



State of the Art in the Engagement of Volunteers in civil protection

ENG4VOL

Lessons learnt in engagement civil protection volunteers
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Abstract:	This report presents the findings of the ENG4VOL study on volunteer engagement in civil protection across several European countries. Combining desk research, case studies, and a large-scale survey, the project provides new knowledge on the state of the art of volunteering in this field. The results highlight volunteers' motivations, experiences, and challenges, showing strong commitment but also persistent barriers such as lack of equipment, limited recognition, and inclusivity gaps. Strategic priorities emerge, including the need for stronger institutional support, improved training, and more inclusive practices that also enhance soft skills such as teamwork, empathy, and intercultural communication. The study underlines the crucial role of volunteers in strengthening community resilience and disaster response. These outcomes represent the fulfilment of the project's objective of increasing
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	knowledge on volunteer engagement in civil protection and serve as the basis for lessons learnt and future activities, with results made publicly available through the project website and the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform.
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Introduction

Background and importance of volunteer engagement in civil protection in Europe

Volunteers are fundamental to Europe's civil protection framework, addressing disasters, emergencies, and resilience-building amid increasing climate-related risks. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism, activated over 800 times since 2001, relies heavily on volunteers for coordinated responses inside and outside the EU¹. This deliverable directly contributes to the application's priorities: it reinforces common values, civic engagement and participation through active volunteer involvement, strengthens soft skills such as teamwork, problem-solving, and leadership, and promotes community development and resilience by enhancing disaster prevention, preparedness, and recovery capacities. The recent events (like the earthquakes in Turkey and Morocco) have further underscored the urgency and importance of structured volunteering to support affected populations. Importantly, while volunteers remain central actors, this deliverable also targets trainers and teaching staff of first responders, as well as civil society and voluntary organizations, ensuring that knowledge transfer, organizational capacity-building, and structured training benefit the broader ecosystem of actors engaged in civil protection.

In the EU, volunteers contribute significantly; a Eurobarometer survey shows 51% of Europeans aware of EU disaster coordination, with 92% supporting volunteer involvement.² NGO volunteers enhance prevention, planning, and response, as per a European Commission study on their role in EU and EEA countries³. In Italy, civil protection volunteers demonstrated resilience during COVID-19, maintaining high coping levels while providing mental health and logistical support⁴.

Their role encompasses search and rescue, first aid, debris clearance, aid distribution, and community education, often as first responders leveraging local knowledge.⁵ Informal volunteers are increasingly vital, though integration remains cautious to ensure safety⁶. National Red Cross societies, as auxiliaries, bolster the EU Mechanism in preparedness and response. Spontaneous volunteers, common in

¹ Enhanced preparedness and emergency response. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/enhanced-preparedness-and-emergency-response-strengthening-eu-civil-protection-mechanism-combined-ambitious-health-funding>

² Special Eurobarometer: EU role in civil protection. <https://europeancommission.medium.com/special-eurobarometer-eu-role-civil-protection-551b569aea5d>

³ The role of NGO volunteers in civil protection in EU and EEA countries. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/funding-evaluations/financing-civil-protection/prevention-and-preparedness-projects-civil-protection/overview-past-track-i-and-track-ii-projects/role-ngo-volunteers-civil-protection-eu-and-eea-countries_en

⁴ "Hang in There!": Mental Health in Italian Civil Protection. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8394470/>

⁵ The Role of Non-Governmental Organisations' Volunteers. https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2014-11/croixrouge_volont_en.pdf

⁶ The engagement of informal volunteers in disaster management. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S221242092200632X>

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events like Italy's emergencies, provide immediate aid but require management to avoid inefficiencies.⁷

Volunteers' importance is evident in amplifying capacities and fostering democracy; they add value to national efforts, with EU Aid Volunteers strengthening humanitarian aid.⁸ In Germany, volunteers in civil protection cite organizational support as key motivators. Across Europe, volunteering varies by capability approaches, from high rates in Nordic countries to emerging models in Eastern Europe. Without them, systems face overload, as seen in the need for standardized training.

Engagement strategies focus on retention through training, recognition, and integration are needed. The EU emphasizes stakeholder cooperation, including volunteers. UfM recommends empowering youth volunteers for resilience and qualified volunteering promotes civic engagement via structured programs.⁹

Models include public administration-linked, where volunteers integrate into government systems, like Italy's national civil protection with formalized roles and other models include third sector/NGOs, via Civil Society Organizations, emphasize independent, uncoerced action in emergencies. Comparative legal frameworks show variations, with some countries regulating for safety and others promoting flexibility.

This report draws on experiences from France, Spain, Greece, and Hungary, as well as other partner countries, ensuring that the lessons identified are relevant and transferable across Europe.

Objectives of the research

The main objective of this research is to increase knowledge about the current state of volunteer engagement in civil protection across Europe.

To achieve this, the study:

- Collected and reviewed existing information on how volunteers are involved in civil protection ("desk research").
- Carried out a survey to better understand volunteers' experiences, motivations, and challenges.
- Analyzed both numbers and open comments to see what helps volunteers stay engaged and what makes participation more difficult.

The results will be the starting point to prepare a lessons learnt document (A6). This will gather key findings and practical recommendations to help organizations, trainers, and volunteers improve engagement, ensure inclusion, and strengthen community resilience.

⁷ Spontaneous volunteerism in disasters. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0925753518320411>

⁸ Interim Evaluation of the EU Aid Volunteers.

<https://voiceeu.org/publications/final-report-of-the-eu-aid-volunteer-interim-evaluation.pdf>

⁹ Preparatory Working Group: Volunteers in Civil Protection.

<https://ufmsecretariat.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Final-report-UfM-WG-volunteers.pdf>

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Methodology

This research combines desk-based analysis, case studies, and direct data collection to explore volunteer engagement in civil protection across Europe. The approach is designed to capture both broad trends and nuanced insights from volunteers. This report also serves as the starting point for the subsequent Activity 6, providing the state-of-the-art knowledge that informs the next phase of work.

Literature Review

A comprehensive review of academic literature, policy documents, and organizational reports was conducted to establish the current state of knowledge on volunteer engagement. This included studies on general volunteering as well as specialized research on civil protection programs. The review helped identify key concepts, existing models, and gaps in practice, which informed the design of the survey and case study framework. In addition the study also took into account different target groups such as first responders, trainers of first responders, civil society organizations, and organizations working with civil protection volunteers.

Case Studies

To complement the desk research, a series of case studies were developed focusing on civil protection volunteer programs in different regions and countries. These case studies aimed to uncover success factors, operational challenges, and context-specific strategies for engagement and retention.

Insights from these examples were used to validate and enrich the survey findings.

