Youth Voluntary Work in Ljubljana[*]

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ABSTRACT

By conducting this research we wished to gain insight into the characteristics of voluntary work of young people in Ljubljana and form guidelines for encouraging young people to participate in voluntary activities. For this purpose, we gathered information about the forms and ranges of voluntary work of young people, about the characteristics of how voluntary work is carried out in various organisations and also about the challenges organisations face in carrying out voluntary work and in enrolling young people in voluntary work. We also examined by what young people are motivated to participate in voluntary work and studied their experience with such work. We conducted a survey on social representations of voluntary work among secondary school pupils in Ljubljana.

Voluntary work in Ljubljana in organised mainly within various societies, but less in public or private institutions. It is most commonly implemented in the field of social inclusion, social security and free time activities. Volunteers work mainly with children and adolescents, people with special needs and elderly people. Volunteers usually participate in projects as assistants and can decide on both the subject as well as the realization of activities and can also participate in the evaluation. In most organisations, volunteers have an introductory training and are further assisted during the work itself by other volunteers and mentors. The reason why young people decide for voluntary work is that they wish to do something useful, help people, gain social experience or examine their career options. Motivation of volunteers changes in the course of voluntary work in accordance with their expectations and assessment of their efficiency. Interpersonal relations within the organisation and the methods of work are also important. By participating in voluntary work, young people feel more useful, become more resourceful, confident and socially skilled and they also gain professional knowledge. The most important values of volunteers are reliability and responsibility, but they also strive for tolerance, creativity, confidence, sociability and solidarity. The most common challenges in voluntary work are of financial nature, but inappropriate motivation of volunteers and organisational problems (e.g. the lack of staff) are also a common obstacle.

The social representations of voluntary work among secondary school pupils in Ljubljana are in accordance with most of the characteristic traits of voluntary work as regard to the public recognition and values of volunteers, the most important fields of voluntary participation and evaluation of its effects on an individual. Voluntary work has a positive connotation for secondary school pupils and they have mostly positive attitudes about it. The perception of voluntary work is above all connected with the type of schooling, but partly also with their gender, age and their experience with voluntary work.

Key words:
voluntary work, young people, motivation, work organisation, social representations

STARTING POINTS

Voluntary work is the type of work which people decide for by themselves, voluntarily, for the purpose of benefiting others and are not financially rewarded for it. Voluntary work is not only beneficiary for the recipients but also for the community and the volunteers themselves. They fulfil special needs of the recipients and dismiss dissatisfaction. Within the community voluntary work strengthens solidarity and people's interpersonal relations. Consequently the social cohesiveness of the society is strengthened. Volunteers gain a greater trust in themselves and their social responsibility, they gain new knowledge, experience, they develop social skills, a wide social network of acquaintances and friends, etc.

In Slovenia there is no reliable information about the range of voluntary work, about its characteristics, challenges, developmental needs and organisations, which carry out voluntary work in various aspects of social life. There is also no database on the basis of which it would be possible to observe the temporal and generational changes in the number of volunteers and the types of work carried out voluntarily. In Slovenia the legal foundations which would legalise the existence of voluntary work are not settled. The organisations, financing and development of voluntary activities are not systematic; indeed, they are left to coincidences, knowledge and resourcefulness of individuals. Within the research carried out in 2005 (Grill et. al. 2006) we gathered information about the types and range of voluntary work of young people in Slovenia, about the characteristics of its implementation in various organisations and about the challenges organisations face in executing voluntary work and enrolling young people in it. The voluntary organisations of the Municipality of Ljubljana gave us information for the purpose of this research. In this study, we compared these characteristics with the characteristics of voluntary work of young people in other parts in Slovenia.

Besides studying the characteristics of organized voluntary work, we also wanted to study why some young people decide to do voluntary work and others do not. Encouraging young people to participate in voluntary work is one of the four priorities of the European cooperation in the field of young people (besides cooperation, education and better knowledge of young people), which the EU intends to support between 2007 and 2012 (White Book of the European Commission in the field of young people http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/education_culture/newprog/index_en.html). That young people should be especially encouraged to participate in voluntary work can be seen on the basis of the results about the trends of socio-psychological characteristics of young people in Slovenia (e.g. Ule and co-workers 2000). The results show that young people shun away from public and voluntary activities into their private life, family and friends. Their personal well-being and instantaneous achievement of satisfaction and comfort are more important.

The enrolment of young people in various groups in broader social environment outside their family and neighbourhoods, with which they expand their interests and options for various activities, extends throughout the period of youthfulness. Consequently, the chances for active participation in a community become greater, and this contributes to a successful integration of being an adult and active construction of one's own identity. By enrolling in public activities (which voluntary work definitely is) young people broaden their chances for searching, checking and deciding about their own social roles and positions, which is the basis for shaping their own political identities (Flanagan 1998). In accordance with this, it seems necessary to study the identity of young volunteers, especially their social identity shaped through voluntary work. The enrolment of an individual into a specific social group (actual or symbolic) enables the process of identification with it which means that an individual takes over the values, beliefs, understanding his/her environment and specific practices which are characteristic of the group. Consequently, through the reconstruction of social notions which support a certain social identity, an individual develops his/her social identity (Duveen and Lloyd 1990). The social notions direct the perception, understanding and behaviour of an individual through social identity. At the same time, the perception, judgement and behaviour of others towards the individual are motivated by the recognition of the appropriate social identities of an individual in certain situations. The individual is thus treated in accordance with the prescribed (stereotyped) characteristics of a group (see: the theory of social identity Tajfel 1981, the theory of social categorization Turner 1999). We can thus conclude that the knowledge about the social identity of the

volunteers and the social notions of voluntary work enable gaining an insight into the key distinguishing elements between young volunteers and their peers. At the same time it also emphasizes the role of motivation in voluntary work for young people (causes and values, standpoints and expectations about voluntary work, the skills, capabilities and knowledge gained). These are, by knowing the characteristics of voluntary work and the options of inclusion, the key elements for constructing efficient strategies for encouraging young people to participate in voluntary work.

THE PURPOSE AND GOALS

By conducting this research we wished to gain insight into the characteristics of voluntary work of young people in Ljubljana and to form guidelines for encouraging young people to participate in voluntary work. For such purposes we set these goals:

- Study the characteristics of voluntary work of young people in Ljubljana:
    - o types of voluntary organisations which enrol young people
    - o fields of work of volunteers and target groups
    - o range of voluntary work of young people in organisations
    - o forms, methods and strategies of voluntary work of young people
    - o role of young volunteers in organisations
    - o training of young volunteers
    - o mentorship for young volunteers
    - o recruitment and development of young volunteers in organisations
    - o problems and obstacles for voluntary work of young people.

- Study the characteristics of young volunteers:
    - o causes for participating in voluntary work
    - o volunteers' values
    - o expectations about voluntary work
    - o factors which change the motivation for voluntary work
    - o effects of voluntary work (skills and knowledge, personal growth)
    - o support in voluntary work
    - o satisfaction with voluntary work
    - o problems and obstacles in voluntary work.

- Study the social notions of young people about voluntary work:
    - o perception of volunteers (the social reputation of volunteers; the ascribed characteristics)
    - o perception of voluntary work (the meaning and social role of voluntary work; the characteristics and effects of voluntary work)
    - o standpoints about voluntary work.

