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Evaluation of the European Year of Volunteering 2011

Final Report

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Disclaimer

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Executive summary

The Council of the European Union designated 2011 as the European Year of Volunteering in order to encourage and support — notably through the exchange of experience and good practices — the efforts of the Community, the Member States, local and regional authorities to create the conditions for civil society conducive to volunteering in the European Union (EU) and to increase the visibility of voluntary activities in the EU¹.

The Council Decision set out four specific objectives for the Year. These were to:

1. work towards an enabling environment for volunteering in the EU;
2. empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities;
3. recognise voluntary activities;
4. raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering.

This evaluation looked at the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, and sustainability of the activities of the Year relative to its objectives.

The evaluation was both formative and summative. The formative part ran in parallel to the Year. During this time, the evaluators provided feedback on lessons learned in the short term, which could be used to adjust and adapt activities in the latter part of the Year. The summative part, when the evaluators looked back at the year as a whole, provided additional input for the final findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The conclusions are based on data collected during:

- interviews with EU officials and with volunteer sector stakeholders (primarily members of the EYV 2011 Alliance) responsible for relations of their organisation with the EU and/or the EYV 2011 Alliance;
- attendance at European Commission coordination meetings with NCBs and conferences organised by the European Commission during the Year;
- fieldwork (i.e. interviews with the NCB, the sector and Flagship Project coordinators, and focus groups of volunteers and volunteer managers) in eight case study countries – Denmark, Germany, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Romania and UK;
- phone interviews with all NCBs as well as informal contacts at events during the Year;

¹ COUNCIL DECISION of 27 November 2009 on the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship (2011) (2010/37/EC)

- online surveys of the general public, volunteers, volunteering organisations (in- and outside the EYV 2011 Alliance), NCBs and Flagship coordinators.

The findings from the data fed judgement criteria in an analytical framework. The judgements reached enabled conclusions to be drawn on the basis not only of the main report, but of thematic case studies and on the approach to EYV 2011 in each of the fieldwork countries.

1. EYV 2011 – funding and strands of activity

The EU funding available to meet the objectives of the Year was²:

- €2.05 million for a European communication campaign (including €1.1 million for a series of conferences across the EU) and €0.95 million for a travelling roadshow and a web portal, hosted on the europa portal – europa.eu/volunteering. These were implemented by an external contractor under the aegis of the European Commission;
- €3.7 million to cover grants to national coordination bodies (NCBs). This met up to 80% of the cost of national communication campaigns³; Member States were, of course, free to make a larger contribution. Based on the budgets they submitted, these went in some cases as far as inverting the ratio of EU to Member State funding, i.e. the EU contribution was only 20% of the total. Some Member States put up other funding that was not included in the official budget.
- €2 million for ‘flagship projects’ to promote networking and innovation projects in the field of volunteering. This met up to 60% of the cost of the project. The objective was to target small civil society organisations working exclusively with other civil society organisations in their own country.
- €400,000 for co-operation with civil society. This budget was allocated to an ad hoc grouping of networks active in volunteering known as the EYV 2011 Alliance. This grouping had originally come together to lobby for a European Year. For the Year itself, it set up structures that were more formal to handle the tasks associated with this funding. The EYV 2011 Alliance was charged with coordination of civil society, developing a policy agenda, mobilisation and capacity-building and dissemination.

Each of these funding lines is described here as a ‘strand’ of activity.

A logo for the Year was developed by the Commission from the winning design in a competition run in advance of the Year by the EYV 2011 Alliance. The message for the Year was ‘Volunteer: make a

² Figures are projected maxima, not actual final expenditure.

³ Monitoring of implementation by the NCB was a condition of the funding, but the extent to which this was a formal monitoring exercise appears to have varied. Evaluation as such was not required, though some NCBs have carried out evaluations. These could not be taken into account as the NCBs’ final reports were not available when this report was written. Nor were those of the Flagship Projects.

difference'. This was translated into all official languages in consultation with the NCBs, who in some cases adapted it significantly in order to accommodate national traditions.

Intra- and interinstitutional coordination ran in parallel to this under the aegis of the Task Force within the European Commission, which was responsible for the Year. This included inter-service coordination because volunteering touches a wide range of policies and programmes, and coordination with other institutions – the Council of Ministers, the European Parliament and the European Economic and Social Committee.

The *main institutional and policy outcomes* of the Year included the:

1. Commission Communication on EU Policies and Volunteering Recognising and Promoting Cross-border Voluntary Activities in the EU of 20 September 2011;
2. Council Conclusions on the role of voluntary activities in social policy of 2 October 2011;
3. Council Conclusions on the role of voluntary activities in sport of 28 November 2011;
4. The 'Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe' of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 Alliance – more commonly known as the P.A.V.E. document;
5. 'Warsaw Declaration' for Sustainability of Action on Voluntary Activities and Active Citizenship adopted by the National Coordination Bodies of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 of December 1, 2011;
6. Opinion of the European Economic & Social Committee on the Commission's Communication on EU policies and volunteering;
7. Report and Resolution of the European Parliament on 'Recognising and promoting cross-border voluntary activity in the EU'.

In September 2011, the European Parliament Intergroup on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity adopted a Resolution on 'Enhancing the participation of older volunteers through the 2011 European Year of Volunteering (EYV2011)'. The EESC held four hearings on volunteering during the Year, and organised a conference in Warsaw in September 2011. The Committee of the Regions organised a forum on volunteering in January 2011. The European Parliament held a round table in February 2012 on Measuring the Value of Volunteering.

This is a range of activity which appears to be unprecedented for any European Year.

The European communication campaign

As part of the European communication strand, the European Commission ran four international *thematic conferences* for exchange of experience and input to policy formulation, one each in the countries of the Presidency – an opening conference in Hungary and a closing conference in Warsaw. In addition, a conference in Brussels targeted volunteers in particular, while a conference in Athens targeted volunteer organisations. The fourth thematic conference (in Warsaw in December 2011) was the occasion for the presentation of the main output of the work of the EYV 2011 Alliance, the Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe (P.A.V.E.).

The travelling roadshow, the *EYV 2011 Tour*, was conceived as a showcase for national volunteering activities. Though frequently referred to as a 'European Tour', it was designed as a showcase for

national activities during the year, both via stands and workshops. The concept was that it should be held in either a marquee in an open public space or in a central indoors location with high footfall.

The European Commission, through its contractor, provided the marquee (which was used in three countries), the furnishings and promotional material; the NCB was responsible for organising the presence of national volunteering organisations, the events programme and the promotion. The format was adapted to national circumstances along a spectrum. This ranged from a volunteer 'fair' along the lines of the original concept associated with workshops and presentation to a series of conferences for volunteer sector audiences. In a number of cases, outdoor activities were organised as well in order to take the message to the public more proactively and to draw the public into the main activities under cover.

The contractor was also responsible for the organisation of a network of *Relay Reporters* and a *web portal*. The Relay Reporters were in the main journalism or audiovisual students or just beginning to work in these fields. Many had personal experience of volunteering. They were equipped with a camera for a stay of around two weeks in another Member State to film short videos with volunteer organisations that hosted them for a few days each. They also made videos in their home country. These videos were uploaded to the web portal and can still be seen on YouTube. A short video was also made available to the Commission at the end of the year.

The web portal, europa.eu/volunteering, was a participative portal, allowing volunteers to tell their own stories. It also contained basic documents on policy and research data, it provided information on tour stops, the conferences organised by the European Commission, events which Member State organisations wanted to publicise more widely, and link to national EYV 2011 websites. The basic structure was in all official languages⁴, but material added during the Year was uploaded in the original language or in other languages if translations were provided.

The national campaigns

Member States were allowed flexibility in designing their *national campaigns* for EYV 2011. This allowed them as a result to take very different volunteering traditions and perceptions of needs into account. Consequently, the Year – like the Tour – took very different forms across the EU. The scope also depended on the extent to which the Member State was able to top up or leverage other funding for additional activities.

Some Member States funded a series of conferences or projects designed primarily to acquire and disseminate new knowledge and experience; others organised grass-roots events with a view to raising awareness of possibilities for and the importance of volunteering, or provide existing volunteers with more recognition. Some combined both.

Some picked up at national level the concept of having ambassadors, an idea considered at European level, but dropped because of the difficulty of finding figures recognised throughout the

⁴ Except Irish.

EU. Where deployed, the ambassador concept took different forms, ranging from a single ambassador who was a well-known TV personality to a series of ambassadors well known in their own fields to a mixed team of recognised figures and volunteers, who went to events in pairs of one in each. The concept appears to have worked well everywhere. It was often felt to have been helpful in attracting media attention.

The Flagship projects

There was a similar diversity in the range of the 33 *Flagship Projects* across 23 EU Member States. The projects ran from building networks of young people to networks of organisations, from improving the level of computer literacy and equipment of volunteering organisations to rewarding the best e-volunteering projects Europe-wide. There were 33 flagship projects in all. There were flagship projects in every member state except four. There was one project in 14 Member States, two in eight and three in one.

As there was no requirement for a cross-border element, most were purely national in their reach. However, there were several exceptions, including the e-volunteering competition. The prize for this was awarded at a ceremony held in conjunction with the fourth thematic conference in Warsaw.

The EYV 2011 Alliance (co-operation with civil society)

The *EYV 2011 Alliance* set up working groups early in 2011 to feed the process of producing 'P.A.V.E.', the **P**olicy **A**genda for **V**olunteering in **E**urope, finalised in December 2011. The six working groups covered quality, legal frameworks, enabling infrastructures, recognition, value and employer-supported volunteering. The final document contains recommendations for a more efficient and effective European policy framework to support and promote volunteers, volunteering, volunteer-involving organisations and their partners. The P.A.V.E stresses the need for a partnership approach in which all stakeholders, from civil society, business and government at all levels continue to work towards an enabling volunteering infrastructure in Europe. It contains an agenda for the policy framework, which the EYV 2011 Alliance believes should be developed to secure the legacy for EYV 2011.

The EYV 2011 Alliance disseminated information on this work, on activities in the sector during EYV 2011 and background documents through its website (eyv2011.eu).

2. Relevance of EYV 2011 to the objectives, and complementarity

As noted above, the Council defined four specific objectives for the Year: working towards an enabling environment, empowering organisers to improve the quality of voluntary activities; promoting recognition of voluntary activities and raising awareness of the value and importance of volunteering. The evaluation looks at the relevance of the Year to all of these and the extent to which the objectives complemented each other.

The importance of *an enabling environment* for volunteering was universally recognised. The involvement of the EU institutions – European Commission, Council of the European Union,

European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee, and of the voluntary sector via the EYV 2011 Alliance, in furthering the enabling environment was regarded as positive. National traditions vary, however, and agreement in principle does not mean agreement on the detail is straightforward. There is a wide gap between those who see a need for regulation or softer approaches.

The objective of creating an enabling environment appears to have struck a particular chord in some Member States with underdeveloped volunteering policies. This was the case of a number of the countries in Eastern Europe for whom the Year was a catalyst to overhaul outdated concepts. However, there were also other Member States who felt that initiatives at European level provide levers which can be activated at national level to stress the need for action and not to be left behind. They also create peer pressure from other Member States.

Such findings are true not just in relation to the enabling environment, but the other objectives as well.

Stakeholders also generally agreed on the need to *empower organisers* of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary services, e.g. through better volunteer management. The extent of consensus varied because some countries have already evolved more in this area. Some in the sector also feel that this could detract from the spirit of some volunteering and exclude some volunteers unnecessarily. Nevertheless, on balance, the desire to improve quality was felt to be relevant.

There were some common threads across countries as to the needs the organisers of voluntary activities have to meet in order to deliver more quality. A number of these are a function of changing times. These include the importance of matching potential volunteers to the opportunities, the significance of the role of volunteer coordinators, the importance of volunteer retention, more flexible approaches to the commitment required and making volunteers feel valued not only per se but relative to full-time staff.

Volunteer organisations and volunteers interviewed all stressed the importance of recognition. The extent to which Member States and the voluntary sector identified with a need for *recognition of voluntary activities* was, moreover, evident in the number of variations on the theme of awards during the Year as part of national programmes or volunteer sector activities. The European Year of Volunteering was often the catalyst for new awards, which are to become annual events.

The need to *raise awareness* of the value of volunteering was recognised everywhere. This embraced awareness within the sector itself beyond the confines of each organisation. It extended to the challenge of raising awareness in the wider public – including the media and politicians, and with specific groups, ranging from immigrant communities to corporates.

The need for complementarity with other programmes and policies, and to develop that complementarity, was recognised in relation to all these objectives. This includes not only areas where volunteers are important, e.g. youth and sport, but also policies which can benefit or impact on volunteering organisations, e.g. lifelong learning, corporate social responsibility and taxation.

The need for complementarity with other Years, i.e. 2010 (combating poverty and promoting social inclusion), 2012 (active ageing) and 2013 (citizens) was widely acknowledged. The extent to which the complementarity had been achieved with 2010 and was being achieved with 2012 was very variable. Institutional structures at EU and national level sometimes did not lend themselves to taking this from the theoretical to the practical level.

3. Effectiveness and efficiency

By objectives

EYV 2011 acted as a clear enabler for a number of *changes to the policy environment* at both European and national level as indicated above. These included the Communication from the European Commission, the two sets of Conclusions from the Council of the EU, the Opinion from the European Economic and Social Committee and a Report from the European Parliament. The work of the EYV 2011 Alliance funded by the European Commission also culminated in the P.A.V.E. set of policy recommendations to the institutions. The Year was also the catalyst for or accelerated a number of legislative changes and/or national charters or national consultations in 2011, and even in the run-up to the Year.

The EU Thematic Conferences and the work of the EYV 2011 Alliance working group on quality (among others), which fed into the P.A.V.E. recommendations, were additional contributions to improving the *enabling environment* and the *quality* of volunteer management. There were also a number of initiatives within national programmes, which made effective contributions to this at national level.

A number of these clearly successfully addressed needs identified by our interviewees. They did this in many different ways. These ranged from a survey to understand better the motivations of today's young people (for whom volunteering is often about acquiring skills and improving their employability) to panel discussions among older volunteers about tailoring programmes to the more active lifestyles of today's over-55's. They addressed the challenge of reaching out to new groups through a number of projects involving immigrant communities, including a conference on how to interest immigrants whose background is solely in urban communities in environmental protection of the countryside. Another initiative encouraged corporates to run volunteer programmes involving several companies at once in order better to exploit the synergies and their respective strengths and at the same time offer their employees a wider range of volunteering opportunities.

As indicated in relation to the section on relevance, stakeholders saw *recognition of volunteers* and raising the *awareness of the value of volunteering* to society as very important. These were important elements of national programmes. Often, they fed on each other. The recognition given to volunteers drew attention to the work they do. Initiatives in society to highlight the value of volunteering gave volunteers a greater sense of their work being valued.

Recognition took the form of a plethora of new awards, revamps of existing schemes and the organisations of volunteer days or fairs. The leverage provided by the Year enhanced the visibility

and thus the effectiveness of these initiatives. The fact of the Year was often instrumental in leveraging additional funding or prizes.

Numerous examples of how recognition was promoted can be found in national programmes, but this was the tip of an iceberg. The 'underwater' profile of local initiatives could only dimly be made out and not concretely captured. It is clear, however, EYV 2011 was effective beyond the examples of activities and initiatives funded within national programmes.

Overall, in our survey, the objective of recognition by raising awareness of volunteering within the sector was felt to have been the most effective. This was in line with the findings from interviews. Next came influencing policies and practices of the volunteering sector, i.e. improving the quality of volunteering. Then came raising awareness and the influence on national practices and policies, i.e. the enabling environment. This is also broadly in line with our findings from interviews. However, these are inevitably broad generalisations. What is true in the aggregate is far from being necessarily the pattern in every Member State.

By strand of activity

The effectiveness of some components of the *European Communication campaign*, i.e. the Tour, the europa.eu/volunteering website and the Relay Reporters were widely questioned both among EU-level stakeholders and in the Member States. This had implications for efficiency.

The Tour was effective within the sector itself in illustrating the diversity of the sector and in building new networks. However, these were side effects rather than a primary purpose. Interviewees felt that there would have been more efficient ways of achieving this. In many locations, the outreach of the Tour to the public was limited. There may have been an effective multiplier effect via the sector from the promotion and media coverage, but there is no way to measure this.

The limits to the effectiveness of the Tour were felt to have lain in the concept being insufficiently flexible. The concept brought branding and visibility benefits from using the same infrastructure transported from place to place, but these did not add significant value. These benefits were outweighed by the disadvantages, i.e. that this inevitably meant that the dates of the Tour stops could not always avoid unsuitable seasons or holiday periods.

Moreover, even though the logistics were in the hands of a contractor, the administrative burden on NCBs in coordinating the content with the sector appears to have been disproportionate to the result achieved. NCB resources (human and in some cases financial) were diverted from other activities in connection with the Year, thus affecting the effectiveness and efficiency of the latter.

There is an argument that it would have been more effective to have held the Tour outside the capital city and/or to have had a touring bus with the emphasis on European programmes that volunteers can access. These are simple issues. If not the capital, then which city and why, and can the publicity effect like to come from holding an event in the capital be replicated? Parking a bus in a central location does not bring footfall of itself. Any such bus has to be associated with an event or activities. One national initiative during EYV 2011 recognised and insisted when making a converted fire engine and associated outdoor games available to municipalities that it be associated with an event and a speech by the mayor mentioning volunteering. Nevertheless, there is at least one

precedent of such a bus tour organised by the European Commission well within the overall budget allocated for the EYV 2011 Tour.

Despite these provisos, the Tour was a success in a number of countries. Generally, several of the following factors had to come together for an effective Tour. These included a high degree of involvement of the European Representation, an NCB well resourced to commit strongly to the campaign and with good relations with the voluntary sector. Others were close cooperation with the local authority in the capital, ability to leverage communication opportunities in local transport networks, activation of the Europe Direct networks and outdoor activities to draw the public in.

The *europa.eu/volunteering web portal*, which had 366,172 visits during the Year, was widely viewed as not having achieved its potential in supporting the Year's objectives. This emerged strongly in the online surveys conducted in March/April 2012. It was felt not to have been well known from lack of promotion, and not easy to use. One reason was a lack of clarity as to whether it was intended as a site or a portal, and lack of resources for updating and moderation.

This website and that of the EYV 2011 Alliance were complementary. Nevertheless, the demarcation line and the reasons for having two websites were not clearly perceived. In addition, the europa-hosted website was intended to provide a service to NCBs, particularly those who initially did not plan to have one. In the end, they all had websites of some sort. The result was unresolved and uneven overlap with NCB websites, since NCBs preferred to put their limited resources into their own websites. They had no incentive to promote the over-arching website or offer material to be uploaded to that site, but generally only did so if prompted.

A number of interviewees felt the portal had not been effective in meeting a need on the part of NCBs and the sector for comprehensive (but not necessarily long) information in English on the activities under all national programmes during the year.

The *Relay Reporter* Programme also under-achieved from lack of visibility, which it was felt could have been improved through better integration in the other strands.

National programmes as designed all fell within the objectives of the Year, ensuring a baseline of effectiveness. Having a European Year was efficient in that it added value compared to, for example, the hypothetical possibility of having just a national year. There was a 'quality label' effect from having a European Year. This was true even in countries where there is high opposition to the EU in public opinion.

The approach of appointing national coordination bodies to run national campaigns and allowing them funds and discretion to tailor their programmes to national circumstances within the overall objectives was regarded as effective and efficient.

The European Commission was in touch with the NCBs on a day-to-day basis and organised coordination meetings. This coordination was effective but constrained by the size of the Task Force. The perceived constraint lay in the Task Force's ability (in terms of the amount of human resources available) to monitor some contractor activities more closely and organise more/longer meetings with NCBs to facilitate a much greater exchange of experience and learning in the run-up to and during the Year.

The key contributing factors to effective campaigns include those mentioned above in relation to the European communication campaigns. Another was the extent to which Member States contributed more financially than the minimum they were required, and the extent to which they were able to leverage funds from other sources. In several cases, the existence of a large budget for the national campaign appears to have had a snowball effect in attracting more funding, i.e. the larger the budget, the greater the multiplier effect of the leverage. Other Member States made a deliberate policy decision to take a low-key approach to the Year for national political views on the degree of relevance of the Year to their needs. This naturally affected effectiveness.

A further contributing success factor was the choice of an NCB with an existing responsibility for volunteering; the extent to which Member States have such a structure varies widely. Some NCBs came from outside Ministries, including from the volunteer sector. Some governments outsourced the implementation to other agencies. These were among the most effective, but this related in part to personalities, not to the suitability of one or other structure. The appropriate structure depends on national circumstances. Equally, the effectiveness of complementarity with other Years often depended on whether the responsibility lay within the same Ministry.

Results from the online surveys show that the national campaigns were considered, in particular, to have achieved higher levels of effectiveness in raising awareness of the value of volunteering, promoting the Year, identifying and exchanging national best practices, and to a lesser extent, in involving stakeholders and civil society organisations. This is consistent with the overall results of interviews.

That the overall picture generalises across a very wide spectrum of campaigns, which ran from the highly successful to those of which even the NCBs expressed doubt about their effectiveness and efficiency.

Results from the online survey and interviews revealed divergent opinions on the effectiveness of the *Flagship Projects*, but also a relatively low level of knowledge because these were stand-alone projects. This was the intention, but it was nevertheless felt that they could in many cases have been more effective overall had they been integrated with other strands. A positive aspect was the fact that they appear generally to have been projects which otherwise would not have found funding in 2011.

The Flagship Coordinators themselves felt that the combined results would have been more effective had there been an inbuilt mechanism for the projects to share learning among themselves during the course of the Year, or ex post. Some projects did incorporate closing or major events in their programmes in order to ensure dissemination of their results at least at national level. Nevertheless, it was felt that more shared learning and more dissemination beyond the project participants themselves would have been more efficient.

A late start to many projects because of delays in receiving funding arising from the European Commission's internal financial procedures, and the unfamiliarity of smaller projects with them, also detracted from efficiency.

Those familiar with the projects felt that they had at least individually succeeded in one of the key objectives, i.e. creating/fostering long-term partnerships/networks between civil society

organisations. There was less certainty that they would have promoted innovation, but the projects were continuing as this evaluation was being completed, so this was more difficult to evaluate. There were unanticipated benefits, on the other hand, in understanding how to access EU funds in future among groups who had not done so before.

There is wide consensus on the overall effectiveness of the *EYV 2011 Alliance* in developing a policy agenda for volunteering in Europe. Views on the effectiveness of the EYV 2011 Alliance in coordinating the civil society, in mobilising and capacity building, and in dissemination – the additional objectives set in its grant agreement, were also positive. It was seen as having used the resources allocated to it efficiently.

In considering whether the *strands in combination*, whether altogether or in twos or threes, were effective and efficient, the alignment of their operational objectives and target groups were a key element. The emphases varied, but this alignment clearly existed.

Some NCBs encountered operational difficulties, however, in launching and managing large awareness campaigns within the timeframe available. By definition, the volunteer sector often relies on part-time volunteers, who may only be giving a few hours a week, so that campaigns being organised in conjunction with them ipso facto take longer to get off the ground. What is an achievable time frame in government or business may be unworkable in this sector for very valid reasons.

Overall, however, since there is a broad consensus in interviews and online surveys that the Year achieved its goals, the combination of strands appears to have been effective. The effectiveness arose, however, from the complementarities rather than from developing synergies and achieving greater efficiency from the cost benefits of greater integration of the strands, even though the existence of a central Task Force within the Commission is seen as having acted as a warranty against overlap or duplication.

Preparing Years longer in advance and having a structure in place within the European Commission to serve as a repository of experience with the Years were seen as possible means of ensuring even greater effectiveness and efficiency in future.

4. Sustainability

There is a consensus that EYV 2011 left a legacy in the continuation of activities and structures which were put in place, and in the adoption of good practice which will reap benefits for institutions and organisations in the years to come. It is expected that the lessons learned during the Year will be applied in future Years. The first real test of this will come in the Year of the Citizen in 2013. Some of the legacy will take time to mature, e.g. potential increases in the number of volunteers as a result of the activities of EYV 2011.

There is nevertheless already a long list of activities organised as part of the *national campaign* strand of many types which have proven sustainable. There are also already changes in the enabling environment, or moves to change that environment, which can be attributed to groundwork done in the year, but that could be the tip of another iceberg. As one interviewee put it: “EYV 2011 was a

slow burner: it was the end of the beginning.” Differences of opinion on whether there is a legacy are generally only a matter of degree, though there is differentiation between the different strands.

By strand, the European Tour and the Flagship Projects are the elements felt to have succeeded less well in leading to sustainable results. In the case of the Flagship Projects, individual projects have clearly produced viable long-term projects. On the other hand, there was no shared learning while they were under way and none planned by the European Commission ex post at the time of writing this report – which Flagship coordinators and NCBs interviewed would have wished for. The final reports were not available as this report was written, so there is therefore no means of assessing whether the objective of fostering innovation was realised. On the other hand, it is already clear that the objective of building lasting networks has been met.

The main legacy has been in the creation of networks followed by heightened awareness, both within the sector of its diversity and the potential for networking more widely. There have not been the same results in terms of good practice in volunteer management or quality. This is, however, relative, since the overall picture is positive.

Nevertheless, there was a widespread perception that the exchange of good practice could have been more effective if greater importance had been attached to the European dimension, both in the Tour and national programmes – irrespective of the fact that this was not a specific objective of the Year. Our survey showed an expectation that the benefits for good practice would be more within organisations than nationwide. Even fewer expected a cross-border effect. The score in our survey in answer to a question about dissemination and feedback mechanisms was particularly low. These survey findings are in line with the fieldwork findings. An exception, where a legacy can be seen, is in some areas of the work of the EYV 2011 Alliance. In the area of quality at least, this is continuing on a self-standing basis.

The legacy is felt to have been greater for the sector than at institutional level, though the differences are marginal. Some of the doubts about the institutional legacy come from concerns that insufficient emphasis was put on shared learning during the year or in the immediate aftermath; the European Commission’s thematic conferences made a contribution to this, but the lasting results are uncertain.

Other doubts arise from the concern of the voluntary sector, and indeed of NCBs as reflected in their ‘Warsaw Declaration’, about the legacy of the EYV 2011 Alliance’s P.A.V.E. document. There is a fear that may not realise the full potential it has for supporting changes in the enabling environment and the quality of volunteering, in particular, if there is no contact point on volunteering within the European Commission. P.A.V.E. is, on the other hand, already being used at national level by volunteer organisations, including NCBs who were from the volunteer sector – more so than the policy documents of the other institutions.

5. Conclusions

We conclude in relation to relevance that:

- the objectives and activities of the European Year of Volunteering were relevant overall, and each strand of the Year and the use of the strands in combination were also relevant; the discretion left to Member States to tailor national programmes and messaging in line with national priorities ensured that they were relevant at this level, while remaining in line with the over-arching objectives and message; each strand of the Year individually, and the use of the strands in combination, was relevant to the needs of stakeholders and target audiences, subject to the exercise of discretion to adapt them to national circumstances;
- EYV 2011 complemented the Year which preceded it (anti-poverty and social inclusion) and the Year which followed (active ageing), and complemented other EU programmes and activities without any overlap; this complementarity could have been better exploited to realise the full potential for synergies.

We conclude in relation to effectiveness and efficiency that:

- EYV 2011 contributed to fulfilment of all the objectives of the Year. It created and catalysed changes in the enabling environment at European and national level. It empowered organisers to improve quality, including focusing more attention on areas such as volunteering as non-formal learning and corporates as a source of management expertise. It increased the recognition of volunteering through a wide range of initiatives. It raised awareness of volunteering and its value to society, through the media, the multiplier effect of national activities and the European communication campaign, and to some extent through direct contact with new publics. The degree to which new publics were reached was constrained by the resources available, including those made available by Member States.
- The national programmes, the EYV 2011 Alliance and activities driven by the European Commission, notably the thematic conferences, had an effective influence on the activities of civil society organisations, European and national policies or practices in a number of countries. They also influenced citizenship policy, but to a significantly lesser extent.
- The European communication campaign could have been more effective. The concept of the EYV 2011 Tour worked well in some countries, but proved difficult to implement in practical terms in others. As a showcase for national activities, it duplicated some existing events. The concept often raised unfulfilled expectations of a cross-border dimension. The web portal attempted to be both website and web portal, without a clear differentiation between the two roles, or the websites of NCBS or the EYV 2011 Alliance, or sufficient resources to develop its potential and therefore maximise efficiency.
- The strands were broadly complementary and in combination contributed more efficiently to achieving of the expected results than would have the strands in isolation, but the degree to which the complementarity of various strands was used to create an integrated whole was variable at European and national level, and this affected the ability to optimise efficiency. This to some extent affected the effectiveness and efficiency of the EYV 2011 Tour, and affected the

ability to realise the full potential of the Relay Reporter concept and the Flagship Projects, in particular. The use of NCBs – and funding for them - to promote the objectives in the Member States was both effective and efficient overall, and the resources made available to the EYV 2011 Alliance were used effectively and efficiently.

We conclude in relation to sustainability that:

- EYV 2011 overall influenced the world of volunteering, both at European and national level, and will continue to do so, since it may takes several years for some benefits to be tangible, e.g. increases in the number of volunteers;.
- a large and varied number of EYV 2011 activities have continued into 2012, and will clearly continue beyond, and a significant number of new structures put in place in EYV 2011 have become permanent;
- EYV 2011 was above all a catalyst for the development of networks and discovery of the diversity of volunteering, including within the sector itself, but also contributed significantly to increased awareness of volunteering, greater recognition of the importance of volunteering, and of individual volunteers; improvements in quality management; empowering organisations, including through a catalytic effect on national strategies and legislation. The policy documents developed at EU level by the institutions and the EYV 2011 Alliance have played an important role in this.
- Good practice developed during EYV 2011 is being applied, but largely within national borders, or even within organisations or parts of the voluntary sector, since the sharing of learning was not always regarded as a priority; this applies both to the activities of the national programmes, and the Flagship Projects financed by the European Commission.
- Future European Years will build on the results and lessons learned during EYV 2011, but will not be structured in the short term at least as the Commission has no structured mechanism for achieving this.

