



# Brochure of good practices

## Volunteering of people over the age of 50



Ways to enhance active aging through volunteering – WEActiveVol  
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**INICIATYVU**  
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ÖNKÉNTES  
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CENTRUM  
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**Voluntariat**  
Centrul de Voluntariat Cluj-Napoca

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# Project overview

The problem of the ageing population remains a major challenge for the economy and social security systems in the European society. An increasing proportion of older people implicates the need to undertake actions aimed to engage their potential in the frames of the social and civic activity. Allowing people to stay active as they grow older and continue contributing to society is a key issue to tackle the challenge of demographic aging. But still, due to perception on volunteering and lack of culture on community involvement among seniors, they remain less involved in volunteering opportunities.

Therefore, the main aim of the project has been to strengthen the volunteering activity among the over 50 people. It has been accomplished by international cooperation of the staff of participating organisations, who has been exploring the theme of volunteering by exchanging ideas, knowledge, experience and good practices. The partnership at European level has enabled to share good practices around Europe and to get familiar with new ideas and approaches on how volunteering could be more efficient amongst the over 50 people both for the community and the senior volunteers themselves.

In the project's lifespan the partner organisations have performed different activities including, among others, preparing the project's official website, publishing the leaflet, cooperating with local experts, carrying out opinion polls, organising public events for promoting volunteering. This brochure contains good practice examples in the area of volunteering of people over 50, as well as short descriptions of the participating organisations. Its major aim is to emphasize the positive aspects of volunteering by presenting some interesting activities involving people this age.

All the presentations and other information describing the work performed by the group of partners are available on the project's official website:

<https://weactivevol.eu>

# **Good practice examples from the participating organisations**



Topic of the project:	Thematic, long term volunteering; promotion
Title of the project:	<b>“Fairy Tale Grandma” – volunteering of people aged over 50 in a kindergarten</b>
Organiser of the project:	The Voluntary Service Centre operating at the Gliwice NGO Centre Zwycięstwa 1 Street 44-100 Gliwice, Poland E-mail: wolontariat@gcop.gliwice.pl Phone no: +48 32 775 01 78 <a href="http://gcop.gliwice.pl">http://gcop.gliwice.pl</a>
Start and end date:	Since February 2011
Intervention level, geographic area:	Local – Gliwice City area
General objectives of the project:	Activation through volunteering of people over 50; promotion of volunteering; elaboration of good practices examples in this field
Financial sources:	The Gliwice NGO Centre is a city unit with public funding

Description of the project: the project participants are ladies aged over 50, who declared the willingness to become volunteers in kindergartens in Gliwice. The ladies are using age-related features such as calmness, patience, life experience, distance, and are eagerly helping in work with children. The volunteer candidates are trained on the basic legal aspects of volunteering. During a first conversation run with the Centre’s employee, they talk about personal motivation, most often the need to feel useful, contact with other people, learning new things, using the experience gained. At subsequent meetings, they learn how to use artistic, organisational and acting skills. The volunteers can also create a meeting agenda by proposing the topics of future workshops. During the meetings organised every second week at the Centre, the participants are sharing their experiences, insights, and are commonly solving problems encountered in voluntary activities. In the kindergartens, they are engaged in performing different tasks, from the most basic, providing care, to substantive one, such as participating in art workshops, reading books etc. Each volunteer has entered into a cooperation agreement. An official summary of the activities is organised in June each year, in which principals of kindergartens, representatives of city hall and project participants take part. Summary meeting is an opportunity for discussion on the project, its adequacy, as well as encouragement

for the future school year. The Voluntary Service Centre assists kindergarten principals through support and advice regarding the agreements and the cooperation with the volunteer.



*“It’s a wonderful feeling when I’m going for a walk with children and each of them wants to hold my hand. It is a great honour”.*

*“Besides reading, children love playing football, puzzles, and physical activities. At the same time, they are asking smart and difficult questions. Sometimes I don’t know the answers to them, and I have to browse through encyclopedia at home”.*





Topic of the project:	Health
Title of the project:	<b>“Service et Amitié” (“Service and Friendship”)</b>
Organiser of the project:	Association Service et Amitié within Institute Curie 26 rue d’Ulm, 75005 Paris, France Phone no: +33 1 44 32 40 24 <a href="https://curie.fr/page/service-et-amitie">https://curie.fr/page/service-et-amitie</a>
Start and end date:	Since 1985
Intervention level, geographic area:	Local level (5th district of Paris)
General objectives of the project:	To offer services, entertainment and listening to patients
Financial sources:	Private sponsorship (Institute Curie) and donations



Description of the programme: the volunteers aged over 50 represent the majority of the volunteers in the group composed of 50 persons. They are offering some services to hospitalized persons or people coming to Institute Curie for consultation, such as: answering their needs or detecting needs, in the attempt to fight against loneliness and anxiety, by providing distraction, improvement of their environment. They support them through their friendly presence.