- Form suggestions for strategies for encouraging young people to participate in voluntary work.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESEARCH

Voluntary Organisations

We asked all the organisations for which we concluded, on the basis of public implementation of voluntary work in the past few years, that they include young people in the voluntary work, to take part in this research. Such organisations are those introduced on the web page prostovoljstvo.org, or those cooperating with the Slovenian philanthropy, or those which have in the past few years enrolled in the public notice of the Slovenian Office of Youth (in 2003 and 2004), the Office of Youth of the Municipality of Ljubljana (in 2003 and 2004), Institute for Promotion of Youth Mobility MOVIT (from 2001 to 2004), Republic of Slovenia Public Fond for Cultural Activities (in 2004). We sent out an invitation with one questionnaire for the organisations and three for their young volunteers to the headquarters of 638 organisations (societies, public and private institutions) – **235 of which are organisations with their headquarters in the Municipality of Ljubljana** (further referred to as ML), that is 39.7% of all the organisations. 180 organisations from all over Slovenia decided to participate in the research (82 did not participate as they do not enrol volunteers, 31 did not participate as their volunteers are not young). We received **filled in questionnaires from 60 organisations** within the ML (57 organisations refused our invitation: 7 of which were sent to the wrong address, 26 organisations do not enrol volunteers, 19 organisations do not enrol young people as volunteers, 5 organisations turned down our invitation because of their too tight schedules). The response of the ML organisations was 33.7% (if we included the responses which turned down our invitation, the response would be 49.8%). The voluntary organisations from the ML which accepted our invitation represent one third of all the participating organisations from Slovenia (the same ratio is between all the invited voluntary organisations are those with their headquarters in the ML).

Out of the 60 participating organisations from the ML, 36 are a society, 14 are a public institution, 6 are a private institution, and 4 are of a different legal status (e.g. an organisation for invalids). In comparison with voluntary organisations from other parts of Slovenia, there is a higher degree of participation of the ML in the societies (*ML : SLO* = 60.0%:37.5%) and the private institutions (*ML : SLO* = 10.0% : 5.0%) and a lower degree of participation of the ML public institutions (*ML : SLO* = 23.3% : 54.2%).

In the summer 2005, the representatives of organisations filled in questionnaires about the characteristics of organising voluntary work, the support they offer to the volunteers and the obstacles they encounter. The questions were mainly of the multiple choice type, some were also open-ended questions. In this study we compared the analysed characteristics of the Ljubljana voluntary organisations with the analysed characteristics of other voluntary organisations in Slovenia.

Young Volunteers

430 volunteers from all over Slovenia participated in the research (383 younger than 28). From each of the participating organisation three young volunteers were included in the research, from some only two or one. **140 young volunteers** were from the organisations within the ML, **132 of whom were younger than 35**. Among the participating volunteers in the ML, similarly as in the rest of Slovenia, three quarters were women, **one quarter were men**. They were from 16 to 34 years old, on the average 23.7 years old, the majority of them were 23. **More than half (60%) were older adolescents** between 19 and 24, one third were young adults between 25 and 35; only 5% of the volunteers were middle adolescents from 15 to 18 years old. In comparison with the volunteers from other parts of Slovenia, there is a statistically significant lower degree of the middle adolescents who volunteer, and a higher degree of older adolescents and young adults.

The majority of the participating volunteers in the ML (71%) have finished high school, one fifth (21,4%), have a Bachelor's degree. 5.3% of the participating volunteers have finished primary school, 2,3% have a Master's degree. In comparison with the sample of volunteers from other Slovenian organisations, there is a lower degree of volunteers with a primary school education in the ML, but a higher degree of volunteers with all other higher levels of education. The majority of the

participating volunteers in the LC were **students** (64.4%) – similar as other Slovenian organisations – more than one tenth were employed (13.6%) or unemployed (11.4%), less than one tenth was secondary school pupils (6.8%). All other participants were either retired or employed in some other way. Thus, we can conclude that the Ljubljana organisations if compared to other Slovenian organisations include less secondary school pupils and more students.

The mother tongue of the majority of the participating volunteers in the ML is **Slovenian** (88.6%). One tenth of the participating volunteers spoke other mother tongues. More than half of the participating volunteers **are not religiously defined (53.4%)** or they claim they never participate in religious ceremonies, one fourth participate in religious ceremonies only at important festivals (26%). More than one tenth of the volunteers (12.2%) participate in religious ceremonies once or twice a week. Other volunteers participate in religious ceremonies more than once a year (5.3%) or at least once a month (2.3%) or almost every day (0.8%).

All the young volunteers filled in the questionnaire about the characteristics of the voluntary work they attend, about their motivation and the obstacles they encounter. The majority of the questions were of the multiple choice type for the volunteers as well as for the organisations.

Focus Groups

To study the changing motivation of volunteers during voluntary work we invited young volunteers to join the focus groups according to the target groups of people with whom young people in the ML most often implement voluntary work: children, adolescents, elderly, people with special needs and people with mental disabilities. The participants in the group interviews were: **20 young volunteers** from 15 to 27 years old, three of whom were men and 17 were women who work in **17 different volunteer organisations in the ML** in the field of health and social care, prevention of violence, drug abuse, human rights abuse, social integration and free time activities. Thus, we formed **5 focus groups** according to the similarities of the target groups of the person with whom the volunteers worked: **children, adolescents, elderly and marginal groups** (2 focus groups included the volunteers who worked with addicts, people with special needs, people with mental disabilities, victims of violence, people from minorities and asylums). In March 2006 we carried out half-structured interviews about the motivation for voluntary work in all 5 focus groups.

Sample of the Ljubljana Secondary School Pupils

We studied the social representations of young people about voluntary work by conducting a questionnaire with the Ljubljana secondary school pupils in March and April 2006. **683 secondary school pupils** from 12 Ljubljana secondary schools participated in the study (7 technical (and vocational) schools and 5 grammar schools). Each school chose 1 division from the second year and 1 division from the fourth year of the technical or grammar school. In two technical schools we also included 1 division from the first and third year of vocational department. Thus the sample equally includes pupils at the beginning and end of their secondary school education. The study included 272 grammar school pupils (39.8%), 310 technical school pupils (45.4%) and 101 vocational school pupils (14.8%). According to the percentage of pupils who attend these three types of secondary schools in Ljubljana the sample percentages do not differ significantly. However, if compared with the pupils from these three types of secondary schools in Slovenia, the sample portions are significantly different. Thus, we can conclude that the sample is representative of the population of secondary school pupils in the ML.

The participating secondary school pupils were between 14 and 20 years old, most frequently 18 (35.7%) or 16 (31.0%). Both genders were equally represented in the sample. The arrangement of male and female secondary school pupils in the three types of secondary schools was equal only within the technical secondary schools, in grammar schools the percentage of females was higher, and the percentage of males was higher in vocational secondary schools.

The majority of the secondary school pupils have never participated in voluntary work (63.7%); about one third has experience in voluntary work (36.3%). Among those with experience the

majority come from vocational secondary schools (44.1%), which is more than from technical secondary schools (39.4%) or grammar secondary schools (30.1%). The participation in voluntary work depended on individual secondary schools attended by the pupils. If compared with male participants (29.7%), the percentage of female participants with some experience in voluntary work is higher (43.1%).