6. Recommendations

We recommend that the Commission:

- consider as a good-practice model for future Years:
 - the stranded approach, and in particular the three strands of a European campaign, national campaigns under the aegis of NCBs, and cooperation with civil society;
 - agreed objectives that leave discretion to Member States to adapt their programmes to national policies and local context;
- recognise the importance of planning Years longer ahead:

- (a) to allow Member States to find the human and financial resources or to make more efficient use of limited human resources, by allowing them to spread the effort over a longer period;
- (b) particularly when the voluntary sector is a major stakeholder, bearing in mind that lead times in the sector are longer because of the reliance on volunteers, who are often part-time, and indeed giving only a few hours a week;
- establish mechanisms that better ensure that the potential of the complementarity across Years and EU programmes and activities can be better developed, e.g. through a single contact point in the Commission, and encourage Member States to do likewise;
- for equivalent future Years:
 - use larger Task Forces in order to be able to:
 - develop synergies with past and future Years, and across EU programmes and activities (including Representations and Europe Direct);
 - devote more time to promoting shared learning during and after such Years, in particular with NCBs and innovative projects funded by the Commission, such as the Flagship Projects;
 - contribute more to adding a European dimension;
 - require Member States to devote a minimum specified percentage of their budget to monitoring and evaluation, and to publish the results;
 - require Member States to devote a minimum specified percentage of the budget to electronic tools, web and social media, and,
 - require Member States to devote a minimum specified percentage of their budget to a website and encourage them to provide some information in English on their website about activities of the Year in order to promote shared learning;
- learn lessons for its financial management procedures from the repercussions for some national programmes and the Flagship Projects of delays in releasing funds;
- take steps in the short term to ensure dissemination in English, and if possible other languages, to a wide group of stakeholders, including the voluntary sector, good practice examples of the results of the Year, including the innovative practices developed by the Flagship Projects;
- leverage actively in future policy making and activities the close relationship between active citizenship and volunteering;
- see volunteering as a key contributor to social cohesion and accord it a visible place within its structures, thus heeding the wishes of national governments, as represented by the NCBs, and of the sector.

1. Introduction

The Commission's Directorate General Communication (DG COMM) mandated Deloitte to perform the formative and summative evaluations of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 (EYV 2011) via a request for services under the Framework Contract on "Services in the support of Information Society and Media DG's Evaluations" N°SMART 2009/0042 – Lot 2 'Conducting Evaluation Studies of an Interim and Ex-Post Nature'.

This report constitutes the Final Report of the evaluation of EYV 2011, due 15 months after the kick-off meeting. According to the requirements of the Terms of Reference, this report provides the answers to the evaluation questions based on the overall project work, and conclusions and recommendations. The report covers all points of the work plan and includes sound analysis of findings, and factually based conclusions and recommendations.

As required by the Terms of Reference, the final report includes:

- an executive summary;
- the report itself;
- technical annexes, including the technical details and data used for the evaluation;
- a PowerPoint presentation of the work done, its conclusions and recommendations.

This Final Report presents:

- the context of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 (Section 2);
- the purpose of the evaluation, its scope as well as the detailed methodology applied to design and conduct the evaluation (Section 3);
- the sources of information, the structure of the analysis carried out and the evidence found by evaluation criterion (Section 4);
- the general conclusions and recommendations (Section 5).

The Annexes are presented in a separate document. They include all technical data used to carry out the analyses presented in the main report, namely:

- Annex 1: Analytical framework
- Annex 2: Thematic case studies
- Annex 3: Geographical case studies
- Annex 4: Documentation overview
- Annex 5: List of interviews
- Annex 6: Feedback notes

2. Context of the European Year of Volunteering

Volunteering is well established in the European Union. Three Europeans out of ten are involved in voluntary work according to Eurobarometers in 2006 and 2010⁵, or one in four according to a European Parliament Eurobarometer published in May 2011.⁶

However, volunteering across the EU is very diverse, in both the level of participation and the form it takes. This is borne out both by these surveys and a Flash Eurobarometer in 2008 which looked at retirees' participation in voluntary work⁷, by the work carried out by the Center for Civil Society Studies at the Johns Hopkins Institute for Policy Studies⁸, and by a study for the European Commission on *Volunteering in the European Union* published in February 2010⁹.

According to the 2010 European Commission Eurobarometer, more than a third of Europeans do voluntary work with a sports club or association, while 22% are involved with a cultural, education or artistic association. Of the respondents doing voluntary work, 17% do so for a charitable or social aid organisation and 16% take part in a religious organisation. Of Europeans who do voluntary work, 13% do so within a trade union. The highest level of participation in the Netherlands (54%), while the lowest in is Portugal and Bulgaria (11%). There is a fairly even spread across age groups: 31% in the 15-24 age group, 29% in the 25-39 group, 34% in the 40-54 group and 30% in the 55+ group. The results of the European Parliament survey were similar – with some exceptions, e.g. in relation to activity in trade unions.

The list of national co-ordinating bodies for the European Year of Volunteering clearly illustrates the diversity: the ministries responsible range from labour, employment or social affairs to family and/or youth and/or senior citizens, education, the interior or justice, culture and public administration. There is a strong representation of entities responsible for youth policy – the area within which most EU volunteering initiatives have sat until now¹⁰ even though older age groups make significant contributions to volunteering.

One of the key challenges of the European Year of Volunteering – and of this evaluation – was, therefore, to respect and understand this context, and maximise the benefits of diversity.

⁵ ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb73/eb73_en.htm;

⁶ www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2011/juillet/04_07/SA_en.pdf

⁷ Family Life and the Needs of an Ageing Population, Flash Eurobarometer 247, 2008, Tables 15a and 15b; ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_247_sum_en.pdf.

⁸ <http://www.ccsc.jhu.edu/index.php?section=content&view=16&sub=91&tri=92>". The Center is planning out a European Volunteer Measurement Projects as a 'legacy' for EYV 2011 in conjunction with Spes, the regional community service organisation for Italy's Lazio region.

⁹ Volunteering in the European Union, GHK; http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news/news1015_en.htm.

¹⁰ An exception being a Senior Volunteering programme within the Grundtvig Lifelong Learning Programme.

EYV 2011: Background

The European Economic and Social Committee and the European Parliament both played a key role in the genesis of the Year. The first proposal for a European Year of Volunteering was in EESC Opinion 157/2006 on the role of voluntary activity in European society.

The European Parliament in April 2008 passed a Resolution on the role of volunteering in contributing to economic and social cohesion. It described volunteering as “a major force nurturing civil society and strengthening solidarity – one of the core values of the EU – as well as an essential component in supporting community development programmes, in particular in those Member States that are now emerging from a post-communist transitional period.” It called for 2011 to be declared the European Year of Volunteering.

At the same time, a loose grouping of like-minded volunteering organisations was lobbying the institutions for such a Year. That grouping subsequently became the EYV 2011 Alliance – and significantly expanded its membership.

In 2009, the Commission carried out an ex ante evaluation¹¹, first establishing the justification for EU-level action, i.e. that volunteering is a core expression of civic participation and contributes to social cohesion and personal capacity-building, and is in tune with EU social agenda priorities of opportunities, access and solidarity.

Its definition of voluntary activities – as slightly modified by the Council Decision establishing 2011 as the EYV – is that it covers “all types of voluntary activity, whether formal, non-formal or informal which are undertaken of a person’s own free will, choice and motivation, and is without concern for financial gain... and are often carried out in support of a non-profit organisation or community-based initiative.”¹² (Member States may nevertheless have their own definitions.)

The policy options for achieving the objectives: why a Year?

Of three policy options – mainstreaming, an action plan and a European Year, a Year was identified in the ex ante evaluation as being likely to have the greatest impact. 2011 was felt to be timely because it followed the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion and preceded the European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity – as well as coinciding with the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers.¹³

Of four options discussed in the ex ante evaluation for the way in which a Year could be organised, the Commission chose centralised action at Community level with strong association of the Member States because a “European Year in which a balance is found between activities implemented at EU level under the supervision of the Commission and action at national, regional and local levels would allow diversities and specificities to be taken into account and, at the same time, meet the need for

¹¹ Commission Staff Working Document - European Year of Volunteering 2011, Evaluation Ex ante {COM(2009) 254}; ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/doc828_en.pdf

¹² Council Decision of 27 November 2009 on the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship (2011); <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:017:SOM:EN:HTML>

¹³ Subsequently then, 2013 was designated as has been designed the European Year of Citizens, which will also have an affinity with the Years which preceded it.

coherence in implementation.” It was also seen as the best option in terms of reaching organisations ‘on the ground’.

The overall purpose¹⁴ of Year was to encourage and support — notably through the exchange of experience and good practices — the efforts of the Community, the Member States, local and regional authorities to:

- create the conditions for civil society conducive to volunteering in the European Union (EU), and
- increase the visibility of voluntary activities in the EU.

It sets out to:

- work towards an enabling environment for volunteering in the EU;
- empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary activities;
- recognise voluntary activities;
- raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering.

Eligible activities

The following initiatives were eligible to be organised at EU, national, regional or local level linked to the objectives of the European Year:

- information and promotion campaigns;
- exchange of experience and good practices;
- undertaking of studies and research as well as dissemination of their results;
- conferences and events to promote debate and raise awareness of the importance and value of voluntary activities stimulating the engagement of people in the EU and to celebrate the efforts of volunteers and their organisations;
- concrete initiatives in the Member States aimed at promoting the objectives of the
- European Year and selected further to a call for projects managed at EU level.

The EYV 2011 activities

The activities were broken down into four types within a total amount of €10.75m over the two-year periods 2010/2011. The strands of the EYV 2011 programme were:

- €4.65m for the *European communication campaign* – €2.6m was made available in 2010 in order to develop the campaign and be able to launch the Year in the second half of 2010, €1.1m for the organisation of events at European level, inclusive of (but not restricted to) opening and closing conferences in the countries of the Presidency (Hungary and Poland),

¹⁴ Article 2 of Council Decision of 27 November 2009 on the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship (2011); <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:017:SOM:EN:HTML>

and €0.95m for the EYV Tour, a one-year travelling roadshow, press actions, media partnerships and outdoor advertising, a web portal and the production of information and promotional material.

The objectives of this campaign were defined as part of the preparatory activity in 2010 – they are to:

- enhance the role of European volunteers;
- give visibility to the multiple dimensions of volunteering;
- disseminate innovative knowledge.

This resulted in a framework being drawn up for a multi-level and comprehensive communication campaign¹⁵ to be run in close co-operation with the EYV 2011 Alliance and the NCBs. Implementation was in the hands of an external contractor. (Fuller detail is in the thematic case study in Annex.)

The targets and issues were consistent with the Council Decision, i.e.:

- Policymakers, Organisations involving volunteers, Volunteers, and Citizens (primarily young people and seniors, but also business), and
- An enabling environment, empowerment, recognition and awareness.

The campaign was based on a unified communication concept, consisting of five main blocks, and a supporting media campaign. The blocks originally envisaged were the EYV Tour, the EYV communication toolbox, EYV Conferences, the EYV website and EYV Relay Reporters. The campaign was constructed on the principle that the National Co-ordinating Bodies were to be closely involved in the first four activities.

(Fuller information on each block is in the thematic case study in Annex.)

- €3.7m for *national coordinating bodies* (ranging from €55,000 for Malta and Luxembourg to €420,000 for Germany). In order to organise its participation in the European Year, each Member State designated a **national coordination body**¹⁶. Each NCB produced a national work programme. The Commission was responsible for coordinating the work of these ‘NCBs’.

The work programmes/actions could include:

- meetings and events connected with the objectives of the European Year, including national events to launch and promote the European Year, 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 levels, including the organisation of awards and competitions,

¹⁵ Commission Decision adopting the 2010 annual work programme on grants and contracts for the preparatory action – European Year of Volunteering 2011 ec.europa.eu/dgs/communication/pdf/native_c_2010_1876_1_en.pdf.

¹⁶ With the exception of Belgium, which had three – one for each language community.

- cooperation with the media.

(Fuller detail of national programmes selected for case studies is in the thematic case studies in Annex.)

- €2m for up to 54 *'flagship' projects*: in the end, thirty-five projects were selected to receive funding support from the Commission, with one only in 13 Member States, two in Germany, Denmark, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Malta and Poland, and three in Portugal and UK. Thirty-three were implemented (one fewer in Denmark and UK than selected). There were no Flagship Projects in Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg or Sweden. Priority was given to projects which were innovative, designed to produce long-lasting effects and to improve the quality of volunteering or create an enabling environment for volunteering – i.e. that relate to the two of the four objectives which had been identified as more important. In addition, certain topics were prioritised: employer-supported volunteering, mobility schemes in volunteering for people of all ages, with specific emphasis on young people, volunteering as a way to fight against social exclusion as a follow-up to the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010, and fostering senior volunteering and strengthening intergenerational dialogue and cooperation.

(Fuller detail of the Flagship Projects is in the thematic case studies in Annex.)

- Co-operation with civil society

In 2010, the Commission awarded a €400,000 action grant to support the activities of the EYV 2011 Alliance, the grouping of civil society organisations set up as networks promoting volunteering. This money staffed a two-person secretariat in Brussels, which coordinated the activities of the EYV 2011 Alliance, including six working groups. The secretariat also runs the EYV 2011 Alliance's EYV 2011 website, www.eyv2011.eu. This was complementary to the europa.eu/volunteering website maintained by P.A.U. The EYV 2011 Alliance also received funding from the Robert Bosch Foundation and Telefónica.

The Grant Agreement defined the following objectives for the EYV 2011 Alliance:

- Coordination of civil society
- Developing a policy agenda
- Mobilisation and capacity-building
- Dissemination.

(Fuller detail on the activities of the EYV 2011 Alliance is in Annex.)

3.Objectives, scope and coverage of the evaluation

3.1.Objectives and scope of the evaluation

As stated in the Terms of Reference (TOR), the evaluation has a dual scope:

- Formative: by identifying ongoing lessons for the managers of the Year.
- Summative: by providing an assessment to be delivered in 2012 on the results of the Year, as compared to its objectives.

The evaluation has covered all four strands of activities – the European Communication campaign, the national programmes coordinated through the NCBs, the Flagship Initiatives and cooperation with civil society.

To comply with the scope, the evaluation:

- Obtained reliable information on implementation and fed it back into the management process of the Year (formative);
- Achieved a global view of the results of the Year – based on a sense of the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of a range of individual actions, the Flagship Initiatives, and of the Year as a whole - and the sustainability of the initiatives (summative);
- Identified lessons for future European Years (summative).

The key objective of the **formative** work was to provide input on strengths and weaknesses on an ongoing basis into the management of the Year. This implied a proactive and ‘rapid-reaction’ approach in order to identify key issues, understand the situation properly and develop useful lessons, which in turn could be fed into the programme and implemented in time to deliver benefits during the Year itself.

The **summative** evaluation has been broader in scope and has assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Year itself – and provides input into the planning of future European Years.

The core of the work in both cases was to be a focus on the programmes and activities in eight case-study countries, including the way in which the European Communication Campaign and the cooperation with civil society was implemented in those countries, which are: Denmark, Germany, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, United Kingdom.

3.2.Evaluation design (methodology)

Bearing in mind the specific approach defined and agreed upon during the inception phase of this assignment, the key principles that formed our approach were built around cross-referencing the following elements:

- An integrated approach of the formative and summative part of the evaluation focusing on the respective objectives of each of these evaluation components;
- A participatory approach involving evaluation stakeholders.

As already mentioned in the previous section, the formative approach aimed to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of the European Year during the year and contribute to its better management. Therefore, we focused on the effective implementation of the activities and the effective achievements of their **operational objectives**¹⁷. The findings were contained in rapid-reaction feedback notes (see Annexes) and two interim reports.

The summative evaluation provides an overview of the results obtained by the EYV 2011, an assessment of qualitative and quantitative aspects of implementation and recommendations on how future European Years could be better managed. As a part of the summative evaluation, we also assessed the sustainability of activities and policy initiatives launched during the EYV 2011. The summative approach focuses on the effects and results of the activities and measures the achievement of the **specific and general objectives** of the EYV 2011.

Although the aim of these two components differs, we carried out both evaluations according to the three same phases, as follows:

1. structuring (inception);
2. data gathering;
3. analysis, judgement and reporting.

Communication and feedback were continuous throughout the lifespan of the assignment.

3.2.1. Structuring the evaluations (Inception phase)

The inception phase allowed the evaluation team to fine-tune the methodology to carry out the evaluation of the EYV 2011. We present below our overall methodological tools for the evaluation activities within our approach, i.e.:

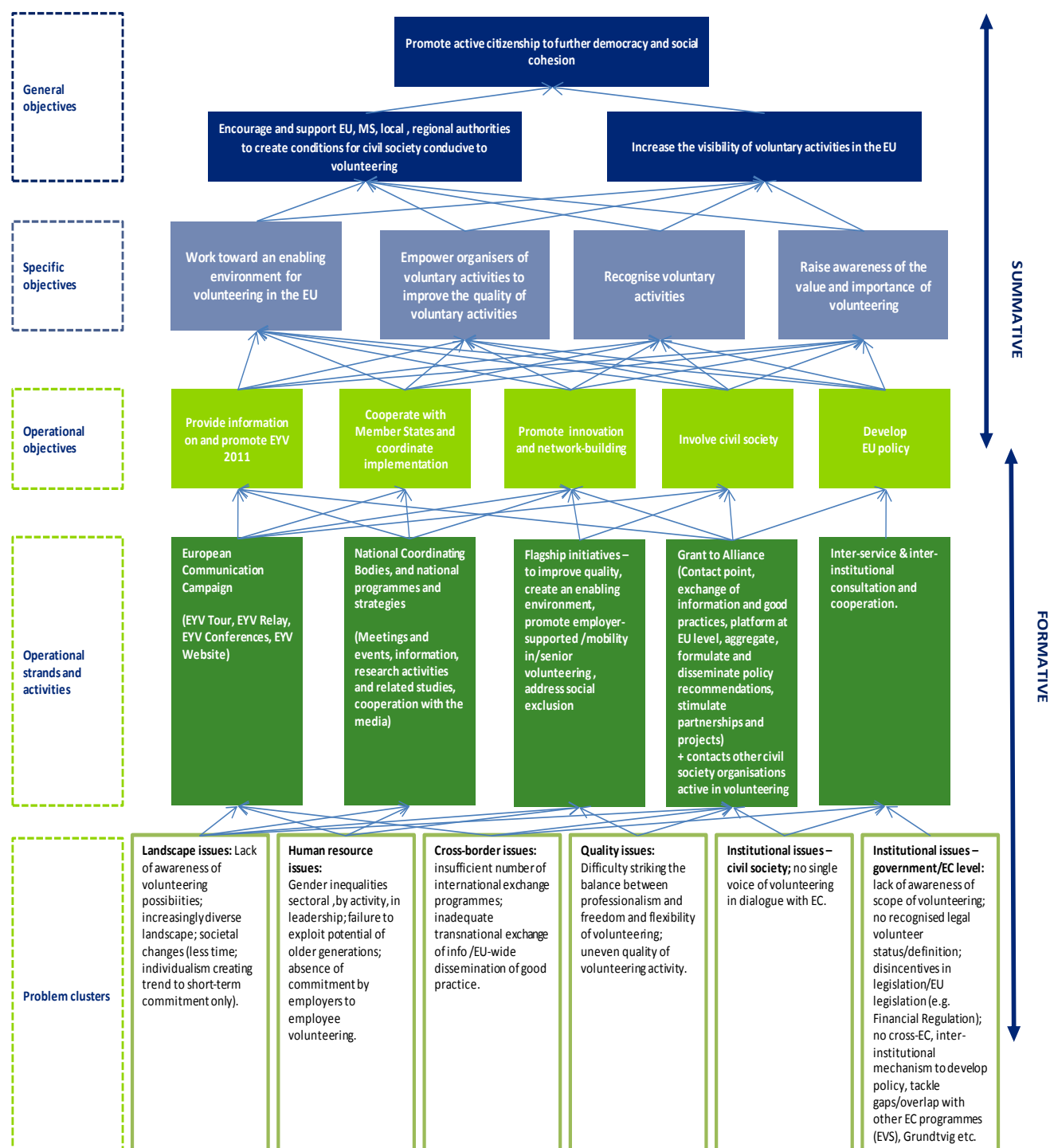
- the intervention logic; and,
- the analytical framework.

3.2.1.1. Intervention logic

A first element for carrying out the evaluation effectively (both formative and summative) was to understand the intervention logic behind EYV 2011. The figure below illustrates the intervention logic of EYV 2011 that was approved by the Commission during the Inception Report Meeting.

¹⁷ As defined in the intervention logic presented in the next section.

Figure 1: Intervention logic of EYV 2011



3.2.1.2. Analytical framework

The evaluation project was structured and conducted by using an analytical framework based on the evaluation objectives and questions identified in the task specifications and our understanding of the services to be delivered. The analytical framework maps the following elements by evaluation criterion (relevance/complementarity, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability):

1. the evaluation questions, thus allowing a more focused approach to the evaluation criterion and main question/issue;
2. the judgement criteria (or success criteria) used to answer the evaluation questions in an accurate and sound manner;
3. the indicators used to substantiate the judgement criteria. Indicators may be qualitative or quantitative;
4. the sources of the information and data that feed the indicators.

Following the inception phase, a final version of the analytical framework was approved by the Commission.

We present the analytical framework in Annex.

3.2.2. Activities of the formative evaluation

This section presents the activities we carried out during the formative part of the evaluation of the European Year of Volunteering. A detailed description is given in the sub-sections which follow.

The table below gives an overview of the activities undertaken:

N°	Evaluation activities	Results
1	Preliminary interviews with DG COMM officials, contractors and partner organisations at EU level	8 interviews
2	Preliminary desk research	List of documents in Annex
3	Interviews with EU officials and EU stakeholders, including two Quick Scan surveys National Coordination Bodies EYV 2011 Alliance members	22 interviews 16 respondents 11 respondents
4	Fieldwork in eight Member States Interviews Focus groups On-the-spot interviews National desk research Attendance at three EU thematic conferences Observation mission to France during the Tour stop	86 interviews 122 participants 121 interviews List of documents in annex
5	Media tracking	35 media tracking sheets from 6 Member States
6	Open survey	10148 replies

N°	Evaluation activities	Results
7	Deliverables	Inception Report First Interim Report Second Interim Report Feedback notes

3.2.2.1. Preliminary interviews with DG COMM officials, contractors and partner organisations at EU level

The evaluation team organised preliminary interviews including with DG COMM officials, members of the EYV 2011 Task Force, contractors and partner organisations at EU level to deepen their understanding of the EYV objectives, strands, activities, monitoring data, etc.

During the inception phase, we carried out eight interviews. The list of interviews is to be found in Annex to this report.

The evaluation team also had the opportunity to identify other relevant stakeholders within the Commission who were interviewed during the data collection phase.

3.2.2.2. Preliminary desk research

Following the initial interviews with the DG COMM and based on the information received from the Commission, we collected and conducted preliminary analyses of a first set of relevant documents. This list included notably:

- regulations and other official decisions of EU institutions¹⁸;
- quantitative and qualitative data coming from the monitoring of the activities carried out under the four strands of EYV 2011;
- evaluation reports and relevant studies¹⁹.

Desk research was a continuous process from the earliest stages through to the end of the evaluation. The list of documents that was used during the preliminary desk research and up to the time of the drafting of the second interim report can be found in Annex to this report.

3.2.2.3. Interviews with EU officials and EU stakeholders

The evaluation team conducted semi-structured interviews with a series of EU officials and European stakeholders. Those interviews were conducted during the formative part of the evaluation and aimed at feeding the Interim reports. However, the evaluation team took the opportunity to collect information for the summative part of the evaluation.

We carried out 22 interviews with relevant EC officials and European stakeholders.

¹⁸ Including Council Decision of 27 November 2009 on the European Year of Voluntary Activities Promoting Active Citizenship (2011) (2010/37/EC); Commission staff working document, European Year of Volunteering 2011

¹⁹ Including Evaluation Ex ante (SEC(2009) 725); Study on Volunteering in the European Union, January 2010, Executive Summary (http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/news/news1015_en.htm); the Grundtvig Senior Volunteering projects reports.

In Annex, we present the list of interviewees the evaluation team met.

In addition to the interviews we initially planned to conduct, the evaluation team also launched **two quick scan surveys** targeting 1) the members of the EYV 2011 Alliance and 2) the National Coordination Bodies.

The quick scan surveys aimed at giving the stakeholders involved in EYV 2011 but not selected to be interviewed the opportunity to voice their opinions, concerns and experiences and contribute actively to the evaluation exercise. Respondents were asked to provide information both on best practice and areas for improvement in relation to each of the strands of EYV 2011.

The response rate was:

- Quick Scan Survey for National Coordination Bodies: 16 respondents (out of 27 NCBs).
- Quick Scan Survey for EYV 2011 Alliance members: 11 respondents (out of 39 members at that time).

3.2.2.4. Fieldwork in eight Member States

As agreed during the inception phase, the countries selected for the fieldwork were Germany, Denmark, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and UK.

The fieldwork allowed the evaluation team to gather information for both the formative and summative part of the evaluation.

In each of the Member States, we carried out the following activities:

- a series of face-to-face interviews (max. 12) with:
 - National Coordination Body (min. 1);
 - Volunteering organisations (4);
 - Flagship Project coordinator (1-2);
 - National authorities in charge of citizenship and/or volunteering (2);
 - Permanent Representation (1);
 - EYV Relay Reporter (1).

A list of interviews is to be found in Annex.

- on-the-spot interviews conducted during the EYV Tour;
- focus groups (max. 3) with:
 - Volunteers (young people and seniors);
 - Volunteering organisations.

A list of participants in the focus groups is to be found in Annex.

- desk research, using all the relevant documents and information at national level.

The list of documents that we received and reviewed is to be found in Annex.

The table below illustrates the total number of interviews and focus groups participants per country.

Country	Interviews	Focus groups
Romania	11	19
Italy	13	12
Denmark	12	7
Poland	10	16
Germany	11	18
Netherlands	6	13
UK	9	21
Malta	14	16
TOTAL	86	122

In addition to the fieldwork initially foreseen, the evaluation team carried out an observation mission in Paris during the Tour stop. This fieldwork allowed the evaluation team to become familiar with the EYV 2011 Tour. No interviews were carried out, as this was not a case-study country.

The evaluation team also attended the second (Brussels, May 23 and 24), third (Athens, November 3 and 4) and fourth (Warsaw, December 1 and 2) EU thematic conferences.

As agreed during the inception phase, and in order to allow immediate action to be taken in relation to immediate recommendations, we provided first insights on the data collected in the form of feedback notes.

The evaluation tools put in place during the fieldwork in relation to the Member States selected as case studies countries allowed the evaluation team to produce eight national case studies that are presented in Annex to this report.

3.2.2.5. Media tracking

The evaluation team collected and tracked media output of the EYV 2011 throughout the assignment.

The evaluation team based the media screening and analysis on the monitoring system that the Commission had put in place, as follows:

- The service provider in charge of the EYV Campaign Secretariat (which is provided by P.A.U., this media screening generally only covers the EYV 2011 Tour).
- The NCBS (via the media tracking template).

Thirty-five media tracking sheets had been submitted from six Member States (Estonia, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and UK). In addition to this, Germany had submitted 15 press clippings.

The data collected through the media tracking exercise were integrated into the analysis of the four strands of activities and presented in the next section.

3.2.2.6. Open survey

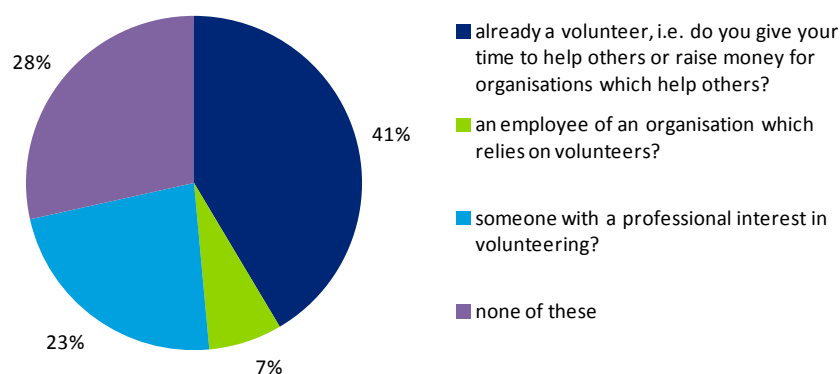
The evaluation team designed a short open survey hosted on the EYV website. The survey aimed to profile the visitors to the survey, their awareness of policy and the campaign, as well as their knowledge of Commission activities in the field of voluntary service. The survey was available in the 23 official languages of the European Union.

The survey was launched in early July 2011 and closed in late December 2011.

The total number of completed questionnaires was 10,148.

In the subsequent discussion of this survey in this report, it should also be borne in mind that 41% of the respondents identified themselves as volunteers, 28% as non-volunteers, 23% as having a professional interest in volunteering and 7% as employees of an organisation which relies on volunteers.

