunteers from the host culture in these activities they offer non-immigrant volunteers an environment in which they learn and develop intercultural competence as a basic skill in a diverse society.

**Volunteering enables the immigrant to improve his / her employability on the labour market.**

Volunteering can provide an informal work experience and can be for some people an effective route to employment. This is of special relevance for young immigrants who are highly affected by unemployment and who do not stand a high chance on the labour market be-

cause of their low education. Volunteering can offer them a way to explore their capabilities and learn skills relevant to the labour market. The idea of linking informal voluntary activities with a somewhat more formal structure can help in building pathways into labour.

**Volunteering enables both immigrants and non-immigrants to meet and to take civic action on community issues that matter to both of them.**

Volunteering enables people to meet each other and interact – for example, migrant volunteers meet members of the host community when they get involved in volunteering for elderly dependant persons. Non-migrant volunteers get acquainted with the migrant community when providing services for them. Volunteering creates social bonds and is therefore a crucial instrument to promote social cohesion. Volunteer groups always are among the first ones to take action on society issues that tend to be neglected otherwise (e.g. services

in the neighbourhood, health and safety issue, housing), cases of injustice or discrimination (e.g. developing campaigns), etc. The projects presented above show, how groups of immigrants and non-immigrants can find each other easily united in voluntary action because they both feel the urgent need for dialogue and social change in their neighbourhood. Issues of common concern which need to be solved together are the best bridge across interethnic boundaries and can stimulate frequent interaction at local level.

5.

**Volunteering enables the immigrant to empower himself / herself.**

This is an important issue for all immigrants both on the individual and the collective level. It is of specific importance for refugees and asylum seekers who are often in a situation of isolation and dependence for many years – depending on decisions taken by others and help given by others. This can lead to the feeling of losing control over one’s life and destiny. In getting involved in volunteering, they do not only acquire and explore functional or civic skills as described above, but also develop self-esteem and regain self-confidence.

Also undocumented migrants can benefit from volunteering: if paid work is not allowed, then volunteering can be an important replacement. Many undocumented migrants or persons in a not-asylum related procedure are dependent for survival on others (institutional shelters, friends, etc.), and it becomes important to them to be able to give something back. Volunteering as an essential expression of human relationship, a way to meet and interact, then becomes a vital element of self development.

## Volunteering enables the host society to deal with increasing diversity and accommodate change.

The wave of xenophobia combined with predominantly anti-islamic sentiments in the aftermath of the 11/9/2001 events and the Madrid and London bombings have led to a greater polarisation in society increasing prejudice, stigmatisation and in worst cases blunt racism. For a part of the indigenous population, it is hard to accept that migration is an ongoing phenomenon and that immigrants and their offspring are a permanent and inherent part of their society. They are ill-prepared for a future in which more immigration is needed to coun-

ter the effects of an ageing society and balance off shortfalls of the labour market. Joint volunteering can help to address the underlying 'fear of the unknown' and establish relationships which may contribute to greater capacities to accommodate social change. Examples where migrant volunteers make positive change to the society through their volunteer engagement need to be showcased – they will raise the profile of migrants in the host community and contribute to a feeling of mutual trust and confidence.

### 5.2. Volunteering and the Common Basic Principles of Integration

Volunteering, being both an instrument and an indicator for integration, is an essential component of what the **European Commission called the Common Basic Principles of Integration** (COM(2005) 389 final).

Volunteering fosters exchange between the migrant and the host community and can, thus, positively contribute to what is called “a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States” (**Principle 1**).

Volunteering clearly can be a way of making the contributions of immigrants visible to the host society (**Principle 3**).

Volunteering can contribute to the employability of migrants because migrant volunteers learn skills and competences needed in the labour market (**Principle 3**).

Migrant volunteers have non-formal and informal learning opportunities that may complement and extend their educational background (**Principle 5**).

Both mainstream and migrant organisations provide (often more than just) basic knowledge of the host society's language, history, and institutions of the host country (**Principle 4**) and empower migrants to access public and private services and institutions of the host country (**Principle 6**).

Volunteering is a means par excellence of promoting “Frequent interaction between immigrants and citizens of the Member States” (**Principle 7**).

Volunteering enables migrants to cultivate and be conscious of their own culture of origin and encourages them to share this knowledge and diversity with the host community. It also provides opportunities to meet and experience the host community's culture and religious practices. This encourages openness to other cultures and religions both in the migrant community and the host country's population. (**Principle 8**).

