

# EMPOWER OF YOUTH



## Youth Strategy

As a part of the Erasmus+ Program, young people from Italy, Greece, the Czech Republic and Poland spent 8 days in Bytom taking part in a youth exchange on volunteering.



#EmpowerofYOUTH

#youthstrategy

#volunteer



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



# Together, they created

a non-formal educational space for young people, using the city's various possibilities. During the over week spent together, they have:



**FuturoDigitale**  
Non profit Association



**EUpHoria**  
youth lab



- developed the volunteer code,
- prepare youth volunteering strategies for their cities,
- met with local youth,
- mixed Silesian culture with the cultures of: Italy, Greece and the Czech Republic during the "Evening of 4 Cultures",
- loudly promoted volunteering during the 11th Intergalactic Meeting of Superheroes.

## The joint meeting

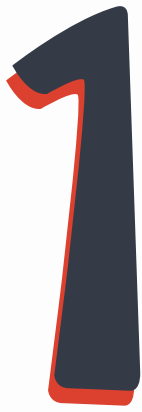
was aimed at promoting volunteering among young people in Europe and seeking opportunities for the development of this form of activity in the cities of youth: Bytom, Naples, Vsetin and Thessaloniki. The main topic was youth volunteering, both as a way of personal development and as a tool for acquiring new competences and skills. Together, the participants showed the opportunities offered by volunteering for young people, but also worked on its quality and how to involve young people in it.



The FEIS Foundation for the first time carried out a youth exchange in Bytom, and the project received the honorary patronage of the President of Bytom. Thanks to the meeting, we were able to discover the youth face of the Polish city, and foreign youth met with a very warm welcome from the residents.

The Polish group was made up of young people from Bytom ZSAiEO, and our partners were Futuro Digitale from Italy, EUphoria from Greece and ASK from Vsetin. The exchange was carried out on 14th-23rd of September, 2019 year. Project was co-financed by the European Commission, under the Erasmus+ Program.





# Five problems and five solutions

Five problems and five solutions about volunteering in Bytom



## 1. Lack of relevant information

Young people do not have enough knowledge about volunteering in the city. They often don't know where and when to volunteer. They are not convinced of the benefits of volunteering. They also do not know the rights that volunteers have.



### Solutions:

- A single information point should be created in the city, whose task would be to provide ongoing information about volunteering (general information and specific offers).
- DATABASE. Developing a list of NGOs in the form of a list indicating: areas of activity, contact details and requirements for volunteers. Urban project “The volunteering bank” is still blank and in creation phase or has not started at all (latest information from 2017). So it should be develop and launch.
- Organizations should provide information on specific volunteer policies. In their individual advertisements they should make the information more specific. Among others, most important are: volunteering hours, requirements, description of activities, facilities for volunteers, nature of work, etc.

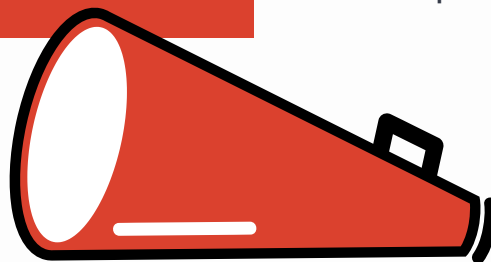


## 2. Lack of effective promotion of volunteering

In addition to information, young people often lack motivation and encouragement to volunteer. It is worth reaching people who are not looking for volunteering, but who can take up such activity in the future. Most young people do not consider volunteering at all as a social activity. For this reason, this group should be the main target audience of the promotion. In turn, information about specific activities should be targeted at recipients with more precise volunteer plans.

### Solutions:

- Volunteer Day - citywide, in the form of accumulation of information campaigns and NGO volunteer activities. On the one hand, it can be aimed at encouraging specific initiatives, and on the other, promoting pro-social attitudes among citizens.
- Using general city promotion channels: social media and website, to promote and inform. Reaching new volunteers requires general communication channels. With the help of advertisements on social networks you can quickly find people willing to take a specific volunteer offer (individual ads promoted by the city).



- Highlighting the work of volunteers during events organized by the city (in the form of statements of the number of hours, number of people etc.).
- Social campaigns organized in cooperation with NGOs and the city.