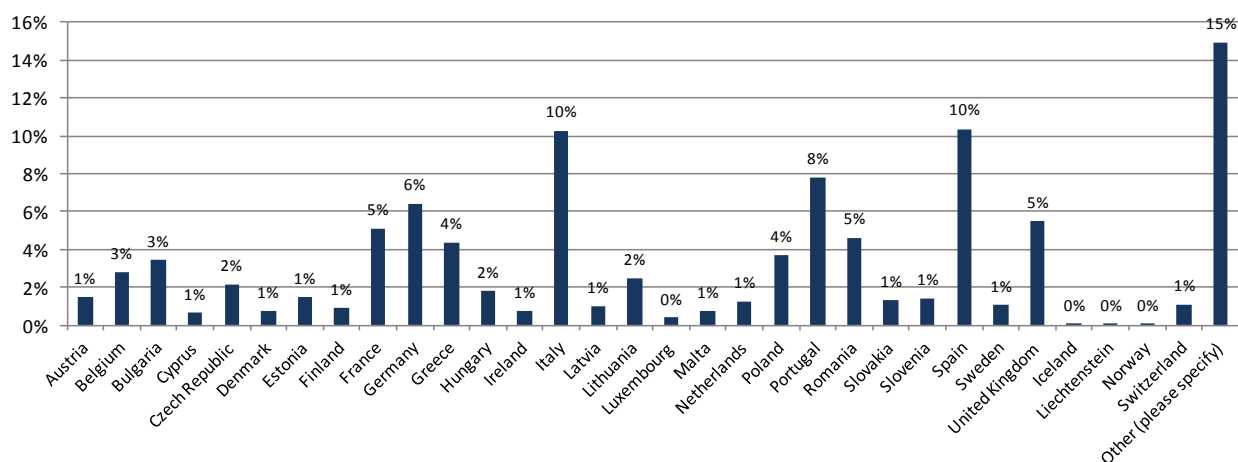
Figure 2: Profile of respondents to the short online survey



Source: Deloitte open survey, July/December 2011

The survey resulted in responses from Italy (10%), Spain (10%) and Portugal (8%) at levels which stand out from most of the rest (see Figure below).

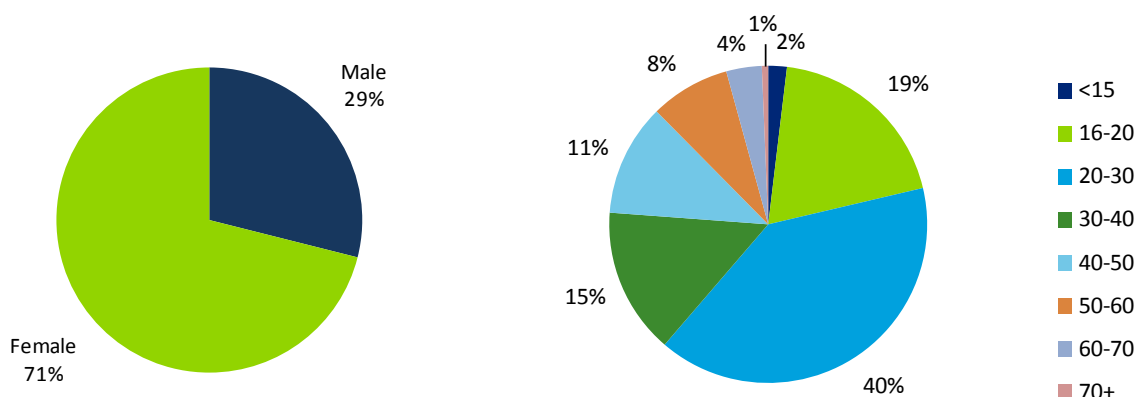
Figure 3: Country of respondents to the short online survey



Source: Deloitte open survey, July/December 2011

Almost three quarters of the respondents to this survey were female, and one quarter were male. Most were between 20 and 30.

Figure 4: Gender and age of respondents to short online survey



Source: Deloitte open survey, July/December 2011

The analysis of the questions related to the relevance and effectiveness of EYV2011 are integrated into the subsequent analysis.

3.2.3. Activities of the summative evaluation

This section presents the activities carried out during the summative part of the evaluation of the European Year of Volunteering. A detailed description is given in the sub-sections below as well as of the challenges identified in relation to the summative part of this evaluation.

The table below gives an overview of the activities undertaken:

N°	Evaluation activities	Results
1	Follow up of fieldwork activities (phone calls and/or emails)	26 interviews
2	Online surveys NCBs Volunteers and volunteering organisations contacted during the fieldwork EYV 2011 Alliance volunteering organisations Flagship Project coordinators	20 replies ²⁰ 136 replies 29 replies 21 replies
3	Interviews with EU stakeholders	18 interviews
4	Complementary desk research	List of documents in Annex
5	Interviews with National Coordination Bodies (not selected for the case studies)	21 interviews ²¹
6	Geographic and thematic case studies	Case studies in Annex

²⁰ All NCBs were invited to respond to the survey, on a voluntary basis. Some of the NCBs did not respond positively to the invitation.

²¹ All NCBs not selected for the case studies accepted to be interviewed by phone except for Cyprus, despite evaluation team's request.

N°	Evaluation activities	Results
7	Expert panel	To be held after the SC meeting
8	Deliverable: Final report	

3.2.3.1. Follow-up of the fieldwork activities (phone calls and/or emails)

It was agreed with the Commission that the follow-up calls would be made at the beginning of 2012, rather than three months after the fieldwork visits as originally envisaged, thus allowing the evaluation team to gather additional information. The methodological reasons behind this adaptation were:

- most of the countries visited had a closing event at the end of the Year so it allowed the evaluation team to capture opinions and views after this event;
- as the evaluation team had already gathered robust data about the Tour, the interviews at a later stage allowed it to focus on the national programmes when they were complete;
- it avoided overloading stakeholders by contacting them a third time (as well as asking them to respond to surveys);

The follow-up was conducted through a series of telephone and/or emails contacts, but primarily by phone. The information gathered fed the subsequent analysis.

We carried out 26 follow-up interviews with relevant stakeholders (see Annex for list).

3.2.3.2. Online surveys

The evaluation team designed and launched surveys targeting:

- NCBs;
- Volunteers and volunteering organisations contacted during the fieldwork;
- EYV 2011 Alliance volunteering organisations;
- Flagship Project coordinators.

The web-based surveys were open for five weeks.

In the subsequent discussion of these surveys in this report, the following elements should be borne in mind:

Survey targeting the NCBs

Twenty of the 29 NCBs²² responded to the questionnaire, covering at least one NCB per Member State except for Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Luxembourg²³, Poland and Slovakia²⁴.

²² Some Member States had more than one NCB, or an NCB and a project manager.

²³ Luxembourg had a national programme, but did not take the Commission funding. They were nevertheless included in the follow-up phone interviews.

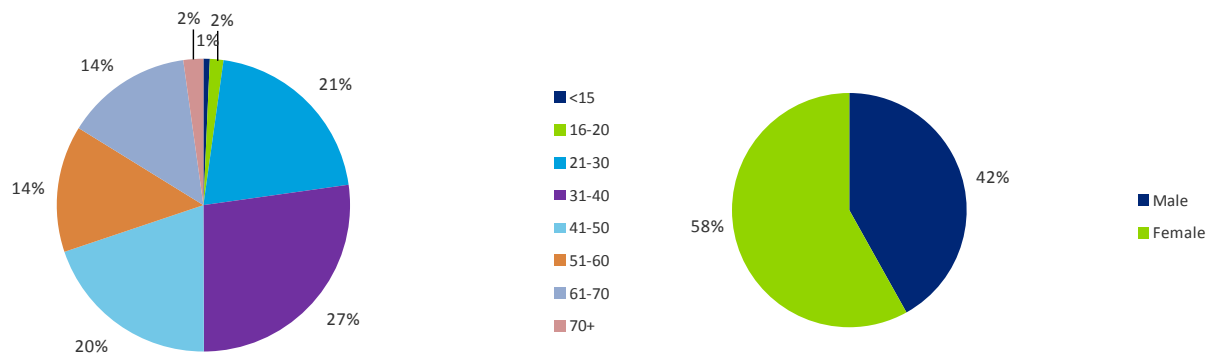
Survey targeting volunteers and volunteering organisations contacted during the fieldwork

In the subsequent analysis, we did not differentiate volunteers from volunteering organisation representatives for several reasons:

- First, someone representing a volunteering organisation may be a volunteer (and may by law have to be a volunteer in some countries);
- Second, many paid staff of volunteering organisations also volunteer elsewhere.

A total of 136 questionnaires were completed. Fifty-eight per cent of the respondents were female, and 42% were male. Most were between 21 and 50, as illustrated in the Figures below. The results may appear skewed towards these age groups, but perceptions that volunteers are older and young are not necessarily correct²⁵. In the middle age group, sport tends to be heavily represented (because parents get involved in the school and sporting activities of their children). However, over-50's are in fact largest group in the survey.

Figure 5: Gender and age of respondents (volunteers and volunteering organisations)



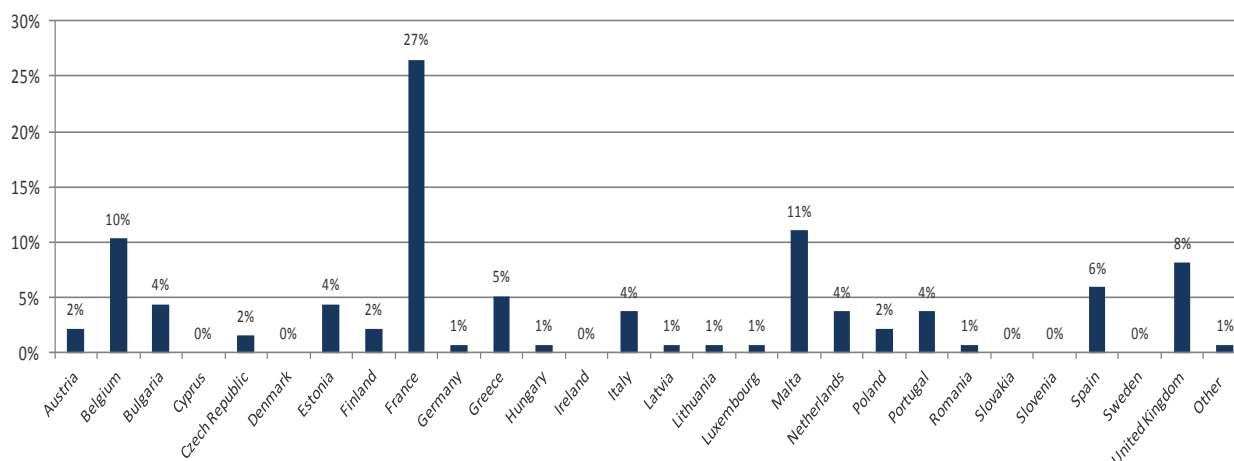
Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

France (27%), Malta (11%) – a case study country, and Belgium (10%) are overrepresented (see Figure below).

²⁴ All countries were contacted for follow-up interviews.

²⁵ See statistics in context section.

Figure 6: Geographical coverage (volunteers and volunteering organisations)



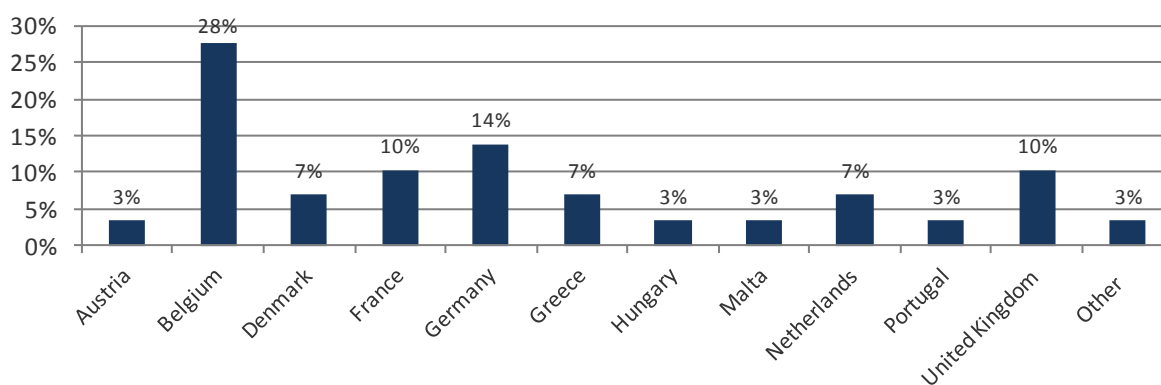
Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

It is important to bear in mind that the survey was sent to the volunteers and volunteering organisations interviewed during the formative part of the evaluation. However, we encouraged the targeted audience to forward the link to the survey as much as possible to ensure higher response rate. It is therefore difficult to formulate hypotheses about the apparent overrepresentation of some countries, and the underrepresentation of some case study countries.

Survey targeting the EYV 2011 Alliance volunteering organisations

The Figure below shows the geographical coverage of the responses received from the EYV 2011 Alliance members. A total of 29 questionnaires were completed out of 41 EYV 2011 Alliance members.

Figure 7: Geographical coverage (EYV 2011 Alliance volunteering organisations)

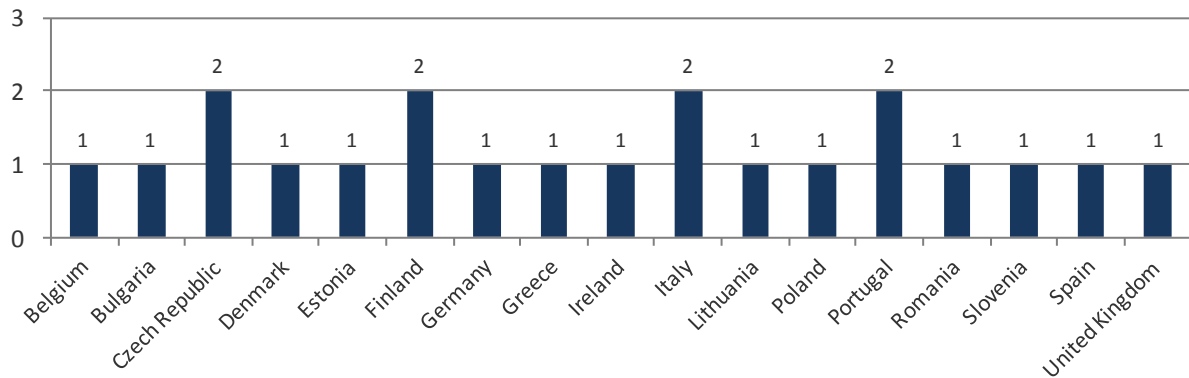


Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

Survey targeting Flagship Project coordinators

The Figure below shows the geographical coverage of the responses received from the Flagship Project coordinators covering 21 Flagship Projects out of 33 Flagship Projects implemented.

Figure 8: Geographical coverage (Flagship Project coordinators)



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

Finally, there is a tendency across the survey for the EYV 2011 Alliance respondents consistently to be the most critical, followed by the voluntary sector, while the NCBs and the Flagship Project coordinators are more positive.

3.2.3.3. Complementary desk research

Based on the system put in place to monitor EYV 2011 activities throughout the year, the evaluation team sought to collect activity reports and any other relevant material covering the 27 Member States.

For the subsequent analysis, it should be borne in mind that at the time of this final report only few final reports for the national campaigns and the Flagship Projects had been submitted to the Commission.

3.2.3.4. Interviews with EU stakeholders

In addition to the desk research and the online surveys, the evaluation team performed a final round of interviews with stakeholders at EU level. These interviews addressed questions related to the summative part of the evaluation.

We carried out 18 interviews with the EC officials and European stakeholders.

In Annex, we present the list of interviewees the evaluation team met.

3.2.3.5. Interviews with National Coordination Bodies

The analysis integrates the results of phone interviews of around one hour with NCBs of countries not in the sample to assess their views in terms of the evaluation questions in order to broaden our understanding of what proved to be relevant, effective and efficient, and sustainable. It had been agreed with the Commission that these interviews replaced the benchmarking with another European Year originally envisaged.

We carried out 21 phone interviews with the NCBs.

3.2.3.6. Case studies

Based on the analysis of the data collected and the additional interviews with the NCBs, the evaluation team produced a series of geographical and thematic case studies:

- Eight national case studies;
- And one case study by strand.

The selection of the case studies were discussed and validated with the Commission.

Both thematic and geographical case studies are the basis for our subsequent analysis. The case studies are to be found in annex to this report.

3.2.3.7. Expert panel

In order to enrich the analysis and as agreed with the Commission, the evaluation team set up an expert panel after the discussion with the European Commission on the draft final report. This expert panel was organised with a view to establishing an expert opinion on EYV 2011 overall. Prior to the call, experts received a 2-3 page summary of the conclusions and recommendations as a basis for the discussion.

The main focus of the expert panel was to validate the conclusions and recommendations.

Five experts responded positively to the invitation:

- Ms Sylvie Banoun, Ministry of National Education, Vie associative et éducation populaire (FR) ;
- Mr. Primo di Blasio, Componente gruppo di lavoro Osservatorio Nazionale per il Volontariato. Associazione Focsiv (IT);
- Ms Simona Costanzo Sow, United Nations Volunteers (UN);
- Ms Ana Delicado, University of Lisbon, Instituto de Ciências Sociais (PT);
- Ms Ksenija Fonovic, Componente gruppo di lavoro Osservatorio Nazionale per il Volontariato “Volontariato Europeo e Internazionale a confronto” – Coordinamento Nazionale Centri di Servizio per il Volontariato (IT).

The panel of experts validated the conclusions and recommendations on relevance and sustainability of this evaluation. The experts were also invited to validate the general findings on these evaluation criteria. The panel of experts reached a consensus which supported the results of this evaluation. Where relevant, the opinions gathered have been integrated into the final report.

4. Evaluation of EYV 2011

4.1. Introduction

This section provides the Commission with the findings in relation to the evaluation questions and associated judgement criteria from the data collected, both during the formative part of our work during EYV 2011 and in the summative part from January to April 2012. These are presented in relation to relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, and sustainability, with specific examples to illustrate these findings. In Annex thematic case studies by strand, feedback notes on specific topics and from the fieldwork in eight countries are presented. All of these, but the thematic case studies in particular, have fed our findings. The findings are summarised at the beginning of each section. These summaries are the introduction to our overall conclusions and recommendations.

We have included illustrative examples relevant to each question. These represent a non-exhaustive selection. Many of them, however, are based on identification in consultation with the NCBs as to what they regarded as having been highlights of EYV 2011 in their country. There could have been many others. The fact that a country is not covered by one of these examples is not a value judgement on the implementation of EYV 2011 in that country.

4.2. The structure of our findings

Our findings are structured according to the evaluation questions as follows:

Relevance by objectives and complementarity – in answer to the questions:

- To what extent are the objectives and activities of the European Year of Volunteering relevant to the needs of the interested parties?
- To what extent were they complementary with existing initiatives in the field of volunteering?

Effectiveness by objective and by strand in answer to the question:

- To what extent have the activities undertaken in the framework of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 been effective in achieving its objectives?
 - Work towards an enabling environment for volunteering in the EU.
 - Empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of this kind of activities.
 - Recognise voluntary activities.
 - Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering.

Efficiency (including by strand) in answer to the question:

- How efficient were the activities undertaken in the framework of EYV to achieve the expected results of the EYV 2011 at European level/at national level?

Sustainability (including by strand) in answer to the question:

- To what extent the EYV has been successful in establishing sustainable good practices and initiatives in the field of volunteering?

Our findings are based on the judgement criteria identified in the Analytical Framework, which underpins our methodology and reflects the evaluation questions.

4.3. Relevance/complementarity

To what extent are the objectives and activities of the European Year of Volunteering relevant to the needs of the interested parties?

To what extent were they complementary with existing initiatives in the field of volunteering?

4.3.1. Introduction and summary

This section on relevance and complementarity looks first at our findings as to the relevance and complementarity of the Year by objective before considering both in terms of the judgement criteria relating to the evaluation questions.

Our findings lead to the conclusion that the objectives were all relevant, complementary with each other, and complementary with other policies and programmes, and with other Years (notably 2010 – Anti-Poverty and Social Inclusion – and 2012 – Active Ageing). Not all objectives were equally relevant to all Member States, but this does not detract from their overall relevance. The discretion left to Member States to focus on the objectives most in line with their national policies functioned well. It was often felt, however, that the potential for complementarity could have been developed further.

Our judgement criteria for relevance were the correspondence of the objectives with policy agendas and the needs of target audiences, the appropriateness of the messaging and the relevance of the activities.

Interviewees and survey results concur that EYV 2011 was relevant. This applies both in terms of being in line with policy agendas and a need among the target audiences for one or more of the objectives of an enabling environment, empowerment of organisations, recognition or awareness-raising. Stakeholders were all able to relate to one or more of the objectives depending on different national or volunteering traditions and circumstances. The key message of making a difference was also adapted according to the diversity of the EU and was appropriate everywhere.

EYV 2011 was felt to be more relevant to the European policy agenda than to national policy agendas. However, national landscapes are extremely diverse whereas EYV 2011 objectives were based on a Council Decision on objectives on which they could agree in common. The emphasis at Member State level is not necessarily as clearly on the same objectives, even if they are not in contradiction with any national policies.

The degree of complementarity with 2010 (social inclusion and poverty) and 2012 (active ageing) is felt to have been relatively limited overall. There are exceptions, but they are felt to derive from national rather than Commission impetus. The fact that there is no structural continuity within the Commission from year-to-year is seen as an obstacle to developing continuity within years.

Stakeholders regarded the initiatives of the Year as complementary to existing initiatives and to EU programmes. There was no sense of overlap, but the potential for synergies across European Commission Directorates-General and policies, was felt to have had unrealised potential. The decentralisation of some programmes or initiatives, such as Youth in Action, Europe Direct, or the Eurodesks is seen as having been one of the barriers to developing these synergies.

The approach of combining EC support for the year via the **communication campaign** with **national campaigns, which left discretion for Member States to adapt activities**, was also considered appropriate to needs. Opening up to the civil society group which had pushed for the Year in the form of a mandate for the **EYV 2011 Alliance** was also seen as relevant. The **Flagship Projects** met a need to promote innovation and improve networks.

4.3.2. Relevance and complementarity by objectives

4.3.2.1. An enabling environment

The importance of **an enabling environment** for volunteering was recognised in every Member State visited for the fieldwork. Some feel that this already largely exists; others, that there is still work to be done. Views differed as to the extent to which regulation is the solution to an improved environment, where improvements are felt to be necessary. However, the fact that the institutions had recognised a need to devote attention to volunteering – through the Commission Communication, two sets of Council Conclusions (covering volunteering and social policy, and volunteering and sport), an EESC Opinion and a Report by the European Parliament²⁶ – was welcomed. So was the input in the form of the P.A.V.E. paper from the EYV 2011 Alliance. All were felt to meet a need for greater attention on the part of the EU institutions to volunteering issues. They also met a need in some Member States with underdeveloped volunteering policies, both as an example, a source of peer pressure from other Member States or the political leverage to be gained from acting in order to be good Europeans. The role of examples of good practice, peer pressure and political leverage also applied to the other objectives.

There was also agreement on the need to discuss policy issues at a European level and for a platform to ensure that the EU takes account of volunteering in its policymaking. There was less certainty about the need for an EU policy on volunteering as such, and disagreement as to whether the best approach to ensuring the needs of the sector be taken into account lies in mainstreaming or dedicated policy entities. This divergence is also evident in the institutional contributions. The ‘Warsaw Declaration’ favours a single contact point; the European Parliament Resolution on the Commission’s Communication favours mainstreaming. There was no dispute about the Commission playing some role.

In terms of complementarity with other programmes and Years, interviewees could generally see a clear need to ensure that policies in other areas be complementary and take volunteering into account. This applied both to policies in area where volunteers are important, e.g. youth and sport, and to policies which can benefit or impact on volunteering organisations, e.g. lifelong learning and taxation.

4.3.2.2. Empowerment of organisations

Stakeholders also generally agreed on the need to **empower organisers** of voluntary activities to improve the quality of voluntary services, e.g. through better volunteer management, even if this does not come through strongly as a recognised need everywhere. In some cases, this is because existing systems are developed; in others (and less often) because this is felt to detract from the spirit of voluntary work. However, the range of countries where this met a need ran from some which already have a number of schemes in place, such as the UK, but which worked further on

²⁶ This report was not finalised until June 2012, but interviewees were aware that it was in the pipeline.

them (see Box in next section) to Ireland, for which this is largely a new area for which EYV 2011 acted as a significant catalyst.

This also came out in interviews and focus groups with volunteer organisations and volunteers. Issues which recurred included: the importance of matching potential volunteers to the opportunities, the significance of the role of volunteer coordinators within organisations, the importance of volunteer retention, the need to adapt to a desire on the part of volunteers for more flexible volunteer commitments, and to make them feel valued not only per se but relative to full-time staff. Others included the challenges of attracting young people into volunteering, of understanding their motivations in terms of skills acquisition, and of keeping them as volunteers once they have found employment. Being motivated to volunteer to improve one's chances of employment is not solely limited to young people, however. Organisations are having to adapt to this as a motivation in the 50+ group as well.

This is an area where it was agreed that complementarity with other EU programmes had a role to play.

4.3.2.3. Recognition of voluntary activities

Volunteer organisations and volunteers interviewed all stressed the importance of recognition. The extent to which Member States and the voluntary sector identified with a need for **recognition of voluntary activities** can clearly be seen in the number of variations on the theme of awards which were part of national programmes or are already an integral part of volunteer sector activities. These countries include Finland, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland and Slovakia, and this list is by no means exhaustive.

In the Netherlands alone, these awards range from the national programme which was totally based on the concept of recognition, with regional competitions building up to a national awards ceremony in the presence of the member of the Royal Family to local initiatives.

The EYV 2011 Alliance website was one of several which demonstrated that volunteers feel a need for recognition by providing an opportunity to thank volunteers for their efforts. As of February 1, 2012, more than 2 million hours of time given to volunteering had been registered, with a remarkable result for Sweden, which accounted for 1.13 million of the total.

At a policy level, a need was felt for complementarity with other EU policy areas, ranging from corporate social responsibility to non-formal learning.

4.3.2.4. Awareness-raising

The need to **raise awareness** and the value of volunteering was recognised everywhere. There were different types of need to which this was relevant:

- within the sector itself of what else is happening in sector;
- in the wider public – including the media and politicians - not just so that they will be encouraged to volunteer but also recognise the importance of volunteering;
- with specific groups, ranging from immigrant communities to corporates.

Countries with less developed traditions of volunteering, such as some of the countries of Eastern Europe tended to target the wider public, while countries with high levels of volunteering, e.g. Denmark, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the UK focused more on the other target groups or specific national needs (see Box). The discretion left to Member States in designing national

campaigns made this possible (and was appreciated) while enabling national priorities to be accommodated. In some countries, the way in which the European Tour was implemented also took advantage of that flexibility, but not all Member States felt they had the discretion to do that.

Combining national needs with EYV 2011 objectives

The bulk of the funding for EYV 2011 in Germany went to a series of lighthouse projects. Many of these were conferences at regional level – all addressing specific needs which were consistent with EU objectives, but met national needs. Two, in particular, stand out for having addressed very specific national needs while remaining fully coherent with the overarching objectives.

One project reached out at local level to meet a particular need for awareness-raising of volunteering in communities in former East Germany. On the one hand, these communities do not have same tradition of active citizenship – with 30% of the population volunteering according to 2009 figures compared to 37% for the ‘old’ federal states; on the other, they face particular issues of de-population and an associated problem of a particularly high ratio of older residents to young. The project was carried out in the state of Sachsen-Anhalt, but a closing conference covered all the East German states and covered projects addressing these issues across all this area.

The activities kicked off with a Dialogforum, a mixture of workshops and an outdoor volunteering organisation fair in May 2011 in Magdeburg, the capital of Sachsen-Anhalt. The conclusions of the workshops at that Forum were the impetus for workshops in municipalities to develop local strategies for attracting more volunteers, providing them with ongoing support and improving quality management. A score of communities were interested, but the €80,000 available for the whole programme was only enough to fund eleven workshops – each of which was free to develop specific local concerns.

Project conclusions ranged from setting up a central coordination point in Dessau-Rosslau to identification in Jena of a need for closer, and more flexible, cooperation with official entities and educational establishments. In the first case, the objective is to publicise existing structures and networks better so that they are better utilised. In the second, the goal is to facilitate access to existing forms of financial support and training schemes for improving the quality of volunteering – and as a signal of improved recognition of the importance of volunteering. In Halle, the emphasis of the workshop was on mentoring schemes – on how to improve them and on how to sustain the effort in 2012, with agreement to continue to exchange expertise, to commit to continuous training and ongoing outreach to the general public, including with a recognition event for mentors.

Another of the German lighthouse projects addressed a particular concern, that of involving Germany’s large immigrant, and in particular, Turkish community more widely in volunteering, and in this instance in conservation and environmental protection, whereas the volunteering of this community tends to be in urban area, and restricted to their own communities.

In late June 2011, the Deutscher Naturschutzring partnered with three other environmental/conservation organisations and two organisations from Germany’s Turkish community to discuss this at a conference, which also focused on how to involve other groups which are under-represented in this type of volunteering – and to some extent overlap, e.g. young people, women and the 55+ generation.

The conclusions of the conference included:

- Target-specific media should be used and skills in media work are vital. This was felt to be particularly important in terms of reaching people with an immigrant background or young people;
- Recognition is essential: volunteers and permanent staff need to get along with other, appreciate each other and learn from each other.
- Civil society organisations working in conservation and environmental protection will only be credible and have influence if they mirror the structure of society.

While the potential for complementarity with 2010 (anti-poverty and social inclusion) and 2012 (active ageing) was widely acknowledged, the reality on the ground was often very different. Institutional structures at EU and national level were often obstacles to complementarity across the Years. The extent to which volunteering was a focus in 2010 and is in 2012 is highly variable as a result; it appears to be greater in 2012 than in 2010, because 2012 has benefited from the awareness-raising in 2011 of the role older volunteers can play. However, this is far from having been picked up everywhere – in line with national discretion to fit the programmes of the Years to national priorities, but with the result that the picture is heterogeneous.