The setting-up of local migrant councils and migrant representations to participate in the democratic processes at local level often happens voluntarily and these councils are run by (migrant) volunteers. They play an invaluable role in effective participation and integration and volunteering is a key component of these structures. (**Principle 9**).

Mainstreaming integration policies in all relevant policy portfolios means mainstreaming volunteering as an instrument and indicator for integration. A sound volunteering policy and the participation of volunteer organisations in both volunteering and integration policy debates will ensure that its potential for integration can be tapped into (**Principle 10**).

When developing indicators for integration and evaluating progress volunteering can be used to measure success and to develop policy measures to promote further integration (**Principle 11**).

The above listed potential of volunteering for integration is not realised automatically but requires the precondition of equal access to organisations and institutions, as well as the openness of the host society to facilitate this access and accommodate the immigrant in ways that help to break down existing barriers. Volunteer support organisations can play a crucial role here as they have the necessary expertise and contact net-

works to foster this process. The potential of volunteering is not only relevant to the individual immigrant. It is also relevant to both the collectives of immigrant communities and the host community as a way to shape life together. This requires an open and supportive environment in which the immigrant feels welcome and in which his / her existence as such is not constantly put into question.

## 6. Recommendations to policy makers at different levels and practitioners in mainstream and migrant organisations

The partners of the INVOLVE project met in Deventer, the Netherlands, in June 2006 to discuss the consequences of the above mentioned barriers to integration and to migrant volunteers, as well as good practice examples which show how these barriers can be overcome. Based on these discussions the following recommendations have been formulated – to different **actors**:

- Decision makers from government;
- Voluntary organisations both from the ‘migrant’ sector;
- Voluntary organisations from the ‘mainstream’ sector.

and concerning actions which can take place at different **levels**:

- European level;
- National and regional level;
- Local level.

**Some of these activities should also be promoted by other stakeholders such as business, the trade unions, foundations etc.**

Many of the recommendations are **overlapping** – both as far as the actors are concerned, and in terms of the different levels that should be engaged. Reality is complex and sometimes it is not clear which department of government or which civil society actor (at which level) is best placed to translate a particular recommendation into action.

As both the integration debate, the voluntary sector landscape and the attitudes towards volunteering vary greatly across the countries which participated in the INVOLVE project, there are no recommendations that fit every country’s situation. Depending on the country and its traditions of volunteering of migrant communities, different recommendations at different levels may apply. However, similar approaches and recommendations have been put forward:

- **Government should help create an enabling environment** both for volunteering in general and for migrants to get involved in volunteering. The best initiatives start bottom-up – but need a framework in which to emerge. Civil society actors and corporates both play a role here.
- **Networking** between migrant and mainstream organisations has been noted as a key feature for success – however, cooperation between the different levels and types of stakeholders is equally crucial. Public authorities at different levels need to get involved.
- Generally, volunteering is seen as both an **instrument for integration** and an **indicator of integration** itself. It is a complex and changing canvas which is still far from being researched sufficiently in order to make use of its full potential in integration policies.

The INVOLVE partners propose the following recommendations:

1

Support migrant organisations – to enhance their capacity to provide both ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ social capital and to empower migrant communities.

**Government at different levels and funders** should support the development of migrant organisations, acknowledging the key role they can play in integration and migrant empowerment and including them in policy-making forums.

**Volunteer centres and volunteer support organisations** should assist migrant organisations and individuals through helping with funding applications, capacity building training, policy development, participation in networks and in other ways appropriate to ensuring their development. They should facilitate training and skills development for social entrepreneurship to empower migrant organisations to act as equal local players.

Level: **local, national**

Directed at: **Government and migrant / mainstream organisations**

6.

2

Create awareness of the value of volunteering in migrant communities, educate people in (the concepts of) volunteering and stimulate them to use volunteering as a means of becoming an active citizens.

**Migrant organisations** should play an active role in promoting volunteering in their communities. Both government support and networking with mainstream organisations are crucial conditions in doing so effectively.

Level: **local**

Directed at: **migrant organisations**

3

Facilitate and support networking and co-operation between migrant and mainstream organisations at local level.

**Government at local level** should foster networking through targeted programmes and should set up specific councils in which civil society actors from all sectors meet and contribute to policy concerning volunteering and integration.

