



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL COMMUNICATION

Citizens & Institutions  
Citizens' Policy

**NOTE TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF MEMBER STATES NOMINATED FOR THE  
PREPARATION OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF VOLUNTEERING 2011**

**GUIDELINES FOR THE NATIONAL PROGRAMMES FOR THE EUROPEAN  
YEAR OF VOLUNTEERING 2011 (EYV)**

**1. Introduction**

For the purposes of organising and implementing the European Year of Volunteering 2011,(EYV) and as stated in the Council Decision N° 2010/37/EC of 27 November 2009<sup>1</sup>, each Member State was required to designate a National Coordination Body (NCB). The NCB will be in charge of coordinating all aspects related to the implementation of the EYV 2011 at national level, and will ensure coordination with Community level activities and the overall planning of the EYV. Therefore, each NCB will receive an operating grant from the Commission.

In order to ensure overall coherence across the European Union, NCBs are required to create a national strategy and a national programme, in line with the four objectives set for the EYV (see below). The aim is to apply the objectives to the reality and needs of each country, based on the analysis of the national context of each country.

**2. Objectives of the EYV**

The European Year of Volunteering 2011 is intended to be a pluralistic event, which acknowledges the diversity of volunteering within and between Member States. In order to understand what the Year aims to achieve and to focus attention on specific achievements, four overriding objectives have been set:

1. Work towards an enabling environment for volunteering in the EU - To anchor volunteering as part of promoting civic participation and people-to-people activities in an EU context and address existing obstacles to voluntary activities, where appropriate and necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 17, 22.01.2010, p. 43.

2. Empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities - To facilitate voluntary activities and help organisers to implement new types of voluntary activities and to encourage networking, mobility, cooperation and synergies within civil society and between civil society and other sectors in an EU context.
3. Recognise voluntary activities - To encourage appropriate incentives for individuals, companies and volunteer-development organisations and gain recognition for volunteering at EU level and in the Member States by policy makers, civil society organisations, public institutions, the formal and non-formal education sector and employers for skills and competences developed through volunteering.
4. Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering - To raise general awareness of the importance of volunteering as an expression of civic participation which contributes to issues which are of common concern of all Member States, such as a harmonious societal development and social cohesion.

### **3. The Grant application and the national work programmes**

As set out by the Council Decision, each National Coordinating Body shall submit a single application for EU funding. This grant application shall describe the NCB's national work programme to be funded and promote the EYV.

For this purpose, NCBs are invited to use the grant application form attached as Annex A to these guidelines.

The following activities are eligible for funding and may be included in the national work programmes:

- Meetings and events connected with the objectives of the EYV, including national events to launch and promote the EYV, create a catalyst effect and provide open space for debate on concrete initiatives,
- Conferences and seminars at national, regional and local levels allowing for mutual learning and exchange of good practices,
- Information, research activities and related studies, educational and promotional campaigns at national, regional and local level, including the organisation of awards and competitions.
- Cooperation with the media.

It is important that all proposed activities are in line with the four objectives of the EYV.

The grant application should be sent to the European Commission by the **15 September 2010** to:

Sophie Beernaerts  
European Commission  
DG Communication, Unit C2  
Task Force EYV 2011  
MADO 5/26,  
B-1049 Brussels  
Belgium

At least one version of the document should be sent in English, French or German.

The following points should be covered for the presentation of the national work programme (part two of the grant application form):

### **3.1. National Context: challenges and possibilities**

This section should describe the key issues affecting volunteering in your country. Briefly explain the current situation on the ground and identify the principal challenges that affect the voluntary sector.

Please explain the distribution of tasks between the national, regional and/or local level in the field of volunteering.

### **3.2. Consultation of stakeholders and involvement of relevant actors within civil society**

This section shall detail which sectors of civil society and which key national stakeholders will be associated in implementing the EYV in each Member State. Many organisations from a diverse array of civil society players are involved in volunteering and it is crucial that all relevant parties are fully engaged right from the start of the process.

Please detail how stakeholders will be involved and what form contact will take.

### **3.3. National Priorities for the Year**

This section will highlight the specific objectives of the EYV at national, regional and local level. There is an immense diversity in the volunteering landscape across the EU and hence it is important to define specific national priorities that will most likely be based on the challenges identified above.

The added European dimension of the actions should also be identified, as well as the potential for some or all actions to be replicated or complemented in other Member states or at Community level.

### **3.4. Best Practices**

National strategies should identify good examples of best practice in volunteering. These should be drawn either from good examples of legislation on volunteering or from within voluntary organisations themselves.

Opportunities for these ideas to be communicated and transmitted should be envisaged.

### **3.5. Communication Strategy**

Each National coordinating body will set out an overall communication strategy including events for the EYV 2011. It should indicate the national strategy's target groups, the planned activities of the European Year, the key messages of the campaign and how these shall be disseminated. It should also be described which is the expected impact at national, regional and local level.

Please note that the European Commission, in collaboration with a service provider company will launch a Europe-wide promotional campaign on the European Year of Volunteering. National communication strategies should as far as possible be aligned with the activities foreseen within the European campaign.

Please note in this context that a European Volunteering Tour will visit all Member States during 2011 staying between one and two weeks in each country. A timetable for the visit of the EYV Tour in each county will be provided as soon as possible by the Commission.