4.3.3. Relevance of the objectives to needs

In considering this question, we looked at whether:

- The objectives correspond to the policy agenda at European and national levels;
- The objectives of the EYV 2011 correspond to the needs of target audiences;²⁷
- The messages transmitted are appropriate to each of the target audiences concerned;
- The activities organised are relevant to the needs of each of the target audiences;
- The activities are appropriate to the cultural/social contexts in which they are implemented.

We look first at the judgement criteria in relation to objectives, then at the appropriateness of the messages and then at the relevance of the activities to the needs and the context.

We also consider relevance by objective. Relevance by strand is covered by means of the thematic case studies.

4.3.3.1. Correspondence with policy and needs

The shape that EYV 2011 took was set in a Council Decision on the basis of prior work and consultation described in the context section. This process took the needs of the sector, target audiences and Member States' policy agendas into account. The Decision itself constituted a statement of European policy, which then evolved during the year by means of the Commission Communication published on 20 September 2011. We found no dispute among interviewees about this.

The assessment of the needs is based on qualitative perceptions, since there was no quantitative baseline measurement. The need was also de facto established by the genesis of the Year, which

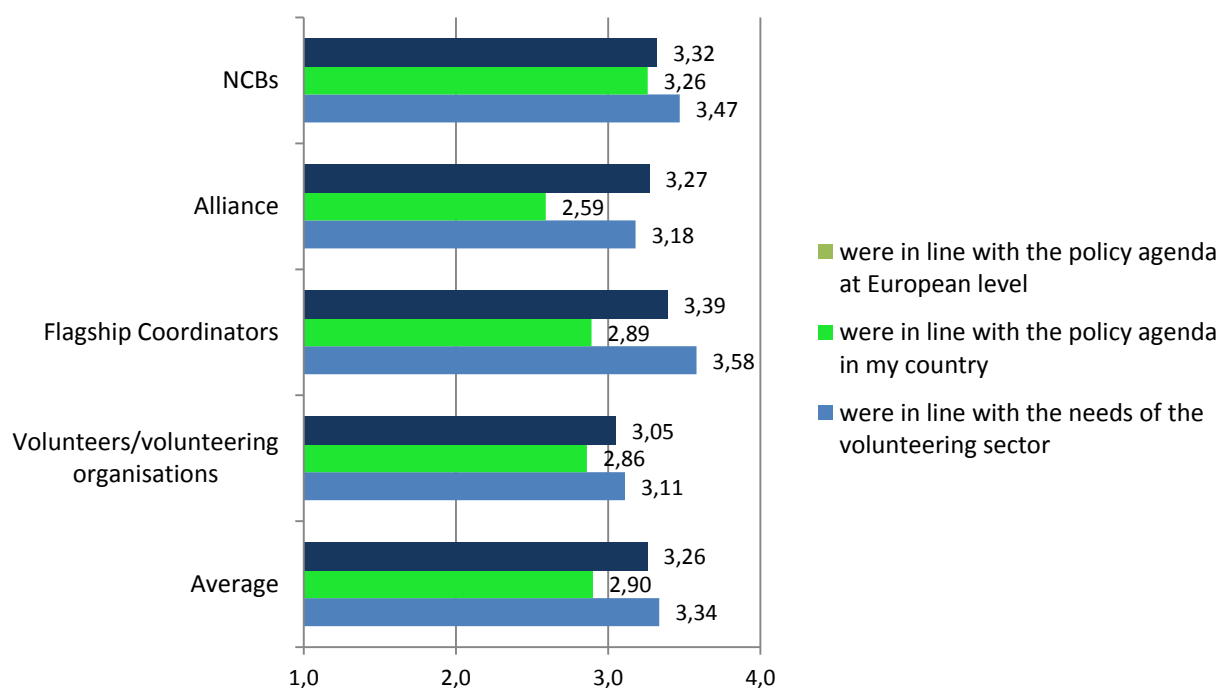
²⁷ Where not specified, by target audiences we refer to volunteers, organisations active in the field of volunteering, policy makers, citizens, and media.

was to a significant extent a bottom-up initiative from the voluntary sector itself. The section concludes with a consideration of relevance in relation to each objective of the Year as a prelude to the consideration of effectiveness by objective in the following section.

The survey results show a high level of agreement that the objectives of EYV 2011 were coherent with the European policy agenda; there is less agreement in relation to coherence with the national policy agenda. There is a relatively high level of agreement that the objectives were in line with the needs of the volunteering sector.

Figure 9: Relevance of objectives

Question: Overall, the objectives of EYV 2011...



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

NCBs were more likely than any other group to feel that the objectives of the Year were in line with the needs of the sector and of the EU or national policy agenda²⁸. This is not surprising, since they are policy setters. The Flagship Project respondents were particularly likely to think that the objectives of the year met the needs of the sector. In every case, the number actually disagreeing was generally low. Members of the EYV 2011 Alliance were particularly likely to consider that the objectives of the Year were out of step with the national policy agenda.

²⁸ Survey respondents could fully or partially agree with these statements, partially or totally disagree, or hold no opinion. The figures in this and subsequent Figures are the ratings on a scale of 1 to 4 based on a weighted average.

It is not altogether clear why this should be. In interviews, there was generally no strong feeling that the objectives of the year were out of line with national policy agendas – where such agendas exist. On the contrary, the objectives of the year were generally felt to have been couched in terms broad enough to encompass most policy agendas.

There are nevertheless two possible reasons why the sector might feel that the objectives of the Year were not in line with national policy. One is that a number of Member States put more emphasis on active citizenship in their national policies than was the case of EYV 2011. This was included in the official title of the Year, but the emphasis was almost always on volunteering. Some interviewees felt strongly that this aspect had not received enough attention.

The second is that there was a feeling among volunteering organisations in some countries that national policy agendas are not in tune with the spirit of volunteering, whereas the objectives of the year are more so. In some countries, the current policy agenda is perceived to be one of seeing volunteers as a substitute for the social welfare system at a time of austerity or the sector feels that there is a risk that government are confusing volunteering and work experience. In certain countries, this is a shift that has occurred since the Council Decision was adopted. Volunteer organisations in Germany, the Netherlands and the UK felt particularly strongly about this and are well represented in the survey responses. This view also came across in Denmark and Portugal. This *may* have coloured responses.

4.3.3.2. Appropriateness of the messages

The key message was ‘Volunteer: make a difference’. This was translated into all official languages of the EU in consultation between the Commission and the NCBs. This enabled NCBs to ensure that it was appropriate to local culture. This resulted in some relatively significant divergences from a straightforward translation – the German and Italian versions are examples. The German translation, which was agreed between Austria, Germany and the German-speaking community of Belgium, when translated literally back into English is ‘Volunteer: get something moving.’ This was discussed in focus groups and interviews. There was a unanimous view among the interviewees that the German translation set the right tone in a Germany environment and that the concept of ‘making a difference’ could not be literally translated and was not appropriate to German-speaking traditions. Therefore, the messages the translations conveyed were felt to be appropriate.

It proved difficult to translate the message in cultures and languages which differentiate between volunteer activity for an association and voluntary work based on a contractual relationship, e.g. for the emergency services. Both French-speaking and German-speaking countries had this difficulty, but it was not regarded as having been a major barrier to getting their message across.

4.3.3.3. Appropriateness of the activities to needs and context

As in the case of the coherence of the objectives with the needs and policy, the volunteering organisations and the EYV 2011 Alliance were more critical than the NCBs on the appropriateness of the activities to the national context and the needs of the volunteering sector. The Flagship Project coordinators were together with the NCBs the most supportive of these hypotheses. Interviewees agreed that there was a need for innovation that was met by the Flagship Projects (see Box).

“Values and activities of volunteering and e-volunteering” (Poland)

E-volunteering is still an innovation in many EU countries, particularly where volunteering has traditionally been about being active in helping address local problems in the immediate neighbourhood. Poland is one of the pioneers, and after two national editions, EYV 2011 provided

the opportunity to organise a 'Discover e-volunteering' competition at European level with Flagship Project funding.

The contest was organised by the Good Network Foundation and the Orange Foundation (Polish arm), with partnerships with Intel, France Bénévolat, Espace Bénévolat (a French online matchmaking site), VSW (Vlaams Steunpunt Vrijwilligerswerk) (Belgium), Hestia (Czechoslovakia), Brīvprātīgā (Latvia), Fundusz Tratwa Szczecinek (Poland), Do It (a UK online matchmaking site), Du Pain pour Chaque Enfant (Luxembourg) and Bright One (UK).

From May 25 to September 16, 2011, more than 80 applications were received from non-governmental organisations registered in 19 different countries. They were representative of the various e-volunteering activities happening on the Web: free Web counseling, forming assistance and self-help groups, e-tutoring, sharing professional skills and knowledge through the Internet, e-charity, searching for information.

An International Selection Committee chose the best 12. Then over 18,000 Internet users voted for the best e-volunteering projects in the public online poll. The four winning projects were from four different countries and four different fields.

The winner was a Polish project (PTPZ Dawca.pl), which runs a social campaign for conscious organ, bone marrow and blood donation mainly based on e-education through the website, Facebook and e-learning tools.

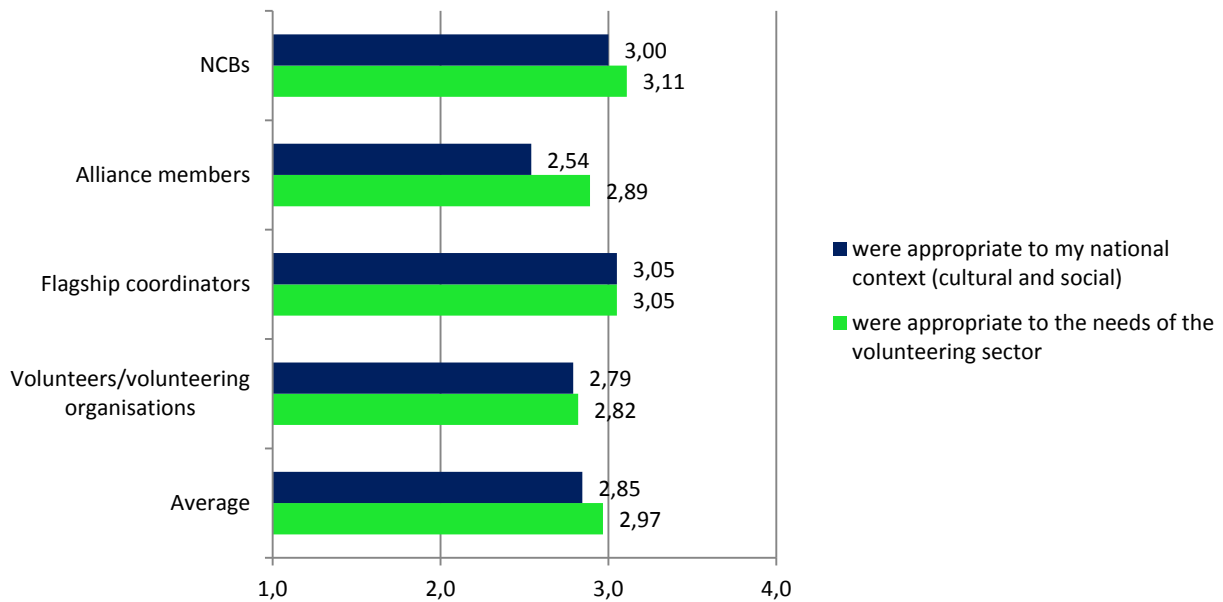
The second prize was awarded to a Lithuanian project (*Nacionalinė moksleivių akademija*), which promotes innovative and successful usage of the Internet in order to help the most talented students in Lithuania to develop their skills and achieve success in education, independently of their social and economic status.

Equal third prize went to two projects. The first (*L'enfant @ l'hôpital*, from France) gives children in hospitals or in difficult conditions the opportunity to encounter outstanding men and women who thanks to creative usage of new technologies stimulate their education and development. The second (*Bright One Communications*, from UK) creates an innovative micro-volunteering web application that allows charities and nonprofits to get projects and tasks completed for free by a global e-volunteer community of experts in such areas as PR, marketing and design.

More than a quarter of the volunteer/volunteering organisations and EYV 2011 Alliance respondents felt that the activities were not appropriate to the needs of the sector, while a third of the volunteering respondents and 44% of the EYV 2011 Alliance respondents felt that the activities were not appropriate to the cultural/social context.

Figure 10: Appropriateness to needs and context

Question: Overall the activities of EYV 2011....:



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

There are indications from interviews as to a number of reasons as to why a minority felt that the activities were not appropriate. In face-to-face meetings, interviewees tended spontaneously to see this question as being about the EU communication campaign rather than national campaigns, so these replies may reflect the lack of enthusiasm in some countries for the Tour concept (not just the implementation), as elaborated on elsewhere in this report. However, some interviewees had reservations even in relation to some national campaigns. These were sometimes felt to be too centralised and, in some cases, to have taken the 'easy option' of funding conferences. These were exceptions.

4.3.4. Complementarity of the objectives with existing initiatives

In answering this question, we looked at whether the objectives are complementary to:

- other European Years, in particular the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010 and the future European Year of Active Ageing 2012 and whether synergies among them have been established;
- European Union programmes in the same field, particularly the Europe for Citizens programme, the Youth in Action (EVS) and Grundtvig (Senior Volunteering) programmes and the development of the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps (EVHAC);
- other European Union initiatives, in particular initiatives concerning the dialogue with citizens and citizens' participation and rights, managed by DG Justice, and other initiatives managed by DG COMM, such as the Europe Direct network.

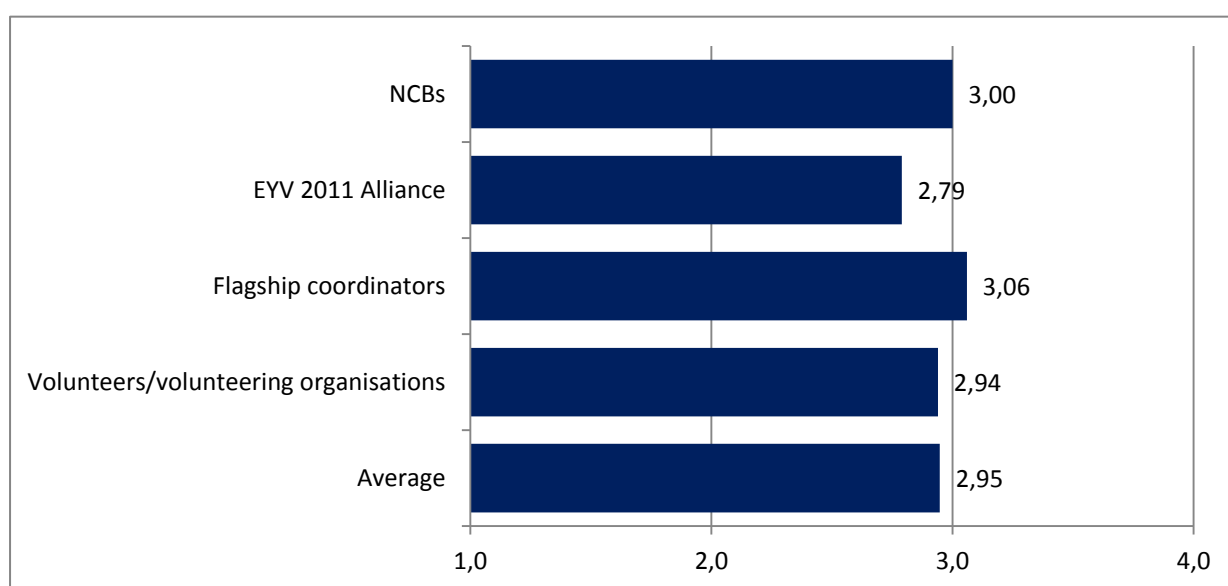
4.3.4.1. Complementarity with other European Years

In the surveys, there was a relatively strong tendency to agree that there was complementarity between EYV 2011 and the years which preceded and succeeded it. The total of the full and partial agreement is in the range 65-80% - with the Flagship Project coordinators as an outlier at the top end of the range. The range is otherwise 65-68%. Thus there was a high degree of consensus at this level as the graphic shows.

Agreement tended to be partial rather than full. This is consistent with the comments of survey respondents and our findings from interviews.

Figure 11: Complementarity across Years

Question: complementarity between the activities carried out during EYV2011 and the activities carried out under other European Years, in particular 2010 ('anti-poverty and social exclusion'), and 2012 (active ageing).



Source: Deloitte Online Surveys, March/April 2012

Both those who commented on the survey and interviewees noted that national and Commission structures often do not favour complementarity because the topics are handled by different government departments at national level and different parts of the Commission.

These views spanned a wide range, but the majority nevertheless felt that this objective had only been partially achieved at best. There is generally a perception that the mechanisms for translating the decision makers' general statements about the desirability of complementarity (and synergies) across Years need developing further. The following comment on the survey is representative:

"The link between EYV2011 and EY2012 needs to be further developed with concrete actions as well as making this link in political statements" – survey respondent

Interviewees commented in this context on the lack of institutional memory on European Years at national and Commission level, with the result that the person given responsibility for a year often had to invest valuable time in researching how previous years had worked or in unknowingly reinventing the wheel. Without a central structure in the Commission, there is no incentive for Member States to have one either.

There are countries where a very deliberate attempt has been made in structures and/or communication material to establish a continuum across all three years or between 2010 and 2011, or 2011 and 2012, but these are seen as national initiatives.

Survey respondents and interviewees point out that the different approaches to the year, including the amounts of funding and the non-availability of funding for NCBs in 2012 have also made it difficult to achieve continuity. Continuity has been helped where the NCB is within the same Ministry as EYV 2011.

At national level, the focus of the years was not always the same and this affected complementarity. Some Member States deliberately put the focus of EYV 2011 on youth, sometimes (but not necessarily) making it more difficult to establish a link with 2012; others focused (wrongly in the eyes of some in the volunteering sector) on active ageing as being a matter of staying in good health and working longer before claiming a pension. They are not establishing the link to the volunteering potential of the older age groups – or to the contribution volunteering can make to staying healthy, given that it is claimed that volunteers live longer.

4.3.4.2. Complementarity with other International Years

The Council Decision on EYV 2011 mentions the fact that 2011 was the UN International Year of Volunteering +10²⁹. There was coordination at institutional level, with a view on the part of the organisers of the UN Year that the European Year was de facto IYV+10 in Europe. There is also evidence of complementarity at the level of some national associations in the voluntary sector.

There is evidence, in addition, of unexpected complementarity with the UN International Year of Forests, e.g. in some interest from specialist media, and in at least one project (see Box).

The Years of Volunteering and Forests come together

The landscape of the German-speaking area of eastern Belgium is 76,000 trees richer as a result of an initiative which combined EYV 2011 and the UN International Year of Forests. That is one tree for every resident of the region as the result of an initiative totally independent of the 'national' programme. The initiative came about from someone in a local conservation group seeing a way of making the link between the two Years. Four thousand primary school children from 52 schools in the region and French-speaking areas bordering it were given a day off to begin the planting of 37 different species of tree.

²⁹ The UN International Year of Volunteering was celebrating its 10th anniversary. The original Year in 2001 gave a significant impetus to volunteering in a number of EU Member States.

4.3.4.3. Complementarity with other EU programmes and initiatives

Interviewees felt that complementarity with other programmes and initiatives had been somewhat serendipitous, not based on identifying the need for or potential for complementarity, either at EU or national level.

Interviewees familiar with Commission procedures were aware of inter-service coordination mechanisms to develop synergies with other European Union programmes and initiatives. Nevertheless, even though there were some initiatives in the context of other programmes, such as a conference in Prague on the use of volunteers in development, a Grundtvig conference in Warsaw on adult volunteering (see Box), the use of Europe for Citizens funds for local EYV 2011 initiatives, e.g. in Leeds, and the use of Leader funds for quality management in rural areas (Belgium), interviewees did not discern any coherence.

Volunteering as adult learning through Grundtvig

Adult volunteering was the topic of the conference organised by the Polish National Agency for the Grundtvig Programme in Warsaw on 23-26 November 2011. It attracted over 120 people from 32 countries plus representatives of the European Commission, National Agencies and beneficiaries of the Grundtvig Programme.

The conference showcased specific projects and discussed examples of good practice. In 2011, the Commission also published a booklet on Adult Volunteering: Learning for Life, which highlights examples of good practice.

The conference workshops covered how to prepare volunteers for volunteering, learning during volunteering and EU support for adult volunteering as an extremely valuable form of informal adult education which allows volunteers to gain technical and organisational skills, but above all “soft skills”: sense of leadership and responsibility, teamwork, self-confidence, awareness of the volunteer’s own capabilities, a sense of solidarity between generations and with disadvantaged people, communication and intercultural skills – among others.

Developing complementarity between Youth in Action and Europe Direct is complicated by the fact that they are highly decentralised. Thus the extent to which they were involved in the Tour or in national campaigns was very dependent on good communication at national level.

The resulting picture was extremely mixed, with examples of Europe Direct being very involved in national campaigns or taking a large number of local initiatives (see Box in next section); in some countries, the European Voluntary Service was very present during the European Tour; in others, not at all. Interviewees did not perceive either duplication, but neither did they see synergies and often felt that duplication was avoided, but complementarity was underdeveloped.

4.4. Effectiveness

To what extent have the activities undertaken in the framework of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 been effective in achieving its objectives?

1. *Work towards an enabling environment for volunteering in the EU.*
2. *Empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of this kind of activities.*
3. *Recognise voluntary activities.*
4. *Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering.*

4.4.1. Introduction and summary

This section answers the overarching question on the extent to which the activities undertaken in the framework of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 were effective in achieving its four objectives.

At first, the effectiveness of the activities in achieving the overall objectives of the Year is analysed. Then, the overarching question is divided **into sub-questions**.

The **first** sub-question concerns the effectiveness of each strand of activities, i.e. the contribution of the European communication campaign, of the National Coordination Bodies, of the EYV 2011 Alliance and of the Flagship Projects to the objectives of the European Year of Volunteering 2011.

The **second** sub-question focuses on the effectiveness reached by combining different strands of activities. This issue is investigated by looking at the correspondence between the overarching objective of the Year and the operational objectives of the four strands of activities, the extent to which the target groups were reached, and the effectiveness in improving awareness of the value of volunteering, influencing policies at European and/or national level, influencing activities of civil society organisations in the field of volunteering, and contributing to the achievement of the European citizenship policy.

There is a broad consensus on the general effectiveness of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 in achieving its goals. The highest levels of appreciation are for the objective of raising awareness in the sector of volunteering. Awareness among the general public scores at a lower level.

The Year was seen effective in influencing the activities, projects, partnerships and practices of civil society organisations active in the field of volunteering, slightly less so in achieving the more policy-related objectives of influencing European and national policies or practices in the area of volunteering and citizenship policy, and fostering and supporting civic participation in ways that empower them to develop a sense of European identity and enhance mutual understanding between Europeans). Despite the number of policy documents published at EU level, there is apparently as yet no trickle-down effect of these at national level, as confirmed in interviews.

In relation to the activities by strand, the effectiveness of the communication campaign and of its components, i.e. the Tour, the europa.eu/volunteering website and the Relay Reporters are widely questioned both among EU-level stakeholders and in the Member States. Perceptions of the Thematic Conferences are more positive.

National campaigns and National Coordination Bodies achieved higher effectiveness in raising awareness of the value of volunteering, promoting the Year, identifying and exchanging national best practices, and in involving stakeholders and civil society organisations. Results were not positive

on identifying and exchanging best practices at European level and in exploiting the European dimension of the Year in general.

There is wide consensus on the overall effectiveness of the EYV 2011 Alliance.

The Flagship Projects were effective in achieving their objectives and in implementing the activities planned (or at least a good part of them) notwithstanding the delay in the signing of the contracts and in the availability of resources. However, they were not well integrated in the other strands of activities, so that the complementarity with other activities of the Year was not fully exploited.

4.4.2. Effectiveness by objective

4.4.2.1. An enabling environment

The effectiveness of the Year in achieving the overarching objective of working towards an enabling environment is clearly shown by the number of EU policy documents issued during the Year. These are the Commission Communication³⁰ on EU Policies and Volunteering for recognising and promoting cross-border voluntary activities across the Union, two sets of Council Conclusions, one on the role of volunteering activities in social policy³¹, the other on volunteering and sport³², and the European Economic and Social Committee Opinion and the European Parliament's Report and Resolution on the Commission's Communication on European policies and volunteering³³³⁴.

It is also worth mentioning the Warsaw Declaration for Sustainability of Action on Voluntary Activities and Active Citizenship from the NCBs, and the agreement reached within the EYV 2011 Alliance which led to the finalisation of the P.A.V.E. Both were presented in December 2011 during the Warsaw fourth thematic conference.

The EU policy documents issued during and immediately after the Year show the political relevance attached to volunteering. They helped in putting volunteering high – or higher – on policy agendas in a number of countries. The P.A.V.E. document and the Warsaw Declaration also show the active commitment of civil society and national bodies in pushing volunteering in the policy agenda.

In many countries the Year provided the opportunity to reflect on the adequacy of the legislative framework in place for volunteering, and to start a consultation process for modifying or renewing it (as in the case for Spain), or to create psychological pressure on Parliaments to adopt pending legislation (Austria).

³⁰ *EU Policies and Volunteering: Recognising and Promoting Cross-border Volunteering activities in the EU*, COM (2011) 568

³¹ Council Decision of 3 October 2011 on the Role of Voluntary activities in social policy

³² Council Decision of 28-29 November 2011 on Volunteering and sport

³³ European Economic and Social Committee Opinion of March 2012 on European policies and volunteering.

³⁴ Report on recognising and promoting cross-border voluntary activities in the EU. In addition, in September 2011, the European Parliament Intergroup on Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity adopted a Resolution on 'Enhancing the participation of older volunteers through the 2011 European Year of Volunteering (EYV2011)'

While this process did not always end in the approval of a new strategy and/or legislative framework for volunteering within the Year, proposals were put together as a result of the Year, and are currently under discussion in national Parliaments in many cases (as in Latvia). In Malta, where a new legislative framework was implemented only recently, it was felt that the European Year of Volunteering contributed to enhancing visibility and awareness, and to consolidating the new institutions.

The Year could not of course be a panacea for solving issues in the enabling environment. Among those highlighted to us, and on which the Year will not have had an impact, are the red tape associated with registering associations and the system of criminal records checks.

A statistical baseline for the enabling environment

A key element for achieving an enabling environment for volunteering is achieving a clear definition of what constitutes volunteering – still a subject of regular controversy in the volunteering sector, a baseline and a periodic monitoring system. In this sense, Year appears to have been effective as a catalyst for launching and implementing the updated ILO Manual on the measurement of volunteering. The creation of a new community of European labour statistics officials and civil society specialising in the statistics of volunteering was perhaps one of the more unusual networks created as a result of EYV 2011.

At the time of a statisticians seminar organised by the Polish Presidency in September 2011, several countries, including Czech Republic, Slovakia, Portugal and Spain were seriously considering its adoption (as was Montenegro). Latvia was considering measuring volunteering for the first time. Hungary implemented it in its Labour Force survey for the third quarter of 2011, Italy is testing it in 2012, and Poland is a pioneer; it presented the first results of surveys using the manual at the Warsaw Conference. Since then Slovakia has also advanced further towards adopting this approach.

In addition, many NCBs included studies on the size and characteristics of the volunteering sector in their national programmes, in order to have a better understanding of it, and a clearer vision of its needs.

The European Parliament organised a round table on measuring the value of volunteering in February 2012.

4.4.2.2. Empowering organisers to improve quality

In the longer term, the work of the EYV 2011 Alliance working group on quality (among others), which fed into the P.A.V.E. exercise, can be expected to be effective in improving the quality of volunteer management. Some of the work at the EU Thematic conferences may also have a ripple effect in this area. However, these are all results that will take time to bear fruit.

There are also a number of initiatives within national programmes which should be effective, where this is regarded as a national priority. A workshop organised during the Dutch week of congresses applied the Harvard Business School case study technique to a notional local authority problem with disruptive youth in what is believed to be the first example, at least in the Netherlands, of applying the technique to the volunteer sector. The winning team received consultancy support as a result to implement their ideas (see the geographic case study about the Netherlands).

One of the areas where there is a need to work on the quality of volunteer management which emerged from interviews, as indicated in the relevance sections, include the challenges of attracting young people into volunteering, of understanding their motivations in terms of skills acquisition, and

of keeping them as volunteers once they have found employment. This is true for countries with well established tradition in volunteering (see Box), and for those with low levels of participation.

Improving volunteer management in the UK

The volunteer management strand of the UK national programme was led by The Volunteer Centre Warrington (now Volunteer Action Warrington). Warrington is a small northern city, but offers training nationwide.

As part of this project to improve volunteer management, they ran four ‘webinars’ broadcasts in response to discussions on their forum and blogging websites about volunteer management issues. Each webinar was delivered by a different guest speaker as a mini-training session and also offered a discussion and networking opportunity. One was held during the European Tour in London, with two international guest speakers.

In addition, the centre delivered presentations on effective volunteer management at two key meetings of the England Volunteering Development Council (EVDC) and carried out smaller projects to examine areas of good practice in different types of volunteering. This included short-term volunteering and group led by volunteers rather than professionals. The centre also carried out research into effective talent management and how this can be applied to managing volunteers, and surveyed volunteer managers to look at current practice and the areas for improvement

They arranged conference calls and discussions through the private space on the website i-volunteer to allow their network of Volunteer Management Champions (VMC) to share their expertise. VCV also facilitated a weekly ‘tweet chat’ to encourage volunteer managers to share ideas and resources. Members of the VMC group wrote several blogs focusing on key volunteer management issues, which generated important debate and discussion for the profession.

As with all the projects, the project coordinator from Volunteering England (the lead on the UK shared learning strand) visited this project to provide support and advice. In addition, the Institute of Volunteering Research was available as part of this strand to research specific issues as needed by individual organisations.