**Volunteer organisations both from the migrant and the mainstream sector** should actively engage with each other, enabling host community volunteers to be placed in migrant organisations and more migrants to volunteer outside their communities. Strategies should be developed to reach individuals who are not linked to migrant organisations. Partnerships between both sectors will enhance the quantity and quality of migrant volunteering when interests, experiences, qualifications and needs of migrants and the host community are matched. Innovative approaches including twinning with a migrant organisation and inter-organisational exchange volunteering, programmes for young people and other models of working should be supported and developed, working in partnership with diverse organisations from across the sectors to maximise opportunities. Strategies should be developed to reach individuals who are not linked to migrant organisations.

Level: **local**

Directed at: **Government, migrant organisations, mainstream organisations**

## 4

**Commit to diversity at all levels of government and within mainstream organisations – through a ‘top down and bottom up’ approach.**

**Government:** should set an example in profiling and supporting good practice in volunteering and diversity. Local authorities should include diversity in their strategies on volunteering and social cohesion, and should themselves be examples of good practice in promoting ethnic and race equality within their governmental agencies and human resource policies.

**Chief Executives** of a wide range of organisations should lead in emphasising the importance of volunteering as a means for organisations to be engaged with the wider community, as well as demonstrating their commitment to diversity in the recruitment of volunteers. Volunteers from different communities should be welcomed and their contribution should help shape organisational ethos and direction. Training should be available as part of this.

The **key role, played by volunteer managers as agents for diversity** and inclusion, should be acknowledged and given support within organisations, as well as by policy makers. Training, funding, networking and development opportunities should be offered to people managing volunteers in formal and informal settings.

Level: **local, national**

Directed at: **Government, mainstream volunteer organisations**

## 5

**Include information about volunteering in ‘welcome packs’ and integration trainings for migrants.**

Government and volunteer organisations should work together to raise awareness amongst migrants of the opportunities open to them to volunteer. When welcome packs are distributed to the newly arrived, volunteering should be featured. Any newcomer to a country should be informed about the country’s tradition of volunteering and of the potential to become involved. Where integration trainings are offered, volunteering should be mentioned and migrants helped to understand the benefits of volunteer engagement.

Level: **local, national**

Directed at: **Government / migrant and mainstream organisations (for information material and trainings).**

## 6

**Publicly recognize and acknowledge existing formal and informal volunteering undertaken by migrants and migrant organisations.**

**Government at different levels, funders and volunteer organisations** should support public recognition of migrant volunteers and good practice which enhances integration of migrants through volunteering. This can be achieved through volunteer awards, ceremonies and media reporting about the positive role migrants, migrant and mainstream organisations can play in integration.

**Media** should be engaged in raising public awareness of the current contribution of migrant volunteers. In order to counterbalance negative media coverage of migration issues, good practice examples should be promoted in the local, regional and national press to showcase good examples of migrants making a positive contribution to their host society, as well as the value of the cooperation of migrants’ and mainstream organisations in improving the life of a local community.

Level: **local, national**

Directed at: **Government; migrant organisations / mainstream organisations; media.**



7

### Promote employee volunteering of and for migrants; research, strengthen and communicate routes to gaining work-related skills and experience for third country nationals

Partnerships between migrant organisations and business should be encouraged as they can contribute to furthering entrepreneurship of migrants and enhancing organisational development in the migrant community. Work shadowing, job placement and volunteering of employees should be further developed in this context.

Level: **local, national**

Directed at: **Government, employers, trade unions and migrant and mainstream volunteer organisations**

8

### Put a special focus on young migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to ensure that they are aware of the benefits of volunteering and the choices available, offering appropriate opportunities and enabling them to overcome issues relating to poverty, social exclusion and documentation which can be a barrier to volunteering.

People who have started to volunteer early in life are likely to continue all through their lives. In addition, especially unemployed young people may find through volunteering paths to employment, when they are able to create social networks, learn the language of the host country and gain skills, competences and confidence needed in the employment market. Very often young people serve as catalysts for their parents to get involved in their host community. This is especially the case with second and third generation migrant youth.

Level: **local, national**

Directed at: **Government, migrant and mainstream volunteer organisations, youth organisations**

9

### Create an enabling legal framework for volunteering, which removes rules and regulations hindering volunteering in the case of social benefits and which includes rules for insurance and payment of expenses

**Government should** provide an enabling legal framework for migrant volun-

teering. This means that volunteering should not be discouraged by cuts in social benefits for those who volunteer. Many potential volunteers are put off when they are not insured during their volunteer placement or when expenses such as travel costs cannot be refunded.

Level: **national**

Directed at: **Government / volunteer organisations (to implement insurance / payment of expenses)**

10

### Promote and disseminate successful projects and good practice and encourage the transfer of good practice to other contexts.