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF VOLUNTARY WORK

The Number of Volunteers

We received the data on the number of volunteers from 80% of the organisations. We received the data on the number of other types of workers within the organisations who are employed in some other way (full time, part time, public work) from only about half the organisations. The data gathered show that the organisations usually have from 5 to 15 or 20 volunteers, some even 100, 200, 300 or even 1000, 2000 or 2500. As the span of the number of volunteers is so great ($M = 119.3$; $SD = 423.9$) the average is not an important information. According to the number of volunteers we can probably classify organisations into small, medium and large voluntary organisations, but we cannot comment on the percentage of these types of organisations neither in the ML nor in Slovenia.

In most of the organisations (more than a half) the number of volunteers this year is equal to the number last year, one third of the organisations have more volunteers than last year in less than one tenth of the organisations the number of the volunteers this year is smaller than last year. In four out of five organisations they wished to have more volunteers than so far. If compared to the voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisation have a statistically more stable number of volunteers, the yearly growth is smaller and so is the yearly decrease. The wish for a higher number of volunteers is statistically smaller than in the voluntary organisations in other parts of Slovenia.

The Range of Voluntary Work

The ML organisations participate with the volunteers up to 15 years, most commonly 2 years. The young volunteers have on average 3.9 year experience with voluntary work. The majority of the volunteers have more than 1 year of experience in the organization they currently work, 2.3 years on the average.

The organisations usually carry out four projects or programmes with the volunteers, on the average the volunteers have a chance to work with 13.7 projects. In most of the organisations each volunteer is included in one project, on the average in 2.7 projects.

Voluntary work in organisations ranges up to 35 hours a week, on the average 4.4 hours. In the organisations where volunteers can enrol in voluntary work monthly they participate up to 10 days a month, on the average 1.8 days a month. According to statements of young volunteers, they worked on the average 6.2 hours a week or 6.9 days a month in 2004/05. The range of work is similar in other organisations elsewhere in Slovenia.

The Role of Volunteers in Organisations

For about one fourth of the organisations voluntary work is a way of carrying out other activities. For more than one third of the organisations voluntary work is one of the most important activities, for one third of the organisations voluntary work is as equally important as other activities. For only one tenth of the organisations voluntary work is less important than other activities.

Most commonly, volunteers help in the implementation of projects (in two out of three organisations). In less than one third of the organisations the volunteers can implement their own projects, in less than one tenth of the organisations they carry out the same work as the people employed. The majority of young volunteers (four fifths) can carry out their own project within the organisation, even though only one fourth (28.2%) actually take advantage of this. Those who have already realised their project are in the majority satisfied with the support of the organisation.

In most organisations the volunteers are assistants or co-workers on projects often they are also team workers or independent executors. In the least of the organisations the volunteers have the role of a mentor or supervisor. Their role in most organisations is not simple in fact it is a combination of several roles (usually two) according to the work assignments they implement. In other organisations in Slovenia volunteers have similar roles. In comparison with other Slovenian organisations the volunteers in the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher role of a team worker.

The Inclusion of Volunteers in Decision-making in the Organisations

In most organisations (three out of four) the volunteers are included in the decision-making of the ways of implementing projects and in the evaluation of the projects. Frequently (in 71% of the organisations) the volunteers are also included in the preparation that is the plan of the content of the projects. In 40% of the organisations they can decide on the distribution of work among co-workers, in 28% of the organisations they can also choose their co-workers. In most organisations volunteers can participate in three types of decision-making. In comparison with other Slovenian organisations the volunteers in the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher percentage of evaluation of projects and in decisions on other matters.

About 8% of the volunteers participating in the questionnaire are not included in any type of decision-making. This relatively low percentage of volunteers not involved in decision-making is still too high as we believe that the inclusion of volunteers in decision-making strengthens the volunteers' obligation for the realisation of individual activities and thus encourages their work motivation.

International Volunteer Exchange

Among the organisations participating in the research one fifth of the Ljubljana organisations are included in the European Voluntary Service (EVS). 15% participate as a host organisation, 6.7% as a sending organisation. In 2004 each organisation hosted one, two or three volunteers, usually two. In the same year one or four young volunteers from individual organisation participated in voluntary work abroad.

The Possibility of Employing Volunteers

The volunteers have the possibility to become employed in more than one third of the organisations. In the last ten years no one has been employed in almost two thirds of the participating organisations. If employment has taken place, it was most frequently of one or two people. Most of the young volunteers (73.5%) would like to be employed in a similar field of work as their voluntary work.

THE CONTENT OF VOLUNTARY WORK

The Field of Activities

The ML organisations most commonly implement voluntary work in social inclusion (63.3%), social security (58.3%) and free time activities (50%). In one third of the organisations they implement voluntary work in human rights and discrimination, in a slightly lower number of organisations they implement voluntary work in sport-recreational activities and offer personal assistance. In about one fourth of the organisations they implement voluntary work in the prevention of violence in one fifth they implement cultural-artistic activities. The majority of organisations implement voluntary work in several fields, four on the average. It is more common for societies than public institutions to implement voluntary work in the field of culture, human rights and discrimination. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana

organisations have a statistically lower degree of implementing cultural-artistic activities and tourism but have a higher degree of implementing activities in the field of human rights and discrimination.

Target Groups

In the majority of the organisations the volunteers implement activities with more than one target group (three on the average). Most organisations implement voluntary work with adolescents (68.3%), half of the organisations implement voluntary work with children (50%). Frequently they also organise voluntary work with people with special needs (28.3%) and elderly (21.7%). In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of working with immigrants.

Work Assignments of the Volunteers

In most organisations the volunteers implement more than one assignment, five on the average. In the majority of the organisations, two thirds, the volunteers socialise with the users and accompany them in the activities. In a slightly smaller portion of organisations the volunteers organise events, in half of the organisations they implement education or training. Frequently, in two out of five organisations, volunteers help with the technical chores or do administrative work. In more than one third of the organisations the volunteers carry out study help. Besides all the mentioned assignments volunteers, they also implement creative workshops, give legal advice and work with political or sport activities in some organisations. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of implementing education and training, organisation of events, help with technical chores, carry out administrative work and others.

Evaluation of Voluntary Work

In 70% of the ML organisations they implement evaluation of voluntary work. Among the answers to the question what is the most important criterion for evaluation of the quality of the implementation of programmes / projects of voluntary work, the most frequently mentioned was the satisfaction of the users (in half of the participating organisations) followed by the fulfilment of the goals and the satisfaction of the volunteers.

Cooperation among Organisations

Most frequently the organisations cooperate with one another in exchanging experience of good practice or in the implementation of joint projects. Cooperation is also frequent in the organisation of joint educations of volunteers or in joint promotion of voluntary work. Seldom, the voluntary organisations share space or equipment. Three quarters of the organisations chose more than one of the listed choices of cooperation, four on the average. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of cooperation in the promotion of voluntary work and in exchanging experience of good practice.