As part of this strand, learning from the projects was placed as an agenda item the regional and national meetings of the England Volunteering Development Council (EVDC). Presentations and workshops were also made to the national voluntary organisation NNVA and the EU-wide body Volunteurope.

In addition, ‘Regional champions’ were nominated for the sharing of learning in each of the English regions. They used their network in the regions to disseminate learning materials and to gather feedback on their appropriateness. Regional Champions reported that this increased collaboration between organisations was likely to have increased the number and variety of volunteers.

The shared learning strand was a cross-cutting strand in a nine-strand programme. The other strands were issue or theme-related. Having a shared learning strand providing support and encouraging networking and exchange of experience throughout the year both across the year and beyond, as well as in principle being a single good practice repository for the results ex post, is regarded as having been a key success factor for the project-based approach to the national programme. Indeed, many national programmes targeted youth (see Box on Italy in the next sub-section) or had initiatives targeting and/or directly involving schools. For instance, in Greece an educational manual on volunteering to be distributed in schools and including volunteering in non-formal education is currently in preparation. Several initiatives aim at including volunteering in educational CVs,

providing credits for hours spent by students volunteering in recognised organisations. EYV 2011 is felt to have been an important contribution to moving forward on recognising the non-formal learning aspects of volunteering in a range of countries (including Belgium and Ireland).

The focus on the younger generation is strong in Eastern European countries. In addition, investing in younger generations is considered as an investment with high prospects to provide a 'return', as young volunteers will tend to be committed to volunteering for life, and will act as "multipliers" of the volunteering culture with new generations. However, the voluntary sector sees a balance to be struck with winning older volunteers for their experience and mentoring capabilities, and their willingness to 'give something back' to society.

In addition, there were a number of initiatives to favour the participation in volunteering of people of working age, through new or expanded Corporate Social Responsibility programmes, including the many 'volunteer for a day' projects. Examples of new CSR programmes include that between the Italian National Railways Company and civil society organisations on creating an observatory on social problems in large railway stations, including help centres managed by those organisations active in the social sector.

Another is the 'We Love Your Project' initiative of Belgian electricity company, EDF Luminus. It ran an award scheme for the first time in 2011 with total prize money of EUR 20,000 to voluntary projects and associations in which its employees are active. Prizes were awarded to seven of the fourteen applicants, with the largest prize of EUR 8,000 going to the youth arm of the international chamber of commerce in the city of Liège for a project to identify poorly insulated roofs and promote energy savings. The projects did not have to be local or energy-related. The second prize went to a project to collect the seeds of tropical fruit for re-use in the poor countries of the world. (See also under Sustainability.)

4.4.2.3. Recognition of voluntary activities

As indicated in the relevance section, stakeholders see recognition as very important and this is an important element of many national programmes. This is particularly, but not only, true of countries which traditionally have high levels of volunteering.

Tens of examples can be found in national programmes. However, the EYV 2011 has been effective beyond the examples of activities and initiatives funded within national programmes. It is impossible to capture all of these. The Box below expands on this.

Applause as a literal mark of recognition

The five million volunteers in the Netherlands were applauded in the literal sense of the word during a Week of Applause from September 11-18, 2011. In some cases, more concrete manifestations of recognition accompanied the 'applause'. This was the case of Rotterdam's Feyenoord football club. Spectators at a championship match all rose to applaud volunteers in the presence of 1,400 volunteers from 250 amateur football clubs, who had been given free tickets to the game. The clubs are part of a partnership scheme run by Feyenoord to promote football.

Other examples of the 86 activities recorded during the week:

- to draw attention to the role 3,200 volunteers play in coaching seniors in the use of computers and the Internet, volunteers formed themselves into a living computer keyboard in the main square of the city of Utrecht – and were applauded by the passers-by.

- the 100,000 visitors to the Appelpop music festival and the Fruitcorso fruit and vegetable festival simultaneously applauded the role of volunteers.

- during the 50Plus fair in Utrecht, dozens of seniors applauded volunteers who work on behalf of the senior gas and transsexual community.

- to the sound of a gong and applause, staff working on the trading floor of the NYSE Euronext stock exchange in Amsterdam acknowledged the importance of the work in local communities of the 43,000 volunteers who work with the Zonnebloem (Sunflower) organisation.

Another example from the Netherlands was totally unrelated to the national programme and illustrates the difficulty of capturing the scope of EYV 2011 at local level:

In the small Dutch town of Helmond, EYV 2011 inspired the local volunteer centre to develop a system of star badges for every volunteer in the town (estimated at 1 in 4 of the population of 80,000). These were pinned on the volunteers by 'ambassadors', who are leading citizens. Volunteers took pride in the number of badges (which in at least one case numbered eight), and in some cases wore them in public, like medals. The scheme is being continued in 2012.

In some cases, the year provided the opportunity to re-thinking the volunteering awards already existing, and unifying them, enhancing the visibility and the effectiveness of the initiative. This is the case of Malta, for instance, where three well-established volunteering awards existed. These were unified into one, which became the national official prize for volunteering, whose ceremony took place during the closing day of the Tour in Valletta (see geographic case study). Interviews with national stakeholders also confirmed that this unified structure will continue in the years to come.

4.4.2.4. Raising awareness

The findings that apply to recognition largely also apply to awareness. The two are often combined as objectives. Of the four strands, the Tour and the national campaigns were those expected to be most effective in this area. As noted previously, the Tour appears to have achieved this in some countries, but not in others.

Sing Hallelujah for volunteering

An unusual Austrian initiative for raising awareness, and with a view to making volunteering 'infectious,' was a flash mob in a shopping centre on December 30, 2010, in which 200 Caritas volunteers 'spontaneously' launched into Handel's Hallelujah chorus – not just as a static choir, but also coming down the escalators. The YouTube video (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=noPyFzC7I3A>) had been viewed more than 50,000 times as of April 2012, and is one of the particular successes of the Austrian programme's efforts to encourage volunteering organisations to use Web 2.0 during EYV 2011. The success of those efforts is regarded as one of the highlights of the Austrian programme.

Stakeholders interviewed were generally cautious about seeing a direct relationship between showcasing volunteering activity and increasing the number of volunteers. This is borne out by the results of the surveys, both in relation to the Year as a whole and the Tour.

However, there is a consensus that raising awareness was one of the objectives of the Year which was most successful

The national programme in Portugal is an example of how a country with relatively low levels of volunteering raised awareness and effectively (and efficiently) leveraged EYV 2011 to translate into

awareness-raising and recognition activities across Portugal and funded from sources other than the national programme. This is not the only such case, but is particularly well documented (see Box).

Portugal: 'From small acorns large oaks grow'

Portugal's national programme envisaged one seminar, two research studies, a 50-minute documentary, the European Tour in Lisbon, replication of the Tour in the Azores and Madeira, and three Flagship Projects. In addition, the Tour was replicated in 22 other cities in cooperation with the EC Representation and the Europe Direct network, there were more than 200 local initiatives (conferences, workshops etc.), a coffee company produced small sugar packs with the EYV 2011 logo, 22 companies and 2 passers-by painted pictures in a Lisbon metro stations which were subsequently sold at auction in a major hotel, an itinerant Volunteering Infobus attracted more than 20,000 visitors, five different award schemes operated, research projects into different aspects of volunteering, two foundations promoted volunteering projects in schools, there were daily radio and TV slots on civil society and volunteering, NATALIS – a solidarity fair in Lisbon, and during the fair celebration of December 5, International Volunteer Day broadcast live by RTP in the "Portugal no Coração" programme and also the extraction of the Volunteering lottery, etc.

Success factors included: a strong existing infrastructure, which meant that there was a government/stakeholder platform in place, the use of an ambassador who was a well known TV personality, regular radio slots on civil society – and a highly dynamic NCB with extensive networks, a success factor which should not be underestimated since personalities clearly played a role in a number of other countries as well.

4.4.3. Effectiveness of single strands of activities

This section focuses on the question on to what extent individual strands of activities have contributed to the achievement of the objectives of the EYV 2011.

When tackling this issue, we looked at whether:

- The European Communication campaign has contributed to the objectives of the EYV 2011, especially to objectives 3 and 4,
- The NCBs have contributed to the objectives of the EYV 2011,
- The cooperation with civil society contributed to the achievement of the objectives of the EYV 2011;
- The Flagship Projects have contributed to the objectives of the EYV 2011.

More information on the strands of activities can be found in the thematic and geographic case studies included in Annex to this report.

4.4.3.1. Contribution of the European Communication campaign

The effectiveness of the communication campaign and of its components, i.e. the Tour, the europa.eu/volunteering website and the Relay Reporters are widely questioned both among EU-level stakeholders and in the Member States. Perceptions of the EU Thematic Conferences are more positive.

The EU Thematic conferences were well received, as NCBs and volunteering organisations confirmed in interviews and online surveys. Two aspects were considered particularly important, namely the network building and the innovative format of some of them. The innovative and participatory approach of the conferences (especially those in Brussels and in Athens), based on the mind-mapping and the world café formats, was considered an interesting way to discuss relevant issues and at the same time obtaining a good overview of how other organisations in other Member States are dealing with common problems. Some interviewees reported their intention to adopt similar approach in future national events.

Perceptions of the Tour are similar across three categories of respondents, with the EYV 2011 Alliance members being more critical. The online surveys show that the Tour was perceived as most effective in fostering the visibility of the multiple dimensions of the volunteering sector, in supporting network building and the exchange of best practices at national level³⁵. In the short-term, the Tour generally did not increase the number of volunteers, and in favouring the exchange of good practices at European level, but there may be long-term multiplier effects and networking benefits. Interviewees stressed that any effect of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 in increasing the number of volunteers may take a few years to become evident.

Data on Tour attendance and media coverage show large differences among Member States for several reasons. Factors which were important in influencing attendance figures were: the type of Tour organised (i.e. a raising awareness event targeted to the general public mainly or a workshop-type targeted to volunteering organisations), whether there was close collaboration between the NCB, local volunteering organisations and the Commission's Representation Office in the country concerned, the duration of the event and the time of year. Overall, more than 56,000 people attended the different stops of the Tour. Attendance was often higher in those countries where the Commission's Representation Office and the NCB were pro-active, such as was the case in France. Tour stops in Budapest and Warsaw, the countries of the Presidency, achieved some of the highest figures (4,500 and 7,000 participants respectively). Similarly, the number of volunteering organisations participating varied widely across Member States, with the peak in Warsaw.

Media coverage of the Tour was highly variable even in quantitative terms (see Table on press clippings in the thematic case study on the EU communication campaign). The data is also not comparable as some clippings agencies cast their net wider than others. The voluntary sector say it is intrinsically difficult to interest the media in what they do ('good news' stories being per se hard to 'sell'), and that this was only marginally less difficult in many cases, even with the news 'hook' of EYV 2011. This had repercussions for the Tour because it was difficult to get the press to publicise it. Member States that used 'ambassadors' found that this helped. They were however only a minority. The initial idea of having EU ambassadors was dropped from the campaign as being over-ambitious,

³⁵ These sections provide a snapshot of the results of the targeted online surveys on this issue. Full detail is in the thematic case studies.

given the difficulty of finding figures well known to the public at large, uncontroversial, actively involved in volunteering, and with the time available to make the necessary commitment.

Opinions of the [europa.eu/volunteering website](http://europa.eu/volunteering) show widespread criticism on its effectiveness in supporting the objectives of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 in general and of the communication campaign in particular. This is particularly evident when considering the answers to the online surveys of the National Coordination Bodies, which express a strong disagreement in all cases (“fully disagree” answers range from 11% to 32% of respondents).

Google Analytics on the use of the [ec.europa.eu/volunteering website](http://ec.europa.eu/volunteering) revealed that in one year (period between January and December 2011) it had 366,172 visits, and a total of 1,556,284 pages visited. These figures are low by comparison with figures for some national sites. This result is not totally surprising, however, when considering the fact that volunteering is a largely local phenomenon, so that it is natural for those involved or interested in it to look at national websites.

Many respondents felt that the website was not well promoted and thus not used enough, becoming much less effective than it could have been as a tool to disseminate national news at European level. The fact that it was not widely used is supported by the relatively high percentage of “no opinion” answers given to the online survey (especially among the EYV 2011 Alliance members), and by the considerations of many interviewees, who had only very limited knowledge of the website, finding the national websites much more up-to-date and user-friendly than the national websites. There was a demand for information in English accessible to professionals across Europe, but this was not met by this site. The existence of the EYV 2011 Alliance as well was a source of confusion. While those behind the two sites understood clearly their different roles and avoided overlap, this was not perceived by the target publics.

Awareness of the [Relay Reporters Programme](#) was not very high, in either interviews or the online surveys. While the idea was in theory appreciated, in practice the opportunities to raise visibility during the Tour stops and during the Year in general was felt not to have been exploited to the full.

In general, the European communication campaign was considered most effective in fostering the visibility of the multiple dimensions of volunteering and in fostering the exchange of best practices. Indeed, the Tour stops often became occasions for national organisations to meet and exchange best practices, as well as to lay the basis for future partnerships, rather than to reach out to the general public.

The European dimension was considered de facto absent during the EU campaign in the overwhelming majority of countries. This is especially, but far from solely, true of the Tour stops, and was widely regretted.

Many interviewees considered that the presence during each stop of the Tour of one or two volunteers with international experience and/or of volunteering organisations from other Member States that could share their experiences (such as the “meet the EVS event” organised during the Tour stop in Romania), would have given a more evident European dimension to the event.

In addition, the cooperation with the existing EU networks and offices (such as Europe Direct and the EU Representation Offices) was uneven, proving highly fruitful in many countries and being a source of frustration in others. There were two sides to this coin – the other side being frustration on the part of Representations at not being adequately involved by the NCBs.

In addition, interviews revealed that a significant number of national players would have welcomed closer coordination with the Commission’s contractor and more direct involvement of the Task Force, which they recognised as being constrained by lack of human and financial resources, and

therefore of time. More centrally coordinated event management, together with more meetings and tighter cooperation with NCBs (especially on the logistics aspects and success factors) would have been appreciated.

4.4.3.2. Contribution of the National Coordination Bodies

Opinions about the effectiveness of national campaigns are more positive among NCBs and Flagship Project coordinators than among EYV 2011 Alliance members and volunteering organisations. Clearly, throughout the survey, each group thinks most highly of its own activities. However, inclusion of each group provides a basis for comparison.

The divergence can certainly in part be explained by the high expectations generated by the European Years in volunteers and volunteering organisations, and by the lower knowledge of the technical and logistics difficulties in organising such a campaign. The organisation of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 generated high expectations among those active in the sector, which were somehow (and sometimes) frustrated by the (perceived) low impact of the event in the national context.

Results from the online surveys show that the national campaigns were considered to achieve higher levels of effectiveness for raising awareness of the value of volunteering, promoting the Year, identifying and exchanging national best practices. Positive opinions were also expressed with regard to the effectiveness of national campaigns (and National Coordination Bodies) in involving stakeholders and civil society organisations.

Involvement of civil society, and active consultation and engagement in the preparation of the National Programmes were explicitly required of NCBs if they intended to request funding support from the Commission. This was perceived as a natural step in order to establish a common plan for the Year.

In some cases, the consulting process foreseen for the Year was included in the work to establish or renew national strategies for the volunteering sector. This was the case for Spain, for instance, where the EYV 2011 coincided with the preparation of the Spanish Strategy for Volunteering 2010-2014. The consultation process needed for the Year was used in many cases as a starting point to put volunteering high on the policy agenda. Consultations were used in order to develop a common platform to be presented in the political agenda, to create or renew the legislative framework. This was the case of many Eastern European countries, where the requirement for involving civil society organisations was particularly appreciated, as it was felt to build a bridge between civil society and the public administration.

The Year was thus a catalyst for strategic development of volunteering-related policies at national level. The associated funding support played a key role in this respect, as it was a lever for civil society and public administration to cooperate closely.

The online surveys also show lower levels of effectiveness of national campaigns in identifying and exchanging best practices at European level. These results are consistent with the interviews with the stakeholders, who considered that exploiting complementarity with other EU programmes, cooperating with EU offices and developing a cross-border dimension were not seen as a priority, and should have been imposed on Member States – or at least they should have been more proactively encouraged to develop their programmes in these areas. Interviewees accept that there was nothing to stop them doing this spontaneously, but in practice these elements are more complex to implement so that without the Commission spurring them on Member States were unlikely to act on them.

It is not possible to provide an analysis of the type and tone of media coverage. Desk research and interviews showed that NCBs implemented communication campaigns which included a broad range of media, including newspapers (from magazine to daily free press), TV (advertising spots or short shows in prime-time during specific events), participation in external events that would guarantee a large coverage of the national territory and of the potential audience. Interviews with NCBs however highlighted the inherent difficulties in launching and managing large awareness campaigns within the limited timeframe and budget availability of the Year.

Leveraging young people's interest by communicating in conjunction with the 'Giro d'Italia'

An example of communicating effectively with the general public with limited resources and given the difficulty of interesting the media in volunteering comes from Italy. In order to reach a wider population, especially younger age groups in line with an Italian concern about the demographic profile of volunteers past and future, it was decided to be one of the sponsors of the 'Giro d'Italia'. This is a popular itinerant cycling competition, which in 2011 stopped in towns and cities associated with Italy's battle for unification and independence. The 150th anniversary of the foundation of Italy was 2011.

At each stop of the race, a 'village' with sponsors' stands is open to the public. Analysis shows that more than 1,200,000 people visited the village (either at the beginning or at the end of the stop). The demographic profile of the visitors shows that they belong to each age segments (from 15 to over 64), with a slight prevalence of those in the 15-24 age range. The visitors perceived the sponsors' village experience as extremely positive, and the EYV 2011 stand had about 118,000 direct contacts.

In addition, the event has broad media coverage; in 2011, more than 585 hours of TV broadcasting was devoted to the Giro, so that there was a multiplier effect.

This communication was part of the national programme, but funded from a separate budget line than that co-funded by the EU.

4.4.3.3. Contribution of cooperation with civil society (the EYV 2011 Alliance)

There is wide consensus on the overall effectiveness of the EYV 2011 Alliance. This clearly emerges from the results of the online surveys. The EYV 2011 Alliance is perceived as contributing to the overall objectives of the EYV 2011 by 84% of the NCBs that answered the online survey, 70% of the volunteers/volunteering organisations, and 90% of the Flagship Project coordinators.

The effectiveness of the EYV 2011 Alliance in developing a policy agenda for volunteering in Europe was highly rated in the survey (94% of positive opinions among NCBs, 66% among volunteers/volunteering organisations, 75% among Flagship Project coordinators), and was demonstrated in the absolute by the production on schedule for the Warsaw conference of P.A.V.E..

Perceptions of the effectiveness leading up to this were positive, with the exception of some occasional problems of internal communication. Some interviews highlighted the existence of a sort of "inner circle" of members with easier and quicker access to information, because their members were from organisations represented in the Steering Group. This appeared to have been a problem especially for the Working Group on Corporate Social Responsibility. The overall feedback was positive, nonetheless.

Views on the effectiveness of the EYV 2011 Alliance in coordinating the civil society and in mobilising and capacity building were very positive as well. Nevertheless, positive answers to the online survey did not reach the high percentages of the two objectives mentioned earlier. Memberships of the EYV 2011 Alliance increased during the Year, reaching 41 members in March 2012 from 28 in October 2010.

The organisations represented by the EYV 2011 Alliance are active in many different areas, but were thought by some not to have been fully representative and some of the organisations which joined relatively late felt a little excluded. Leaving aside activist organisations who feel that associating with a body receiving EU funding is not appropriate or association with the EU could jeopardise the security of their members (e.g. development organisations), some EYV 2011 Alliance members were themselves prepared to concede that the EYV 2011 Alliance may not have been fully representative. They point out, however, that this was not its mandate, but also more related to time pressures than any intention to restrict the outreach.

Opinions on dissemination activities of the EYV 2011 Alliance were positive, as the positive answers to the online survey range from 61% to 80%. The EYV 2011 Alliance website was considered an effective tool for dissemination by the overwhelming majority of the respondents as well. Additional dissemination tools included a Facebook page and a Twitter profile.

These perceptions come from a relatively limited number of stakeholders. Awareness of the EYV 2011 Alliance and its activities outside the group of EU stakeholders, national NCBs and national stakeholder organisations directly involved is not high. NCBs were in general aware of the EYV 2011 Alliance and its activities, but did not work closely with them. In a few cases, however, cooperation between NCBs and the EYV 2011 Alliance was close, and the support given by the EYV 2011 Alliance was appreciated.

4.4.3.4. Contribution of Flagship Projects

Results from the online survey reveal divergent opinions on the effectiveness of the Flagship Projects. While NCBs seem to have a more positive view of their actions and results, EYV 2011 Alliance members and volunteering organisations seem to know relatively little about them (as the relatively high number of “No opinion” answers shows). This result can be partially explained by the consideration that Flagship projects are mainly active at national or even local level, so that NCBs are ‘naturally’ more aware of them than EYV 2011 Alliance members active at European level.

There is a wider consensus on the effectiveness of the Flagship Projects in contributing to the overall objectives of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 and in creating/fostering long term partnerships/networks between civil society organisations. Positive opinions (“Fully agree” and “Agree”) exceed 50% for the first objective (being 56% among NCBs, 51% among EYV 2011 Alliance members and 60% among volunteering organisations), and are about 50% for the second (48% for NCBs and EYV 2011 Alliance members, and 56% for volunteering organisations).

The effectiveness of Flagship Projects in promoting innovation is lower. Only 36% of NCBs expressed positive opinions on that (“Fully agree” and “Agree” answers), while percentages are slightly higher among EYV 2011 Alliance members (41%) and volunteering organisations (49%). Indeed, the innovative aspects of many of these projects were not so evident to some of the stakeholders interviewed.

Both fieldwork and other interviews highlighted the scarce knowledge of the existence of these projects within the EYV 2011 initiatives. NCBs (which had been included in the selection process by the Commission) generally received no further information on the projects. Some, which were proactive or for some other reason, succeeded in working with a Flagship Projects in an integrated

fashion (this is the case of one of the French projects and of a Polish project), but these were exceptions.

Administrative procedures caused delays in signing the contracts and making the advance payments available to the projects' partners. There is evidence that activities had to be re-scheduled in many cases, leading to a very busy second half of 2011. Some seasonal activities (such as events dependent on being able to be outdoors in summer) had to be cancelled and substituted for the same reason. Some dropped their most innovative elements. However it was not possible to evaluate this aspect fully, as the final reports were not available yet at the time of this report. The delay makes it difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of Flagship Projects in disseminating their results, even though dissemination plans and activities were integral part of the projects' selection process. Answers from the online surveys are not particularly positive, but this finding reflects the overall low awareness of these projects. Interviews have shown a slightly different landscape, with many projects organising large closing events in order to increase knowledge about their activities, and creating the basis for continuing the activities.

When it comes to the European dimension, however, it is commonly opined that the Flagship Projects were a missed opportunity. Project coordinators were not involved in the national or European campaigns, and there is the feeling to have been 'left aside', far from the hearth of the European Year of Volunteering. Stronger support from the Commission (for instance leading to the explicit indication of their involvement in the guidelines for the NCBs), systematic involvement in the national campaigns, and the organisation of periodic meetings during the year to foster network building were mentioned as missing elements.

4.4.4. Effectiveness of combination of strands of activities

This section focuses on the sub-question on the extent to which the combination of the four strands of activities, or any combination of two or three strands, contributed to the achievement of EYV 2011, and in particular of objectives 2 and 4.

When considering this question, we looked at:

- The extent to which there is correspondence between the objectives of the EYV 2011 and the operational objectives of the four strands of activities;
- The extent to which the EYV 2011 target groups were reached;
- The effectiveness in achieving the following goals:
 - Raising awareness of the value of volunteering at European level/at national level,
 - Raising awareness of the general public,
 - Influence on the European and national policies or practices in the area of volunteering and citizenship policy,
 - Influence on activities of civil society organisations active in the field of volunteering,

- Contribution to the achievement of the European citizenship policy³⁶.

4.4.4.1. Correspondence between EYV 2011 objectives and operational objectives of the four strands of activities

Interviews highlight a correspondence between the overarching objectives of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 and the operational objectives defined for the four strands of activities. The operational objectives of the EU communication campaign, as well as those of the EYV 2011 Alliance and of the Flagship Projects, appear to be more in line with the objectives 1, 2 and 4, namely working towards and enabling environment, empowering organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of these activities, and raising awareness of the value of volunteering. The objectives of these strands were targeting dissemination of innovative knowledge, results and best practices (EU communication campaigns, EYV 2011 Alliance, Flagship Projects), promoting innovative approaches and building networks of civil society organisations (Flagship Projects), mobilising resources and developing a policy agenda for volunteering in Europe (EYV 2011 Alliance).

The criticisms levelled at the effectiveness of some activities in national contexts concerned the EU communication campaign (and the Tour in particular). This highlights the difficulties in tailoring its structure to the national needs. While the idea of a roadshow across Europe was generally considered as good in principle, there were doubts about both the way it was operationalised and implemented.

Volunteering tends to be strongest in rural areas and small towns, while the activities of the EU communication campaign focused on the capital. Many interviewees felt a bus touring the country would have been more effective, and more efficient, even it had cost more and/or would have liked the Tour to have had European content, i.e. speakers on good practice from other countries or (more) information on organisations and associations offering opportunities to volunteer in other European countries. These were sometimes present, but far from everywhere.

In addition, the European Tour focused on the capital in locations and at times, which generally made it impossible to leverage the existing awareness of and promotional activities around established volunteering activities.

However, while an EU-wide roadshow including not only capitals but also other large cities would have been probably more suitable, the budget available for the Year forced to make a choice. It was decided to focus on the capitals of Member States as they it was felt that this would be the best way of attracting maximum publicity to the event.

4.4.4.2. Reaching the EYV 2011 target group

The definition of target audience of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 includes volunteers, civil society organisations active in the field of volunteering, policy makers, citizens and media. Businesses represent an additional target.

The results of the open survey provide some information on the demographic profiles of the respondents³⁷. The main age group is represented by those in the 20-30 years range (40% of

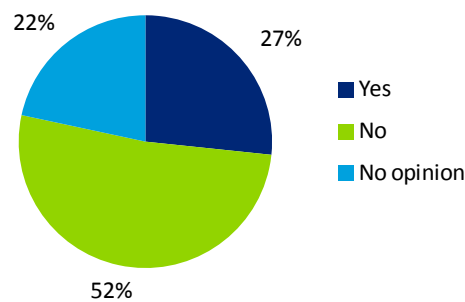
³⁶ Europe for Citizens' main priorities include encouraging citizens to become actively involved in the process of European integration, empowering them to develop a sense of European identity, and enhancing mutual understanding between Europeans.

respondents), followed by the younger (range <20), and the immediately older (30-40), with similar percentages (19% and 15% respectively). Interestingly, when looking at the volunteers only, the distribution is more uniform across the age ranges. Women were the overwhelming majority of respondents. While the respondents to the open survey cannot be considered as a representative sample of the world of volunteering in Europe, the large number of respondents (and the age and gender profiles) suggests that they are a valid proxy.

Only one respondent out of four³⁸ were not associated with volunteering in some way and the survey was conducted in the last six months of the Year. So volunteers and volunteering organisations represented the main target group reached through the website. Yet 25% of the respondents had not heard about the Year before finding the ec.europa/volunteering website while surfing on the Internet. Another 16% found the ec.europa/volunteering website via a link in another website. Only very small percentages arrived on the website because they heard about the Year from other media (such as radio or newspapers). Overall, as shown in the figure below, the open survey showed the general opinion was that a narrow majority (52%) felt not enough information was available about the Year and the related activities despite a large majority having links with the world of volunteering.

Figure 12: Availability of information about the Year

Question: Do you think there has been enough information available about EYV 2011 and its objectives?



Source: Deloitte open survey, July/December 2011

Interviews with NCBs however highlighted the inherent difficulties in launching and managing large awareness campaigns within the limited timeframe and budget availability of the Year. In addition, there was a widespread feeling that in order to have visible results for this type of communication activities, they should extend over and be regularly repeated over a period of years.

Involvement of policy makers was a secondary objective of many national campaigns, that aimed at promoting a new legislative framework or policy debate on volunteering. As such, reaching policy makers was an important achievement in many cases. Some NCBs managed to have policy makers (such as Ministries) to participate as speakers to some of the events (as in Finland, for instance). This of course helped in achieving better media coverage, and to better promote the Year as a whole.

