

VALUE: Spain National Report
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November 2009

This document reports on the interaction between University Lifelong Learning (ULLL) and volunteering in Spain and is the result of collaboration between Observatorio del Tercer Sector and IL3 – Universitat de Barcelona.

1. Overview of volunteering – university interaction

1.1. Volunteering in Spain

Volunteering is a key element for participation and citizenship implication for society improvement. It contributes with values, ideas, reflections, resources and, in short, is a social capital generator.

It has been said that volunteering has crisis due to the change of lifestyles, new values, etc. Nevertheless, there are thousands of people that offer their time to work for social transformation through participation in nonprofit organizations.

About 4 million people were volunteers in social nonprofit organizations in 2003 (Delgado, 2004). There are around 5 million people that volunteer in Spain, a 17,6% of the population (FUNCAS, 2009). Culture, sports and social issues are the main areas in which people volunteer.

Social changes have brought new experiences in volunteering, new profiles (elder people, mature women, immigrants) and new ways of collaborating in nonprofit organizations.

Volunteering is in the origin and essence of nonprofit organizations. The commitment with social, environmental and cultural missions or to sport, for example, is directly linked to the decision of volunteering. It is an action that involves an implication with the environment and society.

Professionalization of the nonprofit sector does not mean that there has been a decrease on the spaces where volunteers may be present. There are a lot of nonprofit organizations composed completely by volunteers and other that combine volunteering with paid staff.

There are differences depending on the role of the volunteers in organizations. Nonprofit organizations define themselves as volunteer organizations or as organizations with volunteers. Volunteer management, activities in which volunteers participate and volunteers training differs from one organization to another depending on the role that volunteers have.

Volunteering activities and volunteers will be considered as one of the main activities developed by the nonprofit sector for the purpose of this report. It is understood that volunteering activities are developed on a nonprofit organization framework (see article 1 and 2 of Law 25/1991, of 13th December, for the creation of the Institut Català del Voluntariat)

1.2. University Lifelong Learning (ULLL) in Spain

As in several countries of Europe, in Spain and in Catalonia, the term “lifelong learning” covers a wide range of learning activities: **vocational and non-vocational training and training for trainers**. There is special emphasis on continuing education with professional purposes in order to adequate training to work and to promote job placement for people in the job market.

Key aspects in training for trainers on continuing education would be taking into account their needs, skills and professional profile, as well as the development of an innovative training model, newly defined by a professional profile, based on training the practitioner’s best-practice according to the aims proposed by the EU institutions.

The EU proposes original models of training intervention which are constructivist-oriented and focused on the citizen-user as the beneficiary and actor of training, thus, aiming to improve continuing training and the acquisition of learning.

Achievement of these aims will enhance a longer-term effectiveness of training by equipping beneficiaries with the ability to acquire their own knowledge in their own way, and the flexibility to adapt it to a wide range of learning methods.

1.3. The political and legislative context in Spain

1.3.1. Volunteering policy

The main policies about volunteering are defined in Spain through two different tools: on the one hand, the legislative framework and on the other hand, volunteer action plans.

Additional references could be found on the Bibliography at the end of this report.

-Legislative framework:

There is a State Law in Spain about volunteering since 1996 that defines the concept and also the rights and duties of volunteers. The Law has had a significant impact across nonprofit organizations.

Nevertheless, the reality of volunteering depends on each region. In Catalonia, for example, there is not a specific regional Law about volunteering although there is consensus about the concept. Moreover, the first regulation which referred to the concept of volunteering in Spain was generated in 1991 by the creation of a Regional Government body for Volunteers in Catalonia.

There is also a Catalonian Volunteering Letter (not a legal document but a document adopted by general assent by the Catalonia Parliament) that also defines the concept of volunteering. In addition, the Catalonian Volunteering Letter establishes the rights and the duties of volunteers in a similar way as the State Law.