Mostly, the organisations cooperate with uniform organisations with which they share a joint field of work or target group, frequently they also cooperate with organisations from which they get volunteers or those which are in charge of the support for the voluntary work. Youth centres and youth organisations cooperate mainly among themselves but also with social work centres and organisations for voluntary work and other organisations. Student clubs cooperate mainly with the youth centres and youth organisations, but also frequently with other student organisations, cultural societies and other organisations, and also with primary schools. Social work centres mainly cooperate with primary and secondary schools, frequently also with humanitarian organisations and organisations for voluntary work. Retirement homes mainly cooperate with secondary schools, primary schools and faculties as well as other organisations. The organisations for the people with special needs cooperate most

frequently with faculties and secondary schools and also among themselves and other organisations for voluntary work.

THE FINANCING OF VOLUNTARY WORK

Financial Resources and Means for Voluntary Work

The voluntary organisations receive the bulk of financial means from government and communal resources or their own resources. They get the least means from various foundations, sponsors the European Union or affiliation fees.

In almost half of the ML organisations the financial support in 2004 was the same as the year before, in more than one fourth of the organisations the support was smaller and in less than one fourth the financial support was bigger. Two fifths of the organisations did not give us the data on the amount of the financial support in 2004. In all other organisations the financial support is very different from a few hundred thousand tolars (the Slovenia currency) to seven hundred million tolars. Less than a third of the organisations received financial support especially for voluntary work which is on the average less than one tenth of all the financial means of an organisation.

Financial Support for the Volunteers

In two out of three organisations the volunteers receive fare refund in more than half of the organisations the volunteers also receive pay for all the material costs during the implementation of voluntary work.

Financial rewards for voluntary work in Ljubljana are on the average about 5,000 tolars ($SD = 12,000$ SIT), in other parts of Slovenia the rewards are about 1,600 tolars ($SD = 5,000$ SIT). Such difference is also statistically characteristic. Only 13.6% of the young volunteers say they get a financial compensation for their voluntary work. The financial compensation is between 1,000 to 5,000 SIT, but some volunteers get up to 10, 20, 25 or 45,000 SIT.

THE ORGANISATIONS' SUPPORT FOR THE VOLUNTEERS

The Demands of Voluntary Work

In three out of four organisations the volunteers have to meet special demands to implement voluntary work. Most frequently the demand is for the volunteers to attend the introductory training (82.6%). Often, the organisations demand special skills and knowledge from the volunteers (47.8%). Besides the listed demands, some organisations also added specific personality traits (responsibility, empathy, kindness…), suitable motivation, impunity, psycho–physical health and the fulfilment of work obligations and rules of the organisation. The organisations have specified mainly more than one demand to carry out voluntary work, two on the average. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher demand for the introductory training, special skills and knowledge and for a specific gender of the volunteer.

The Activities with the Volunteers in Organisations

In the majority of the organisations there are five people included in the activities with the volunteers. In some organisations all the workers deal with the volunteers (and they can be volunteers themselves). In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of people who deal with volunteers.

Most frequently the other workers assist volunteers as mentors (94.7%) or they cooperate in the implementation of the programme (86%). They offer special trainings and educations for the volunteers (77.2%), and also do the necessary administrative work (68.4%) and the fund-raising (64.9%). They are less frequently in charge of informing about the work, informing the public and the

development of programmes for the volunteers (in half of the organisations). Working with volunteers is mainly a part of their work assignments only the cooperation in implementing voluntary programmes is, in most organisations, a primary task of the workers who deal with volunteers.

The Education and Support for the Volunteers

In most organisations (more than 80%) the volunteers are educated through mentor guidance, information about their work, the introductory training and also interpersonal exchange of information. Organisations listed, on the average, six forms of education and support for the volunteers. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of almost all forms of education (introductory training and the following qualification in the organisation, mentorship and supervising groups, information about their work and information about the possibilities of education outside the organisation, literature for self-training and other types of education).

The Rewards for the Volunteers

Almost all the organisations use more than one way of rewarding volunteers, on the average four to five. The most common reward for the volunteers (in four out of five organisations) is verbal praise. In two out of three organisations a common reward is also a written acknowledgement for the work carried out, a reference for future job search or a trip or picnic for all the volunteers. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of issuing written acknowledgements and references for future job search.

Suitable Rewards for Voluntary Work

The majority of young volunteers (almost three quarters) believe that the most suitable reward for their work is reference for future job search. They also believe (less than half) that verbal praise or written acknowledgement about the work carried out are suitable rewards. About one third of the volunteers believe that a suitable reward is also education, a register of their work in Nefiks or a trip when the work is finished.

Efficiency Factors of Voluntary Work

On the average the representatives of the organisations believe that the motivated volunteers are the most efficient factor in successful implementation of voluntary work, followed by a professionally planned programme, financial means and qualified managers. The least important factors are, on the average: agreement of the managers of the organisations, cooperation with professionals and technical equipment. In comparison with other organisations in Slovenia the Ljubljana voluntary organisations estimated financial means as the most important factor in implementing voluntary work.

THE MOTIVATION OF THE VOLUNTEERS

The Volunteers' Values

Each organisation chose among 24 values (they could also list values of their own choice) five values which are the most important to the volunteers in their organisation. Also the young volunteers chose five most important values in their organisation. According to the frequency we listed them from the most to the least important. In the organisations (in about half of the organisations) they listed reliability and responsibility as the most important values. In about one third of the organisations they listed the following values as the most important: empathy, initiativeness,

creativity, tolerance and confidentiality. The young volunteers chose the following values most frequently: responsibility, reliability, tolerance, creativity, honesty, confidentiality, sociability, kindness, solidarity and unselfishness. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically lower degree of listing honesty, sociability and politeness but a higher degree of listing solidarity as an important value of the volunteers. Most frequently the preferred values are moral and social values with which we express concern for the well-being of others. As the purpose of organised voluntary work is benefiting others we can thus conclude that the focus orientation of such work is the starting point of forming central values of voluntary work. Besides the listed values we should mention some individual values which orient volunteers in the realisation of personal potentials in voluntary work (e.g. creativity, initiativeness).

The Sources of Getting Acquainted with Voluntary Work

Most organisations get new volunteers through the acquaintances of the volunteers or simply that the new volunteers join by themselves (in more than four fifths of the organisations). Besides personal addresses or advertisements some organisations also get new volunteers by having a special agreement with schools (presentations at schools, or personal-choice subjects) or the former users become volunteers themselves. Organisations listed, on the average, three ways of getting new volunteers. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of volunteers enrolling in voluntary work by themselves or through acquaintances with other volunteers.

Young people mostly decide to work in a certain voluntary organisation on their own initiative, but also often by being invited by other volunteers or according to the experience they get in doing the necessary school practice. On the average they listed one or two sources of how they got acquainted with voluntary work. Among the most common reasons for deciding to participate in voluntary work the interviewed volunteers listed too much free time. They also listed the fact that doing voluntary work substituted their compulsory school practice and experience with foreign countries and also recommendations of relatives and acquaintances that do voluntary work.

When we asked the volunteers why they chose a certain voluntary organisation or target group they responded that they were encouraged by the references of others or the accessibility of the commencement of work. They were also encouraged to chose a certain voluntary organisation of target group by the presentation at school, the feeling that a certain target group matches their capabilities and experience, the wish to get acquainted with new organisations and other forms of voluntary work, or they were drawn by the web page of a certain organisation or an add in the paper.

Reasons for Participating in Voluntary Work

Most frequently, young people decide to do voluntary work because they wish to gain experience in working with people, because they want to do something useful. Frequently, they also decide to do voluntary work because they want to actively contribute to the society or because they want to help people in distress. The volunteers were given a chance to list more than one reason for participating in voluntary work, on the average; they chose four of five reasons.