Data Collection

A structured survey was designed to gather both quantitative and qualitative data from civil protection volunteers and program managers. The survey included closed-ended questions to capture demographic and operational data, as well as open-ended questions to explore motivations, challenges, and personal experiences. The instrument was distributed across multiple countries and translated where necessary to ensure accessibility.

Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative responses were examined to identify patterns, while qualitative responses were thematically coded to extract deeper insights. This dual analysis allowed for the identification of different models of volunteer engagement, as well as best practices

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that could be adapted across contexts. Comparative analysis by gender, age, and years of experience was also conducted to highlight variations in volunteer experiences and needs.

State of the Art in Volunteer Engagement

Volunteer engagement involves strategic processes to recruit, manage, and retain individuals contributing time and skills without financial compensation, aligning their efforts with organizational missions. This state of the art reviews academic literature on volunteer engagement broadly and in civil protection and disaster management in Europe, drawing from systematic reviews, empirical studies, and reports post-2010. It examines models, factors, trends, challenges, and gaps, emphasizing volunteers' roles amid rising crises like pandemics and climate-induced disasters, particularly in European contexts.

General Volunteer Engagement: Models, Factors, and Trends

Volunteer engagement is often framed through human resource models. Einolf (2018) identifies three key models: the Human Resources Management Model (top-down, universal), the Service Enterprise Model (strategic mission integration), and adapted cycles like AmeriCorps, emphasizing nonlinear recruitment-support-retention processes¹⁰. The Service Enterprise Model is supported for institutionalizing best practices, though studies often use proxy measures like intention to remain rather than direct retention outcomes.¹¹ Recruitment strategies lack robust empirical links to organizational practices, focusing instead on individual responses. Retention is better studied, with role matching, task/emotional support, clear role definitions, training, autonomy, relationships, feedback, and recognition enhancing outcomes.¹² Organizational factors are understudied compared to individual characteristics, revealing a research gap.¹³

Post-pandemic, nonprofits face increased service demands. A 2023 Do Good Institute report found 64.4% of nonprofits reported higher demand in 2022, with

¹⁰ Einolf, C. J. (2018). Evidence-based volunteer management: A review of the literature. *Voluntary Sector Review*, 9(2), 153–176.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326048877_Evidence-based_volunteer_management_A_review_of_the_literature

¹¹ Studer, S., & von Schnurbein, G. (2013). Organizational factors affecting volunteers: A literature review on volunteer coordination. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 24(2), 403–440.
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11266-012-9268-y>

¹² Do Good Institute. (2023). The state of volunteering in America 2023. *University of Maryland*.
<https://dogood.umd.edu/research-impact/research/state-volunteering-america-2023>

¹³ Do Good Institute. (2022). Nonprofit sector survey on volunteer engagement. *University of Maryland*.
<https://dogood.umd.edu/sites/default/files/2022-12/Nonprofit%20Sector%20Survey%20on%20Volunteer%20Engagement%202022.pdf>

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28.7% facing reduced funding/staff. Recruitment challenges include insufficient volunteer numbers (46.8%), workday availability (38.4%), and skill mismatches (35.4%). Benefits include enhanced attention and improved resource returns (68.4%, up from 43%). Perceptual gaps exist, with 72.2% of leaders vs. 25.2% of funders noting volunteers' impact on service quality¹⁴. This highlights the need for increased investment in engagement strategies.

A 2020 review of 41 global studies (2008–2019) using the Socioecological Model identifies motivations like education, morale, prior experiences, social networks, and organizational management, with barriers including health, financial constraints, and caregiving duties¹⁵. Most studies are quantitative and Western-centric, lacking macro-level (e.g., policy) analyses, necessitating cross-cultural and mixed-methods research.¹⁶ Trends show a shift from “management” to “engagement,” recognizing volunteers' unique contributions, with gaps in evaluating organizational impacts and post-COVID adaptations¹⁷.

Volunteer Engagement in Civil Protection: Roles, Challenges, and Strategies

In Europe's civil protection sector, volunteers amplify capacities during crises like floods, fires, and pandemics, integrated via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, activated over 800 times since 2001. Informal volunteerism includes emergent (spontaneous) and extending (community-based) forms, providing first-response aid, resources, and recovery support. Volunteers enhance resilience, often acting first and persisting post-official response¹⁸. In Italy, civil protection volunteers showed high coping levels during COVID-19, aiding logistics and mental health¹⁹. National Red Cross societies bolster preparedness and response as EU Mechanism auxiliaries.²⁰

¹⁴ Niebuhr, F., van Loon, L., & Steins Bisschop, C. (2020). Socioecological correlates of volunteer engagement: A state-of-the-art review. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 49(5), 933–953.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0899764020919560>

¹⁵ European Commission. (2023). EU Civil Protection Mechanism: Overview.

https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en

¹⁶ Whittaker, J., McLennan, B., & Handmer, J. (2015). A review of informal volunteerism in emergencies and disasters: Definition, opportunities and challenges. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 13, 358–368.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212420915300388>

¹⁷ European Commission. (2023). EU Civil Protection Mechanism: Overview.

https://civil-protection-humanitarian-aid.ec.europa.eu/what/civil-protection/eu-civil-protection-mechanism_en

¹⁸ Schmidt, A., Wolbers, J., Ferguson, J., & Boersma, K. (2018). Are you Ready2Help? Conceptualizing the management of online and onsite volunteer convergence. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 26(3), 338–349.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0925753518320411>

¹⁹ Vagni, M., Maiorano, T., Giostra, V., & Pajardi, D. (2021). “Hang in There!”: Mental health in a sample of the Italian civil protection volunteers during the COVID-19 health emergency. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(16), 8587. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8394470/>

²⁰ FRC. (2020). Civil protection guidance for National Societies and IFRC relations with EU actors.

<https://redcross.eu/positions-publications/civil-protection-guidance-for-national-societies-and-ifrc-relations-with-eu-actors.pdf>

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Challenges include cultural perceptions of informal volunteers as liabilities, legal concerns, and coordination issues. A 2019–2020 European study (eight countries, 95 interviews) found ad hoc engagement common, with social media guiding volunteers (except in Germany)²¹ Regulated models, like Sweden/Norway's with insurance, improve efficiency²². Volunteer resiliency depends on experience, social support, and training, per a 2020 review of eight studies.²³ Strategies involve adaptive integration, awareness campaigns, and first-aid training. The EU's Knowledge Network and emphasizes stakeholder cooperation and deployability plans²⁴ Digital volunteerism is rising, requiring inclusive emergency management gaps include limited macro-level research and cross-cultural comparisons

Conclusion and Gaps

Volunteer engagement drives organizational success and resilience, with general literature emphasizing retention and post-pandemic adaptations, and civil protection focusing on informal integration. Gaps persist in organizational impact evaluations, macro-level analyses, and empirical recruitment studies. Future research should prioritize mixed-methods, global perspectives, and digital/hybrid engagement evaluations to address evolving challenges in Europe's civil protection landscape.