Topic of the project: School volunteering  
Title of the project: **“Lire et Faire lire” (“To read and make read”)**  
Organiser of the project: Association Lire et Faire Lire  
3 Rue Récamier, 75007 Paris, France  
E-mail: [communication@lireetfairelire.org](mailto:communication@lireetfairelire.org)  
Phone no: +33 1 43 58 96 27  
<http://www.lireetfairelire.org>  
Start and end date: Since 2000  
Intervention level, geographic area: National level  
General objectives of the project: The aim of this programme is on the one hand to go in schools or similar premises to read books to children, and on the other hand to encourage intergenerational exchange between children and elderly people  
Financial sources: Public funding, private sponsorship and partnership with NGO

Description of the programme: at the request of the teacher or facilitator and in coherence with the school project and the teaching practices, volunteers over 50 years of age offer some of their free time to children to stimulate their taste for reading and promote their approach to the literature. Reading sessions are organised in small groups, once or several times a week, throughout the school year, with a focus on the pleasure of reading and the encounter between the generations.

*“Retired for just one year, I am involved in the association and I have no regrets. What a pleasure to spend time with children reading stories and making them discover the pleasure of reading!”*





Topic of the project: Thematic, long term volunteering  
Title of the project: **HAPPEN-BIG**  
Organiser of the project: Lithuanian Osteoporosis Foundation  
A. Juozapavičiaus g. 3, LT- 09310, Vilnius  
Lithuania  
E-mail: povilas.smolskas@osteoclub.org  
Phone no: +37061126003  
www.osteoclub.org  
*Partners:*  
National Osteoporosis Centre; Socialization  
and Vocational Training Centre (a member of  
Initiatives Network Association)

Start and end date: 2011-2014  
Intervention level, geographic area: National, all 10 administrative districts of  
Lithuania

General objectives of the project: To consolidate the efforts of various national  
organisations and local communities into one  
voluntary network (10 OSTEO-CLUBS). Develop  
national strategy and adapt existing foreign  
policies to advice citizens and health profes-  
sionals about healthy lifestyle and proper  
nutrition. By raising awareness among  
physicians, help to improve public accessibility  
to dual energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) as  
the best method to measure bone mineral  
density

Financial sources: Private donors: Merck & Co., Inc., Merck Sharp  
& Dohme, MSD

Description of the project: the purpose of HAPPEN-BIG project was to encourage  
communication and mutual relations among the patients with metabolic bone  
diseases, their relatives, doctors' clubs, and other stakeholders by raising public  
awareness regarding increasingly unwelcoming trends of osteoporosis prevalence.

Highlight of the project was the launching of 10 Osteo-Clubs in the major Lithuanian cities run by local volunteers. The great majority of volunteers were women over 50 years of age who were also the major contributors in the country-wide awareness-raising campaign through which the public was informed about healthy lifestyle choices that help to prevent bone fragility fractures. Equipped by Project Partners with necessary knowledge, tools and dissemination material volunteers reached out to local societies of Osteoporosis patients, groups of elderly members of society, healthcare providers, etc.



Regular public meetings within Osteo-Clubs hosted by volunteers were often themed by inviting visits of local healthcare professionals and patients' rights advocates. The initiative was recognised by the local government that invited the final conference of the Project into Vilnius Municipality.