When the volunteers were asked to specify their indicial motivation for doing voluntary work their most frequent response was that the wish to do voluntary work had always been present or that they liked to help others even before participating in voluntary work. They also listed that they were motivated by their desire to become acquainted with something new, the opportunity to gain experience for their studies or profession, the idea behind a particular voluntary work or the sense of being useful and personal fulfilment.

When we asked the volunteers what their expectations before staring voluntary work were, they responded (almost half of them) that they did not have any expectations. Among those who had some expectations, the majority said that voluntary work differs from their expectations. In some cases the expectations were negative or pessimistic, such as: the work would be more difficult or that

they would not be qualified to carry out the work. Some of them had too optimistic expectations: the work would be less straining, that the work would be more successful or that people would be more willing to accept help. Some volunteers said that voluntary work was in accordance with their expectations such as: that they would have a chance to do something for someone, that they would get along with the users, that they would loose prejudice or that they would learn about a specific field of work.

The Changing of the Motivation During Voluntary Work

About one half of the volunteers said that their starting motivation was low due to low expectations, no knowledge about the work or the external factors to start working. Only one volunteer said that her level of motivation was medium due to the small extent of information. Others said that their primary motivation was high. Among the reason for their high motivation they listed a strong desire to do voluntary work and their interest in novelties.

When they spoke about their current level of motivation most of them said that it is high, one fourth even said that it is still growing even though it is already high. Only two said that their level of motivation is medium but that it could still increase.

Reasons for the Increasing Motivation During Voluntary Work

The reasons for the increase of the motivation of volunteers can be divided into three groups: reasons connected with the individual (volunteer); reasons connected with the voluntary organisation; reasons connected with the work itself. In the first group the volunteers stated that their motivation increased because of their experience with the work and the lowering of expectations. In the second group the volunteers stated that that their motivation increased because of their satisfaction with the relations within the organisation that is with the other volunteers and the possibility to develop their own ideas and projects. In the third group the volunteers stated that their motivation increased because of the satisfaction with their work, the relationship with the users or the enrolment in the work and organisation.

Reasons for the Decreasing Motivation During Voluntary Work

The reasons for the decrease of the motivation of volunteers can also be divided into three groups: reasons connected with the individual (volunteer); reasons connected with the voluntary organisation; reasons connected with the work itself. In the first group the volunteers stated that their motivation decreased because of the lack of time, too high or unrealistic expectations, difficulties in their personal life, interest in other things, doubt in their own interest, mind for work and their own work capability. In the second group the volunteers stated that that their motivation decreased because of their dissatisfaction with the relations in the organisation, dissatisfaction or disagreement with the way the work is implemented and the costs of voluntary work being too high. In the third group the volunteers stated that their motivation decreased because of the problems with the users, doubt in their success or efficiency of work and the work being to straining.

The Satisfaction with Voluntary Work

On the average, the organisations agree that it is necessary to work with volunteers regularly, that the volunteers are the pride of the organisations, that it is necessary to help the volunteers in implementing voluntary work, that they trust their volunteers and can depend on them, that the volunteers bring novelties into the work of the organisations, that the volunteers get along with other people in the organisation, that they cooperate with each other and that the organisations spread the range of their activities by working with volunteers. On the average, they do not agree that everyone gets along with each other because of the volunteers. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of agreeing with

the statement that because of the volunteers the organisations get more means, that the membership grows and that the volunteers are a cost to the organisation. We can thus conclude that volunteers are of vital importance to the organisations even though they do not influence how people within the organisation get along with each other; they also do not influence the financial support of the activities. The volunteers' contribution to improve the image of the organisation is also very slim.

The volunteers also say that they get along with the workers in the organisation, that they are successful in their work, that they get enough support, that they are satisfied with the organisation and the policy making of voluntary work and value the diversity of the work they can chose. On the average, the volunteers are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the possibility of a professional growth (they are neutral). We can thus conclude that the volunteers are well accepted in the organisations.

The Effects of Voluntary Work

Young volunteers notice that because of their voluntary work they gain competence in various fields of everyday life. Very rarely, they estimated that they lost a certain competence due to voluntary work. We can thus conclude that voluntary work does not have negative effects on personal competence or everyday life of volunteers. On the average, voluntary work has least effect on technical skills, social reputation, enrolling in free-time activities or how others see the volunteers. The most positive effects of voluntary work can be seen in their increasing sense of usefulness, getting professional knowledge and skills, being more resourceful and flexible, evolving social and communication skills, boosting self-esteem, trusting themselves and enlarging the circle of friends and acquaintances.

When the volunteers were asked what aspect of life changed the most since doing voluntary work they enumerated various different changes which can be divided into two groups: individual-focused changes and outward-focused changes. In the first group the changes are connected with *our self-image*: their feeling of usefulness, self-content and optimism grew; with *the acquisition of competence*: they gained new knowledge and skills, greater inventiveness, responsibility, patience or a better organisation of time; and with *practical acquisitions*: a more pleasant spending of free-time and direction of future work. In the second group the changes are connected with *interpersonal relations*: making new friends and widening the social network, enhancing tolerance and empathy; and the changes connected with *the way we see the world*: broadening our horizons, a changed or more realistic outlook on life.

If we put the effects of voluntary work side by side with the starting motivation of the volunteers, we see that their expectations came true. The two leading reasons for enrolling in voluntary work were doing something useful and gaining social experience. In these two aspects the volunteers also perceived the biggest changes in themselves. The reason to try out a certain professional role was also fulfilled. The same can also be said for the reason of socialising with and meeting new people.

THE PROBLEMS OF VOLUNTARY WORK

The Obstacles in Voluntary Work

The majority of the organisations (three out of four) face financial deficit which hinders the implementation of voluntary work. In half of the organisations they face problems of rewarding the volunteers, in a smaller number of the organisations they also face the problem of the volunteers' motivation and how to keep them in the organisation. In two out of five organisations the problems is also how to enrol volunteers. The smallest number of organisations has problems with cooperating with others and the policy of the organisation about voluntary work. The majority of the participating organisations stated that they face more than one obstacle in implementing voluntary work, usually four. Some problems are inter-connected, for example the financial and worker deficit are not merely an obstacle by themselves but they also influence the maintenance of the volunteers, their training or

rewarding their work. We can thus conclude that eliminating one type of problem for example financial would contribute to the solving of other problems: more financial means would for example enable the organisations to hire new workers more easily which would affect the training and guiding of the volunteers within the organisation. More workers would, at the same time, also means more capacity for promotion of cooperation among organisations.

The young volunteers also observe similar obstacles as the organisations. Two fifths of young volunteers face financial problems in enrolling in voluntary work, one third faces the problem of two small a number of meetings among volunteers, less than one fourth face the problem of low respect for volunteers in public. One fifth also faces the problem of great responsibility they have to take on while implementing voluntary work. Encouraging and guiding the volunteers, unclear expectations and not getting along with the workers are, according to the volunteers, smaller obstacles in voluntary work. The volunteers were given a choice of several types of obstacles in voluntary work and they, on the average, chose two.