³⁷ More information on the open survey, its purposes and methodology, can be found in section 2.3.2.6

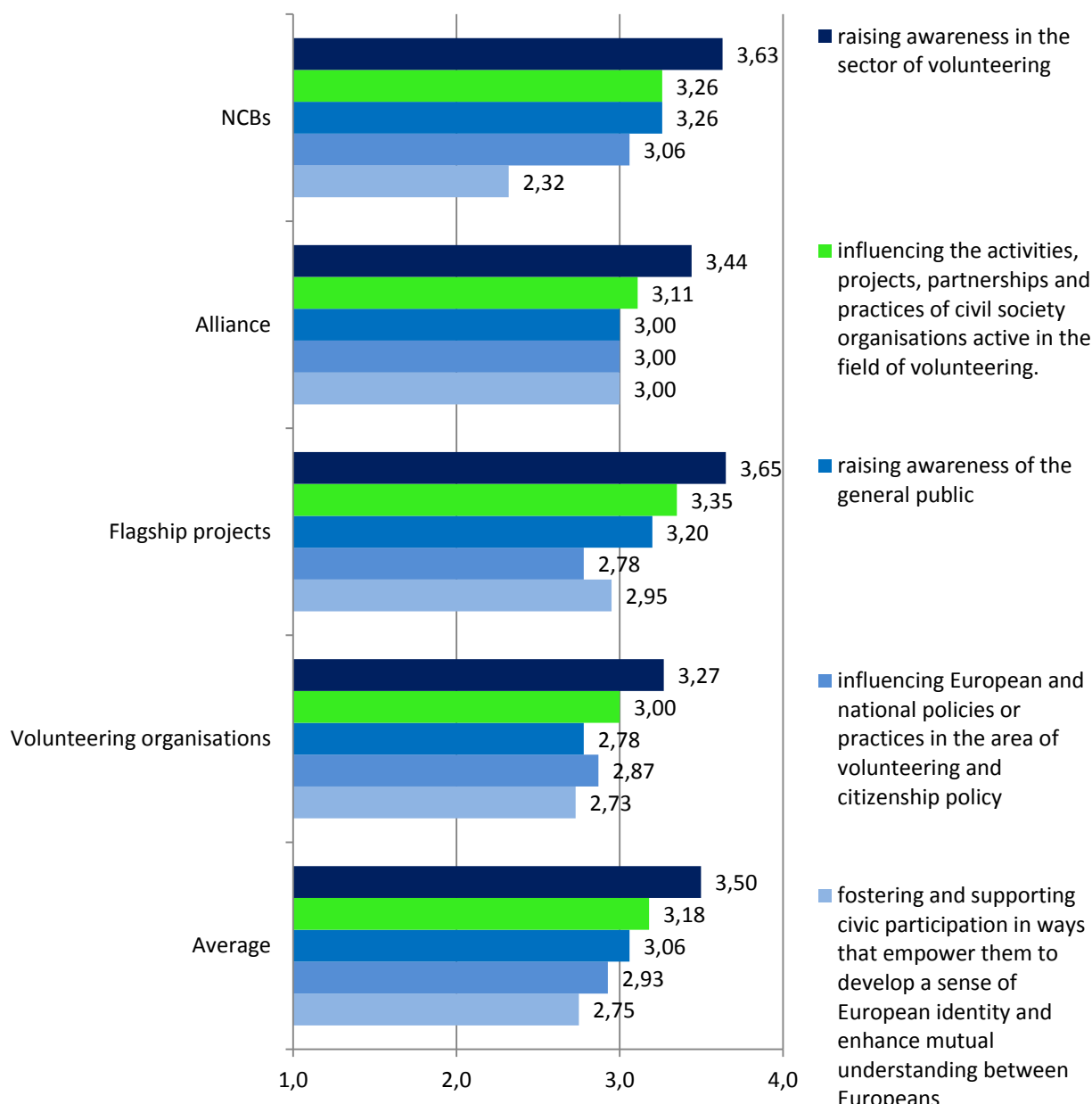
³⁸ 28%

4.4.4.3. Effectiveness in achieving goals

The figures below show the results of the online survey on the effectiveness of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 in achieving goals. Results are shown per type of respondents.

Figure 13: Effectiveness of the Year in achieving goals

Looking at the activities of Year as a whole, please give your opinion on the following statements: EYV 2011 contributed to:



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

There is a broad consensus on the general effectiveness of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 in achieving its goals. The highest levels of appreciation are registered for the objective of raising awareness in the volunteering sector. Consensus ranges from 44 to 65% (“fully agree” answers), with higher peaks among Flagship Project coordinators and lower among volunteering organisations. When taking into consideration all positive answers (“fully agree” and “agree” answers) the

consensus is even more evident, with percentages reaching 100% of respondents in two cases (NCBs and Flagship Project coordinators). This result is consistent with the fact that all Member States organised events for the ‘insiders’, i.e. targeted to volunteers and volunteering organisations, in order to promote exchange of best practices and network building.

When considering effectiveness in reaching awareness of the general public, the opinion of the respondents is less positive, ranging from 19% to 40% of full consensus (“fully agree” answers) to 4% and 7% of disagreement (“fully disagree” answers), among EYV 2011 Alliance members and volunteering organisations respectively. While the EU communication campaign and the national campaigns targeted the general public as well, this target proved more complex to reach, for several reasons (a level of funding which inevitably meant that large-scale campaigns could not be mounted, unless additional funding could be found or free sources leveraged, and low experience of NCBs in managing this type of promotion campaign being among them). This negative perception is more widespread among volunteering organisations and EYV 2011 Alliance members, as they had less direct knowledge of the difficulties of reaching the objective, and high expectations on the activities to be carried out during the Year.

Views on effectiveness of the Year in influencing the activities, projects, partnerships and practices of civil society organisations active in the field of volunteering are in general positive across all categories of respondents (ranging from 24% to 41% of full consensus).

Among NCBs, the good practices developed included the direct involvement of schools in volunteering programmes – or reaching out to schools (see Box), consultation with civil society organisations in drawing up policies and programmes on volunteering, and the use of information society tools (including social media (for both professionals and the wider public), Web 2.0 (including YouTube) and new electronic marketplace and placement/matching websites created.) Further examples are in the section on sustainability.

Targeting young people and schoolchildren: France’s ambassadors

In order to encourage young people to become volunteers, the French NCB worked with France Bénévolat and the French Ministry of Education to develop for the first time a scheme to send ‘ambassadors’ into schools (primarily lycées) to promote volunteering from the start of the 2011/2012 school year, and in particular starting in the third week of October, which was national ‘youth commitment week’. The scheme is continuing, however.

The French government produced a special leaflet for schools, highlighting associations which specialise in using youth volunteers, including those offering opportunities to volunteer in other countries. Ambassadors also worked with ‘teaching’ tools specially developed for the purpose. These incorporated suggested topics, approaches, and lesson plans, including quizzes and games as appropriate. There were different manuals for each of four age groups – 6-11, 12-15, 16-18 and 19-25.

By February 2012, well over 200 trained ambassadors had reached more than 6,000 secondary school students. These are only the numbers officially recorded by France Bénévolat. Associations are free to develop less formal cooperation with local schools without necessarily registering them or using the official tools. However, having the blessing of the Ministry of Education undoubtedly made it easier to convince schools to let associations in. The schemes have also given rise to specific agreements on sending ambassadors into schools between the French Red Cross and both Catholic faith-based schools and vocational training schools specialising in agriculture.

For members of the EYV 2011 Alliance, the good practices included networking and partnership, debate and definition of common platforms with interlocutors with different backgrounds and views

on sensitive issues such as taxation and the legal framework for volunteering, the collaboration with the Task Force, and the adoption of the Policy Agenda on Volunteering in Europe (P.A.V.E.)

Volunteers/volunteering organisations appreciated the network building during the Year, the promotional activities (via the use of information society tools and especially social networks), and the innovative working methods presented at the EU Thematic conferences. Their views on the European Tour were mixed, but it had its fans despite having a number of detractors.

For Flagship Projects coordinators, the good practices developed included network building, communication activities, the use of social networks to improve cooperation between volunteering organisations and the general public – and learning how to run an EU-funded projects, and how that opens doors to becoming involved in cross-border EU-funded projects.

Opinions on the more policy-related objectives (influencing European and national policies or practices in the area of volunteering and citizenship policy, and fostering and supporting civic participation in ways that empower them to develop a sense of European identity and enhance mutual understanding between Europeans) were less positive, especially among EYV 2011 Alliance members and volunteering organisations. This can be explained by pessimistic expectations concerning the emergence of visible results at the European level of the Year and the fact that knowledge of the EU policy documents has not yet filtered down to national level to a sufficient extent. Nonetheless, in the run-up, during and/or in the aftermath of the Year, all the key EU institutions (European Parliament, Council, Commission, European Economic and Social Committee, Committee of the Regions) issued policy documents or took other initiatives, all of which stress the importance of the volunteering sector, and the need for support and coordination of policies in this field. This level of across-the-board activity in association with a European Year appears to be without precedent.

4.5. Efficiency

How efficient were the activities undertaken in the framework of EYV to achieve the expected results of the EYV 2011 at European level/at national level?

4.5.1. Introduction and summary

This section provides answers to the overarching question on how efficient the activities undertaken in the framework of EYV 2011 were to achieve the expected results of the EYV 2011 at European/national level. This main question was broken down in two **sub-questions**. The **first sub-question** considers the efficiency of the single strands of activity, and thus consider the European communication campaign, the national campaigns (and the NCBs), the EYV 2011 Alliance and the Flagship Projects. The **second sub-question** investigates the complementarity across the four strands of activities of the Year, the efficiency gains (if any) obtained by combining them and exploiting the complementarity, and the appropriateness and proportionality of the resources available for the Year.

Final technical reports on implementation and financial statements on costs were not available (this is particularly relevant for the NCBs and the Flagship Projects) at the time of this report. This limited the analysis, which was restricted to the information available from the online surveys, interviews with stakeholders at national and EU level, and desk research. The findings reflect this limitation.

The four strands of activities were considered as complementary or at least non-contradictory in their design according to the online surveys. However, implementation did not fully exploit this complementarity. While interviewees felt the European and the national communication campaigns were better integrated, than the other two strands of activities (the EYV 2011 Alliance and the Flagship Projects), which were carried out almost as stand-alone activities. This is understandable for the EYV 2011 Alliance but less so for the Flagship Projects.

Overall, the activities pertaining to the different strands of activities were managed separately, so that it was not possible to assess whether efficiency gains were achieved by combining two or more strands – though some interviewees did think there would have been benefits from better integration of the Tour and the national programmes.

Resources were in general considered as appropriate and proportionate to the results to achieve, but were complemented by national funding, which often (especially for national campaigns) represented the main source of resources.

Delays in the availability were the main issue related to resources, and posed cash-flow problems to Flagship Projects' participants.

When considering the level of human resources available, some NCBs felt they did not have the competencies to design and run large communication campaigns. In order to support NCBs, a one-day seminar was organised in autumn 2010 to provide them with information on the Tour and activities expected of them, and training on running the national campaigns, and the contractor's team provided support with media activities. The NCBs nevertheless often felt that they lacked the resources to be proactive with the media.

According to the majority of the feedback received (especially from NCBs), implementation of the European communication campaign (and of the Tour in particular) was the most challenging in terms of obtaining efficient results because of the difficulty of attracting the general public. These were compounded in some cases by the compromises which had to be made on cost grounds on the

venue and on the timing in each capital. This was in part dictated by the desire to minimise the mileage covered, and therefore the cost, in delivering the infrastructure, and restricting it to two sets of infrastructure. However NCBs were not convinced that it was necessarily the case that there were not more cost-effective approaches which could also have enabled the Tour to go to other cities. There are examples from within Member States of this having been done at low cost at national level, and there is at least one apparently cost-effective precedent within the Commission. One of the factors adding to the cost of this approach was using the same furnishings everywhere to create a single image. As the cross-border dimension of the Tour was limited, the utility of this was questioned.

NCBs also sometimes felt that the time devoted to finding a venue and in some cases organising the content to an extent they had not envisaged meant they had to take time at the expense of their national programmes.

The creation of the National Coordination Bodies as structures in charge of the implementation of the national communication campaigns and in supporting of parts of the European campaign was the subject of much positive comment. However, many NCBs expressed the view that more guidance and central coordination of activities would have improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the Year. They considered that more (or longer) meetings with the Task Force would have improved coordination of activities among Member States, and favoured the exchange of best practice during the Year.

Opinions on efficiency in the implementation of the EYV 2011 Alliance were positive. The structure set-up and the tools used were appropriate for the objectives to achieve, and the resources adequate.

The main issue encountered in implementing the Flagship Projects was the delay in signing the contracts and in receiving the related payment. This posed cash flow problems for many organisations participating. However, the call for the Flagship initiatives was considered as a great opportunity to carry out projects that would not have taken place otherwise, or not on the same scale.

4.5.2. Efficiency of single strands of activities

This sub-section answers the question on how efficient individual strands of activities were to achieve the expected results of the EYV 2011 at European level/at national level.

When tackling this issue, we looked at whether:

- The communication campaign contributed to the achievement of the objectives of the EYV 2011;
- The administrative and operational procedures implemented (including the establishment of National Coordination Bodies (NCBs) as well as the award of operating grants to the NCBs) contributed to the achievement of the objectives of the EYV 2011;
- The action grant to the EYV 2011 Alliance contributed to the achievement of the objectives of the EYV 2011;
- The call for proposals for Flagship initiatives contributed to the achievement of the objectives of the EYV 2011.

More detailed information on the single strands of activity can be found in the thematic case studies included in Annex to this report.

4.5.2.1. Contribution of the European Communication campaign

As already mentioned, the existence of a central coordination and management structure responsible for the Year was widely praised. Nevertheless, there was a widespread opinion that more central event management and IT management would have been beneficial for the Year, as would a larger Task Force with the resources to provide more detailed guidance still on expectations in terms of communication. In order to achieve a better coordination with the Task Force, many interviewees (especially NCBs) would have liked more meetings to better phase and coordinate activities. Several comments were made on the administrative burden embedded in the organisation of the Tour, which detracted much energy from the organisation of other events.

Issues in cooperating with the contractor responsible for the European Communication campaign and the Tour arose in many cases. The finalisation of the Tour calendar was a complex process, which left many Member States dissatisfied. NCBs understood the intricacy of finalising the schedule, and the related logistics issues, such as transporting the tent and the rest of the equipment cost-effectively, and the large territory to be covered in a short time. They nevertheless considered that the final output was not appropriate. Inappropriate seasons and locations (in order to accommodate the logistics requirements) were the most common criticisms. Most of all, however, NCBs felt that they were not sufficiently involved in the process at an early enough stage, leading to misunderstandings with the contractor.

Positive feedback was received on the flexibility of the contractor's representatives during the stops, and on the positive cooperation with them.

The work of collecting press clippings on the Tour was carried out by the contractor. However, many NCBs had to complement it and provide additional press clippings both on the Tour, and to obtain a view of the media coverage throughout the Year. Even so, it was difficult to capture the true scope because EYV 2011 was mentioned in so many local papers and on Internet sites, including those of associations which are accessed direct without going through the media.

The ec.europa/volunteering website was sought by some NCBs, in order not to have to mobilise resources to create a national website. The website as implemented, however, was not widely used by national stakeholders, and national campaigns generally did create their own websites – though at different levels of sophistication. They then mainly favoured these as they provided more content in national languages. Many national campaigns already had plans to develop a national website, while others either decided to or upgraded their own sites as it became evident to them that the official one was not effective in disseminating national news at European level. This led to duplication of efforts, or inconsistency in the level of information about different Member States on the central portal, and therefore sub-optimal use of resources, and did not contribute to overall efficiency.

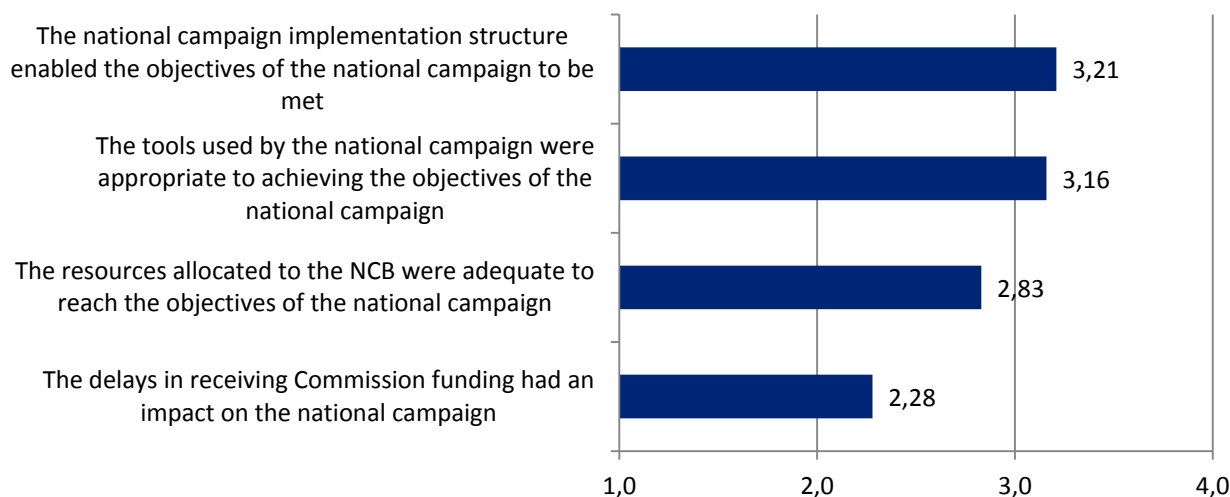
As the contribution of Relay Reporters was not felt to have been effective on the whole, this had follow-on implications for efficiency. Awareness of the Relay Reporters was quite low, so that the resources allocated to them (in both time and money) did not contribute widely to the visibility of the Year. The implementation system put in place did not integrate the Flagship Projects in the activities implemented for the European communication campaign. Sometimes, project coordinators participated in the Tour stop in their country, but not much more beyond that unless their organisation was involved for other reasons. Interviewees called for stronger central management

and coordination, as they considered it would have improved dissemination of those projects, and given more visibility to the projects and the campaign.

4.5.2.2. Contribution of procedures implemented for NCBs

Figure 14: Efficiency in implementing national communication campaigns

Please give your opinion on the following statements:



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

The creation of the National Coordination Bodies as structures in charge of the implementation of the national communication campaigns and to supporting the European campaign was viewed positively, as the results from the online survey show. As mentioned previously, the resources allocated were considered as adequate (possibly because often complemented by national resources), as were the tools used by the national campaigns.

Among the comments from NCBs, the administrative burden related to the grant and the amount of resources mobilised by the Tour were the most common. A longer planning process (to be started earlier) and better central management and coordination of activities were also seen as elements that could have improved overall efficiency and effectiveness. It was also felt that more central management and better coordination would have improved the European element of the Year, which was largely missing or not very evident on many occasions. In particular, it was thought it would have been beneficial for the exchange and dissemination of best practices at European level, which was recognised as lacking during the Year.

Resource availability was judged as adequate, but in many cases EU funding was not the most important source of financial resources. Nonetheless, delays in receiving funds and the rigidity of EU rules were criticised. The reasons for rigidity in EU funding are well known and fully understood by NCBs (many of which are public administrations). Nevertheless, they considered that more flexibility in re-allocating budget on items different from those originally planned would have been beneficial.

The set-up of National Coordination Bodies in each Member States was a key element of the design of the European Year of Volunteering 2011. The overwhelming majority were in national Ministries with competencies for volunteering (usually, Ministries of Labour, Youth, Social policies, Education). The main difficulties were encountered in the direct management of the national communication campaigns. A number of NCBs commented on the problems in this respect, as they are not used to

carrying out these activities directly. On the contrary, they tend to contract out nationwide communication campaigns to specialised companies. The budgets available did not allow for this solution, so that, even when the implementation role was given to volunteering organisations, who themselves did not necessarily have this experience, the involvement of the administration was wider than usual. The choice of NCB was dictated by the topic, but the communication dimension may not have been fully understood, when choosing on whom within the entity concerned responsibility for implementation of the Year should fall, and/or how that entity's communication and event management expertise should be involved.

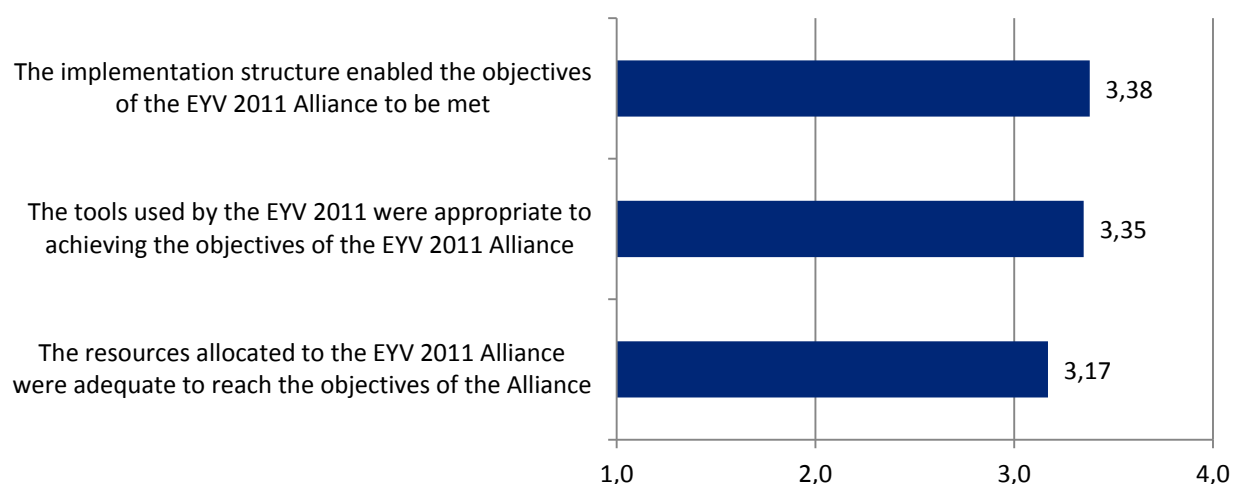
As many of the NCBs are not involved in the European Year of Active Ageing in 2012, it was perceived as a missed opportunity, as the new national bodies will have to start from scratch and not from the lessons learned from 2011.

NCBs also felt that they did not include the other strands of activities (especially the Flagship Projects) in the activities, mainly because of low awareness of their activities, and lack of time. Retrospectively, the scarce involvement was perceived as a missed opportunity.

4.5.2.3. Contribution of cooperation with civil society (the EYV 2011 Alliance)

Figure 15: Efficiency in implementing the cooperation with civil society

Please give your opinion on the following statements:



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

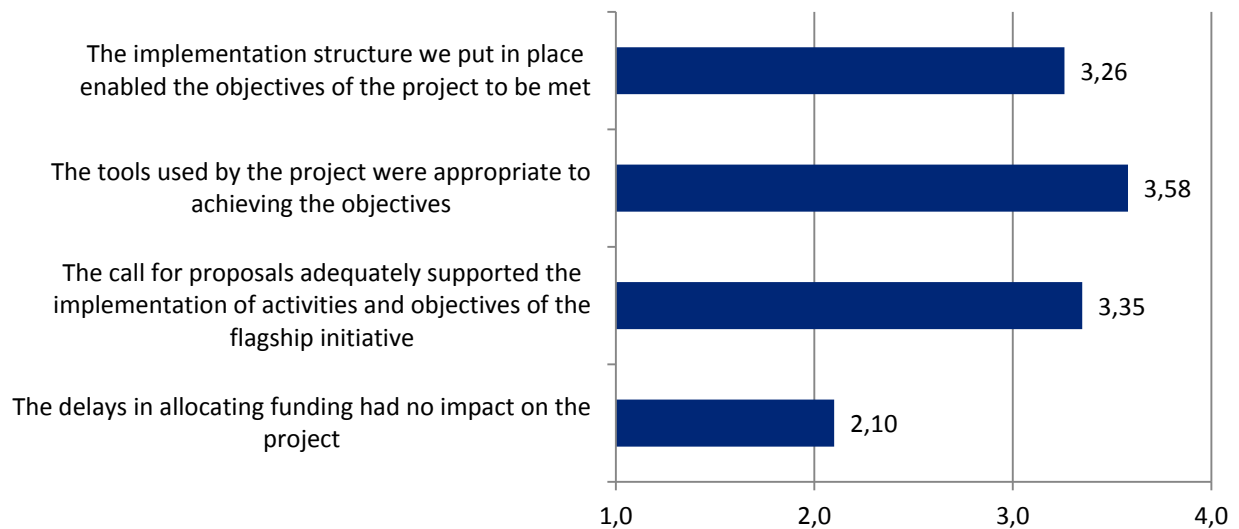
Results from the online survey on the efficiency of the EYV 2011 Alliance structure and resources substantially mirror those for the other strands of activities. Views of the respondents are very positive on the implementation structure put in place and on the tools used to reach the objectives. The resources allocated were also considered as appropriate to reach the objectives of the EYV 2011 Alliance.

The EYV 2011 Alliance secretariat was included in the management structure of the Year. As such, representatives from the secretariat took part in the periodic management calls between the Task Force and the contractor in charge of the EU communication campaign. In addition, the EYV 2011 Alliance contributed to the organisation of the EU Thematic Conferences.

4.5.2.4. Contribution of Flagship Projects

Figure 16: Efficiency in implementing the Flagship Projects

Please give your opinion on the following statements:



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

Opinions on the efficiency and adequacy of the call for Flagship Projects and the implementation structure required were quite positive. Flagship Project coordinators generally agreed on the importance of the opportunity of the call for carrying out projects that would not have taken place otherwise, or not on the same scale.

The fact that for a significant number of organisations, they were not participating in a European project for the first time probably influenced this result, as they had clear view of the administrative process related to the submission of the project proposal, the selection and award process, the implementation and reporting requirements. Many project coordinators interviewed expressed the view that a longer period for applying and for implementing the projects would have been beneficial. The delay in payments made their lives particularly difficult.

The delay in signing the contract and in receiving the advance payment was the main implementation problem encountered (as explained better in the thematic case study). Organisations had to face initial expenses (in some cases until the autumn) with their own budgets, and this posed cash flow problems for many of them, especially the smaller ones.

In order to cope with this problem, projects partially rescheduled their activities and concentrated many of them in the second part of the year, but others had to be cancelled or adapted/replaced. Nevertheless, this issue affected organisations' budgets and cash flow. This had consequences also on the use of human resources. Alternative resources had to be found for the personnel that had been budgeted to work on the Flagship Projects, and they could not work full time on those from the beginning as initially planned.

4.5.3. Efficiency of combination of strands of activities

How efficient were the strands of activities in achieving the objectives of EYV 2011 when taken in combination, either as a whole or two or three strands taken together, and would the use of a single strand of other activities, policy instruments or mechanisms, individually or in some combinations with these strands have been more efficient in achieving the objectives?

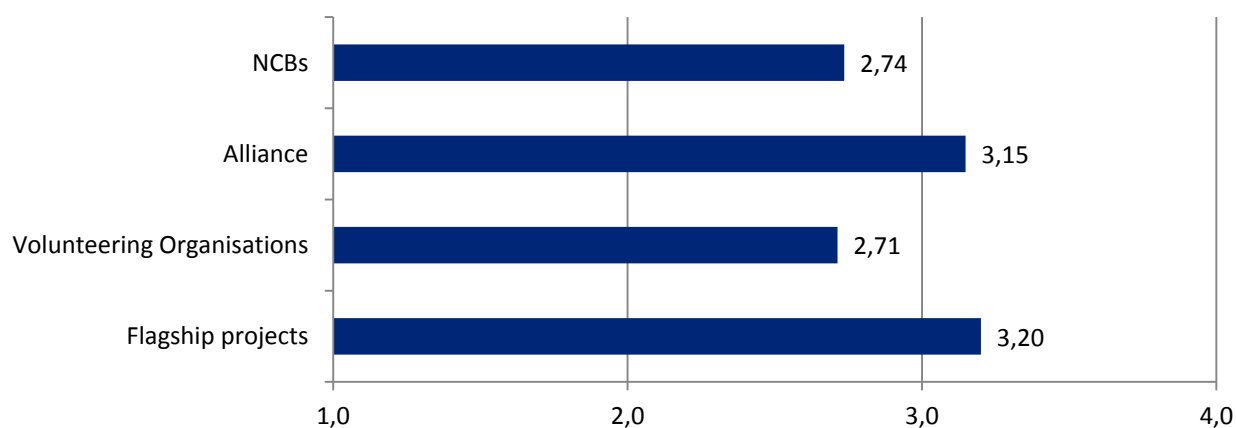
When considering this question, we looked at whether:

- The four strands of activities undertaken were complementary and/or non-contradictory with each other;
- The four strands in combination contributed more efficiently to the achievement of the expected results than would have the strands in isolation or the use of other strands individually or in combination;
- The resources for the EYV 2011 have been appropriate and proportional to what the EYV was set out to achieve.

4.5.3.1. Complementarity/non-contradiction of the four strands of activities

Figure 17: Complementarity/non-contradiction of the four strands of activities

The EYV2011 activities – European communication campaign, national campaign, flagship projects, work of the Alliance – were complementary/not in conflict.



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

As the results from the online survey show, the four strands of activities of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 were considered as complementary or at least not contradictory by a large part of respondents. Volunteers and volunteering organisations are the more critical on this. This result may be due to their relative degree of involvement in the planning and management of the different activities.

Respondents have commented however that while the complementarity of the four strands of activities was evident in the design of the Year, the implementation showed some limitations.

From interviews it emerged that integration between the EU communication campaign and the national campaigns was more evident and easier to achieve. NCBs had a direct and prominent role in both, so that they were in the position to tailor the focus and organisation of the Tour to the national needs. However, the requirements imposed on the Tour stops in terms of location and duration especially were felt to have prevented the achievement of full efficiency, as discussed above.

Some NCBs felt that alternative venues were in fact available (for free or at a lower cost), often in locations that they considered more appropriate to reach the target audience. The logistics

requirements imposed made it possible to choose these venues. The direct link with the Year and the European dimension was not clear to participants (especially those from small organisations).

Flagship Projects were not well known by the other strands of activities, so that possible complementarities could not be exploited during the Year. They were not integrated in the national communication campaigns (with few exceptions); nor were they promoted within the European communication campaign. The project coordinators were sometimes present at the Tour stops, but this was generally the only interface.

Complementarity with the policy initiatives at EU level (including the work carried out by the EYV 2011 EYV 2011 Alliance) was less evident, especially in terms of communication. The activity of the EYV 2011 Alliance was perceived as crucial for policy development at European level by many interviewees (especially from Member States), but not so relevant for national or local activities. Direct cooperation between the EYV 2011 Alliance and NCBs was scarce, apart from few exceptions.

The European element was perceived as missing from each of the strands (apart from the EYV 2011 Alliance), and possible complementarities and synergies among the strands and among initiatives in Member States not exploited. This is especially true for the Tour stops. While it was always evident that the events were supported by the European Union, they were often perceived as being strictly linked to the national contexts. The exchange of practice at European level was perceived by interviewees and survey respondents as very low. There was a wish for stronger coordination and central event management at European level.