Case Studies

Spain, France, Hungary, and Greece reflects the diversity of civil protection volunteer engagement models within the European Union. These cases illustrate different institutional arrangements—from decentralized, municipality-based systems to highly regulated national frameworks and NGO-led models—while sharing a common reliance on volunteers as a core pillar of disaster preparedness, response, and community resilience. European policy and research consistently underline the strategic role of volunteers in expanding response capacity and strengthening local

²¹ Kuhlicke, C., et al. (2020). The engagement of informal volunteers in disaster management in Europe. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 47, 101614. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S221242092200632X>

²² Strandh, V., & Eklund, N. (2018). Emergent groups in disaster response: A review of research on spontaneous volunteers. *Risk, Hazards & Crisis in Public Policy*, 9(2), 151–173. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/rhc3.12134>

²³ Kragt, D., & Holtrop, D. (2020). Volunteer resilience in emergency management: A systematic review. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 28(4), 456–467. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1468-5973.12320>

²⁴ European Commission. (2021). EU Civil Protection Knowledge Network. <https://civil-protection-knowledge-network.europa.eu/>

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resilience across these governance contexts (European Commission, 2020; European Commission, 2023; Whittaker et al., 2022).²⁵

Spain: Decentralized Civil Protection Volunteering within a Public Administration Framework

Context and Structure: Spain's civil protection volunteer system is embedded in a decentralized governance model, with responsibilities distributed across national, regional, and municipal levels. Civil protection volunteers are primarily organized at the local and regional level and operate under the coordination of public authorities, in line with national civil protection legislation and regional regulatory frameworks. Volunteers are formally integrated into municipal emergency plans and cooperate closely with professional emergency services, reflecting a public-administration-linked model of volunteering (European Commission, 2020).

Role and Impact: Spanish civil protection volunteers play a key role in responding to floods, wildfires, extreme weather events, missing persons searches, and public safety operations during large events. Their strong territorial presence allows rapid mobilization and effective coordination with local authorities. Beyond emergency response, volunteers contribute to prevention and preparedness through awareness campaigns, training activities, and community-based risk education, reinforcing local resilience and preparedness capacities (European Commission, 2023).

Engagement Strategies: Engagement in Spain is closely linked to community attachment and civic responsibility, with training serving as a central pillar of volunteer participation. Training typically combines theoretical instruction with practical exercises and joint operations with professional responders, a practice associated with higher retention and operational readiness in civil protection contexts (Studer & von Schnurbein, 2013)²⁶. However, engagement and retention are influenced by territorial disparities, as access to resources, equipment, and recognition varies across regions and municipalities.

Hungary: NGO-Led Volunteering within a Centralized Disaster Management Framework

Context and Structure: Hungary's civil protection system is centrally coordinated by national disaster management authorities, while volunteer engagement is largely organized through NGOs, voluntary rescue teams, and civil associations. These organizations operate under formal cooperation agreements with public authorities,

²⁵ Whittaker, J., McLennan, B., & Handmer, J. (2022). *The engagement of informal volunteers in disaster management*. International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction. Retrieved from <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S221242092200632X>

²⁶ Studer, S., & von Schnurbein, G. (2013). *Organizational factors affecting volunteers: A literature review on volunteer coordination*. Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 24(2), 403–440. Retrieved from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11266-012-9268-y>

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enabling volunteers to support professional responders during emergencies. This reflects a model where volunteering is legally recognized but operationally dependent on civil society structures (European Commission, 2020).

Role and Impact: Hungarian civil protection volunteers are especially active in flood response, technical rescues, search operations, and disaster recovery, particularly in rural and flood-prone areas. Their local knowledge and specialized skills enhance response effectiveness during prolonged emergencies and complement state-led capacities, in line with findings on the value of community-based volunteerism in disaster contexts (Whittaker et al., 2022).

Engagement Strategies: Volunteer engagement in Hungary is strongly driven by local solidarity and personal commitment to community safety. Training and certification are central to participation and are often required for operational deployment. However, studies highlight that limited resources and uneven institutional recognition can negatively affect retention in NGO-led models, underlining the importance of stronger public–civil society cooperation (Studer & von Schnurbein, 2013; European Commission, 2020).

Greece: Volunteer-Centered Civil Protection in a Context of Recurrent Disasters

Context and Structure: Greece's civil protection system relies heavily on volunteer organizations, particularly in regions frequently affected by wildfires, earthquakes, floods, and search and rescue operations. Volunteer groups often emerge from local initiatives and operate in cooperation with municipalities and national emergency services. While volunteering is formally recognized within the civil protection framework, levels of material, organizational, and psychosocial support remain uneven (UfM Secretariat, 2021).

Role and Impact: Greek civil protection volunteers are deeply engaged in frontline emergency response, including wildfire prevention and suppression support, evacuation assistance, first aid, logistics, and post-disaster recovery. They also play an important role in preparedness and prevention activities, such as fire patrols and public awareness campaigns. Their sustained involvement across successive crises highlights both the resilience and the vulnerability of volunteer-based response systems (Whittaker et al., 2022).

Engagement Strategies: Engagement in Greece is largely sustained by strong altruistic motivation, community solidarity, and a sense of civic duty. Training and operational experience are key drivers of retention, consistent with evidence linking skill development and meaningful participation to sustained volunteering (Einolf, 2018). At the same time, repeated exposure to high-intensity emergencies increases the risk of burnout, underscoring the need for stronger recognition, access to equipment, and psychosocial support mechanisms (Savoia et al., 2021).

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France: Institutionalized Volunteering within a Regulated Civil Security System

Context and Structure: France represents a highly institutionalized model of civil protection volunteering. Volunteers operate mainly through officially recognized civil security associations—such as the French Red Cross and national civil protection federations—within a clear legal and regulatory framework. National legislation defines training requirements, operational roles, and deployment conditions, ensuring standardized integration of volunteers within the civil security system (Croix-Rouge, 2014; European Commission, 2023).

Role and Impact: French civil protection volunteers provide first aid, emergency response, shelter management, logistics, and support during major disasters and public events. They are also strongly involved in prevention and preparedness activities, including first-aid training for citizens and safety coverage at mass gatherings. This combination of operational and preventive roles is widely recognized as a key factor in enhancing national surge capacity and community resilience (IFRC, 2019).

Engagement Strategies: Engagement and retention are supported by structured training pathways, certification systems, and formal volunteer status, which contribute to professionalism and clarity of roles. Recognition mechanisms and public visibility further reinforce motivation. At the same time, research highlights the need to balance regulatory requirements with flexibility to sustain long-term engagement, particularly as operational demands increase (Einolf, 2018).