The answers of the young volunteers are compatible with the answers of the interviewed volunteers. The obstacles which could have effect on the decision to terminate the voluntary work can be generally divided into three groups: obstacles connected with the individual (volunteer); obstacles connected with the voluntary organisation; obstacles connected with the implementation of voluntary work itself. In the first group the most common obstacles were lack of time, doubt in one's own capability to do the work and the doubt in one's own interest or sense to do the work. In the second groups the most common obstacles were dissatisfaction with the relations within the organisation and with other volunteers, disagreement about the way work is carried out, dissatisfaction with the relations with other similar organisations and too high expenses with voluntary work. In the third group the most common obstacles were doubts about the successfulness or efficiency of work and problems connected with the users.

These data also show that the obstacles in voluntary work are inter-connected and that they cannot be solved separately. Getting rid of one type of problems encourages the solving of other problems: work being more organised – which would harmonise tasks and responsibilities of all the co-workers and would more clearly define the goals of individual activities – the professional growth of volunteers would for example improve interpersonal relations in the organisation. Being more content with the work would contribute to greater effects of voluntary work with which the public respect for the volunteers would, indirectly, also grow.

The Decrease in the Number of Volunteers

Most frequently, the organisations lose volunteers due to the fact that the life-style of the volunteers changes (78%), for example they finish their studies, get a job or move. Often, the volunteers stop working with the organisation when a certain project which they worked on is finished (39%) but also because their initial expectations are incorrect (37.3%). Some organisations also listed some other reasons for the decrease, such as: the organisations did not give too much attention to the volunteers, stingy rewards, the volunteers' desire to gain other types of experience, tiredness and the lack of time. Most organisations listed more than one reason for the decrease, usually two. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of listing the incorrect initial expectations of the volunteers as a reason for the decrease; they also more frequently listed other reasons.

The Problem of Enrolling Young Volunteers

In most organisations (two out of three) they see the low respect for voluntary work in society and the lack of interest of young people to spend their free time in such a manner, as reasons for young people not enrolling in voluntary work. Half of the organisations explain the low participation of young people with the lack of supporting activities for volunteers and the lack of informing young people about the possibilities of voluntary work. Some organisations also listed the low financial rewards and preoccupation of young people with school obligations. Organisations listed several

problems with enrolling young volunteers, two to three on the average. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of listing the lack of support activities for the volunteers as a reason for young people not enrolling in voluntary work.

Stimulating Young People for Enrolling in Voluntary Work

Almost all of the organisations believe that enforcing voluntary work as a reference for future work encourages young people to enrol in voluntary work. The organisations (three out of four) also list as a possibility of stimulating young people to do voluntary work the presentations of voluntary work in secondary schools and faculties or the media and various benefits for the volunteers. All the organisations listed more than one possibility of stimulating young people for voluntary work, six on the average. In comparison with voluntary organisations elsewhere in Slovenia the Ljubljana organisations have a statistically higher degree of listing presentations of voluntary work in informative or youth shows or providing various benefits for the volunteers as a means of stimulating young people to enrol in voluntary work.

THE SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS ABOUT VOLUNTARY WORK

The Public Reputation of Volunteers

Secondary school pupils evaluated the reputation of individual social group on a seven-grade scale: from non-reputable to the least reputable to the most reputable. Doctors, intellectuals, lawyers, sportsmen and managers were, on the average, graded as the most reputable groups in the Slovenian society (the average grade was more than 5.5). Artists, politicians, volunteers, teachers and craftsmen were, on the average, graded a bit higher than the non-reputable groups. The non-reputable groups comprise of invalids, salesmen, young people, retired people, workers and policemen. The unemployed were graded with 2.9, which is closer to the non-reputable than the least reputable groups.

The differences between the students attending different levels of secondary school were relevant only with the grading of two social groups: artists and policemen were graded with a higher grade by the younger pupils. In grading the reputation of the unemployed, young people and retired people the differences in the age of the pupils turned out to be at the limit of statistical significance although there is a pattern in evaluating all the groups: the younger pupils graded their reputation higher than the older pupils.

The type of the secondary school affected the grading of the reputation of almost all social groups (the grades of sportsmen, retired people, invalids and volunteers were, on the average, the same in all three groups of secondary school pupils). Vocational secondary school pupils graded higher than technical secondary school pupils who also graded the young, unemployed, workers and craftsmen higher than the grammar secondary school pupils. Technical secondary school pupils graded the policemen, managers, teacher and lawyers higher than the grammar secondary school pupils who also graded higher than vocational secondary school pupils. The grammar secondary school pupils graded the artists, politicians, doctors and intellectuals higher than the technical secondary school pupils who also graded higher than vocational secondary school pupils.

Gender affected the grading of the reputation of most social groups: artists, politicians, retired people, policemen, managers, volunteers, teachers, lawyers, doctors and intellectuals. Girls graded all of theses groups higher than the boys did.

Secondary school pupils in general graded the reputation of volunteers as low, just as the volunteers and representatives of the organisations believe it to be. Secondary school pupils grade the reputation of volunteers higher than they grade young people in general. We can thus conclude that secondary school pupils grade the volunteers slightly higher because their role in society is slightly more clearly defined (as a group they are more known according to various differentiation attributes)

than the role of young people. Because the characteristics which differentiate one group from the other are important for the identification of an individual with a specific group (see: e.g. Turner 1999, Tajfel 1981) it is important to know which characteristics are assigned to particular groups by the secondary school pupils when stimulating young people to enrol in voluntary work.

The Volunteers' Characteristics

The secondary school pupils chose 5 out of 24 listed characteristics which, according to their opinion, the volunteers should have. More than 40% believe that the volunteers should be hard-working and patient; one third believes that they should be kind and reliable. About 30% of the secondary school pupils see the volunteers as responsible, sociable, honest and respectful. About one fifth believes that the volunteers should be compassionate, flexible, polite, open, unselfish and tolerant. Only a few (less than 10%) see the volunteers as honest, brave, creative, funny, calm, obedient and initiative.

The differences in the age of the secondary school pupils were influential only in the marking of volunteers' characteristics such as hard-working, compassionate and tolerant. The younger pupils, at their beginning of schooling, generally see the volunteers as hard-working (55.5% of the young pupils chose this characteristic) while the older pupils do not see the volunteers as such (58% of the older pupils did not chose this characteristic). A greater percentage of older pupils (27.8%) than the percentage of younger pupils (20.3%) see the volunteers as compassionate, even though most pupils in both groups did not chose this characteristic as typical for volunteers. Similarly, a greater percentage of older pupils (23.1%) than the percentage of younger pupils (14.3%) see the volunteers as tolerant, even though most pupils in both groups did not chose this characteristic as typical for volunteers. The volunteers were mostly characterised according to the moral-ethical personality qualities which are reflected in the attitude of the individual towards other people and in the attitude towards work. Secondary school pupils listed among the most important attributes of volunteers two which are compatible with the most important values of volunteers as seen in the organisations – responsibility and reliability.

The type of secondary school affected most of the characteristics ascribed to the volunteers. Vocational secondary school pupils more frequently than the technical and grammar secondary school pupils described the volunteers as smart, hard-working, honest, straightforward, brave and calm. Technical secondary school pupils more frequently than the vocational and grammar secondary school pupils described the volunteers as conscientious and respectful. Grammar secondary school pupils more frequently than the technical and vocational secondary school pupils described the volunteers as patient, compassionate, unselfish, initiative, responsible, tolerant and open.