Volunteering is understood by the Spanish State Law as those altruist activities that not only could be carried out in a nonprofit organization but also in a public body. Nevertheless, in some regions as Catalonia, the concept relates to the

activities that are developed in volunteer organizations understanding that they are the natural channel for civil society participation through volunteering.

-Volunteer action plans:

At the beginning of the 90's State Volunteer Action Plans started to appear in Spain and since 2000, the different regions have elaborated their own plans to prioritize the main actions they would carry out. Volunteer action plans specify guidelines for organizations with volunteers. At the same time, they contribute to an improvement of how they should be managed and which the main priorities for volunteering are.

In general, the regions created a Volunteer Advisor, composed of representative people of public administration, volunteer organizations and sometimes, people from university, enterprise, and so on, that helped to elaborate the plans. Thus, the participation of the organizations as part of the process has been common in most of the plans.

The plans have given suitable guidelines in a changing environment for volunteering. They refer to the new ways of collaboration (for instance, virtual and corporate volunteering) and also to new emergent profiles such as elder people, qualified volunteering, middle-aged homemaker woman, etc.

Amongst other questions, the regional plans empathize about volunteer management and the necessity of coordination. Plans also specify the importance of volunteer training policies. In addition, a lot of plans establish that to sensitize civil society is one of the most important areas of work.

1.3.2. Lifelong learning policy in Spain

Continuing training and education in Spain is developed along these lines:

-Training for adults in the field of Educational Administration; covered by the article 3 of the Organic Law 1/1990, 3 October, general resolution of the educative system.

-The occupational vocational training is aimed at unemployed people in the field of Labour Administration; National vocational Training and Incorporation programme (FIP Programme). This programme is regulated by the Royal Decree 631/1993, 3 May, published in the Official State Gazette (BOE) the 4th of May by the Ministerial Order of the 13th of April 1994, published in the BOE the 28th of April.

-Continuing training is aimed at employed workers. It is based on the III National agreements for the Continuing training (2000-2004): Later on, the name changed to Tripartite Formation for Training and Employment.

The year 1992 was held to transfer the management of vocational training to the Generalitat of Catalonia. Later, the Tripartite Agreement between the General Administration of the State and the most representative trade unions and business organisations state-wide meant that the training is not managed at regional level, so the Catalan government appealed to the Constitutional Court to claim jurisdiction of the training of employees in Catalonia.

El Tribunal Constitucional, mitjançant la Sentència 95/2002, de 25 d'abril, reconeix la competència de la gestió i l'execució de la formació professional contínua a la Generalitat de Catalunya; per aquest motiu, i atès que la Llei 17/2002, de 5 de juliol, d'ordenació del sistema d'ocupació i de creació del Servei d'Ocupació de Catalunya preveia la creació de consorcis per millorar la gestió i l'execució dels serveis als ciutadans, es crea el Consorci per a la Formació Contínua de Catalunya. The Constitutional Court, by ruling 95/2002 of 25 April, recognizes the competence of the management and implementation of vocational training to the Generalitat of Catalonia, for this reason and because the Law 17/2002, 5 July, regulating the system of employment creation and Employment Service of Catalonia envisaged the creation of consortia to improve the management and implementation of services to citizens, creating the Consortium for Continuing Education in Catalonia. La Generalitat de Catalunya, a través del Consorci, participa l'any 2004, per primera vegada, en la gestió i l'execució de les iniciatives de contractes programa i les accions complementàries i d'acompanyament a la formació, per programar aquestes actuacions en el seu territori. The Generalitat of Catalonia, through the Consortium, first started participating in 2004 in the management and implementation of initiatives and actions complementary to contract services and the accompanying training in order to programme these performances in its territory.

There is, both at state and regional level, a single subsystem of vocational training for employment. This new model was regulated by the publication on 23 March 2007 of the Royal Decree 395/2007 (Official Gazette no. 87 Wednesday, April 11).