Cross-Cutting Observations

Across Spain, France, Hungary, and Greece, civil protection volunteering is shaped by national legal frameworks, governance traditions, and institutional capacities. While models range from decentralized public-administration systems to highly regulated and NGO-led approaches, common challenges emerge, including ensuring adequate resourcing, harmonized recognition, and sustainable engagement. The literature consistently emphasizes that effective volunteer engagement depends on combining clear institutional frameworks with flexibility, training, and recognition, positioning volunteers as essential actors in European civil protection systems (Einolf, 2018; European Commission, 2023).

Survey and Open Question findings

Description of the survey's responders

The four organisations forming the consortium disseminated a survey through their respective networks, containing both closed-ended and open-ended questions, with the aim of assessing the situation, motivation, and engagement of volunteers. The survey was implemented using the EU Survey platform and was distributed between

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May and June 2025. A total of 123 responses were collected. The geographical distribution, roles performed within the organisation, gender distribution, age, the type of organisation to which they are affiliated and years of experience are reflected as follows.

Table 1: Country distribution

Country	% of Respondents
Greece	43.9%
France	22.0%
Hungary	14.6%
Spain	6.5%
Germany	4.9%
Italy	3.3%
Croatia	2.4%
Estonia	1.6%
Poland	0.8%
Turkey	0.8%

Table 2: Volunteer profiles

Role	% of Respondents
Volunteer	85.4%
Manager / Coordinator	11.4%
Other	3.2%

Table 3: Gender distribution

Gender	% of Respondents
Male	82.9%
Female	14.6%
Non-binary	2.4%

Table 4. Age distribution

Age Range	% of Respondents
20–29 years	12.2%
30–39 years	18.7%
40–49 years	34.1%
50–59 years	26.8%
60+ years	8.1%

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Table 5 Organizational Affiliation

Type of Organization	% of Respondents
NGO (Non-Governmental)	93.5%
Public Administration	6.5%

Table 6. Volunteering Experience Breakdown

Duration	% of Respondents
Less than 1 year	9.8%
1–3 years	16.3%
4–6 years	28.5%
7–10 years	14.6%
More than 10 years	30.9%

The survey results show a strong presence from consortium member countries, with most responses coming from Greece (44%), France (22%), and Hungary (15%). An overwhelming majority of participants (93.5%) are affiliated with non-governmental organizations, while only 6.5% belong to public institutions.

As seen in official statistics—where just 18% of first responders are women—our sample also reflects a gender gap: 83% of respondents are men, while women and non-binary volunteers make up the remaining 17%.

Most volunteers are in their 40s, suggesting a mature and experienced group. Ages range from 21 to 73, with an average age of 45.2 years. Nearly one-third have been volunteering for over 10 years, and more than half have at least 4 years of experience—highlighting a deeply committed and seasoned community.

In terms of roles, 85% serve as field volunteers, while 11% hold managerial or coordination positions. This points to a highly engaged group, actively involved in emergency response, training, and community support across diverse settings.

Motivation of the volunteers

As part of the survey, first responders were asked about the motivations that led them to join a civil protection volunteer program. Respondents were allowed to select more than one option. The following table presents the most frequently mentioned motivations along with their corresponding percentage of occurrence.

Table 7. Volunteers motivation

Motivation	% of responders
Desire to help the community	88%
Personal interest in emergency response	76%
Previous personal experience with emergencies	42%

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Motivation	% of responders
Career development opportunities	18%
Family/friend recommendation	15%
Other	12%

These are additional reasons mentioned by volunteers who selected “Other”, such as:

- Ethical commitment and humanitarian values
- Passion for rescue missions
- Desire to contribute to international operations
- Interest in canine rescue training
- Motivation from previous professional experience (e.g., firefighters, medics)
- Curiosity and personal growth
- Emotional connection to past disasters
- Influence from colleagues or mentors
- Desire to support underprepared communities

The survey reveals that most civil protection volunteers are driven by a strong desire to help their communities and a personal interest in emergency response. Many also cite past experiences with disasters as a key motivator, having witnessed firsthand the importance of timely support. For some, volunteering offers a chance to grow professionally or explore new skills, while others were inspired by friends, family members, or colleagues already involved in similar efforts. A smaller group mentioned more personal reasons, such as ethical values, emotional connections, or the wish to contribute to international missions. Overall, the motivations reflect a blend of altruism, lived experience, and a commitment to making a meaningful difference.

Volunteers with more than 10 years of experience are primarily motivated by a deep desire to help their communities, a strong personal interest in emergency response, and past experiences with disasters. Many of them also mention emotional or ethical reasons, and some have professional backgrounds in firefighting or medical services. Their commitment tends to be long-term and rooted in personal values.

In contrast, volunteers with less than 10 years of experience share similar core motivations—helping others and responding to emergencies—but are more likely to mention career development, curiosity, and the influence of friends or family. Their decision to volunteer is often shaped by recent exposure to disasters or media coverage.

When looking at age and gender, younger volunteers (under 40) are more likely to cite career growth and learning new skills as key motivators. Older volunteers tend to emphasize community service and emotional fulfillment. Gender differences also emerge: while both men and women are driven by altruism, women more frequently mention empathy, emotional connection, and the desire to support vulnerable populations. Men, on the other hand, are more likely to reference operational interest and technical engagement.

Overall, the findings show that civil protection volunteers—regardless of age or gender—are united by a shared commitment to helping others. Their motivations

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vary in depth and origin, but together they form a diverse and dedicated force ready to respond when it matters most.

How volunteers heard about the opportunity

Respondents were asked how they first learned about civil protection volunteer programs. Below are the most commonly mentioned sources of information.

Table 8: Source of information

Source of Information	% of Respondents
Word of mouth (friends/family)	32%
Internet or social media	28%
Events, seminars, or public demos	18%
Professional or workplace contacts	12%
Media (TV, radio, press)	7%
Other	3%

This shows that personal networks and online platforms are the most common ways volunteers discover opportunities. Public events and professional circles also play a key role in outreach.

Volunteer Expectations and Fulfillment

When asked about volunteer's expectations upon joining a civil protection volunteer organization, most respondents expressed a desire to contribute meaningfully to their communities, receive proper training, and be part of a supportive and well-organized team. Many also hoped for personal growth, recognition, and the chance to develop practical skills in emergency response.

Encouragingly, the majority of volunteers reported that their expectations were met. (76% of responders) They highlighted real-life deployments, hands-on training, and strong team spirit as key factors that fulfilled their initial hopes. Volunteers described feeling empowered, valued, and part of something impactful.