*"We, me and my husband, already knew that osteoporosis exists but we did not know the symptoms, how can one notice and overcome such a disease on their own. Osteo-Club volunteer training meetings helped us to know better and most importantly, made us care more".*



Topic of the project:	Working with a disadvantaged target group – young people in life crisis; elderly people living alone or in care institutions
Title of the project:	<b>TESZUNK (WE DO IT) Senior Volunteers' Club</b>
Organiser of the project:	Volunteering Hungary – Centre of Social Innovation 1022 Budapest, Marczibányi tér 3., Hungary E-mail: <a href="mailto:onkentes@onkentes.hu">onkentes@onkentes.hu</a> Phone no: +36 1 225 0710 <a href="http://www.onkentes.hu">www.onkentes.hu</a>
Start and end date:	Since 2013
Intervention level, geographic area:	Local – Budapest and surroundings
General objectives of the project:	Find opportunities of providing valuable help for disadvantaged groups or persons in temporary crisis; Offer the possibility of participation for people over 50, and so promote active aging; Help the operation and professional work of the host organisation (Volunteering Hungary)
Financial sources:	Own resources: Club members' personal and that of the hosting organisation. The visiting activity is now supported by <i>les petits frères des Pauvres</i>

Description of the programme: the Club was created upon a personal initiative, and soon became a great success amongst people over 50. It is a basic principle and core part of the Club's identity that they are not a pensioners' club but a volunteers' club. For the moment, the Club has approx. 70 members who are involved in various types of activities.

The members of the Club participate in various activities: visiting old people living in big caring institutions or in their own flats; consulting young people facing a critical phase of their lives; helping the implementation of company CSR programmes or providing administrative help for Volunteering Hungary. They are also continuously and curiously looking for new ways and methods of participation.

One of their most successful activities is visiting old people. This activity, too, started in a “bottom-up” way – upon personal initiative. One of the members started contacting social institutions to have the possibility to visit as well as organise others to visit old people who are lonely and vulnerable living either in boarding institutions or in their own homes. The group members visit the old people weekly, and from time to time they attend community events, as well. By today, the group consists of 20 volunteers, and they have a long list of old people expecting their visits and help. This activity (and the group itself) is now being embedded into an international network doing professional work in this field.

*“As long as you are concerned with yourself, you’ll have problems. The moment you start dealing with others, you’ll have tasks”.*





Topic of the project: Thematic, long term volunteering  
Title of the project: **Volunteer programme “Small Heads”**  
Organiser of the project: Volunteer Centre in Banská Bystrica  
Ružová 13, 974 11 Banská Bystrica, Slovakia  
E-mail: [cd@centrumdobrovolnictva.sk](mailto:cd@centrumdobrovolnictva.sk)  
Phone no.: +421 907 130 817  
[www.centrumdobrovolnictva.sk](http://www.centrumdobrovolnictva.sk)

Start and end date: 1.9.2016 – nowadays  
Intervention level, geographic area: Local – Banská Bystrica  
General objectives of the project: Increase intergenerational understanding, increase seniors’ participation in volunteering and help children from vulnerable groups with school preparation

Financial sources: Private – Community Foundation in Banská Bystrica and public – municipality Banská Bystrica



Description of the programme: volunteer programme Small Heads is an individual after school teaching programme for children from vulnerable groups. Senior volunteers meet minimum once a week with children and help him/her with the preparation for school and with home works. The programme is organised by the Volunteer Centre in cooperation with schools. The main principles of the programme are: cooperation, mutual help, uniqueness, individual approach, education and friendship.

Topic of the project:	Thematic, long term volunteering
Title of the project:	<b>Volunteering of seniors in the University Library</b>
Organiser of the project:	Matej Bel University Library in Banská Bystrica in cooperation with Volunteer Centre in Banská Bystrica Tajovského Street 40, P. O. Box 285, 974 01 Banská Bystrica E-mail: kniznica@umb.sk Phone no.: +421 48 446 5205 www.library.umb.sk
Start and end date:	1.1.2013 – nowadays
Intervention level, geographic area:	Local – Banská Bystrica
General objectives of the project:	Increase the satisfaction of users of the University Library with the services and increase seniors' participation in volunteering
Financial sources:	Private – Community Foundation in Banská Bystrica and public Municipality Banská Bystrica

Description of the programme: the Volunteer Centre is the sending organisation and is responsible mainly with the promotion, recruitment, contracting volunteers and paying for travel expenses. The University Library is the hosting organisation. The programme has a volunteer coordinator in the University Library responsible for selection, preparation, communication and support for volunteers. The volunteers help with administrative and many other tasks and they assist employees in the library. There are approximately 6 regular volunteers involved in the programme each year. Volunteers come to the library every week for 2-3 hours.