1.4. The volunteering – university interaction in Spain

There is a lack of research done on the current relationship between ULLL and volunteering in Spain. Nevertheless, it appears that probably most of the interaction between volunteering and University Lifelong Learning (ULLL) has not a very long tradition. Anyway, nowadays different ways are being explored.

Training is increasingly important as volunteers have increased their participation in a wider range of activities and are able to take more responsibilities. Volunteers are present in committees, activities, management issues, etc. Internal and external training activities for volunteers are common in nonprofit organizations. As long as they participate in more specialized areas further training is required.

There are two areas in which ULLL may contribute. First of all, universities have much more specialized training initiatives. Secondly, they may introduce new topics related to information and communication technologies, innovation or the state-of-the-art developments in many subjects.

Several ways of interaction between both parts have been identified:

-First of all, although usually volunteers are not the main target group of ULLL offer, they may easily find an interesting course there. Frequently, volunteers can take advantage of some of the programs as topics about specific issues such as health, addictions or new ways of social intervention are covered very

often. Courses addressed to older people, to caregivers, etc., may be interesting for volunteers as well. The length of the courses might be one of the aspects that may retract volunteers.

-Secondly, the offer about nonprofit management may be another area in which volunteers might pay attention. There are several long courses composed of different modules in which volunteers could participate. However, this is not the most common way of interaction as it can be difficult to afford these courses. (for example, the *Función Gerencial de ONG* course at ESADE, the *Grado en Dirección y Gestión de Organizaciones no Lucrativas* in Fundació Pere Tarrés, etc),

-Finally, there are some courses created specifically for volunteers. They usually focus on cooperation and partnership working in order to develop volunteering (for instance, universities could offer their expertise about course designing methodologies for courses organized from the different volunteer umbrella bodies around Spain).

There could be a key contribution of ULLL in the recognition of volunteer training in a modular way, in offering training programmes and useful accreditations for the future. Universities have a long experience in accreditation processes and also in creating programmes. There have not been identified these kind of initiatives yet.

2. Good practice examples of interaction

The following projects have been selected as a sample of the interactions that may be generated between volunteering and ULLL. Both cases refer to IL3-University of Barcelona experiences.

2.1. CARERS – Content Materials to Raise Employability and Reinforce Skills of Carers (<http://www.carers-project.eu>)

In spite of the fact that sometimes there are ULLL programs that have not been exclusively designed for volunteers it appears that volunteers could be also a target audience for them. This experience is a possible example.

CARERS is an Education and Culture Lifelong Learning Programme financed by the European Union and the Leonardo da Vinci Program (multilateral projects to transfer innovation).

Project context

In Europe there is a growing demand for carers, people who are in the first line of support for those dependent on care. According to the EC Green paper, the demographic dependency ratio will rise from 49% in 2005 to 66% in 2030. (COM 2005: 94).

Despite this, carers lack certain things, from education and training to recognition of formal competencies. Still 75% of dependent people are cared within the family context, mainly by family members (www.bmsk.gv.at 2007) and mostly without basic knowledge in care.

A current discussion on quality and financing of caring can be observed in most of the European countries. Full professional services mostly exceed the

financial resources of the families and the public bodies. Partly legalised people (carers from East European countries) challenge juridical system regarding basic standards of laws on labour and Social Security.

Empowering informal carers regarding the quality and efficiency of caring processes has an impact, both on the affordability of care and the psychological health of carers (e.g. in terms of prevention of burn out).

Main objectives of the program

The aim of the project is to set up an education and support system specifically geared towards those looking after people dependent on care, providing answers to informal carer's needs in their support work as well as for their own emotional well-being.

The specific objectives of the program are:

- To offer a specific program of education and training for non professional carers.

- To give answers to solve the real needs of these carers work, as well as its emotional welfare.

Main activity lines

- To support participants in training and further training activities, in the acquisition and the use of knowledge, skills and qualifications to facilitate personal development, employability and participation in the European Labour Market.