However, some respondents noted gaps between expectations and reality. (18% of responders). These included limited access to equipment, lack of institutional recognition, and challenges balancing volunteering with personal or professional responsibilities. A few volunteers mentioned that while their team experience was positive, broader organizational support—especially from public institutions—was lacking. Only 6% of responders showed that their expectations were not met.

Overall, the responses reflect a committed and resilient volunteer base. Most joined with a strong sense of purpose and found their involvement rewarding, both personally and professionally. Yet, there is room for improvement in areas such as

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resource provision, formal recognition, and support systems to ensure long-term engagement and satisfaction.

The following table shows the most common volunteer's expectations.

Table 9: Common expectations

Common Expectations	% of Respondents
Helping the community	82%
Receiving proper training	68%
Being part of a supportive team	54%
Gaining personal or professional growth	47%
Recognition and respect	35%
Participating in real emergency operations	32%
No specific expectations (joined out of curiosity)	9%

Volunteers were asked what they expected when joining a civil protection organization and whether those expectations were met. Most hoped to help their communities, receive proper training, and be part of a supportive team. Nearly three-quarters said their expectations were fulfilled, often citing hands-on experience, skill development, and strong team spirit. Differences emerged across age, experience, and gender: long-term volunteers and older participants emphasized emotional fulfillment and structured missions, while younger and newer volunteers focused more on learning and career development. Women and non-binary respondents were more likely to highlight empathy and inclusion, whereas men leaned toward operational and technical aspects. Overall, the findings reflect a diverse and committed volunteer base, with shared values and varied motivations that evolve over time.

Tasks Performed by Volunteers

Respondents were asked to indicate the types of activities they are involved in as civil protection volunteers. They were allowed to select more than one option. The following table summarizes the most commonly reported tasks, reflecting the diverse roles volunteers play in emergency response and support operations.

Table 10: Task performed

Task Type	% of Respondents
Intervention in emergency situations	92%
Training tasks	78%
Logistic tasks	65%

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Task Type	% of Respondents
Support in administrative tasks	54%
Communication tasks	47%
Other	6%

As “Other” tasks mentioned appears the following:

- Dog search and rescue operations
- Psychological support
- Fundraising and public outreach
- Equipment maintenance
- Medical support during public events

This distribution shows that most volunteers are actively involved in emergency response and training, while many also contribute to logistics, administration, and communication. The presence of specialized roles like canine rescue and psychological support highlights the diversity and adaptability of the volunteer force.

Training assessment

Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with two statements about the training they received as civil protection volunteers: (1) whether the training was adequate and prepared them well for their responsibilities, and (2) whether the training was of high quality and helped them perform their volunteer tasks effectively. They answered using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “strongly disagree,” 2 “disagree,” 3 “neither agree nor disagree,” 4 “agree,” and 5 “strongly agree.” Most volunteers gave positive ratings, with over three-quarters agreeing or strongly agreeing that the training was both adequate and high quality. This suggests that training programs are generally well-designed and play a key role in preparing volunteers for their duties. The training ratings distribution is shown in the following table:

Table 11: Training ratings.

Rating	Training Adequacy (%)	Training Quality (%)
1 – Strongly disagree	2.4%	1.6%
2 – Disagree	4.1%	3.3%
3 – Neutral	14.6%	12.2%
4 – Agree	36.6%	38.2%
5 – Strongly agree	42.3%	44.7%

Most respondents gave positive feedback, with over three-quarters agreeing or strongly agreeing that the training prepared them well and helped them perform

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effectively. Female volunteers and those over 60 tended to rate training slightly higher than others. Similarly, those with more than 10 years of experience expressed greater satisfaction, possibly due to more exposure to structured programs or deeper engagement. These findings suggest that while training is generally well-received, newer and younger volunteers may benefit from additional support or tailored onboarding to ensure consistent satisfaction across all groups.

Equipment assessment

Respondents were asked a series of questions about the equipment provided by their organization to support their volunteer activities. First, they were asked whether they had received the necessary equipment to carry out their tasks, with response options being “Yes,” “No,” or “I am not sure.” They were then asked to rate the adequacy and suitability of the equipment using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 5 means “strongly agree.” Finally, they were asked whether the equipment was provided at no cost, with the same response options: “Yes,” “No,” or “I am not sure.” These questions aimed to assess both access to essential gear and the level of support volunteers receive from their organizations.

Most respondents (68%) confirmed that they had received equipment, and over 70% rated its quality positively. As it is shown in the following table:

Table 12: Equipment quality

Rating	Meaning	% of Respondents
1	Strongly disagree	3.3%
2	Disagree	6.5%
3	Neutral	18.7%
4	Agree	36.6%
5	Strongly agree	34.9%

However, nearly one in four said they had not received the necessary gear, and about one-third (32.5%) reported having to pay for it themselves. These findings suggest that while many volunteers are well-equipped, there are still gaps in access and affordability that could affect their ability to perform safely and effectively. Addressing these issues could improve volunteer satisfaction and operational readiness and it will be one of the points addressed in the Lessons Learnt deliverable (A6).

Legal or Policy Framework Support

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Volunteers were asked whether their country has a legal or policy framework that offers support, recognition, or benefits—such as justified work leave, financial aid, or official recognition. Just over half of respondents said such a framework exists, while nearly 40% reported that it does not. A small portion were unsure. In their comments, some volunteers described positive measures like tax incentives, national accreditation systems, and formal recognition. However, many highlighted ongoing challenges, including inconsistent application, lack of financial support, and the need to use personal vacation time for emergency deployments. These responses suggest that while some countries offer meaningful support, others still lack the infrastructure to fully recognize and empower their volunteer force.

Experience after participation in emergency situations.

Based on the data, approximately **84.6%** of respondents indicated that they have participated in emergency situations as volunteers. This highlights a highly active and experienced volunteer base within civil protection programs.

Those who indicated they had participated in emergency situations were asked to assess the usefulness of debriefing sessions and the emotional support they received from their organization. The results are presented in the following tables.

Table 13: Usefulness debriefing sessions

Rating	% of Respondents
1 – Strongly disagree	3.9%
2 – Disagree	6.8%
3 – Neutral	17.5%
4 – Agree	38.8%
5 – Strongly agree	33.0%

Over 71% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that debriefing sessions were helpful in sharing knowledge and experiences.

Table 14: Emotional support

Rating	% of Respondents
1 – Strongly disagree	5.8%
2 – Disagree	9.7%
3 – Neutral	21.3%
4 – Agree	34.0%
5 – Strongly agree	29.2%

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Around 63% felt supported emotionally by their organization during tense emergency situations, though nearly 16% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Volunteers who had participated in emergency situations were asked to evaluate two aspects of their experience: whether post-emergency debriefing sessions helped them share knowledge, and whether they felt emotionally supported by their organization during tense moments. Most respondents gave positive ratings, with over 70% agreeing that debriefings were helpful and 63% feeling emotionally supported. Female and older volunteers tended to rate these aspects slightly higher, and those with more than 10 years of experience expressed the highest levels of satisfaction. These findings suggest that while many organizations provide valuable follow-up and care, newer and younger volunteers may benefit from additional emotional support and structured reflection after emergency deployments.