*“Thanks to the volunteer programme in the University Library I can still be active and meet other people”.*





Topic of the project:	Working with adults over 45 from disadvantage backgrounds, elderly immobilized at home and/or socially isolated (in poor health, with high risk of being neglected by the family and the community or with a low income)
Title of the project:	<b>“Sfântul Vasile cel Mare” Programme</b>
Organiser of the project:	Societatea Femeilor Ortodoxe din Arhiepiscopia Vadului, Feleaculuiși Clujului (non-governmental organisation) Str. Tipografiei nr.23, Cluj-Napoca Cod: 400101, Romania E-mail: sfo_director@yahoo.ro Telephone/fax: +40 264 430286 Facebook: <a href="https://www.facebook.com/sfocluj/societatea-femeilor-ortodoxe-cluj.webnode.ro">https://www.facebook.com/sfocluj/societatea-femeilor-ortodoxe-cluj.webnode.ro</a>
Start and end date:	The programme started in 2003 and it’s still implemented today
Intervention level, geographic area:	Local - Cluj-Napoca city
General objectives of the project:	Strengthening the orthodox faith in the families and our society; Increasing the quality of life for the people living in situations of social risk, by satisfying their need for communication, avoiding in this way their social exclusion (for elderly lacking independence); Developing the spirit of offering help among the orthodox women
Financial sources:	Archdiocese of Vad, Feleac and Cluj; World Prayer Day in Austria and the Switzerland; Württemberg Evangelical Church; Diaconal House in Stuttgart, Germany; occasional donors; membership contribution

Description of the programme: the programme’s aim is to assist adult persons with homecare services. Since its start the programme offered services to 170 persons. The total number of members aged over 50 who have been involved as volunteers is 97. The recruitment of volunteers is done mostly with the help of the priests

from our parishes, the members of our society as well as via radio announcements (Radio Renașterea) and printed newspapers. The volunteer manager is responsible for the training of the volunteers, as well as the assessment of their individual performance.

Depending on the current needs, the volunteers' activities include: conversation; counselling on specific topics, depending on the beneficiaries' needs; prayer, connection with the priests of the parish; help with shopping; accompanying beneficiaries to medical visits, signing in or out of the hospital; visiting elderly people during hospitalization; help with medical recipes or buying specific medication; different delivery tasks: tax payments, delivering documents to local public institutions (city hall, social services institutions, etc.); periodical house visits; meetings, visits to religious sites, pilgrimage for beneficiaries that are able to travel; managing the monthly food packages for the beneficiaries with low income.



*"I absolutely adore people and I want to bring joy, trust and hope in the lives of those who are suffering".*

# **Description of partner organisations**

Established in 2000, the **Voivodeship Labour Office in Katowice (VLO in Katowice)** is an organisational unit of the local authorities of the Silesian Voivodeship. Its responsibilities are concerned with developing labour market policy as well as initiating and supporting activities promoting and stimulating development of the labour market in the Silesian Voivodeship. The key mission of the Voivodeship Labour Office is to promote employment, reduce unemployment effects and stimulate job activation aiming to reach a high rate of employment, human resources development, and high quality of work as well as to foster social inclusion. VLO tasks and objectives include, among others, the organisation of employment placements abroad, provision of vocational guidance and vocational information, promotion of entrepreneurship, obtaining funds and pursuing projects under European Union programmes, development of a regional plan of action for employment, division of the Labour Fund resources, implementation of the European Social Fund within the Silesian Voivodeship, as well as performing various analyses regarding the regional labour market.

**E-Seniors** is a non-profit non-governmental organisation that aims at fighting e-exclusion by providing access and training in ICT to seniors and/or disabled people. Its main objectives are: to shrink, and where possible, bridge the digital gap between generations; to care for elders by fighting seniors' isolation; to open new horizons for efficient use of free time. Since its creation, E-Seniors have provided courses on ICT usage for seniors in various public locations and the association is constantly opening new locations all over the region in order to provide a "proximity" service that takes into account the rhythm, interests and needs of its potential audience. Through its work for elderly people and with them the organisation also tries to increase awareness about the importance of ICT solutions in everyday life. E-Seniors invests resources in developing new applications and services to enable independent living as well as helping keep their physical and mental health. E-Seniors has both local and European projects related to active ageing and supporting older adults' voluntary work.