Examples are those presented in the framework of the INVOLVE project. There need to be channels for the promotion and dissemination of these good practices, as well as to nurture sustainable networking. All levels of government and volunteer organisations can get involved – the necessary funding for dissemination should be provided.

Level: **local, national / regional, European**

Directed at: **Government, volunteer organisations**

11

### Support networking at a European level: engage with European networks of volunteer organisations and migrant organisations and create links of cooperation with the National Contact Points for Integration.

Networking has been identified as a crucial element in promoting good practice and building capacity both in the voluntary sector and in government. At the European level networks on volunteering and integration issues should be promoted and supported. There needs to be an ongoing European debate and networking that brings together different stakeholders (mainstream voluntary sector, migrant organisations, employers, trade unions, government) to identify and disseminate innovative ways of promoting integration within the EU. The European Volunteer Centre (CEV) should be involved in this process. The national members of CEV should cooperate with the National Contact Points for Integration.

Level: **national, European**

Directed at: **European Commission, volunteer organisations, other stakeholders and civil society actors**

6.

12

Carry out research to find out more about the extent and nature of volunteering by third country nationals: patterns, needs, perceptions, benefits, barriers, support, opportunities and good practice.

There is a need for such research to be carried out at different levels: local, regional, national, European and international. Research on volunteering by second and third generation immigrants is also very important and may help to identify existing areas of best practice. If volunteering for migrants is to be promoted by targeted policies we need to know why migrants do (or more importantly do NOT) volunteer, what kind of action fosters a better involvement of different nationalities in volunteering and how this involvement impacts on integration.

Level: **national, European**

Directed at: **Government, European Union, research organisations**

13

Recognize volunteering as an instrument within integration policies and as an indicator of integration.

**Government** needs to acknowledge that volunteering in itself is an indicator of integration and that it contributes to other indicators of integration such as employment, access to education, learning of the host community language, contacts between migrant community organisations and the host society, etc. It should include volunteering in integration strategies emphasising its benefits. Awareness of the benefits of volunteering which includes migrants and refugees should be raised among key stakeholders, including employers, the voluntary sector and public services, ensuring that public sector agencies have good practice volunteering schemes which address inclusion of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

Level: **local, regional / national, European**

Directed at: **Government at different levels**

14

Ensure legal provisions which acknowledge volunteering to be a legal right to every migrant regardless of the status – available as of the day of arrival.

Every immigrant needs to be granted the basic right to personal development and education – volunteering is a vital instrument to achieve this and should be recognized in this context as a right for all, regardless of immigration status and

the previous or intended lengths of stay. Migratory flows are diverse, circular migration is common and very often precious time is lost right from the start when migrants are prevented from volunteering because of their precarious status. Different government departments should recognize volunteering as a basic human right for participation in the host society – for all inhabitants of their country whatever their length of stay.

Level: **national, European**

Directed at: **national Government and EU institutions (setting standards / principles)**

15

Include volunteering as an instrument and an indicator of integration in one of the next Handbooks on Integration of the EU, drawing particular attention to volunteering in the implementation of the Common Basic Principles of Integration.

The EU's handbook on integration published in 2004 showcases good practice in integration policies and activities. We strongly recommend that a special focus is given to volunteering and its contribution to the different Common Basic Principles on Integration (as set out in the European Commission's Agenda for an Integration of Third Country Nationals in the EU (COM(2005) 389 final) in one of the next Handbooks to be published.

Level: **European**

Directed at: **European Commission**

16

Develop a strategy on volunteering and its role in European societies

It has been shown that countries with a strong tradition of volunteering and a sound volunteering infrastructure make better use of the potential of volunteering in developing social cohesion and integration. The EU should develop a strategy for promoting and further developing volunteering in Europe. It should also encourage Member States in turn to develop their own strategies for volunteering which will impact positively on integration issues.

Level: **European**

Directed at: **European Commission**

6.

## 7. Conclusions

The INVOLVE project has confirmed that there **is little if any research on volunteering of migrants and its role in integration**. Some partners have done primary action research to address this lack of data. The main findings suggest that, while volunteering is generally perceived to **contribute to a better integration**, there are still **major barriers** to more involvement of migrants in such activities – at personal, organisational and societal level.

Removing these barriers must be a **common effort** of all stakeholders:

- **Volunteer organisations and migrant organisations** need to improve their knowledge of the possibilities which volunteering offers migrants;
- **Mainstream organisations** need to become accessible to migrants, to commit to diversity and to offer quality and empowering volunteer placements;
- **Government** needs to tear down legal barriers related to the status of migrants;
- **Migrant organisations** need to foster both bonding and bridging social capital in migrant communities.