Volunteer recruitment

Respondents were asked how their organization recruits volunteers for civil protection activities. The most common methods include word of mouth (34%), social media (28%) and participation in public events (17%). Many volunteers also joined through direct applications or interviews (12%), while others were inspired by media (6%) coverage or workplace outreach. These findings suggest that informal networks and visible community engagement play a key role in attracting new volunteers. Strengthening online presence and public demonstrations could further enhance recruitment efforts.

General satisfaction

Volunteers were asked to rate their satisfaction with their role, whether their organization encourages active participation, whether they feel valued and recognized, and whether they receive adequate support. Using a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), the majority of respondents gave positive ratings. Nearly 85% agreed or strongly agreed that they are satisfied with their role, and over 81% felt encouraged to participate actively. Around 76% felt valued and recognized, and 82% said they receive adequate support. These results suggest that most volunteers have a positive experience within their organizations, though a small percentage still feel under-recognized or unsupported. Results are shown in the following table:

Table 15: General satisfaction assessment

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Rating	Satisfaction with Role	Organization Encourages Participation	Feeling Valued and Recognized	Organization Provides Adequate Support
1	1.6%	2.4%	3.3%	2.4%
2	3.3%	4.1%	5.7%	4.1%
3	9.8%	12.2%	14.6%	11.4%
4	36.6%	38.2%	36.6%	37.4%
5	48.8%	43.1%	39.8%	44.7%

In addition, female, older, and more experienced volunteers tended to rate these aspects more highly, suggesting that deeper engagement and longer tenure may enhance the volunteer experience. These findings highlight the importance of sustained support and recognition to maintain motivation and satisfaction across all volunteer demographics.

Keep volunteer motivated

Respondents were presented with an open-ended question asking them to reflect on three aspects of their volunteer experience: what keeps them motivated to continue volunteering over time, how their organization helps them stay engaged and active, and what has been the most rewarding experience in their role. Their answers were grouped into common themes and categories, and the approximate percentage of responses for each theme was estimated. These results are summarized in the following tables to make the findings easier to understand.

Table 16: General motivation

Theme	Approx. % of Respondents
Desire to help others	40–45%
Sense of purpose and fulfillment	30–35%
Team spirit and camaraderie	25–30%
Learning and skill development	20–25%
Recognition and appreciation	10–15%
Emotional connection to past events	5–10%

Table 17: How organization keeps motivation

Strategy	Approx. % of Respondents
Training and development	35–40%
Inclusion and team bonding	30–35%
Recognition (certificates, praise)	20–25%

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Strategy	Approx. % of Respondents
Opportunities for real missions	15–20%
Communication and feedback	10–15%
Leadership or specialized roles	5–10%

Table 18: Rewarding experiences

Experience Type	Approx. % of Respondents
Emergency response missions	45–50%
Saving lives or helping in crises	30–35%
Emotional gratitude from others	25–30%
Personal growth and overcoming fears	15–20%
Training others or sharing knowledge	10–15%

Volunteers shared what keeps them motivated, how their organizations help them stay engaged, and what they consider their most rewarding experiences. Most are driven by a desire to help others and a sense of purpose, while many also value teamwork and personal growth. Organizations support volunteers through training, inclusion, and recognition. The most memorable experiences often involve responding to emergencies, saving lives, and receiving heartfelt thanks. These reflections show that volunteering is not only about helping—it's also about growing, connecting, and making a meaningful impact.

It is important to keep in mind that the open responses revealed meaningful differences in how volunteers experience and interpret their roles, depending on their gender, age, and years of experience. Female volunteers often emphasized emotional fulfillment and team spirit, while male volunteers focused more on training and operational impact. Younger respondents were motivated by learning and career development, whereas older volunteers highlighted legacy and emotional connection. Those with more experience described deeper relationships, mentoring roles, and a strong sense of purpose. These insights suggest that volunteer engagement strategies could be tailored to different demographic groups to better support and inspire long-term involvement.

Inclusivity and Accessibility in Volunteering

Volunteers were asked how their organization works to make volunteering accessible and inclusive for people of different backgrounds, identities, or abilities. Many described efforts to support gender equality, provide language assistance, and accommodate volunteers with disabilities. Some organizations offer flexible

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schedules or reduce costs to support those with limited financial means. However, a portion of respondents were unsure or noted that no specific measures were in place. These findings suggest that while many organizations are making strides toward inclusivity, there is still room to strengthen and clarify their approaches to ensure all volunteers feel welcome and supported

The main findings are summarized in the following table.

Table 19: Strategies identified

Theme	Description	Estimated % of Responses
Gender inclusion	Equal opportunities regardless of gender; some mention of gender balance	~30%
Disability access	Physical accessibility, adapted training, inclusive roles	~20%
Language support	Multilingual materials, interpreters, translated documents	~25%
Socio-economic support	Free equipment, flexible schedules, reduced costs for participation	~15%
General openness	Statements like “everyone is welcome,” “no discrimination”	~40%
Limited or unclear efforts	Some responses indicated uncertainty or lack of specific measures	~10–15%

Main Challenges Faced by Volunteers

Respondents were asked to select as many challenges as they considered relevant to their volunteer experience. The main results are presented below, highlighting the most commonly reported difficulties.

Table 20: Frequently challenges

Challenge	% of Respondents
Lack of resources or equipment	45%
Time constraints	40%
Poor communication within the organization	25%
Emotional or psychological strain	20%
Insufficient training	15%
Lack of recognition	10%

In “Others” the following issues have been identified such challenges in the open question:

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- **Financial burden:** Volunteers often pay for their own equipment or travel
- **Limited institutional support:** Lack of backing from government or employers
- **Bureaucracy and slow decision-making**
- **Difficulty balancing volunteering with work or family life**
- **Feeling excluded from decision-making or operations**
- **Lack of clear role definitions or coordination**

Volunteers were asked to identify the biggest challenges they face in their roles. The most common issues include lack of equipment, time constraints, and poor communication within organizations. Many also reported emotional strain and insufficient training. In open-ended responses, volunteers highlighted additional concerns such as financial burdens, limited institutional support, and bureaucratic obstacles. These findings suggest that while volunteers are highly committed, they often face practical and structural barriers that could be addressed to improve their experience and effectiveness. It is underlined that the challenges reported by volunteers vary depending on their gender, age, and years of experience. Female respondents more often mentioned emotional strain and financial burdens, while male respondents highlighted communication issues. Younger volunteers tended to report time constraints and lack of recognition, whereas older volunteers focused on bureaucracy and institutional gaps. Those with less experience struggled with training and role clarity, while long-term volunteers expressed concerns about sustainability and support. These insights suggest that tailored strategies may be needed to address the specific needs of different volunteer groups.