### 3. Week volunteer coordination

Most volunteering in the city is on a small scale and is not related to each other. Events requiring volunteer work overlap, volunteers have a problem with smooth transition between activities in different places. Volunteer offers are not standardized, it is difficult to check, it takes a long time to search for information. NGOs have a problem with the transfer and exchange of information both with the city and with other organizations.



#### **Solution:**

Coordinating volunteer activities by one unit of the municipality. This would create a simple communication channel between organizations and volunteers in Bytom. In addition, it would increase trust in volunteering itself.

Organizations cooperating with the city for a longer period of time would enjoy greater social prestige and could benefit from promotion as well as influence the shaping of attitudes of young people. Organizations with longer experience in volunteering would have a positive impact on other NGOs by promoting good practices. It would be easier for volunteers to find the right job and to combine different forms of social activity.



## 4. Poor volunteer offer

The main offers of social activity concern typical forms of volunteering (animal care, animation for the people in needs). These activities cannot always be undertaken without preparation and do not suit everyone. There is a lack of other and professionally developing forms of activity.

### Solutions:

- The city can organize and promote youth volunteering at entertainment events (e.g. city concerts and events). This can be combined with additional profits for volunteers (backstage entry, meeting with stars, mini gadgets). This form is often the first meeting of a young person with volunteering and is an introduction to further development and undertaking more complex activities (long-term and more demanding experience).
- NGOs could also offer volunteering affecting the acquisition of new skills and professional development (e.g. related to IT, photography, social media, journalism). These offers could be prepared in partnership with the city in the form of short-term mini-projects.

## 5. No volunteers

The main offers of social activity  
Many young people are motivated but lack the right skills and experience. Engaging young people requires comprehensive promotion, information and creating fashion for volunteering.

### Solutions:

- Good practices in the form of meetings with volunteers and exchange of experience. The meetings could involve both urban volunteers, social workers and foreign ones (solidarity corps).
- Short training sessions could be organized for volunteer groups before volunteering (mini-project form: training - action).
- Trained and experienced volunteers can act as volunteer ambassadors in their communities.



# Five problems and five solutions

Five problems and five solutions about volunteering in Naples



## 1. Lack of communication and advertising problems

Many volunteers find that their phone-calls, emails and other attempts at communication are not being responded to promptly or often not at all. This can be particularly stressful in the planning stages of a volunteer program when volunteers will want information about their arrival, their host family, airport pick-ups etc. It is even more worrying when the volunteer is in a foreign country, living in a situation that is completely new, surrounded by people they don't know. When working with a professionally-run volunteer abroad organisation, prompt and helpful communication is the key to easing the transition for volunteers and making sure their stay is both enjoyable and productive.

### How to solve it?

The best way to avoid this issue is to get a feel for the organisation's communication before you even apply. Any reputable organisation will have an easy way to contact them with questions, queries. Send the organisation a few emails and if you don't receive prompt, helpful responses, simply do not apply. If they cannot answer a few basic questions beforehand, it is probable they will be unable to help you urgently during your project.





## 2. Not enough money

Fees for volunteer abroad programs can often seem dauntingly high (10). This being said, overcharging does take place and many volunteers notice cheaper fees being advertised after they have already paid. Worse still are those who speak to volunteers on their program who are seemingly paying a lot less for the same program and even host family.

### How to solve it?

So the institutions should help the associations more, but the real problem is that there is funding for these projects but no one knows where the money goes



### How to solve it?

Better qualification to volunteers receiver should occur and better controls of volunteers work in mean of evaluation in partnership with volunteers themselves and local community representatives.



## 3. Take advantage from volunteering even if you don't need it

Volunteering gives real help to people who cannot buy basic necessities like water and clothes. People sometime exploit the helps of the volunteers and the social welfare also when they don't need it, cheating on their economic condition, denying the aid to who really need it.

## How to solve it?

Evaluation in partnership with volunteers themselves and local community representatives, especially financial evaluation. Additionally, more financial transparency.