The gender also affected most of the characteristics ascribed to the volunteers. Boys more frequently than girls described the volunteers as smart, honest, hard-working, obedient, brave and calm. Girls more frequently than boys described the volunteers as conscientious, unselfish, compassionate, kind and sociable.

Experience with voluntary work affected only the characteristic of being hard-working: the pupils who had never done voluntary work see the volunteers as hard-working more than the pupils who had already done voluntary work.

The Characteristics of Voluntary Work

Secondary school pupils evaluated the characteristics of voluntary work on a 7 level bipolar scale consisting of eight adjectives. On the average, the voluntary work was estimated as responsible, pretentious, important, necessary, accessible, interesting, clearly defined and pleasant. On the average, the secondary school pupils see voluntary work as positive.

The differences in the age of secondary school pupils did not affect the characteristics of voluntary work.

The type of secondary school affected the characteristics of voluntary work on four bipolar scales. Grammar secondary school pupils estimated voluntary work as pretentious, necessary and

important in a higher degree than the technical secondary school pupils, who also estimated it as such in a higher degree than vocational secondary school pupils. Technical secondary school pupils estimated voluntary work as clearly defined in a higher degree as the grammar secondary school pupils, who also estimated it as such in a higher degree than vocational secondary school pupils.

The gender affected the characteristics ascribed to voluntary work in all bipolar scales except one (rarely - widened). Girls estimated voluntary work more positively than boys – more girls than boys believe that it is interesting, pretentious, pleasant, responsible, necessary, available, important and clearly defined.

Experience with voluntary work affected the definition of the characteristics of voluntary work in all scales of bipolar adjectives. The pupils who had already done voluntary work defined it as more positive than those who had no experience with voluntary work – they believe that it is more interesting, pleasant, important, spread and clearly defined.

The Fields of Voluntary Work

Secondary school pupils estimated how important voluntary work in certain field is: necessary, needed or unnecessary. Most of them evaluated voluntary work in the field of health care and human rights as necessary. Most evaluated voluntary work in the field of sports, tourism and culture as needed. A similar percentage of pupils evaluated voluntary work in the field of environment protection, social security and education as necessary and needed.

The differences in the age of secondary school pupils affected the importance of voluntary work only in the field of sports. The younger pupils estimated voluntary work in the field of sports as more needed than the older pupils.

The type of the secondary school affected the importance of voluntary work in the field of social security, sports, tourism and environment protection. Grammar secondary school pupils estimated voluntary work in the field of social care and environment protection as important in a higher degree as the technical secondary school pupils, who also estimated it as such in a higher degree than vocational secondary school pupils. Vocational secondary school pupils estimated voluntary work in the field of sports and tourism as important in a higher degree as the technical secondary school pupils, who also estimated it as such in a higher degree than grammar secondary school pupils.

The gender affected the estimation of the importance of voluntary work in four fields: social security, human rights, sports and tourism. The girls believe that voluntary work in the filed of social security and human rights is more important than the boys do. The boys believe that voluntary work in the field of sports and tourism is more important than the girls do.

Experience with voluntary work affected the estimation of the importance of voluntary work only in the field of environment protection: the secondary school pupils who had already worked voluntarily believed that it is more important than the pupils who had no voluntary experience.

The Subjective Value of Voluntary Work

Secondary school pupils classified 10 possible profits of voluntary work according to how important they are in their decision to participate in voluntary work (from the most to the least important). On the average, pupils believe that the most important benefits are new knowledge, new friends and acquaintances. Benefits such as getting employed more easily, responsibility and the possibility of choosing their work by themselves are also important. The least important are the power and reputation of voluntary work, filling up their free time and money.

The differences in the age of the pupils were significant only in the classification of the benefits of voluntary work according to how important they are in their decision to participate in voluntary work – the benefit being money. The younger pupils classified money as more important in the decision to participate in voluntary work than the older pupils.

The type of the secondary school affected the importance of most benefits of voluntary work. Grammar secondary school pupils estimated the benefits of voluntary work such as new knowledge

and new friends and acquaintances, filling up their free time and choosing their own work as more important than the technical secondary school pupils, who also estimated it as such in a higher degree than vocational secondary school pupils. Vocational secondary school pupils estimated the benefits of voluntary work such as profits, power, reputation and money as more important than the technical secondary school pupils, who also estimated it as such in a higher degree than grammar secondary school pupils.

The gender affected the estimation of the importance of most of the benefits. The boys estimated profits, power, reputation and money as more important than girls. The girls estimated new knowledge, new friends and acquaintances, the possibility of choosing their work and getting a job more easily as more important than boys.

Experience with voluntary work affected the estimation of the importance of responsibility and money. The secondary school pupils who had already worked voluntarily believed that responsibility of voluntary work is more important than the secondary school pupils who had no voluntary experience. The secondary school pupils who had never worked voluntarily believed that money is more important in deciding to participate in voluntary work than the secondary school pupils who had voluntary experience.

We can thus conclude that the pupils are generally attracted to the novelties (either knowledge or responsibility) the voluntary work brings, that they want to be independent in their work (they can freely choose to participate and can take responsibility) and expect to use such experience as references in finding a job. These expectations are focused in finding personal fulfilment and in voluntary work. These expectations are most typical for girls and grammar secondary school pupils. Boys and vocational secondary school pupils find direct benefits of voluntary work such as for example money more important. And also power and reputation of voluntary work are important.

The Attitudes about Voluntary Work

The secondary school pupils evaluated certain attitudes about voluntary work on a 7 level scale according to how much they agree with them. On the average, they agree most with the statements that the volunteers can learn a great deal and that voluntary work builds self-esteem. On the average, they did not agree with the statements that voluntary work is a way of taking advantage of the volunteers and that it is a waste of time.

The differences in the age of the pupils affected only two standpoints about voluntary work. The older pupils believed that voluntary work is a form of socialising and fun in a greater extent than the younger pupils. The younger pupils agreed more with the statement that voluntary work should be paid.

The type of the secondary school affected all but one statement about voluntary work. Vocational secondary school pupils agreed with the statements that voluntary work should be paid, that it is a waste of time, that the volunteers can do whatever and whenever they want and that voluntary work is a form of taking advantage of the volunteers more than the grammar secondary school pupils, who also agreed with the statements in a higher degree than technical secondary school pupils. Grammar secondary school pupils agreed with the statements that voluntary work is a form of socialising and fun, that it builds self-esteem, that it brings personal benefits and that the volunteers can learn a great deal more than the technical secondary school pupils, who also agreed with the statements in a higher degree than vocational secondary school pupils.

The gender also affected the estimation of all but one attitude about voluntary work (i. e. that voluntary work brings personal benefits). The boys agreed more with the following statements than girls: voluntary work should be paid, that it is for those who do not have money difficulties that it is a waste of time, that it is a form of taking advantage of the volunteers and that the volunteers can do whatever and whenever they want to. The girls agreed more with the following statements than boys: voluntary work is a form of socialising and fun, it builds self-esteem and that the volunteers can learn a great deal.

Experience with voluntary work affected almost all the attitudes about voluntary work. The pupils who had already worked voluntarily agreed more than the ones who had not with the

statements that voluntary work is a form of socialising and fun, it builds self-esteem and that the volunteers can learn a great deal. The volunteers who had not worked voluntarily agreed more than the ones who had with the statements that voluntary work should be paid, that it is for those who do not have money difficulties, that it is a waste of time and that is a form of taking advantage of the volunteers.