Volunteer Retention

Respondents were asked whether they had ever considered leaving their volunteer role. 70% said no, 28% said yes, and 2% preferred not to answer. The most common reasons for considering leaving are summarized in the following table.

Table 21: Reasons leaving

Reason Category	Description	Estimated % (among "Yes" responses)
Time constraints	Difficulty balancing volunteering with work/family	~35%
Lack of recognition or support	Feeling undervalued or unsupported by the organization	~25%
Emotional or psychological strain	Stress from emergency situations or lack of care	~20%
Financial burden	Costs related to equipment or travel	~15%
Poor communication or coordination	Frustration with internal processes	~10%
Other	Personal reasons, relocation, change in priorities	~10%

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As it has been said, volunteers were asked whether they had ever considered leaving their role. While the majority said no, nearly one in three had thought about stepping away. Among those, the most common reasons included time constraints, lack of recognition or support, emotional strain, and financial burdens. Some also cited poor communication or personal circumstances. These findings suggest that improving organizational support, flexibility, and recognition could help strengthen volunteer retention and satisfaction.

Female and younger volunteers are more likely to cite emotional strain and time pressures, while male and older volunteers often mention logistical or institutional challenges. Those with less experience tend to struggle with training and role clarity, whereas long-term volunteers face issues like bureaucracy and financial burden. These insights suggest that tailored support strategies—especially for newer and younger volunteers—could help improve retention and satisfaction across civil protection programs.

Suggestions for the organization

Volunteers were asked how their organization could improve engagement. Many suggested more frequent and practical training, better internal communication, and stronger recognition of their efforts. Others emphasized the need for access to equipment, support from public institutions, and opportunities to participate in decision-making. Social bonding activities were also seen as valuable for building team spirit. These insights highlight that volunteer engagement depends not only on operational readiness but also on feeling valued, supported, and connected. Main findings are collected in the following table:

Table 22: Main suggestions for the organizations

Theme	Description	Estimated % of Responses
Better training and skill development	More frequent, hands-on, or specialized training to build confidence	~35%
Improved communication	Clearer internal communication, feedback, and coordination	~30%
Recognition and appreciation	Acknowledging volunteer efforts through awards, certificates, or praise	~20%
Access to equipment and resources	Providing necessary gear without personal cost	~25%
Support from public institutions	More backing from government or employers (e.g., justified leave, funding)	~20%
Inclusive decision-making	Involving volunteers in planning and decisions	~15%
Social bonding and team building	More group activities, events, and shared experiences	~15%

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Theme	Description	Estimated % of Responses
No suggestions / unclear	Some respondents said “I don’t know” or gave vague answers	~10%

Some respondents provided additional suggestions for improving volunteer engagement beyond the predefined options. Many emphasized the need for stronger institutional support, including legal protections and financial aid. Others called for better access to equipment, more inclusive decision-making, and clearer communication. A few highlighted the importance of emotional support and opportunities for leadership. These insights show that volunteers are looking not only for practical resources but also for recognition, involvement, and care from their organizations.

Volunteers were asked to rate communication within their team. Most respondents gave positive ratings, with 75% describing communication as good or excellent. Around 18% rated it as average, and only a small minority—less than 10%—reported poor or very poor communication. These results suggest that internal communication is generally strong across volunteer teams, though there may be room for improvement in some organizations to ensure clarity, coordination, and feedback for all members.

Impact for volunteers

Respondents were asked, “How has volunteering impacted you personally or professionally?” The main responses are summarized in the following table.

Table 23: Impact for volunteers

Theme	Description	Estimated % of Responses
Personal growth	Increased confidence, empathy, resilience	~40%
Sense of purpose and fulfillment	Feeling useful, proud, and emotionally rewarded	~35%
Skill development	Gained leadership, teamwork, crisis management skills	~30%
Expanded social network	Built friendships and connections	~20%
Career benefits	Improved job performance or career clarity	~15%
No significant impact / unclear	Some respondents said “no change” or gave vague answers	~10%

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Volunteers shared how their experience has impacted them personally and professionally. Many described personal growth, emotional fulfillment, and the development of valuable skills such as teamwork and crisis management. Some also noted career benefits and stronger social connections. In terms of suggestions, volunteers called for more institutional support, better equipment, improved training, and clearer communication. Others emphasized the need for public recognition and emotional care. These insights highlight the deep personal value of volunteering and point to practical ways organizations can better support their teams.

The vast majority of respondents—over 90%—said they would recommend volunteering in civil protection to others. This strong endorsement reflects the positive experiences many volunteers have had, including personal growth, meaningful missions, and a sense of community. Only a small number expressed reservations, often related to challenges such as lack of resources or institutional support. Overall, the results suggest that civil protection volunteering is widely valued and seen as a rewarding way to contribute to society.

Conclusion and future directions

The ENG4VOL survey gathered insights from civil protection volunteers across ten European countries, offering a rich perspective on their motivations, experiences, and expectations. Most respondents were long-serving volunteers, deeply committed to their roles and driven by a strong desire to help others and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Their motivations often stemmed from personal values, previous experiences, and a genuine interest in emergency response.

Overall, volunteers expressed satisfaction with their involvement, noting that their expectations—such as receiving training, being part of a team, and making a tangible impact—were largely met. Many highlighted the personal growth and sense of purpose they gained through volunteering. However, some challenges persist, particularly around access to equipment, institutional support, and recognition. While most volunteers received training and gear, a significant number still had to cover costs themselves, and some felt that their contributions were not sufficiently acknowledged.

Inclusivity emerged as another area for improvement. Although many organizations were perceived as open and welcoming, there is still work to be done in terms of gender balance, accessibility, and support for volunteers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. This also connects to the Erasmus+ priority on soft skills, since inclusive practices foster collaboration, empathy, and intercultural communication among volunteers.

Looking ahead, the findings point to several strategic priorities. These include strengthening institutional support—such as providing free equipment and formal recognition—enhancing training programs tailored to different experience levels, and fostering more inclusive environments. Communication within organizations should be improved to ensure volunteers feel heard and valued, and recruitment efforts could benefit from showcasing inspiring stories and engaging younger, more diverse

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audiences. Importantly, volunteers should be actively involved in shaping the future of civil protection efforts, with opportunities to contribute to decision-making and program design.