## 5. Lack of protection

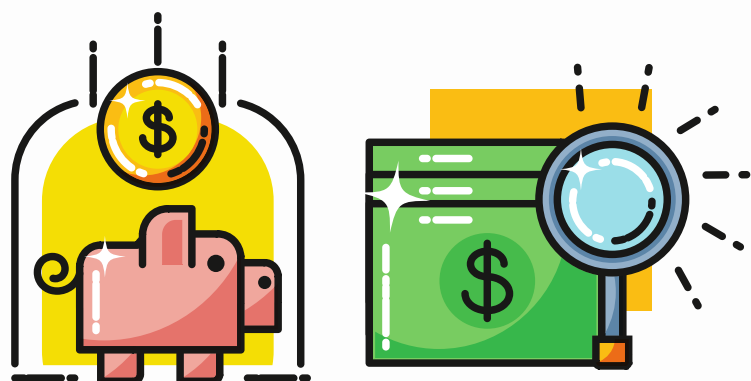
In Naples there's few and not so well institution that protect the association of volunteering. Volunteers hasn't the protection and the training they deserve and also the managing of the goods of the association is very difficult and some of them has to limit their projects.

## 4. Financial allocation problem

Often, volunteers arrive at their destination and begin working and become suspicious about how their fees are being allocated. Perhaps they find that their host family is not being compensated particularly well or that the project seems to be running on a very tight budget, despite having a large number of fee-paying volunteers. Those that do confront their organisation are often given vague responses about administration costs, equipment and overheads.

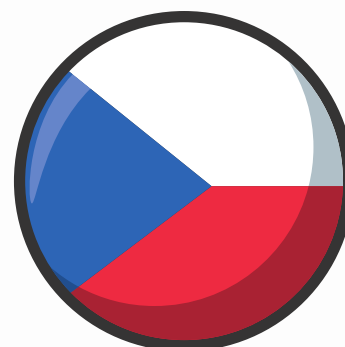
## How to solve it?

Implementation of long-lasting strategy for protection and prevention.



# Five problems and five solutions

Five problems and five solutions about volunteering in Vsetín (and Třinec)



## 1. Lack of money for organizations

The city should prepare an offer of mini grants that would be dedicated to the support of volunteering in organizations. Small grants would be aimed at improving the conditions of volunteering, through logistic and practical support (places of volunteering, training, insurance, promotion). Thanks to this, organizations would be encouraged to use the volunteer work more widely and better, in their initiatives.

The city can attract NGOs from the region and stimulate the emergence of new organizations through a volunteer mini grant system. Informal groups of young people (e.g. school clubs, youth city council, urban youth initiatives) should also receive support, so that they can cooperate with the city on various events and permanent actions. The partnership established in this way could eventually lead to the creation of new organizations or new permanent urban initiatives offering various forms of voluntary activities for young people.

## 2. Lack of volunteer

Some of volunteers can go to all highschool's or universities in the city. To show students how to be volunteer and try to improve them how its good to help each other and then maybe they will want to be volunteer, or we can also do more posters about voluntary.

## 3. Lack of organization

There are not enough organizations to volunteer and involve young people in their activities. There is a lack of organization and volunteering in various activities.



## 4. The city doesn't support smaller organization

Lack of support for small organizations significantly weakens the city's opportunities for volunteering. Large organizations focus on specific initiatives by organizing their volunteers around them. Small organizations could create individual volunteer positions that would be attractive and interesting for young people. In this regard, the city could support NGOs that prove the use of volunteers on an appropriate scale.

## 5. Unrespecting volunteers

Volunteers are not respected. Both by the organizers (lack of facilities, lack of substantive support, lack of recognition) as well as by the city and residents (lack of appreciation, not knowledge).

Social campaigns targeted at residents would help, with the goal of getting to know local volunteers and the work they do for free. Through such actions, the residents would learn about their volunteers, meet them and could contribute to a better promotion of volunteering. There could also be regular meetings with volunteers, during which everyone could see the results and learn how to become a volunteer. In the long term, this would increase volunteering interest and the number of volunteers.



# Five problems and five solutions



Five problems and five solutions about volunteering in Greece (Thessaloniki)

## 1. The first obstacle that can someone face in Greece when he/she will be a volunteer, is the lack of money

Greece faces some huge financial problems that is an obstacle for volunteers. The lack of funds don't help volunteering programmes raise in Greece. Most volunteer organizations will not pay for your flight, travel insurance, medical costs, or personal expenses. Moreover one critical disadvantage of Greek voluntarism is the lack of proper funding. Many voluntary organisations in Greece do not have the right funds from government and usually the donations are not enough. So the goals of the organisation are not fulfilled and each situation is getting worse. Volunteers unfortunately are engaged in activities where they're unable to do any progress. Because of that, there should be more programmes aimed to support volunteering in financial field.