4.5.3.2. Efficiency of combined vs. individual strands of activities

While this item pertained to the evaluation of the efficiency of the European Year of Volunteering 2011, it has important implications for sustainability and is therefore placed there.

Complementarities among the four strands of activities were more evident on paper than in reality, so that achieving cost benefits from combining the strands was not possible in many cases. The four strands of activities were managed separately, so that it is not certain that duplication of activity and related costs were avoided.

4.5.3.3. Appropriateness and proportionality of resources available

The objectives of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 were ambitious, and many interviewees felt that their achievement would require coordinated action over a period of years. Resources were considered inadequate for reaching the goal of raising awareness of the value of volunteering, which would have needed larger awareness and communication campaigns, with notably higher budgets.

However, considering the current economic climate and the scale of budgets for European Years 2012 and 2013, the funding available for the European Year of Volunteering was considered as adequate. During interviews NCBs mentioned that, in order to achieve the ambitious objectives of the Year with the level of funding available, notable efforts were made to reach favourable agreement on the use of locations and for communication initiatives (especially for broadcasts on public TV where these are open to this). However, when the operational objectives of each strand of activities are considered, there is a consensus that the resources received were appropriate.

The amount of the grants received varies among Member States according to their size and the size of their economy as defined in advance of the Year. The level of co-funding is relatively similar in most cases, i.e. close to the obligatory minimum of 20%. Exceptions included Austria, the Belgian German-speaking community, Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK, where the proportion of eligible costs covered by the Commission grant ranges from 15% to almost 50%.

However, not all expenditure is included in the figures relating to the official grants. For example, in Italy, an additional €360,000 came from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs communication budget in Italy. This was managed separately. There was a 'European label' effect on governments and on third parties, which was significant in a number of countries. The 'European label' effect is important and engenders a sense of recognition, even in countries where public opinion is not particularly enamoured of the EU.

The grants given to the Flagship Projects ranged from about €8,500 to €120,000, depending on the characteristics of the projects.

Results from the online survey show a consensus on the appropriateness and proportionality of the resources received.

When considering the level of human resources available, many NCBs felt they did not have the competencies to design and run large communication campaigns. They had to learn and acquire relevant skills in the process, and this may have reduced efficiency and effectiveness of the communication campaigns. In addition, they commented (together with other stakeholders) on the need for more guidance and central event management (including IT aspects) from the Task Force. This would have helped integration of strands and made the website more useful, and could have improved local-language content. Support to the NCBs was provided in advance of the Year, when a one-day seminar was held to provide them with information on the involvement expected from them and training on running communication campaigns. This fell short of what some NCBs felt would have been needed. More training and more/longer coordination meetings might have improved efficiency according to the stakeholders interviewed.

4.6. Sustainability

To what extent has EYV 2011 been successful in establishing sustainable good practices and initiatives in the field of volunteering?

4.6.1. Introduction and summary

This section on sustainability is structured around the judgement criteria of the analytical framework. Together these are designed to assess the legacy of EYV 2011 in terms of both activities and structures. It looks at the extent to which good practice developed in 2011 is becoming embedded on a long-term basis, and whether the learning from the Year has spread outwards. The two aspects of this at which we looked are whether activities and results were or are being disseminated beyond the confines of the activities or structures within which they were developed and whether future European Year will be able to build on the results.

There is a consensus that EYV 2011 left a legacy in the continuation of activities and structures which were put in place, and in the adoption of good practice which will reap benefits for institutions and organisations in the years to come. The emphasis is very much on the years to come. Some of the benefits, such as potential increases in the number of volunteers, will not be evident for several years. There are areas where the legacy is immediately apparent, but that could be the tip of the iceberg. As one interviewee put it: "EYV 2011 was a slow burner: it was the end of the beginning." Differences of opinion on whether there is a legacy are generally only a matter of degree, though there is differentiation between the different strands.

There is already a long list of activities of many types which have proven sustainable, and there are already changes in the enabling environment, or moves to change that environment, which can be attributed to groundwork done in the year. It is also expected that the lessons learned during the Year will be applied in future Years. The first real test of this will come in the Year of the Citizen in 2013.

The legacy is felt to have been greater for the sector than at institutional level, though the differences are marginal. Some of the doubts about the institutional legacy come from concerns that insufficient emphasis was put on shared learning during the year or in the immediate aftermath; the conferences made a contribution to this, but it was felt that there was more that could have been done.

Others relate to the concern of the voluntary sector, and indeed of NCBs, that the EYV 2011 Alliance's work in producing the P.A.V.E. document may not realise the full potential it has for supporting changes in the enabling environment and the quality of volunteering, in particular if there is no contact point on volunteering within the European Commission. P.A.V.E. is, on the other hand, already being used at national level by volunteer organisations, including NCBs who were from the volunteer sector. In some areas its work continues.

Many NCBs hope to see follow-up at Commission level of the achievements of the Year in terms of contributions to policy included the Commission Communications, two Council Decisions, an Opinion from the European Economic and Social Committee and initiatives from the European Parliament. NCBs have formally requested continuing attention to volunteering in the form of a contact point with the Commission. The same point was made during interviews with NCBs and the volunteer sector, both of whom stress the societal value of volunteering

By strand, the European Tour and the Flagship Projects are the elements felt to have succeeded less well in leading to sustainable results. In the case of the Flagship Projects, individual projects have

clearly produced viable long-term projects, but there was no shared learning while they were under way and none planned ex post at the time of writing this report – which Flagship Coordinators and NCBs interviewed would have wished for. The final reports were not available as this report was written, so there is therefore no means of assessing, as pointed out in the thematic case study, whether the objective of fostering innovation was realised. On the other hand, it is already clear from interviews that the objective of network-building has been met.

The main legacy has been in the creation of networks followed by heightened awareness, both within the sector of its diversity and the potential for networking more widely. There have not been the same results in terms of good practice in volunteer management or quality. This is, however, relative, since the overall picture is positive.

4.6.2. Sustainability of activities and good practices

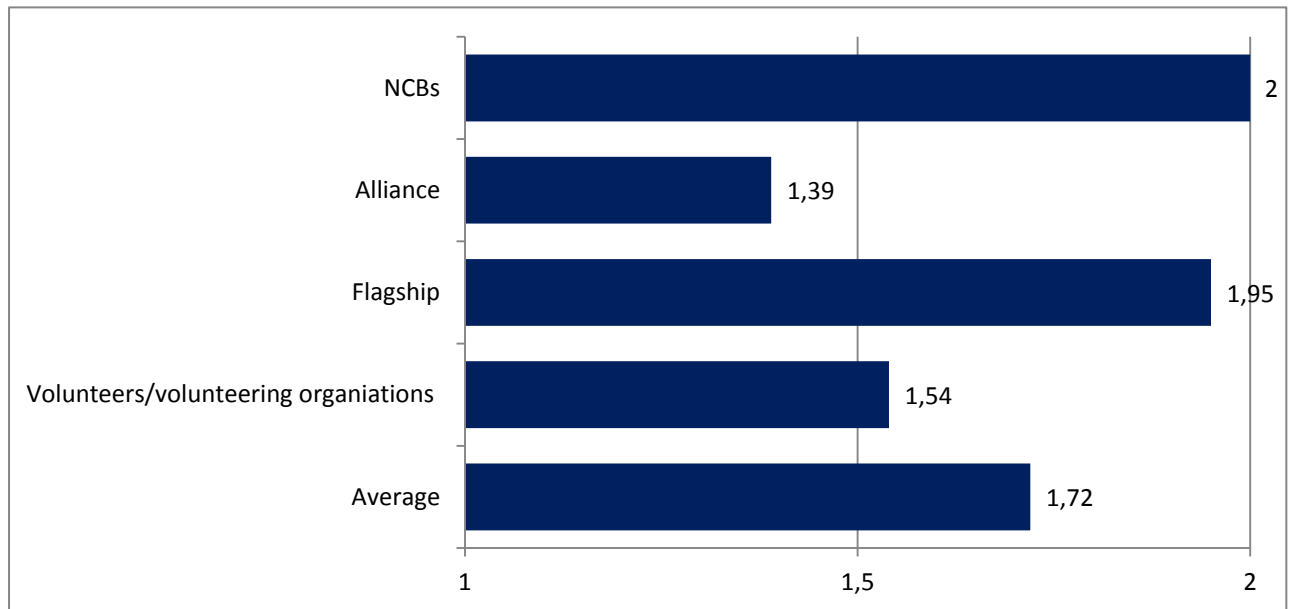
In considering this question, we looked at whether:

- EYV 2011 activities have continued after 2011 even without EU funding.
- Good practice developed during EYV 2011 is being applied by actors in the field after 2011.
- The activities and results of the EYV 2011 have been properly disseminated to the target groups of the EYV 2011.
- Future European Years build on the results and lessons learnt during the EYV 2011.

Taking first a ‘helicopter’ view of whether EYV 2011 had an influence on the world of volunteering, NCB respondents to the surveys have no doubts, and Flagship Project coordinators have few. The volunteering organisations/volunteers are more circumspect, but nevertheless 53% answered ‘Yes’ to this question in the online survey. The EYV 2011 Alliance respondents were overall negative (61%) about the influence on the sector/world of volunteering in their country in line with the pattern across the survey as a whole of a more critical view from the EYV 2011 Alliance.

Figure 18: Influence of EYV 2011 overall

Question: Would you say that overall EYV 2011 influenced the actions in the field/the world of volunteering in your country?



Note: as the answers to this question are based on Yes/No responses, the maximum score is 2 (and the minimum 1), whereas other graphics are on a scale of 1 to 4.

Source: Deloitte Online Surveys, March/April 2012

As noted elsewhere, more than one quarter of the EYV 2011 Alliance responses came from Belgium and in practice from EU offices of pan-European organisations. These respondents are in our experience more focused on policy than activities at national level (since that is their role), and consequently we believe that this is likely to have influenced the answers. Indeed, a more than one-third of respondents skipped the question, indicating that they did not feel equipped to answer.

This is also reflected in some of the qualitative comments. The range of the qualitative comments goes from those who say that there was no legacy at national level, for which they put the blame on the lack of commitment on the part of their government, to those who feel that the influence was considerable. These responses should, therefore, be treated with caution, the more so in that they are at odds with what we largely found in interviews. In interviews, the view was generally that there had been some influence, but it was difficult to measure – as one survey respondent also pointed out. Moreover, there are certainly countries where there is clear evidence of a strong and continuing influence on the world of volunteering. This includes, but is not restricted to, a number of countries in Eastern Europe.

The positive assessment was, however, sometimes tempered by the uncertainty about whether the Commission will make volunteering a policy preoccupation on an ongoing basis given that there will be no contact point and there is as yet no mainstreaming of volunteering. It is recognised that several key documents were agreed during the Year which have the potential to underpin policy formulation and/or mainstreaming going forward, but there are fears that the potential will not be realised. In addition to P.A.V.E., these are two sets of Council Conclusions, a Commission

Communication, a European Economic and Social Committee Opinion and a European Parliament Report and Resolution.

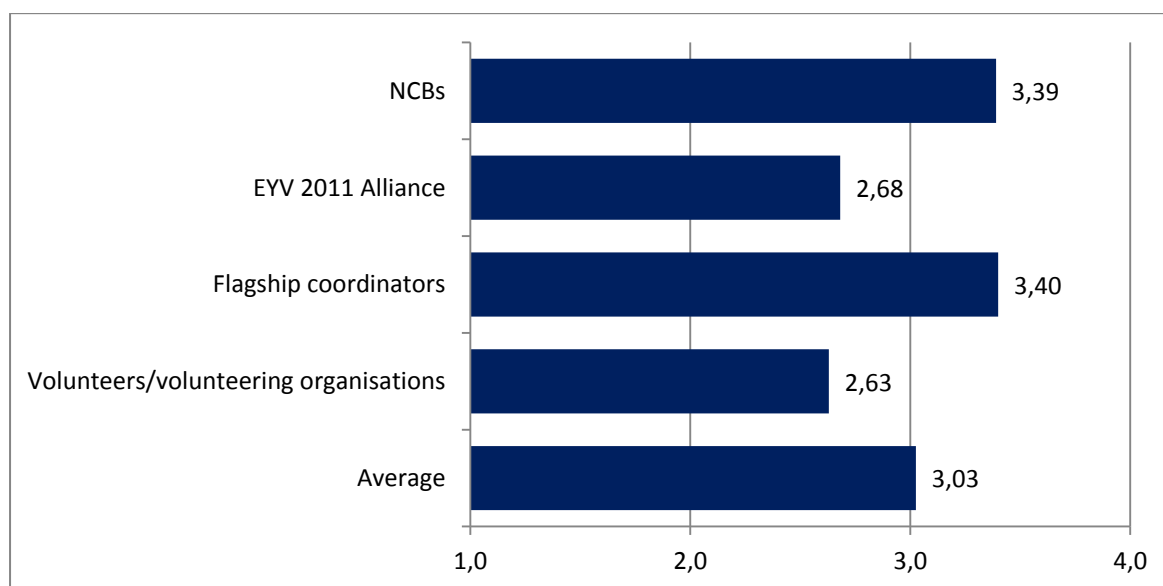
Sustainability of activities

Activities have continued

There is overwhelming backing in the survey from NCBs that activities supported by EVY 2011 will prove to be sustainable, i.e. there are activities supported by EYV 2011 which will continue without EU funding. Ninety-five per cent agreed at least in part, with almost two-fifths in full agreement. No one among the NCB respondents disagreed even partially with this. The views of respondents in the other groups were less outright positive, but nevertheless 60% of the EYV 2011 Alliance respondents and nearly two-thirds (65%) of those in volunteering/voluntary sector group also agreed with this. There was no strong disagreement in any group³⁹.

Figure 19: Activities supported by EYV 2011 will continue

Question: Please give your opinion on the following statement: Overall, there are activities supported by EYV2011 which will continue after 2011 without EU funding



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

The findings of the survey are fully in line with the findings from interviews. If anything, they understate the view of the voluntary sector/volunteers, particularly if the networking effect is included in the definition of activities which will continue. Even without taking the networking effect

³⁹ The views of the Flagship Coordinators are reproduced for the record. Even though there was a separate question on the likelihood of their projects continuing, the results, the comments on the survey and the fact that in interviews few showed any knowledge of other EYV 2011 activities suggest that these responses relate primarily to the Flagship Projects not to all activities.

into account, there is a long list of activities held for the first time in 2011 because of EYV 2011, which will continue.

This includes some websites, both at government and organisation level (Belgium, Netherlands, and Romania), a significant number of award schemes or recognition events (including Hungary, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Romania) and a number of other events and initiatives.

These range from replicas of the Tour on a smaller and more local scale (Malta) to a volunteer day (Denmark – see Box), from the Defies Mecenova, a week-long corporate social responsibility initiative (France) (see Box) to media partnerships with the free press (Netherlands), from the use of social media for professionals (a LinkedIn forum for professionals) to Facebook pages for the general public (Austria – check), from active citizenship events for young people - Laboratori della Cittadinanza Partecipata (Italy) to a service learning network (pan-European), from an example from Estonia (Box) of how a programme tapping into corporates will continue to an agreement with the Luxembourg post office to feature the flame image associated with volunteering in that country as part of the postmark in the first two weeks of December each year for ten years.

Raising awareness: Denmark's Volunteer Day

Volunteer days already existing in some Member States, such as 'Make a Difference Day' in the UK or Freiwilligentag in Austria (which greatly expanded its scope in 2011 thanks to the catalyst of EYV 2011, but in Denmark, EYV 2011 was the opportunity to launch a volunteering day for the first time.

Denmark's first Volunteer Day (Frivillig Fredag) was held on September 23, 2011. Organisations opened their doors for volunteers to try different activities. It was preceded by workshops, lectures and debates. The principle was embedded in the national citizenship strategy adopted at the end of 2010 and the Ministry of Social Affairs drew up a concept paper in January 2011.

It had its own logo and website (<http://www.frivilligfredag.dk/>). In the period between June 15 and October 10, 2011, the website had 16,683 visitors. More than 350 sites had linked to the Volunteer Friday site. A Google Maps insert on the home page flagged all the locations where there were activities, of which there were 273 activities in more than 60 areas.

The day was coordinated by local associations, voluntary sector organisation, a large corporate, Social Innovation House (a brokerage for matching identifying CSR volunteering opportunities) and a PR firm. The national CSR awards were held on the same day.

The National Council for Volunteering carried out a satisfaction survey among organisers which showed that 87% were satisfied or very satisfied with how their activities had gone. Sixty-eight per cent were satisfied with the number of participants in activities, and nearly 60% believed that they have found new potential volunteers as a result. Seventy per cent of the activities had a visit from local media. There were 175 articles in local media as well as some national press coverage. Eighty-four per cent said they would participate again in 2012.

Denmark will hold a Volunteer Day on the last Friday in September every year in future. It will be coordinated by the National Council for Volunteering.

A full report of the 2011 Volunteer Day can be found at http://www.frivilligfredag.dk/sites/default/files/frivillig_fredag_opsamling_web_.pdf

Estonia: Volunteering programme for business and public sector

One of the trends in corporate volunteering is to move away from, or at least complement, programmes in which employees volunteer to help in what might be called conventional volunteering roles doing relatively unskilled tasks to programmes which make use of the professional qualifications of the volunteers. One such programme developed as a pilot in Estonia in 2011 and which has proved sustainable involves both business and the public sector.

In the pilot, the idea was to find professional volunteers to 10 non-governmental organisations from five companies and five ministries. The programme was launched in autumn 2011 and aimed to increase the capability of the NGOs, and to increase the awareness of employees about volunteering and the potential benefit from volunteering to the company.

Ten pairs were formed of 20 participating organisations. Within the programme, 28 volunteers from companies and ministries shared their professional skills and knowledge with the NGOs. The volunteers committed an estimated 160-226 hours of volunteer work.

An evaluation of the programme carried out about two months after the programme took place found the programme 'valuable and encouraging'. Although it was the first time such initiative was launched in Estonia, the general feedback was positive: training, joint events and also broader opportunities for co-operation with a partner from another sector were all considered important.

The follow-up programme has been coordinated by NENO (Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organizations) in a slightly different form since February 2012. The follow-up programme is funded by the Estonian Ministry of the Interior, the national co-ordinating body of EYV2011.

An example of a corporate volunteering which couples giving time for 'conventional' volunteering activity and providing business skills which took off for the first time in connection with EYV 2011 and which is continuing is the French Défis Mécénova scheme. In 2011, 6,000 employees of 30 companies gave time and skills to 150 associations. The activities during the week included a speed dating session to match corporates and NGOs in and around the southern French city of Nice.

A number of platforms created for EYV 2011 have proved sustainable, both at institutional level (co-operation between the three NCBs in Belgium) and at stakeholder level (cross-sectoral working groups in Romania). New relationships, which should prove lasting, have been forged with Members of the European Parliament (Belgium) and national parliaments (Finland, Sweden).

Several Flagship Projects have proved sustainable, e.g. the European e-volunteering competition (spearheaded from Poland), youth networks created as part of the Faces for Active Citizenship programme (Denmark), corporate volunteering programmes (Spain), the Give us Time campaign (Finland).

These are tangible benefits as of 2012, but interviewees also stressed the long-term nature of any benefit and that they are intangible at this point.

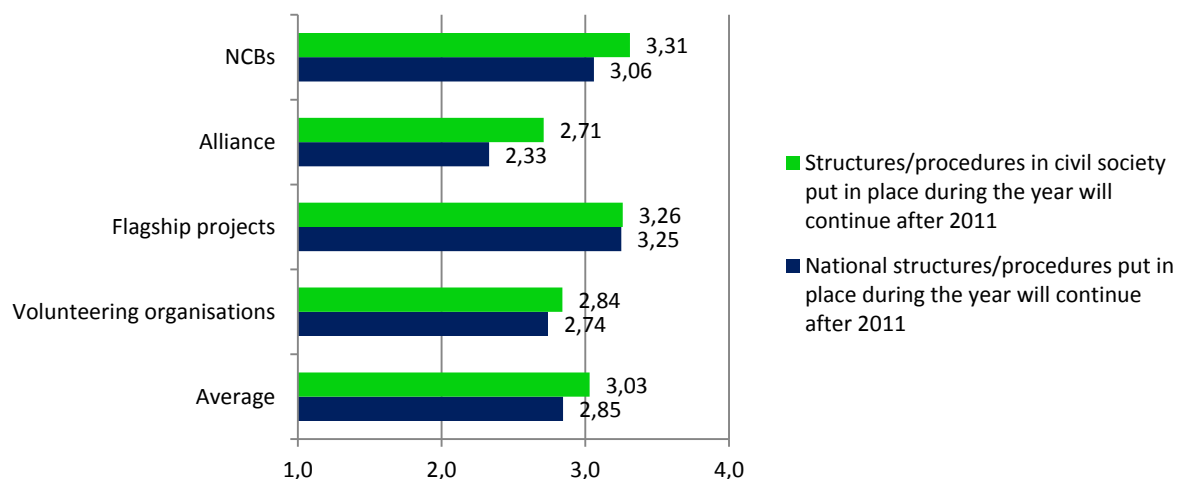
"The benefit of the year is mostly that the personal meetings and networks, the competence building produced at seminars and the methods used will live on in the minds and actions of people" – NCB survey respondent

It would be wrong, they stress, to try to measure the success of EYV 2011 in increases in the number of volunteers, for example, because the gestation period for acquiring volunteers is long. It may be five years before it is possible to form a real view.

Structures have proven sustainable

When asked to differentiate between the likelihood that national and civil society structures put in place for EYV 2011 would continue, survey respondents in every category plumped for civil society structures being more likely to continue, but only by a narrow margin, and against the background of a relatively high expectation that both will continue.

Figure 20: Likelihood of EYV 2011 structures remaining in place



Source: Deloitte Online Surveys, March/April 2012

This question did not address the sustainability of structures at European level. Concern that there might not be a focal point in future was formally expressed by NCBs in their Warsaw Declaration and came through clearly in interviews with them and with the volunteer sector, who felt that it was a signal that the societal value and importance of volunteering had not been properly grasped within the Commission.

While a stronger European Union role in policy-making for volunteering was not always sought (especially in Scandinavian countries), a central coordination point to gather and disseminate information from the different Directorates-General with related programmes was regarded as a minimum.

The foundations of the legacy

When asked about the type of success which will ensure that activities will continue after EYV 2011, the most cited by NCBs by far was collaboration and networking. This finding is based on clustering answers often expressed in different wording into broad categories. Collaboration and networking were mentioned almost as often as all other factors combined and more than three times as often as any other factor. Generally, this collaboration and networking is between the institutions and the organisations, but it also includes mentions of collaboration among the organisations themselves and collaboration across government. Answers to other questions also cite cooperation with companies as being an important legacy of EYV 2011.

The next most important benefit cited in the NCB survey comments was awareness, both directly among the general public and directly thanks to increased attention from the media. The answers to this question appear to understate the importance of awareness, however. In answer to the question about the influence of EYV 2011 on volunteering in their country, the majority of the

associated comments relate to increased awareness. Overall, most interviewees also felt that there is greater awareness as the result of the Year, although they could not quantify it.

Many interviewees in all categories were disappointed that they had not been able to obtain greater media awareness, even though it was less difficult in EYV 2011 than in other years to garner media attention for volunteering. Nevertheless, many felt media awareness had risen, and one NCB felt that greater media awareness had been the single greatest benefit of EYV 2011. Countries which used the ambassador system, as this one NCB did, appear to have found it easier as a general rule to obtain media coverage. Countries which managed to involve their royal family, the First Lady or a presidential candidate had a comparative advantage.

Several NCBs also mentioned developments in the legal environment or more attention from politicians as beneficial spin-offs of the Year. This overlaps with awareness since it is often the result of raised awareness among politicians, and can also generate awareness.

The awareness-raising during EYV 2011 has helped lay the groundwork for Ireland's first national strategy on volunteering. EYV 2011 was instrumental in Latvia in the fact that Guidelines of National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policies for 2012 – 2018 were drawn up and approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in the end of 2011. The Guidelines establish concrete measures to promote public awareness and knowledge on volunteering as a form of civil solidarity and integration. Other countries with new or emerging legislation or strategies include Portugal and Slovenia.

As such, the empowerment of organisations was only mentioned once in the NCB survey, but there is clearly an overlap with the enabling legal environment. Other success factors mentioned (in declining order) were the sustainability of the activities, increases in knowledge, recognition, better quality or management, and the relevance of the year to the needs.

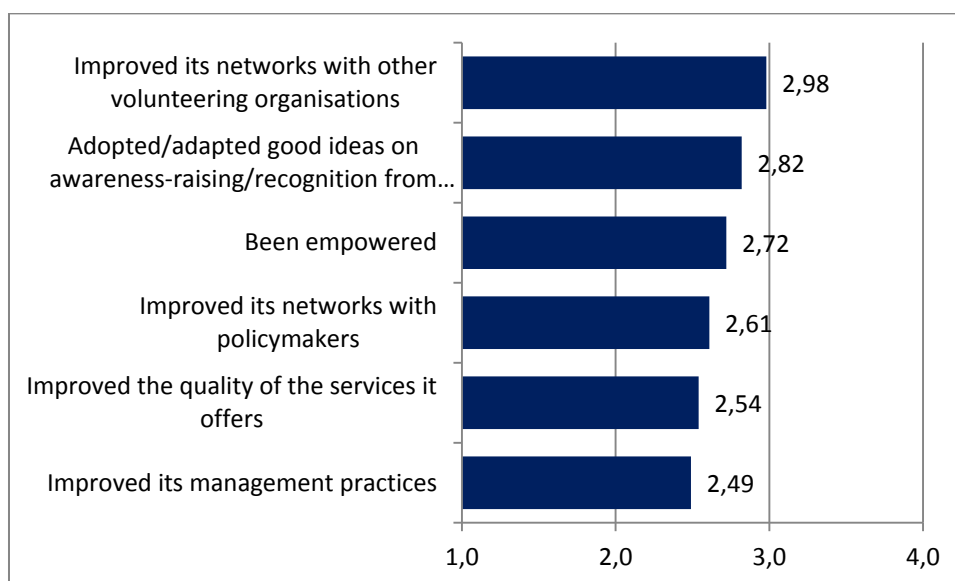
All these results, including the relative hierarchy, are in line with the findings from the interviews with the exception that the importance of recognition came through much more strongly among interviewees. The difference is partly attributable to the fact that clusters above are based on spontaneous comments; interviewees were prompted about the objectives of the Year.

Most considered that the initiatives promoting recognition had been important, often being surprised at the importance this has for volunteers. The number of award schemes during the year and the number that will be continued illustrate this.

However, these are not a 'one-size-fits-all' solutions; one NCB felt that singling out individual volunteers would be culturally inappropriate in that country.

The survey of the voluntary sector also tested the relative importance of different elements in contributing to sustainable results, and networking again had the clear lead (77% in agreement, at least to some extent), while improving management practices brought up the rear (47%).

Figure 21: Benefits for organisations



Source: Deloitte online survey, volunteering sector, March/April 2012

The results of and comments on the survey coincide with findings from the interviews. The new relationships built during the year were widely seen as a major benefit. EYV 2011 lifted the horizons of many in the voluntary sector beyond the organisations in their own sector with whom they habitually deal, thus opening up new prospects for learning and exchanges. Indeed, sometimes – particularly large organisations - discovered organisations within their own sector whom they do not normally come across and with whom they built new networks.

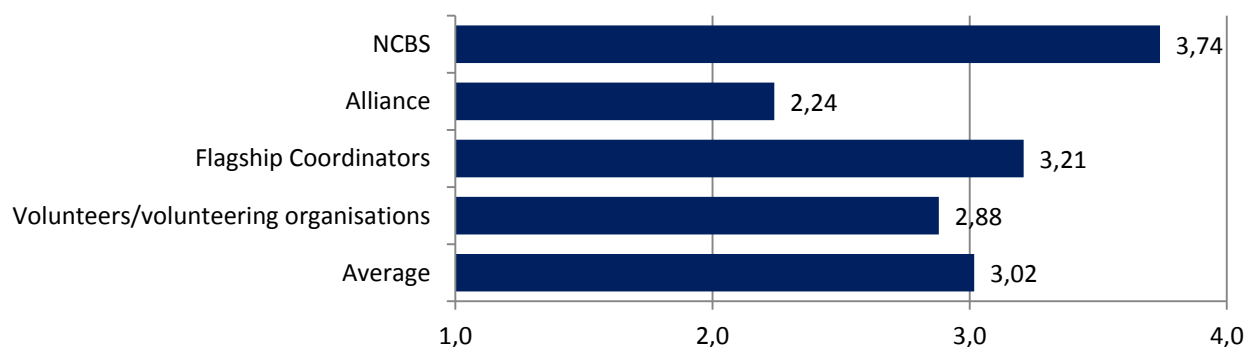
Sustainability by strand

Asked which strands of the year have proved best at generating sustainable activities, respondents showed a clear bias towards their own activities. The volunteer sector/volunteer category might be supposed not to have any bias, but in practice, there is an overlap with the EYV 2011 Alliance membership, so this is not certain.