Communication material produced by NCBs should feature the logo and slogan of the EYV and a communication toolbox will be made available by the Commission before the end of 2010.

As part of the communication campaign, European ambassadors will be appointed. These will be known personalities with a strong volunteering profile, who will provide a recognisable face for the campaign. NCBs could consider appointing in addition to these European ambassadors their own national or regional ambassadors to strengthen their national communication strategy.

NCBs are invited to closely cooperate with the Representation Offices of the European Commission in the Member States for the implementation of the national communication campaign. Please describe how this cooperation will be implemented.

### **3.6. After 2011**

This section should explain the expected long-term effects of the EYV at national, regional and local level, including any initiatives which one can already envisage continuing and developing after 2011.

### **3.7. Monitoring and reporting**

This section should describe which mechanisms will be put in place to ensure adequate monitoring of all activities at national level, particularly with regards to achieving the objectives set out for the EYV. This should include projects associated to the EYV but not necessarily financed through the budget. Please also explain how such monitoring will then be reported to the Commission.

It should also specify how civil society and relevant stakeholders will be associated to this monitoring and reporting exercise.

## **4. Budget**

The grant application shall be accompanied by a detailed budget setting out the total costs of the work programme proposed and the amount and sources of co-funding. The EU grant can cover up to 80 % of the total eligible cost, but Member States may, if they wish, add own funding and increase the activities.

For the presentation of the budget, please use the table in annex 1 of the grant application form, part A for the eligible costs and part B for the funding.

The budget must be detailed, in balance and exclusive of VAT unless the applicant can demonstrate that VAT cannot be recovered.

The budget must be drawn up in EUR. Member States not being in the eurozone must use the exchange rate published in the Official Journal of the European Union of the month in which they are submitting their application (see website <http://ec.europa.eu/budget/inforeuro/index.cfm>).

#### **4.1. Eligibility period**

The eligibility period for planned costs related to the National work programmes will be a period of fifteen months, from 1st October 2010 (under the condition that the NCB has submitted the grant application form by 15 September 2010) to 31 December 2011.

#### **4.2. Co-funding**

The budget should mention the origin and form of national co-funding (minimum 20%). This co-funding must be guaranteed in cash. This means an actual income, a financial flow that can be traced in the written accounts of each NCB, the partners or third parties. Consequently, contributions in kind, such as the provision of goods or services to the NCB free of charge by a third party, are not acceptable.

If co-funding is provided by a third party, a letter confirming the amount and source must be provided by the NCB.

#### **4.3. Eligible costs**

All planned costs must be necessary and related to the implementation of the work programme.

A detailed statement for each heading of eligible costs must be provided in a separate document.

To be eligible for the grant application, costs must be:

- Necessary for the implementation of the working programme and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular economy and cost efficiency;
- Incurred during the eligibility period;
- Identifiable and verifiable with original supporting documents.

#### Eligible direct costs:

Eligible direct costs are costs which can be identified as directly linked to the performance of the work programme. In particular, the following direct costs are eligible:

- The cost of staff assigned to the national work programme, comprising actual salaries plus social security charges and other statutory costs included in their remuneration, provided that this cost does not exceed the average rates. Staff costs are eligible where they correspond to the cost of activities that the public authority concerned (the NCB) would not carry out if the project in question was not undertaken.
- Travel, accommodation and subsistence allowances for staff assigned to the national work programme, provided that they comply with the beneficiary's usual practices on travel costs;

- The purchase cost of equipment (new or second-hand), provided that it is written off in accordance with the tax and accounting rules generally accepted for items of the same kind. Only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the period of eligibility for Community funding covered by the agreement may be taken into account.
- Costs of consumables and supplies;
- Costs entailed by other contracts awarded by the beneficiary for the purposes of implementing the work programme;
- Rental and property maintenance charges.

#### **4.4. Ineligible costs**

The following expenditure cannot be considered eligible:

- Return on capital;
- Provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- Debts and debt service charges;
- Other interest owed;
- Doubtful debts;
- Exchange losses;
- VAT, unless the beneficiary can justify that it cannot be recovered;
- Costs declared and covered in connection with another action or programme receiving an EU grant;
- Excessive or reckless expenditure;
- Contributions in kind.

### **5. Grant calculation**

The Commission has determined the indicative amounts available for grants to each NCB based on the population, the cost of living and a fixed amount per Member State to guarantee a minimum level of activities.

The final amounts awarded will be determined on the basis of the individual grant applications submitted by the NCB. The maximum Union's co-financing is set at 80 % of the total eligible cost.

### **6. Payment conditions**

A pre-financing payment for a maximum of 70% of the grant will be transferred to the NCB within 45 days of the date when the last of the two parties signs the agreement and any guarantees are received. The purpose of the pre-financing arrangement is to provide the beneficiary with cash flow.

### **7. Timing**

15 September 2010:	Deadline for the submission of grant applications (including National work programmes) – start of eligibility period for planned costs
15 September to 15 December 2010:	Analysis and approval by the Commission
January 2011:	Signature of 2011 operating grant agreements
February 2011:	Payment of pre-financing (70%)
31 December 2011:	End of eligibility period for actual costs
28 February 2012:	Final reporting

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