## 2. Another problem that our country faces is the lack of prevention.

People become active after the damage is done. For instance, many forests catch fire because of the many rubbish. People throw the garbage everywhere and they don't care about consequences. The answer for those problems could be volunteering itself, especially as a community binding ones.



### **3. A significant point is the lack of infrastructure is another problem**

In particular there are no public buildings or they are old and inappropriate. Even when there are, they don't have the appropriate facilities. For example, heating and equipment. Therefore investing in hard results could be more significant goal of volunteer's programmes.

### **4. Finally, strong argument about voluntarism in Greece is the mismanagement**

The mistreatment of volunteering programmes lead to negative results and at the end discourage the volunteers themselves. When there is not good management and leadership from the heads of the organisation, the whole operation goes down and the organisation loses too much. Better evaluation and more financial transparency could be a solution.



### **5. It has to be mentioned that people are not informed properly and deeply about volunteering**

For example many events that take place are not known to the common people because they are not promoted. The solution of the lack of awareness in Greece, must be given fast and quickly. At first people throughout the Internet and the brochures will be informed about volunteering projects. Also, it is a good idea to organise events in the main squares of the towns and the city in which people can attend. Moreover people from the young age will attend in volunteering projects and it will be part of their life from the school years



# 2

## 5 tips on finding opportunities for volunteering

1. Information point for volunteering in the city. If it exists, it is usually run by the city or one of the larger NGOs. If there is no information point in your city, look for the list of organizations on its pages and look for volunteer offers through links or by direct contact.
2. Follow the events in your city. Large city events usually involve volunteers. Such volunteering usually has a short-term form (one or several days). This is a great opportunity for your first volunteer activity. During these meetings you will probably meet other volunteers. Many of them will be experienced and will be able to give you practical tips and recommend other organizations and places for volunteering.
3. Meet the volunteer. Find out if any of your friends or their friends are volunteers. If so, propose a coffee meeting and talk about volunteering. If you are at a party or a larger meeting, raise the topic of volunteering and talk to volunteers. This way you will get a lot of valuable first-hand information and you can get in touch with people directly involved in the organization of volunteering.
4. European Solidarity Corps. Search for organizations that implement projects under ESC or are partners of such projects. Often, just enter the “european solidarity corps” and the city in which you are interested in volunteering and you will receive information about the specific possibilities of European volunteering. Search on the central pages of the Erasmus+ Program [https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en) and on the pages of national agencies.
5. Develop volunteering in NGOs. If you know people associated with some NGOs, ask about volunteering and suggest the development of this area. Many organizations do not create volunteer offers for fear of lack of interest. Many of the NGOs will happily welcome a person who will not only become a volunteer but will help create a practical framework for such activity.

# 3

## Volunteers feedback

**Under the #EmpowerofYOUTH our social campaign for young volunteering is underway. Find us and join us. Lets make a world a little better place!**

BE A PART OF SOMETHING BIGGER THAN YOURSELF

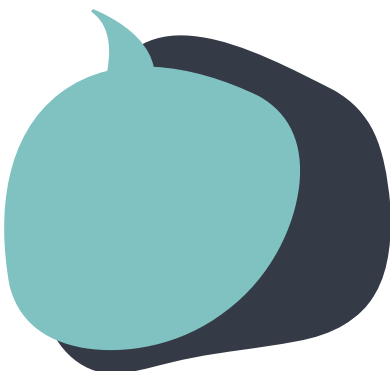
DO YOU KNOW THAT ONE OF THE BIGGEST OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPING VOLUNTEERING IS THE LACK OF PROMOTION?

I AM A VOLUNTEER, AND YOU?

WE ARE NOT PROPERLY INFORMED ABOUT VOLUNTEERING IN OUR CITIES. DO YOU AGREE?

THE HAPPIEST PEOPLE ARE NOT THOSE WHO GET MORE, BUT THOSE WHO GIVE MORE!