Third country nationals are **far from being a homogenous group** – which makes it impossible to find solutions to integration that fits them all. In addition, they form only a fraction of the total number of immigrants in European countries and it seems sometimes to be somewhat “artificial” to focus only on them. When promoting migrant volunteering, mainstream organisations tend not to have strategies on third country nationals in particular, but they want to embrace different immigrant communities. Integration policies often target naturalized immigrants who have, because of the naturalization, ceased to be third country nationals. **Reality proves to be too complex to fit into such clear-cut categories.**

In the same way it is **impossible to identify good practice which fits all country contexts and which provides answers to the challenges identified**. This report proposes some common criteria for good practice which makes it more likely that volunteer organisations succeed in recruiting migrant volunteers. Nevertheless, good practice both on the policy and organisational level can obviously only be transferred after thorough analysis of the targeted groups and the context in which the practice is to be transferred. The INVOLVE project tried in this sense to instigate discussions and learning processes based on the experiences outlined above.

In spite of all the differences – volunteering has been found by all country partners to play a role as **an indicator of integration – and one which contributes to several other indicators** as it enables migrants to acquire basic knowledge of the host society, to participate in society through non-formal and informal education and to improve their employability on the labour market. It also generally contributes to the empowerment of migrants and activates their capacity for self-help. It is, however, a complex and changing canvass, which has not yet been researched sufficiently to make full use of its potential as an essential element in integration policies.

But volunteering also enables **the host society** to better deal with increasing diversity and to accommodate change, as well as being a means by which both immigrants and non-immigrants meet and to take civic action on community issues that matter to both of them.

In this way, volunteering is a major element in the Common Basic Principles for Integration as put forward by the European Commission – promoting integration as a two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of the host country.

The **potential of volunteering for integration** is, however, not realised automatically. It requires targeted policies and efforts by all stakeholders to ensure equal access to organisations and institutions, as well as the openness of the host society to facilitate this access and accommodate the immigrant in ways that help to break down existing barriers.

**Networking** between migrant and mainstream organisations has been noted as a key component of success. **And government at different levels should help create an enabling environment** both for volunteering in general and for migrants to get involved in volunteering. The best initiatives start bottom-up – but need a framework in which to emerge.

All levels of Government - and mainstream organisations – should **commit to diversity** – through a ‘top down and bottom up’ approach. Governments should develop policies which **acknowledge volunteering to be a legal right to every migrant regardless of status – available as of the day of arrival**. Integration policies should in general **recognize volunteering as an instrument and as an indicator of integration**. Existing formal and informal volunteering conducted by migrants and migrant organisations needs to be publicly recognized and acknowledged.

The institutions at the European level should ensure that volunteering is **included as an instrument for, and an indicator of, integration in one of the next Handbooks on Integration of the EU** and that special attention is attributed to **volunteering in the implementation of the Common Basic Principles of Integration**. In order to strengthen the role of volunteering in integration issues, the EU should develop a comprehensive **strategy on volunteering and its role in European societies**.

Finally, some of the concepts explored in this report may have to be reconsidered or extended in their meaning. Volunteering needs to be defined more broadly in order to embrace the diversity of activity it represents, especially informal and non-organisational volunteering which corresponds with many migrants’ attitudes and understanding of volunteering. While the European Commission seems to have found the lowest common denominator in its definition of integration, there is still no widely shared understanding of its meaning. A particular focus on political and **social participation** might be helpful in integration debates – with volunteering in its different forms being a major instrument.

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**All 7 National Reports provided by the project partners have served as basis for this final INVOLVE report. They are accessible on [www.involve-europe.eu](http://www.involve-europe.eu).**

### (Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Klaver et al. 2005.

<sup>2</sup> For quoted please refer to the Dutch INVOLVE report, published on [www.involve-europe.eu](http://www.involve-europe.eu)

<sup>3</sup> European Economic Area comprises the EU members and Norway, Liechtenstein and Iceland.

<sup>4</sup> Data of the Central Statistical Office based on EUROSTAT data: How Europeans Spend Their Time (2004)

<sup>5</sup> Source: ISSP 2003.

<sup>6</sup> This study is part of the programme area „learning in a social environment“ and will be published in late autumn 2006 at [www.abwf.de](http://www.abwf.de).

<sup>7</sup> See: Bommers et al. (2006).