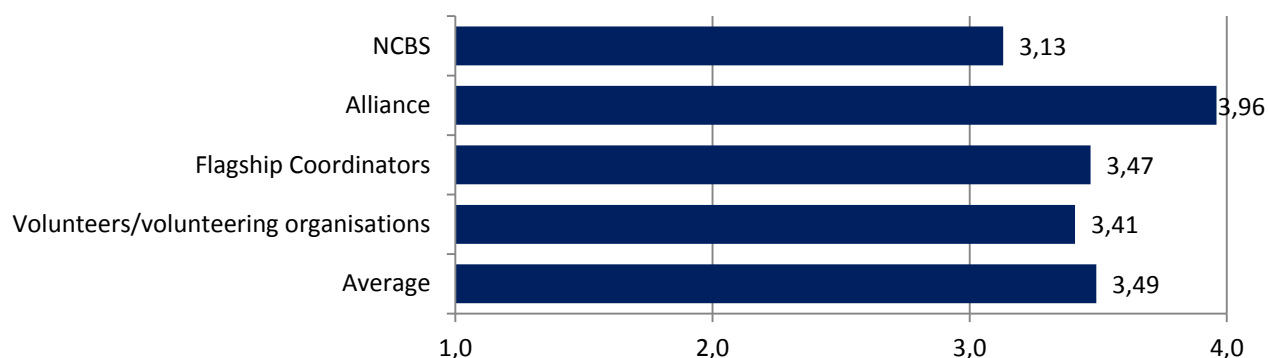
Figure 22: Sustainability by strand

Question: The extent to which each of the following activities generated sustainable activities:

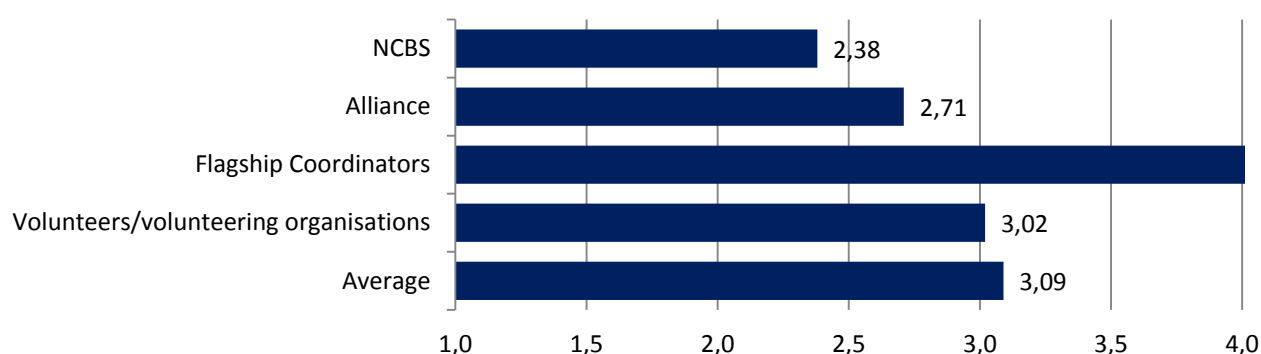
National programmes



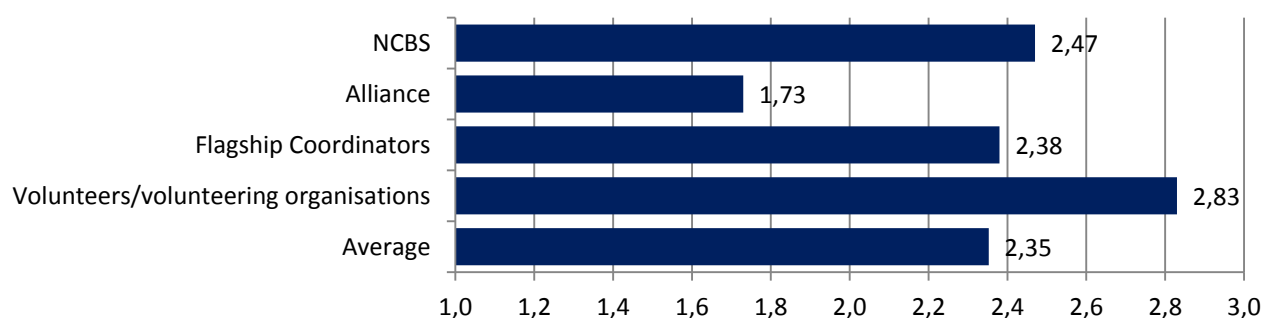
EYV 2011 Alliance



Flagship Projects



European Communication Campaign



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

It is, therefore, more useful to look at what the different groups thought had *not* been particularly successful in generating sustainable activities. For the NCBS, it was clearly the Flagship Projects and the European Tour. The NCBS were also the least convinced (though more positive) about the sustainability of the activities of the EYV 2011 Alliance. This is at odds with many of the comments in the survey, in interviews and concrete follow-up, e.g. with formal launches of the P.A.V.E. paper in early 2012, for example, in Portugal (in Portuguese) and in Ireland. This view may, however, reflect uncertainty about the future of the EYV Alliance itself.

What the survey comments and the interviews show in relation to sustainability of this activity is a fear that there will be no follow-up at European level. This was reflected in the Declaration that the NCBs issued in Warsaw calling for a single contact point in the Commission to continue after the year. Those interviewees contacted in early 2012 frequently stressed this, seeing, for example, little point in the EYV 2011 Alliance continuing in some renewed form if there is no one within the Commission with whom it can hold a dialogue.

The Alliance respondents were particularly sceptical as to whether the European communication campaign had left a legacy, and were almost as sceptical about national campaigns, and only slightly less sceptical about the value of the Flagship Projects. This greater scepticism on the part of the Alliance may come from being closer to the subject. They were, therefore, more aware of some of the challenges. This was reflected in interviews, but the interview process gave them an opportunity to temper this with an over-arching statement about their overall positive view of the Year.

Overall, it is the EYV 2011 Alliance which scores the highest ratings for having generated sustainable activities. A caveat should be entered in relation to the Flagship Projects, however, as they were less well known. A significant minority did not hold a view. The Flagship Projects had the highest 'no opinion' levels across the other three groups in answer to this question.

Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe P.A.V.E.

The Policy Agenda for Volunteering in Europe (P.A.V.E.)

P.A.V.E. is the final output of the EYV 2011 Alliance and is intended to represent the legacy of the European Year of Volunteering 2011. While the issue of follow-up at EU level is still open, it is already regarded as being influential at national level in a number of Member States.

It follows the pathway of other European documents in the field (such as the 2009 European Council decision on EYV 2011 and the EC Communication on Volunteering 2011.), and supports volunteering as an expression of European values, and its role of vehicle for active citizenship and the Europe 2020 strategy on the growth of economic and social capital.

P.A.V.E. seeks to provide a basis for future policy-making in the field of volunteering, and calls for a partnership approach which involves all stakeholders working together towards an enabling volunteering infrastructure for Europe. In order to achieve this enabling volunteering infrastructure in Europe, it puts forward a series of policy recommendations for each of the objectives of EYV 2011 (enabling environment, empowering organisers to improve quality, recognition of voluntary activities, and raising awareness), and the categories of stakeholders (European institutions, EU Member States, social partners, civil society, and all stakeholders).

The bulk of the actions deal with the objective of enabling environment, and all stakeholders are requested to make efforts, consistent with the declared partnership approach. European institutions are requested to put in place measures ensuring better support to volunteering organisations, in terms of granting better access to information about EU programmes in the fields (and funding opportunities). EU institutions are also called upon to ensure strong coordination of actions (at national and international level) for recognition of volunteering activities.

P.A.V.E. calls on EU Member States to give substance to the actions coordinated by EU institutions at a higher level. Social partners are called on to act more strongly stronger action to develop and support employee volunteering and employer-supported volunteering programmes. Finally, civil society organisations active in the field of volunteering are asked to achieve strong coordination and better dialogue with political institutions, and to keep improving the volunteer management

systems (the full list of actions itemised by the P.A.V.E. can be found in the Thematic case study on the EYV 2011 Alliance in Annex to this report).

The scepticism about the sustainability of the European Tour and the Flagship Projects expressed by the NCBs is shared by the other groups. The reasons for this in relation to the Tour, and the extent to which this relates to the concept or to implementation, are discussed in greater detail in the thematic case study on the European communication campaign.

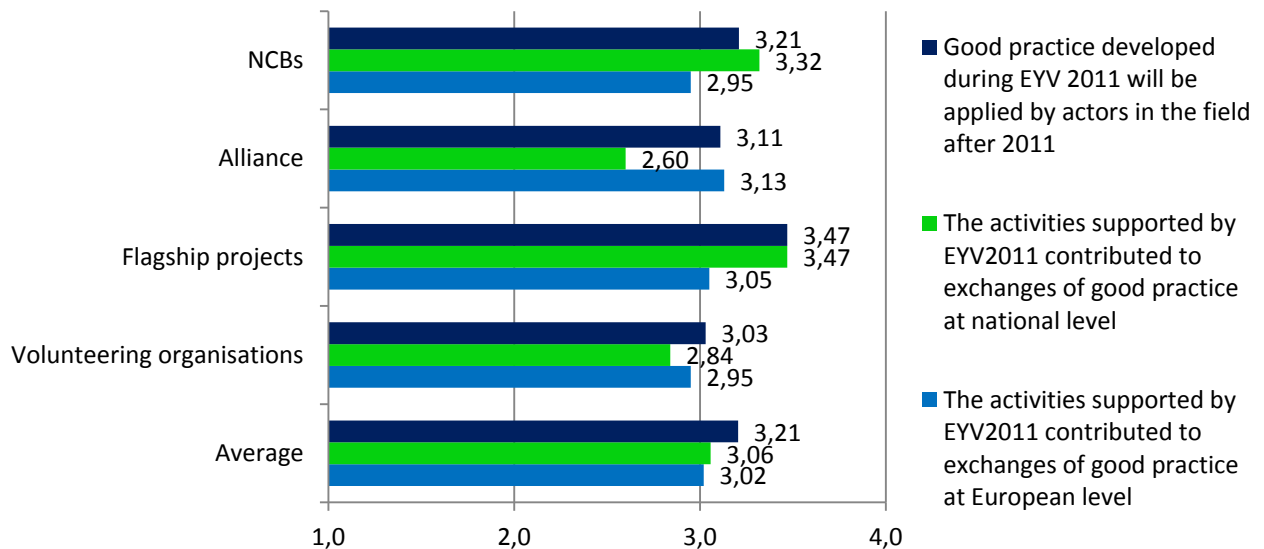
The case study on the Flagship Projects discusses the reasons why these are not felt to have generated sustainable activities when seen in the round rather than individually. It also explains that there was virtually no osmosis between the projects and the other initiatives. It is reasonable to assume, and substantiated by comments on the survey, that not knowing anything about these projects is the reason many respondents did not express an opinion on these.

4.6.2.1. Sustainability of good practice

Asked whether EYV 2011 had led to sustainable good practices, survey respondents were relatively confident that it had (based on ratings of the extent of their agreement on this.) They were particularly sure that it will be applied in the field, as the Figure shows, but less sure and more divided on whether it will be applied at national level or European level.

The EYV 2011 Alliance respondents were the most certain that EYV 2011 contributed to exchanges of good practice at European level. This is understandable as the working groups which contributed to the P.A.V.E. document were exchanging good practice and creating new networks. The most striking example of sustainable result at that level is the continuation of the quality working group has continued on its own initiative. It plans a series of conferences and is planning an application for funds from the Europe for Citizens programme in a project led by Cyprus.

Figure 23: Sustainability of good practice in the field, at national and at European level



Source: Deloitte Online Surveys, March/April 2012

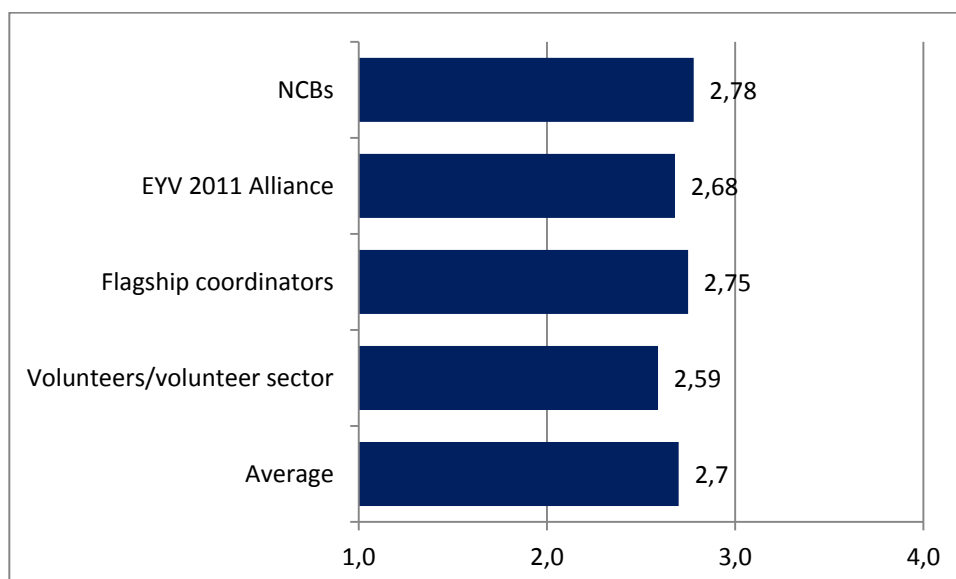
Based on the examples given in the surveys enriched to expand on some of them and include examples cited during interviews, the following is a non-exhaustive list complementing the examples of sustainable activities given earlier in this chapter:

Promotional movies to appeal to young people via TV (Poland); the use of webinars to share learning and create debate (country not given in the survey, but possibly the UK, but there are examples from two of the projects funded under the UK programme); a Youth Volunteering Report (country not given in the survey, but there is an example in Italy); opening up to different sectors;; volunteer measurement at organisational level; a survey carried out by the Greek Flagship Project of the Movement of Volunteers for Parks; the European Tour as a model for regional tours; cooperation with corporations, which draws on the knowledge of corporations, e.g. in management and human resources rather than taking a ‘painting fences’ approach; the way to leverage EU funding programmes (including Europe for Citizens) for the volunteer sector; ‘thank you’ tools (such as the counter on the EYV 2011 Alliance website to thank people for hours given); inter-generational networking; the importance of and potential for promoting volunteering in schools;; certification in recognition of voluntary work and qualification frameworks, ambassador programmes, networking for volunteers with disabilities, use of social media for networking, innovative ways of brainstorming (e.g. the mind mapping used at the conferences by the European Commission).

4.6.2.2. Dissemination of results

Of the seven sustainability indicators put to survey respondents that are dealt with in this section, this one which scored the lowest average rating. Nevertheless, more than half of the respondents agreed that adequate dissemination and feedback mechanisms were put in place, though the level of full agreement is relatively low, i.e. in a range of 5-15%. The EYV 2011 Alliance and the voluntary sector were less convinced than the Flagship Projects. However, the most extreme disagreement is also among the Flagship Projects, with 10% in total disagreement (but bearing in mind that this is only two coordinators).

Figure 24: Views on dissemination and feedback mechanism



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

The results of the survey are more upbeat than the findings from interviews, where the view was frequently expressed that the Year was a missed opportunity for shared learning, at least in some Member States, and certainly at pan-European level. This applied both at institutional level, i.e. across NCBs through a better resourced Task Force with more time to push this process rather than having to leave NCBs to push it, and at the level of the voluntary sector, including the Flagship Projects. The voluntary sector was positive about the conferences which were part of the European communication campaign, but not sure that they had left a legacy.

The electronic tools were also seen as a missed opportunity for dissemination: the europa.eu/volunteering website was a tool for shared experiences but not shared learning, the EYV 2011 Alliance website was not designed for this purpose, and national websites were generally in national languages. Interviewees commented positively on national websites which contained some material in English.

A number of Flagship Project coordinators, but others as well, would have liked more dissemination and feedback on these. A number of coordinators would have liked more feedback from the Commission itself. The following view from the surveys on dissemination of the results of the Flagship Projects is representative of what we heard in interviews:

“...a more coordinated approach to dissemination with all Flagship Projects being engaged to bring together content and examples of what people can get involved with in their area as part of the bigger picture of the European campaign” – survey respondent.

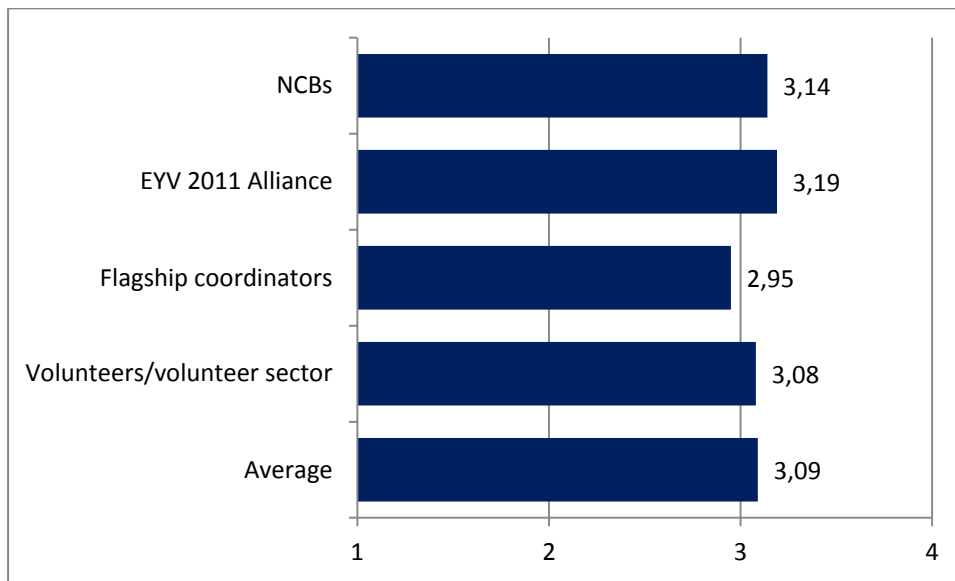
Interviewees stressed that they would have wished for this dissemination and feedback during the Year as well as ex post.

Monitoring and evaluation of national campaigns might have helped with dissemination and was a condition of Commission funding, but has not been enforced *stricto sensu* on the basis of the information available to us at the time this report was drafted.

4.6.2.3. The legacy for future European Years

The level of agreement with the view that future European Years will build on results and lessons learned during EYV 2011 is very strong – ranging from 66% among the voluntary sector respondents (taking full and partial agreement together) to 80% among the Flagship Projects. The most confident of this are the EYV 2011 Alliance respondents, with 23% in full agreement. Virtually no one is in total disagreement.

Figure 25: Future European Years will build on results and lessons learned during EYV 2011



Source: Deloitte online surveys, March/April 2012

Obstacles during the Year to an effective year and thus maximising the legacy included a number of support issues mentioned in the survey – not enough technical and promotional assistance from the Commission (including the local EU Representation) and/or the Commission’s contractor, particularly in relation to the European Tour and the Relay Reporters (see also the case study on the communication campaign).

A number of NCB respondents deplored the lack of flexibility in EU funding rules and the lateness with which funding was received: nearly half of the NCB respondents to the survey (48%) agreed fully or partially that these delays had had an impact on their programmes. There were comments from the voluntary sector about the Commission being too remote from the grass roots.

These are all issues identified in the interviews. The involvement of EU Representations appears to have been very uneven, with the Permanent Representative or a Deputy present at the opening of the Tour, for example, in a number of cases, whereas in others no one at all from the Representation attended. The importance attached to the EU Corner at the Tour and to highlighting the European Voluntary Service at the Tour was also highly variable. In some cases, this appears to have been the wish of the NCB; in others, the Permanent Representation did not regard the Year as a priority. While the objective of the European Tour was to showcase volunteering not to promote the EU as such, many interviewees nevertheless felt that the two could and should have been combined.

Some interviewees, though not all, felt that the Task Force was sub-optimal in size. Had it been larger, it would have been able to achieve more in terms of dissemination and feedback, and monitoring certain of the outsourced activities.

However, it is only fair to reflect the other side of the coin. There were many positive comments in the survey and in interviews, including one in the survey which merely said ‘Flawless! Congratulations!’, stressing that the identification of issues should not be allowed to detract from the overall picture of a successful year.

However, the permanent creation of a structure managing European Years was considered a key factor in future in order not to have to reinvent the wheel each time, and to plan events (and the

related budgets) well in advance, allowing organisations to plan the use of their financial and human resources accordingly. An alternative to a permanent central structure could be a 'troika' approach, with a core team from the preceding, current and following year.

5. General conclusions and recommendations

5.1. General conclusions

5.1.1. Relevance/complementarity

We conclude that:

- the objectives and activities of the European Year of Volunteering were overall relevant to the needs of the interested parties, i.e. stakeholders and policymakers;
- the discretion left to Member States to tailor national programmes in line with national priorities, thus enabling them to focus on the objectives most appropriate to them, was successful;
- the objectives and activities of the Year were flexible enough to apply in all national cultural and social contexts;
- the objectives and activities of the European Year were more relevant to objectives of European policy than that of some Member States, whose policies either put more emphasis on active citizenship than the Decision on the Year and/or which had been modified to some extent relative to those in place when the policy was adopted;
- any differences between national and European policy were not so great as to have prevented the objectives and activities of the Year meeting some national needs;
- the message of ‘Volunteer: make a difference’ was appropriate throughout the EU since discretion was allowed for a free translation to suit different volunteering cultures;
- each strand of the Year individually, and the use of the strands in combination, was relevant to the needs of stakeholders and target audiences, subject to the exercise of discretion to adapt them to national circumstances;
- EYV 2011 complemented the Year which preceded it and the Year which followed, and complemented other EU programmes and activities without any overlap, but this complementarity remained largely theoretical without the full potential for synergies being realised.

We, therefore, conclude that:

- **the objectives and activities of the European Year of Volunteering were relevant to the needs of the interested parties and complementary with existing initiatives in the field of volunteering.**

5.1.2. Effectiveness

We conclude in relation to the effectiveness of individual strands and of the strands in combination that:

- There was a large measure of correspondence between the overarching objectives of EYV 2011 and the operational objectives defined for the four strands of activities;
- The target groups of the Year were reached only in part; information about the Year failed to reach many even in the volunteering sector, or reached them late in the Year.
- The individual strands of EYV 2011 were effective in raising awareness of volunteering, and of its value, both at European level and national level, among policymakers in many countries and at European level, within the sector, and to some – but significantly lesser - extent within the general public.
- The individual strands of EYV 2011, and in particular the national programmes and the EYV 2011 Alliance (together with the efforts of the European Commission itself), were effective in influencing the activities of civil society organisations active in the field of volunteering, and in influencing European and national policies or practices in the area of volunteering in a number of countries; they influenced citizenship policy, but to a significantly lesser extent.
- Overall the European campaign would have corresponded more to expectations if it had added a European dimension within the Member States, notably in relation to the Tour, which showcased national organisations and activities, which generally have existing channels for this, but was a missed opportunity to add a cross-border dimension.
- The thematic conferences, which were part of the European communication campaign, were more effective in fulfilling all four objectives of the year than the campaign's other elements. The European communication campaign failed to maximise its effectiveness through difficulties in some cases in implementation of the concept of the Tour and the website, and because the Relay Reporter network was generally a stand-alone rather than an integrated activity.
- The Flagship Projects were effective in implementing their projects, but not necessarily effective in introducing innovation in the volunteering sector. In addition, they did not contribute to the effectiveness of the Year as a whole as they could have, as they were insufficiently integrated in the other strands of activities.

We, therefore, conclude that:

- **there were synergies between the strands in combination, notably between national programmes and the European communication campaign, and between the EYV 2011 Alliance and the European communication campaign. The synergies were not, however, optimised – particularly those between the national and European programmes, and between the Flagship Projects and the other strands.**

We conclude that in relation to the effectiveness of EYV 2011 by objective:

EYV 2011 contributed to:

- creating an enabling environment both at European level (with the adoption of policy documents by the institutions and through the work done at national level) and at national level, and was a catalyst for changes to the enabling environment in a number of Member States;
- empowering organisers to improve quality and focus more attention on areas such as volunteering as non-formal learning and corporates as a source of management expertise for the voluntary sector;

- recognition of volunteering through a wide range of award schemes and other forms of recognition, e.g. volunteer days, which were either totally new or given new impetus as a result of EYV 2011;
- raising awareness of volunteering and its value to society, both through the media, the multiplier effect of national activities and the European communication campaign, and to a significant extent through direct contact with new publics.

We, therefore, conclude that:

- **The activities undertaken as part of EYV 2011 were overall effective in many respects in fulfilling its objectives, i.e. to:**
 - **Work towards an enabling environment for volunteering in the EU.**
 - **Empower organisers of voluntary activities to improve the quality of this kind of activities.**
 - **Recognise voluntary activities.**
 - **Raise awareness of the value and importance of volunteering.**

5.1.3. Efficiency

We conclude that:

- the strands were broadly complementary and in combination contributed more efficiently to achievement of the expected results than would have the strands in isolation;
- there was overlap and duplication between the websites of the European communication campaign, the EYV 2011 Alliance and the Member States, which resulted in decreased efficiency of the europa.eu/volunteering site.
- the degree to which the complementarity of various strands was used to create an integrated whole was variable at European and national level, and this affected the ability to optimise efficiency.
- the resources made available were broadly appropriate, subject to it being well understood that they were not enough to mount a large scale campaign reaching out to the general public; however, delays in releasing funds for the Flagship Projects and the NCBs affected efficiency in a number of cases.
- the European communication campaign encountered problems in implementation of each of its elements which were detrimental to its effectiveness and therefore efficiency;
- the use of NCBs – and funding for them - to promote the objectives in the Member States was efficient and a catalyst in some cases for mobilising significant amounts of additional funding both from central government and other bodies;
- the resources made available to the EYV 2011 Alliance were appropriate and used efficiently;
- the funding for the Flagship Projects went generally to new projects and projects were individually efficient, but the concept could have been used more efficiently through better cross-fertilisation across projects and strands.

We, therefore, conclude that:

- **the activities undertaken in the framework of EYV 2011 to achieve the expected results European level/at national level were broadly efficient, but that there are lessons to be learned on maximising efficiency in future such years.**

5.1.4. Sustainability

We conclude that:

- EYV 2011 overall influenced the world of volunteering, both at European and national level, and will continue to do so, since it may take several years for some benefits to be tangible, e.g. increases in the number of volunteers;
- a large number of EYV 2011 activities have continued into 2012, and will clearly continue beyond, and that these activities cover a wide spectrum by type;
- a significant number of new structures put in place in EYV 2011, particularly among voluntary stakeholders, but also across national institutions (including at regional and more local level), have become permanent;
- EYV 2011 was above all a catalyst for the development of networks and discovery of the diversity of volunteering, including within the sector itself;
- EYV 2011 contributed significantly to increased awareness of volunteering, and to greater recognition of the importance of volunteering, and of individual volunteers;
- EYV 2011 contributed to improvements in quality management and development of recognition of the contribution of volunteering to society and of individual volunteers;
- EYV 2011 contributed to empowering organisations, including through a catalytic effect on national strategies and legislation. The policy documents developed at EU level by the institutions and the EYV 2011 Alliance have played an important role in this.
- Good practice developed during EYV 2011 is being applied in the field, but this is largely remaining within national borders, or even within organisations or parts of the voluntary sector because the sharing of learning was not always regarded as a priority; this applies both to activities conducted as part of some national programmes, and the Flagship Projects financed by the European Commission.
- By strand, the national programmes and the EYV 2011 Alliance had a greater influence than did the European Communication Campaign (including the conferences, the Tour, the website and the Relay Reporters) or the Flagship Projects; the European Tour nevertheless contributed to the building of sustainable networks and the conferences contributed to the development of good practice.
- Where ‘ambassador’ systems were used, these were successful and helped in raising media awareness;
- Future European Years will build on the results and lessons learned during EYV 2011, but in the short term this will not be optimised because the Commission has no mechanism to provide impetus to developing synergies between years and there is no contact point on volunteering within the Commission to promote the results and lessons learned.

We, therefore, conclude that:

- **Overall, EYV was, however, successful in establishing sustainable good practices and initiatives in the field of volunteering.**

5.2. Recommendations

We recommend that the Commission:

- consider as a good-practice model for future Years:
 - the stranded approach, and in particular the three strands of a European campaign, national campaigns under the aegis of NCBs, and cooperation with civil society;
 - agreed objectives that leave discretion to Member States to adapt their programmes to national policies and local context;
 - the flexibility granted in translating messages to enable the local context to be taken into account;
- recognise the importance of planning Years longer ahead:
 - (c) to allow Member States to find the human and financial resources or to make more efficient use of limited human resources, by allowing them to spread the effort over a longer period;
 - (d) particularly when the voluntary sector is a major stakeholder, bearing in mind that lead times in the sector are longer because of the reliance on volunteers, who are often part-time, and indeed giving only a few hours a week;
- establish mechanisms that better ensure that the potential of the complementarity across Years and EU programmes and activities can be better developed, e.g. through a single contact point in the Secretariat General, and encourage Member States to do likewise;
- for equivalent future Years:
 - use larger Task Forces in order to be able to:
 - develop synergies with past and future Years, and across EU programmes and activities (including Representations and Europe Direct);
 - develop further relations with other EU institutions, including at national level, e.g. information offices of the European Parliament;
 - devote more time to promoting shared learning during and after such Years, in particular with NCBs and innovative projects funded by the Commission, such as the Flagship Projects;
 - contribute more to adding a European dimension, including by making speakers available for events;
 - enforce monitoring and evaluation requirements in agreements with NCBs.

- require Member States to devote a minimum specified percentage of their budget to monitoring and evaluation, and to publish the results;
- require Member States to devote a minimum specified percentage of the budget to electronic tools, web and social media, and,
- require Member States to devote a minimum specified percentage of their web budget to providing information in English on their website about activities of the Year in order to promote shared learning, given that Years of this type involve stakeholders comfortable only in their own language and a full-scale, fully moderated 23-language website covering 27 countries is unlikely to be cost-effective and always likely to be beyond the resources of the Commission;
- learn lessons for its financial management procedures from the repercussions for some national programmes and the Flagship Projects of delays in releasing funds;
- take steps in the short term to ensure dissemination in English, and if possible other languages, to a wide group of stakeholders, including the voluntary sector, good practice examples of the results of the Year, including the innovative practices developed by the Flagship Projects;
- leverage actively in future policy making and activities the close relationship between active citizenship and volunteering;
- see volunteering as a key contributor to social cohesion and accord it a visible place within its structures, thus heeding the wishes of national governments, as represented by the NCBs.