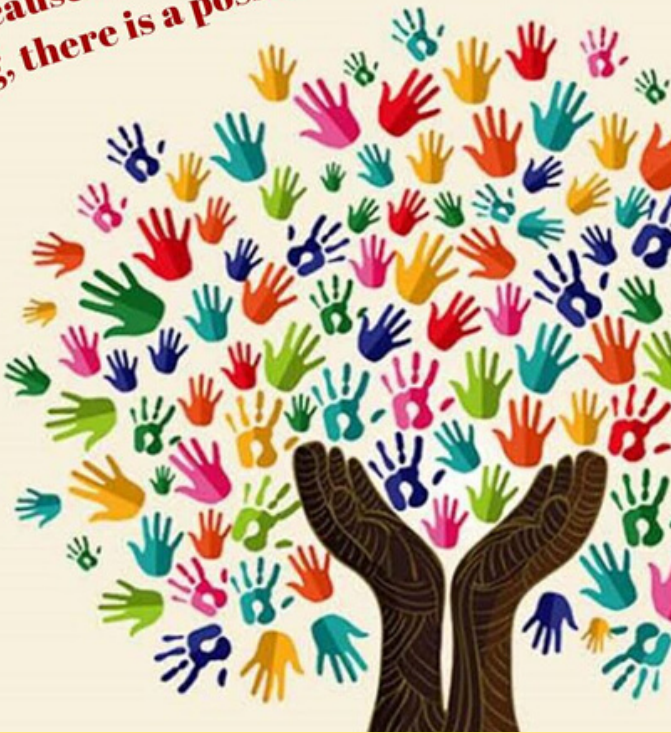
NO TEAR - BE VOLUNTEER!





**Why am I a volunteer?**

**"Because whenever there is a human being, there is a possibility for kindness"**



BYTOM COMMUNITY CENTER

## AS LONG AS VOLUNTEERS EXIST

Join us to our community

**I'M A VOLUNTEER, WHAT ABOUT YOU ?**



HAVE A HEART  
LAND YOUR HAND  
STAND OUT AND  
**MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE**

WHAT KIND OF VOLUNTEER  
ARE YOU? DISCOVER IT WITH  
US



BYTOM COMMUNITY

**THE HAPPIEST PEOPLE  
ARE NOT THOSE  
GETTING MORE, BUT  
THOSE GIVING MORE.**

Help us make a difference  
in the lives of our neighbors!

**START NOW CHANGING YOUR LIFE AND  
THE LIFE'S OF OTHERS**

We highly encourage everyone  
to take an active role in our  
community through our volunteer  
opportunities and events

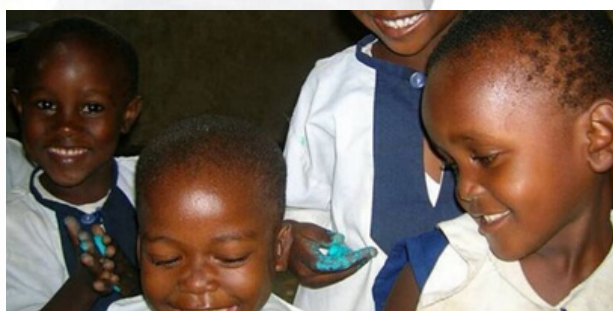






REGISTER AS A VOLUNTEER

**MAKE  
BYTOM  
A  
BETTER  
PLACE**



NO ONE HAS EVER BECOME POOR BY GIVING.