- To support improvements in quality and innovation in vocational education and training systems, institutions and practices.

- To enhance the attractiveness of vocational education and training and mobility for employers and individuals and to facilitate the mobility of working trainees.

The project is also an opportunity to discuss the requirements and the modalities for the definition of a "European passport of the carers", in synchrony with another European project.

Design and production of content materials

The project has designed the content materials according to the definition of basic competences for informal carers. These requirements have been discussed together with the coordinator of the running Leonardo da Vinci project "ECL-European Care Licence" that is designing a basic entry certificate in the care sector and that could become recognized and accepted across Europe.

The design and production of the training material and the discussion on the requirements for an effective ECL have been carried out by the four European universities and expert enterprises that consist of several professionals in the health field.

The results will be evaluated during an international conference with experts in the caring sector and with experience in development of European competences passports. Partners of the Consortium have been always very active in the research of the care sector.

Project results

This project is of fundamental importance and relevance in its social impact for a group that rarely receives training and whose numbers are gradually growing every year.

The project results include a definition of the requirements to be followed to make a Caring Training Programme suitable for a “European Care Licence” and a definition of a training program for carers with six modules of ten hours each. Consequently, the program could be repeated in the future having this first experience and materials as a reference. Volunteers acting as carers may be one of the main targets for this kind of learning.

2.2. Corporate volunteering Programme (IL3- Creu Roja)

The Corporate Solutions department of IL3-University of Barcelona and the Creu Roja (the Spanish Red Cross) have developed together a corporate volunteering program.

Corporate volunteering aims at promoting a collaborative culture and it also aims at making the workers of a company aware of the social needs of other community groups, thus discovering new values and putting solidarity into practice.

To carry out the project, a specific company needs to let an employee do the volunteering in a NGO or association within his or her working hours. The worker will take part in the project and will contribute with his or her knowledge and skills.

The worker’s involvement in this kind of project is related to learning and also to the improvement of working abilities and competences such as:

-Transversal competences: creativity, initiative, flexibility, adaptation to change, interpersonal sensitiveness, sociability, continuous improvement, learning skills, analysis skills, etc.

-Specific competences: synthesis skills, project management, strategic planning, time organization, management, resources management and tasks delegation, problem solving and decision making, leadership and coordination skills, team work, focus on results, etc.

The cooperation proposal has two stages:

-First stage: on-line material creation on volunteering projects development and on production a pilot test with Creu Roja volunteers.

-Second stage: establishment of agreements to carry out tailored-made projects of corporate volunteering.

A 30 hours course has been designed and is divided into two modules:

-Module 1: citizen participation with corporate volunteering (6 hours).

-Module 2: development of volunteering projects (24 hours).

The aim of the course is to provide with tools those who wish to commit themselves participating in a volunteering project.

Results of this initiative are more than 300 people trained in volunteering, cooperation and development of volunteering projects.

3. Challenges for future development

ULLL and volunteering will increase their interactions if they succeed in overcoming the current challenges.

-Development of adequate training for different volunteer profiles.

New profiles of volunteers have recently come out (corporate and qualified volunteering could be a couple of examples). ULLL should be aware of the emergence of these new profiles so that they can make up proposals and courses aligned with the reality of volunteering at the moment. Fulfillment expectations would be better.

-Flexibility of ULLL in designing and carrying out interesting training for volunteering.

Nonprofit organizations are usually more flexible than universities structures as the latter are sometimes rigid. The value of agile training designs that cover unexpected needs would be recognized by nonprofit organizations and volunteers.

-To get enough funding in order to offer training that volunteers or nonprofit organizations may afford.

A specific training will not be successful if the price is too high. ULLL should look for as much funds as are needed. Prices should be fixed taking into account nonprofit organizations and volunteers capacity.

-To disseminate and be aware of the importance of the valuation of training and experience acquired as a volunteer.

ULLL may contribute with accreditations and training itineraries for volunteers. They should be able to see the advantages and value of this possibility. As a result they should disseminate good practice.