The results obtained directly address the project's objectives. By mapping the state of the art of volunteer engagement in civil protection and identifying motivations, challenges, and good practices, the study has generated new knowledge that was previously fragmented. These findings not only represent the fulfilment of the project's objective of increasing knowledge but also provide a solid foundation for lessons learnt and future activities. Finally, the survey has also provided valuable content for dissemination, and the results will be made publicly available through the project website and the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform.

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Annex: Survey

Volunteer Engagement in Civil Protection

Fields marked with * are mandatory.



Volunteer Engagement in Civil Protection and Emergency

This questionnaire is part of an Erasmus+ project focused on exploring volunteer engagement in civil protection and emergency response. Your input will help us better understand how to support and strengthen the role of volunteers in these critical fields.

Project Number: 2024-1-FR01-KA210-ADU-000250776

Participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality and analyzed anonymously by the project consortium members. The data collected will be used exclusively for research purposes within the scope of the project. By completing the questionnaire, you consent to the use of your responses under these conditions.

For more information about the project, please visit the project website.

We sincerely appreciate your time and valuable contribution to this important research!

Section 1: General Information

* Type of organization

- ☒ Public Administration (Governmental organization)
- ☐ NGO (Non-Governmental Organization)
- ☐ Others

* Country

1

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- ☐ Austria
- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Bulgaria
- ☐ Croatia
- ☐ Cyprus
- ☐ Czech Republic
- ☐ Denmark
- ☐ Estonia
- ☐ Finland
- ☐ France
- ☐ Germany
- ☐ Greece
- ☐ Hungary
- ☐ Italy
- ☐ Latvia
- ☐ Lithuania
- ☐ Luxemburg
- ☐ Netherlands
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Poland
- ☐ Portugal
- ☐ Rumania
- ☐ Slovakia
- ☐ Slovenia
- ☐ Spain
- ☐ Sweden
- ☐ Turkiye

* Role in the first responders' organization

- ☐ Volunteer
- ☐ Volunteer programme coordinator
- ☐ Manager
- ☐ Other

* Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to say

* Age

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Section 2: Volunteer Engagement Experience

* How long have you been involved in civil protection volunteering?

- ☐ Less than a year
- ☐ 1-3 years
- ☐ 4-6 years
- ☐ 7-10 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

* What motivated you to join a civil protection volunteer program? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Personal interest in emergency response
- ☐ Family/friend recommendation
- ☐ Desire to help the community
- ☐ Career development opportunities
- ☐ Previous personal experience with emergencies
- ☐ Other

If you have selected **other** in the previous question, please, specify

* How did you hear about the volunteer opportunity?

* What were your expectations as volunteer when joining the civil protection organisation?



* Were these expectations met during your engagement?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Please, explain your response

Section 3: Activities and Training

* What kind of tasks do you perform as a volunteer? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Logistic tasks
☐ Communication tasks
☐ Training tasks
☐ Intervention in emergency situations
☐ Support in administrative tasks
☐ Other

If you have selected **other** in the previous question, please, specify

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by selecting a number from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree):



* The training I received before starting my role was adequate and prepared me well for my responsibilities.

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

* The training I received was of high quality and helped me perform my volunteer activities more effectively

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

* Has the organization provided you with the necessary equipment to carry out your volunteer work (e.g., helmet, gloves, boots, etc.)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I am not sure

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement by selecting a number from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree):

* The equipment provided is sufficient and suitable for me to perform my tasks as a volunteer.

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5

* Does the organization provide the necessary equipment at no cost to you as a volunteer?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I do not know

* Is there a legal or policy framework in your country that offers support, recognition, or benefits (e.g. justified work leave, financial aid, official recognition)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I do not know

Please, explain your response



Section 4. Participation in emergency situations

* Have you ever participated as a volunteer in an emergency situation?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If you have selected yes in the previous question, please indicate the level of agreement with the following statements by selecting a number from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree):

After the emergency situation, the debriefing session helped team members share knowledge and experiences.

- ☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ 5

Some of the emergency situations were emotionally tense, and I felt that the organization gave me the support I needed to overcome these situations as a volunteer.

- ☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ 5

Section 5: Engagement Strategies

* How does your organization recruit volunteers?

Disclaimer:



Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by selecting a number from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree):

* The organization provides adequate support to help me succeed in my volunteer role.

- ☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ 5

* I am satisfied with my role as a volunteer in the organization.

- ☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ 5

* The organization encourages active participation and involvement from volunteers

- ☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ 5

* I feel valued and recognized in my volunteer role

- ☐ 1
☐ 2
☐ 3
☐ 4
☐ 5

What keep you motivated to continue volunteering over the time?



*

* In what ways does the organization motivate volunteers to stay engaged and active?

* What has been the most rewarding experience in your volunteer role?

* How does your organization work to make volunteering accessible and inclusive for people of different backgrounds, identities or abilities? (e.g., gender identity, disabilities, language barriers, socio-economic status)

* Would you recommend volunteering in civil protection to others?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I am not sure

Section 6: Challenges and Improvements

* What are the biggest challenges you face as a volunteer? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Lack of resources/equipment
☐ Insufficient training
☐ Poor communication within the organization
☐ Time constraints
☐ Emotional/psychological strain
☐ Other

If you have selected **other** in the previous question, please, specify



* Have you ever considered leaving your volunteer role?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

If you have selected **yes** in the previous question, please, specify why

* How could volunteer engagement be improved in your organization?

* How would you rate communication within the team?

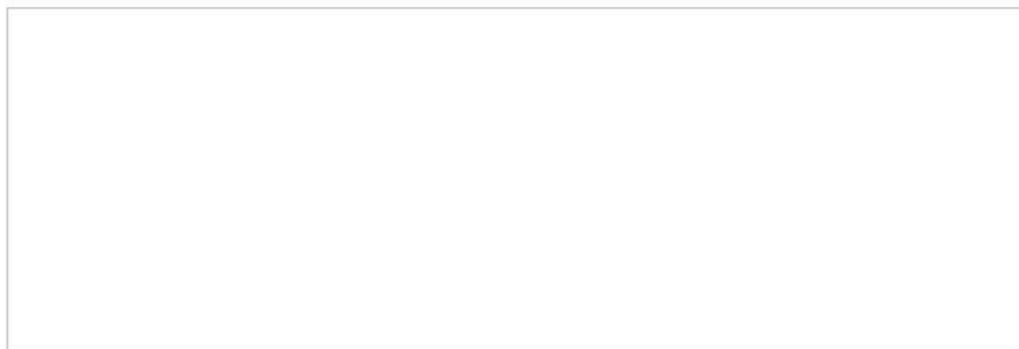
- ☐ Very poor
- ☐ Poor
- ☐ Average
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Excellent

Section 7: Additional Feedback

* How has volunteering impacted you personally or professionally?

Any additional comments or suggestions?

Disclaimer:



Thank you very much for your participation!

Contact

[Contact Form](#)

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