



Skills acquired through
Volunteering in Sport

V4V PROJECT TO ANALYSE AND MAKE VISIBLE THE SKILLS ACQUIRED THROUGH VOLUNTEERING IN SPORT IN EUROPE

- Second Full Partner Meeting, Research Progress -

Press Release – 15th October 2021

15th October 2021 saw the second full partner meeting for V4V, another innovative project coordinated by the European Observatoire of Sport and Employment (EOSE) and funded through the European Commission's Erasmus+ Sport programme. The partners had hoped to convene in Romania, but due to the ongoing COVID pandemic, they agreed to meet online. The purpose of the meeting was for partners to review progress in the desk research and interview component of output 1 – a comprehensive mapping of the volunteer workforce.

Since the project's kick-off in May 2021, much good work has been done. Under the leadership of Hungary's University of Physical Education (UPE), the project formed a research subgroup which devised three different research templates, appropriate to each of the main categories of partner: national representatives, international sport federations and European/worldwide organisations. The templates cover many key questions vital to understanding sport volunteering in Europe, for example, definitions of volunteers, relevant legislation and national policies/programmes, the cultural history and context to volunteering, quantitative data on volunteering, barriers and incentives, COVID impact, recruitment, retention, and volunteer management.

Over a three-month period since July 2021, all partners have been hard at work digging up relevant information and data for countries, regions or sports. In parallel, the partners have also been interviewing sport volunteers to get a better grasp of their experiences and perspectives. The outputs from this research cover 18 countries and sports, and Europe as a whole, amounting to over 1,000 pages in total. Interviews were completed for 55 volunteers with more expected to come in.

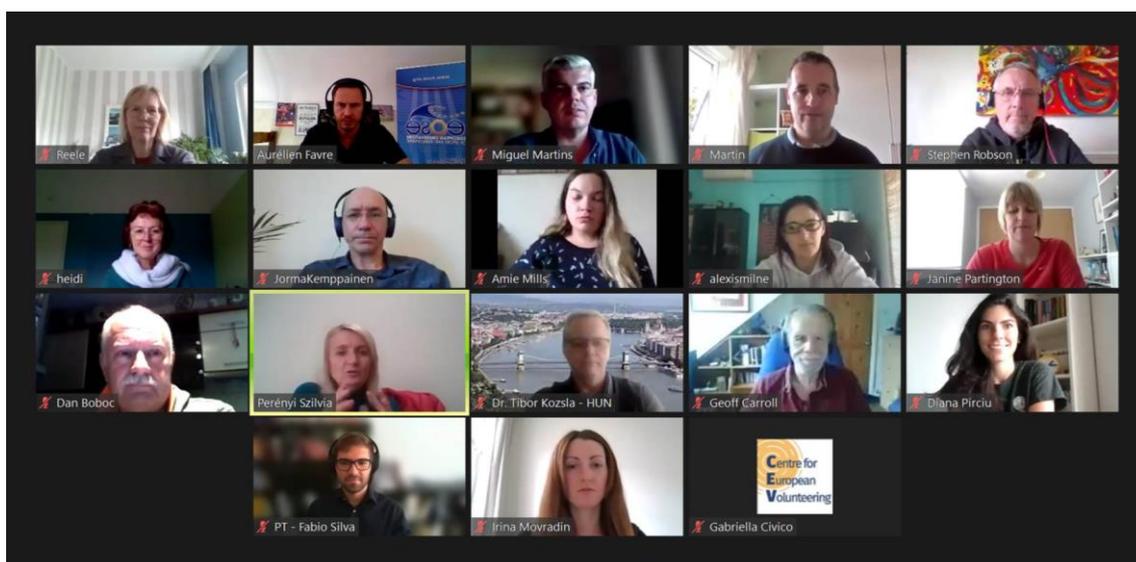
At the meeting, each partner provided a brief update on what they had done and their most significant findings. This was followed by a presentation from Drs Judit Farkas and Szilvia Perényi from UPE who provided a comprehensive summation of all main findings across all the partner research templates and interviews, bringing to light key themes and challenges.

Geoff Carroll, EOSE's Skills Development Director, said *"The determination shown by the V4V partners has been breath-taking. Each consortium member has carried out extremely detailed and diligent research in a short space of time and revealed a host of highly relevant issues which provide a brilliant foundation for the next phases. Motivation and commitment are high, and we are confident that V4V will deliver really practical, evidence-based solutions to the benefit of sport volunteers and the sector as a whole."*

At the next meeting in November 2021, partners will use the research findings to devise a major online survey of sport organisations across Europe to learn more about how volunteers are deployed and managed, the major challenges they face in recruitment and retention and the solutions they apply. Of particular importance will be discovering more about the volunteer skills and competences which organisations value and the formal and informal learning that takes place. The survey will launch in early 2022 and will be of interest to all stakeholders in the sport sector.

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About V4V

The project aims to provide practical solutions to some key challenges in the world of sport volunteering. There is substantial evidence over many years that volunteers are vital to sport. They give freely of their time and energy, but they also gain much informal learning through their voluntary work. One of V4V's founding principles is that, if there is a way to make these skills and competences visible, this could be a powerful incentive to engaging more volunteers. As appropriate to the ambitions and needs of individual volunteers, making their skills and competences visible could also ease their transition into paid employment, help career progression and begin to address some of the sectoral skill shortages which other research, such as EOSE's ESSA-Sport project has revealed. Another challenge is that sport volunteering is in decline, and it is vital we do more to care for and retain sport volunteers and make better use of what they can contribute.

With the support of 12 high profile expert partners from the European sport sector, V4V aims to provide the following outputs:

- > *A comprehensive mapping of sport volunteer workforce*
- > *A digital toolkit for volunteer recruitment, retention and management*
- > *An online competency-based self-assessment tool so volunteers can identify and showcase skills and competences gained through volunteering experiences*
- > *The first ever European Sport Volunteering Skills Summit*

Full list of partners:

- > *European Observatoire of Sport and Employment (EOSE) - France/ EU*
- > *International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA) - Denmark / Global*
- > *European Volunteer Centre (CEV) - Belgium / EU*
- > *World Rugby - Ireland / Global*
- > *International Judo Federation Academy Foundation (IJF) - Malta / Global*
- > *Romanian Football Federation (FRF) - Romania*
- > *Finnish Athletics Federation (SUL) - Finland*
- > *Sport and Recreation Alliance (SRA) - United Kingdom*
- > *Portuguese Institute of Sport and Youth (IDPJ) - Portugal*
- > *Estonian Foundation of Sports Education and Information (FSEI) - Estonia*
- > *National Institute for Sport Research (NISR) - Romania*
- > *University of Physical Education (UPE) - Hungary*
- > *Leeds Beckett University (LBU) - United Kingdom*