4. Recommendations

The aim of the guidelines given below is to point out some of the relevant aspects that should be considered in the ULLL and volunteering relationships.

-Considering the aims of volunteering and ULLL as a tool for developing relationships that are sustainable.

An effort should be done by volunteering and ULLL to understand each other aims and perspectives.

The flexibility of volunteer organizations, their knowledge about volunteering and to understand that volunteering is a core value for nonprofit organizations are some of the main aspects to bear in mind for ULLL.

At the same time, volunteer organizations should be aware that ULLL has experience and knowledge of the best ways and tools for training and will be able to adapt training from different disciplines to the specific requirements of volunteers.

-Importance of considering the training that already exists.

Government at different levels has developed through agencies or specific bodies running training programmes that are addressed not only to nonprofit organizations but also to volunteers. A wide range of seminars, workshops and courses about several topics and with different lengths are offered nowadays.

Moreover, umbrella organizations have been working on the needs expressed by their members in terms of volunteer training. They provide specific training for volunteers and volunteer managers: in the development of skills, on topics covered by organizations, in management areas, etc.

ULLL should consider the current offer before defining new courses and training as the initial approach would determine further possibilities of interaction between ULLL and volunteering. On the one hand, duplication of an existing offer could cause a negative reaction from the agents that have been working on volunteer training. On the other hand, a possible sense of unnecessary effort could also appear in ULLL.

-To guarantee a common approach for new ways of interaction.

The design and planning of new ways of interaction should be done by ULLL in partnership with volunteer organizations. Some of the issues that require making a decision could be: pace and frequency of the actions, actors involved in order to make the most of the actions developed, set of priorities, etc.

-Work together with nonprofit organizations and umbrella organizations as experts in volunteering.

According to the concept of volunteering expressed at the beginning of this report, volunteering takes place in nonprofit organizations. This is why nonprofit organizations have the knowledge about the necessary training for volunteers in each situation and organization. They should be considered as main agents with which to share plans and decisions.

Umbrella organizations and nonprofit organizations could define training itineraries together with ULLL according to ULLL specifications.

-To value the volunteer training and experience should not be mandatory.

Volunteering itself has not been seen traditionally as an experience to be valued at a learning level. These learning experiences have been considered as part of informal and non-formal education.

Probably, it had influence that volunteers were not aware in terms of all the learning (attitudes, knowledge, values and skills) provided by their experience as volunteers.

There has been an increase of the importance given to the value of volunteering recently. It is important for some volunteers to get an accreditation that can be valued in a curricular way and in hiring processes.

Nevertheless, on the one hand, it should not be mandatory that all volunteers had accreditation of their training. On the other hand, it must be ensured that accreditation does not distort the concept and values of volunteering. Accreditation is a means of valuing volunteering but if it is seen just as a way of getting accreditations for curricular purposes could lose its essence.

-Learn from the successes and pitfalls of foreign experiences and adaption of other models.

As it has been mentioned above experience of interaction between ULLL and volunteering has taken place quite often. This is why the exchange of experiences with other countries is strongly recommended for further advances.

Foreign experiences are a reference for the development of interaction models avoiding previous pitfalls. Nevertheless, the situation of volunteering and ULLL varies from one country to another and even in the same country. As a result, good practices should be adapted so that they are useful and valuable.

5. Recommendations

The reflection about the current reality and relationship between ULLL and volunteering may give future guidelines for develop more strategic ways of collaboration for them based on a common approach of both parts.

Although there are experiences about the interaction between ULLL and volunteering much more proactive work could be done in order to achieve better results and other interesting experiences.

The different agents with knowledge about volunteering should contribute in this processes and current training should not be forgotten although new common initiatives start so that everybody feels that has participated. The learnings from foreign experiences may also be very useful to reach successful projects.

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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Sara López and Pau Vidal from Observatorio del Tercer Sector for giving feedback to this report.