**BECAME  
A VOLUNTEER  
AND CHANGE  
THE WORLD.**

Help us helping other people



**ONE OF THE  
GREATEST GIFTS  
YOU CAN GIVE IS  
YOUR TIME!**

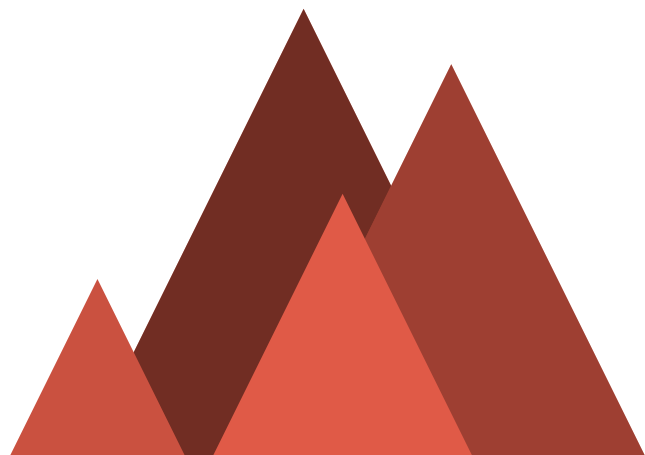
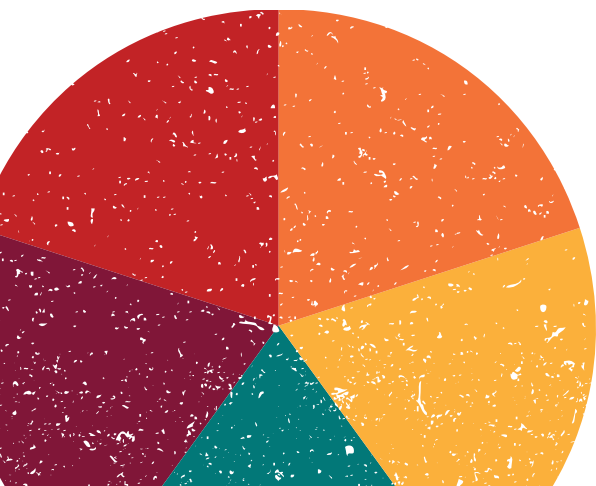
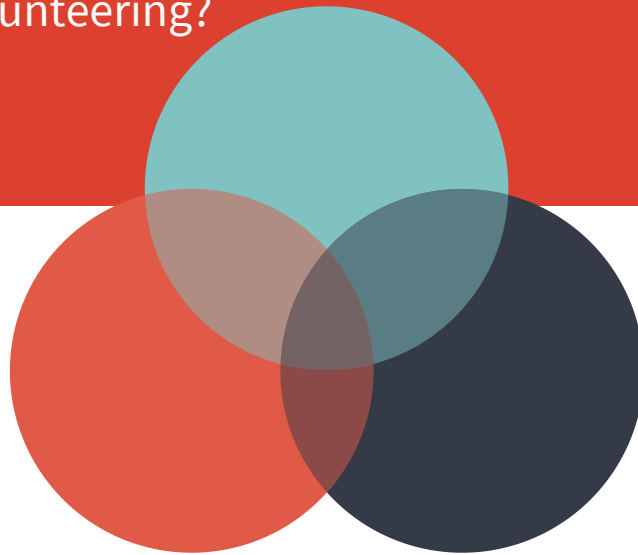
**Be a volunteer**

# 4 Volunteer code



As part of the project, young participants from Poland, Italy, Greece and the Czech Republic looked at volunteering as opportunities for personal and professional development for young people. Together they prepared a volunteer code consisting of three infographics:

- advantages and disadvantages of volunteering,
- volunteer rights,
- how to start volunteering?





find what do you  
like most doing



motivate  
yourself by:  
empathy,  
others  
experience,  
local community  
needs

# HOW TO START

## volunteering?



find an  
organisation  
that suit your  
preferences

start from local  
level and then  
develop and go to  
national or  
international  
organization



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patronat  
Prezydenta  
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it is easier to start  
volunteering with  
a group of friend





# VOLUNTEERS

## RIGHTS



### protect

working in a healthy and safe environment, being assured against risk of accident and illness, protection of human rights

### equality

right to know the reason why not being accepted when applying for volunteering, working in an equal-opportunities environment, protection against discrimination

### essential

should not be expected to undertake tasks that they are uncomfortable with or being beyond possibilities

### free

should not be charged anything relevant to volunteer work

### respect

being acknowledged and appreciated for contribution, value and impact

### support

should receive training and work evaluation, right to receive information and necessary materials

### certification

right to have an accreditation that identifies their work



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# ADVANTAGES



# DISADVANTAGES



## of being volunteer

### SATISFACTION

- helping others
- giving happiness

### EXPERIENCE

- improving ability of organizing things,
- adaptability and flexibility of volunteer's work

### LOCAL ACTIVITY

- Providing help to those that are in need
- being useful to your local community
- making the place that you live a better one,
- knowing deeply the problems and the needs of the community and being able to help more effective

### SOCIALIZATION

- friendship possibilities
- volunteering is fun

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- changing your daily routine
- being creative
- being independent
- being open minded
- chance to reflection



### LUCK OF PAYMENT

### TIME COMMITMENT

- volunteering requires a lot of time

### HEALTH IMPACT

- Some volunteer's work requires to handle stressful situation
- risk of being injured during outdoor activity

### NOT ENOUGH FUNDS

- money shortage from organization
- hardship with efficiency
- not enough resources in comparison of needs

### LUCK OF RESPECT

- the receivers are not active enough
- people not appreciate the volunteer work



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