**Initiatives Network Association (Asociacija “Iniciatyvų tinklas”)** was founded in 2007 with the goal to develop and expand a highly sophisticated network of shared experiences where creative and active society forms and flourishes. For more than 10 years it is involved in promoting volunteering and stimulating job activation among less advantaged groups of society, aiming for human resource development and social inclusion. Our expertise is backed-up by our members’ experience in the field of defending civil, social, and economic rights, forming knowledge-based society, contributing to the education and social integration of individuals all across EU based on innovative methods and the principles of equal opportunities. We represent organisations and people practicing law, psychology, social work, andragogy who are united by the common goal to pursue an inter-generational dialogue, promote their initiatives, discover volunteerism, improve their skills and abilities, and develop solutions to real problems.

The aim of **Volunteering Hungary - Centre of Social Innovation (ÖKA)** is to provide support to Hungarian volunteers and their host organisations with information, advice and training; to spread the culture of volunteer work, and its integration into our communities with private entities, civil organisations, institutions and companies through concrete programmes. ÖKA offers its services for all the different actors of society (individuals, NGOs, government, local authorities, institutions and companies). Our core activities: recruitment, registration and referral of volunteers and registration of volunteer opportunities; framing and review the legislation on volunteering; educational and training programmes; professional consultation with governmental institutions; coordination of the Volunteer Centres Network; organising corporate volunteer programmes; organising Pro Bono events; implementation of institutional volunteer programmes; organising Volunteer Promotion Activities; development of senior volunteer programmes; Volunteering Award Ceremony; conferences on volunteering; international cooperation.

The **Volunteer Center** was founded in 2000, in the Banská Bystrica City, Central Slovakia. Our mission is to increase human potential and to improve the quality of life through volunteering. The Centre is based at the Matej Bel University and it is actively participating in the community life and important actions. Our goals are to motivate people to volunteer, to increase awareness and interest of people in volunteering, to raise the value of volunteering in the eyes of the wide public, to improve the quality of the volunteer management within organisations that involve volunteering and to create volunteer opportunities. Our main activities are: services for volunteering; promotion of volunteering; training and supervision for volunteers and volunteer involving organisations; annual award ceremony for volunteers through the prize called Heart on a Sleeve; research in the area of volunteering and youth; implementation of our own volunteer programmes; developing service-learning strategy; sending and hosting volunteers to/from abroad and co-operation with organisations active in volunteering on national and international level.

The mission of the **Centrul de Voluntariat Cluj-Napoca (CVCN)** is to develop volunteerism as a means of involving citizens in solving out the problems of the Cluj-Napoca community. The CVCN was legally founded in December 2004. Our objectives are to increase: the number of volunteers (local and international) in Cluj-Napoca, the innovation degree in the area of volunteerism, the visibility of volunteerism. Services for the organisations and public institutions: recruiting volunteers, consultancy for volunteering strategies, training in volunteer management, developing our own volunteering projects. For the volunteers: informing them about volunteering opportunities and guiding them in their choice, organising volunteering campaigns and events recognising the work volunteers do for the community, organising training sessions for the development of volunteers professional abilities. For the community: organising volunteering actions, organising annual events: National Volunteer Week (since 2002) and 5-th of December – International Volunteers' Day (since 2004), developing corporate volunteering projects in partnership with companies.

# **Project partners' contact details**



Voivodeship Labour Office in Katowice  
**(Wojewódzki Urząd Pracy w Katowicach)**

Kościuszki 30, 40-048 Katowice, Poland

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Tel.: +48327573301

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**E-Seniors Association**

19 cité de Phalsbourg, 75011 Paris, France

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Tel.: +33140334926

Contact person's e-mail address: [afernandez@eseniors.eu](mailto:afernandez@eseniors.eu)



**Initiatives Network Association (Asociacija "Iniciatyvų tinklas")**

V. Vaitkaus g. 13/165 Vilnius, Lithuania

Website: [www.itinklas.lt](http://www.itinklas.lt)

Tel.: +37067799969

Contact person's e-mail address: [povilas.smolskas@sidmc.org](mailto:povilas.smolskas@sidmc.org)





ÖNKÉNTES  
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CENTRUM  
DOBROVOĽNÍCTVA

**Volunteer Centre (Centrum dobrovoľníctva)**

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Voluntariat  
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