The data show that girls, grammar secondary school pupils, pupils who had already worked voluntarily and partly older pupils have a more positive attitude about voluntary work; while boys, vocational secondary school pupils, pupils who had never worked voluntarily and partially younger pupils have a more negative attitude.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The Ljubljana voluntary organisations and organisations form other parts of Slovenia included in this research probably represent only an approximation of the whole spectrum of the Slovenian organisations in which young people volunteer. We invited organisations to participate on the chosen criteria of public declaration of the implementation of voluntary work – consequently we tried to present the most representative image of the real situation. Despite this fact, a lot of organisations were not invited to participate in the research (e.g. environmental, tourist, mountaineer, sports and others). The deviation from the representative quality of the whole organised voluntary work also increased a bit because of the inevitable possibility that the organisations can choose freely whether to participate in the research. The date of the implementation of the research probably also contributed to a lower participation of the organisations. We chose to do the research at the end of the school year and during school holidays – this is a time when voluntary organisations finish their working season. But due to the time limitation of the whole research we were unable to plan the implementation of first part of the research (the characteristics of voluntary work) differently or to prolong it. Due to all the listed limitations we wish to stress that we cannot, on the basis of the gathered information from the organisations and the volunteers, reliably conclude on the individual characteristics of the voluntary work of young people in Slovenia. This means that if the research was repeated the percentages of the voluntary activities in various areas of social life would be different from those shown in this research or the characteristics of organising voluntary work and the problems needed to be solved would be different. This is not only due to different criteria of selecting the organisations in the research but also to the different time perspective: voluntary work evolves in different fields with different dynamics and it is also mostly tied to individual projects which affects the representation of individual segments. Even though there are certain limitations the data gathered are a valid representation of the characteristics of organised voluntary work in the participating organisations. Indeed, this research is the first systematic record of the of the characteristics of organised voluntary work in Slovenia which enables the comparison on individual indicators and represents the basis for future accounts of the development of voluntary work in Slovenia.

2. What has been said of the organisations can also be said of the young volunteers included in the first study: they are surely not a representation of all the young volunteers in Ljubljana or Slovenia. They come from only those organisations which decided to participate in the research as we did not search for the volunteers separately from the organisations. A lot of the data which we gathered simultaneously from the organisations and the volunteers match, which is in favour of the validity of the data but not of their reliability. The majority of the participating young volunteers in Ljubljana are women, only every fourth volunteer is a man. The ratio among men and women is similar for all the volunteers from Slovenia. As the majority of voluntary work is done in the field of social security – which employs more women than men – we conclude this data to be a relevant indicator of the real state of voluntary work in Slovenia. Among the participating volunteers from all over Slovenia half of them are students, one quarter are secondary school pupils and young adults who have already

finished their studies. Among the Ljubljana volunteers there is a slightly greater percentage of students and young adults and considerably smaller percentage of secondary school pupils. Considering the fact that Ljubljana is a university centre such data are not surprising. A bit worrying is only the percentage of secondary school pupils participating in the research as we could thus conclude on their small participation in voluntary activities. Indeed, the data from other parts of Slovenia show that voluntary work in also already organised for the secondary school population. According to the data on secondary school volunteers in Ljubljana participating in the third study (the notions of young people about voluntary work) the participation in voluntary work depends on the individual secondary school. The percentage of the secondary school pupils who had already worked voluntarily showed to be higher than expected from the participating young volunteers form the Ljubljana Commune in the first study and is thus comparable with the percentage of the participating secondary school pupils from other parts of Slovenia. In accordance with this we could thus conclude from the Slovenian sample of the first study about the age structure of the young people who decide to participate in voluntary work.

3.   Voluntary work in Ljubljana is organised mainly within various societies, less in public or private institutions. There are great differences among the voluntary organisations in the number of the enrolled volunteers and in the range of their work regardless of the field of the activities and the target groups with which they work. There are also big differences among the voluntary organisations in the extent of the financial means with which they have on their disposal.

4.   In Ljubljana, voluntary work is most frequent in the field of social inclusion, social security and free time. Frequently, the voluntary activities are also implemented in the field of human rights protection and the prevention of discrimination, sports and recreation and personal assistance. Most organisations implement voluntary work in several fields at once and deal with more target groups. Most frequently, voluntary work is meant for young people, children, special needs people and elderly.

5.   Young volunteers mostly participate on one project of the organisation. Most frequently, they do two types of assignments: socialising with the users and organising events. Mostly they have the role of an assistant or team workers although they also frequently implement projects independently. In almost all of the organisations the volunteers co-decide on the way the activities are implemented, frequently they also co-decide on the work content and are mostly included in the evaluation of the projects. The role of managers or organisers is rarely accessible to the volunteers.

6.   To be allowed to participate in voluntary work the organisations demand the candidates to attend the introductory training. Frequently, there are also some additional conditions such as specific knowledge or skills, fulfilment of the rules of the organisation and agreements about the work (also in writing). In a greater extent, the volunteers support each other by exchanging experience; professional support is given in the form of return information about the work or at mentor meetings. The majority of the work with the volunteers, which is done by the co-workers in the organisation during their work-time, is focused on the direct support in work implementation and education. In general, the volunteers are satisfied with the organisation of voluntary work. Organisations trust their volunteers, appreciate them and invest in them as they are of vital importance for the successful implementation of the activities.

7.   Voluntary organisations mostly cooperate with those organisations with a similar field of activities or the same target group population. The choice of co-operating organisations is connected with the manner of co-operation: mostly they implement individual projects together; they share their experience or help each other in assuring conditions for the

implementation of the activities (with shared space and equipment). The organisations rarely co-operate in the promotion of voluntary work or its organisation. They also rarely co-operate in the international exchange of volunteers (EVS).

8. The organisations implementing voluntary work are mainly financed from the budget means (governmental or municipal) and their own means, rarely they get the financial means from sponsors or donators or European programmes. The amount of means differs from organisation to organisation but it stays approximately the same from year to year regardless of the fact that almost one third of the organisations report of the enlarged range of their activities in 2005 in comparison with the previous year. The means are mostly focused on the financing of the programmes of the activities as only one fourth of the organisations are capable of gaining the means especially for the organisation of the voluntary work. The participating organisations in the most part do not have the chance to employ the volunteers. The majority of the voluntary organisations refund the volunteers' fare and they often refund some material costs resulting from voluntary work.

9. Most frequently, young people decide to volunteer by themselves or are encouraged to volunteer by their friends or other volunteers. Most often they decide to volunteer because they want to do something useful, help other people, gain social experience and knowledge or check their professional role. Judging from the effects of voluntary work which the volunteers perceive in themselves their initial reasons for volunteering are satisfied: in the most part their sense of self-worth is increased, they gain professional knowledge and skills, become more resourceful and flexible, they communicate better, are more socially skilled and more self-confident.

10. The motivation for voluntary work is at the beginning connected primarily with the expectations of the volunteers about the work and their own successfulness. These expectations are frequently unrealistic due to the lack of knowledge about the work which prevents the realistic estimation of their own competence. During the work the volunteers gain experience on the basis of which they change their expectations and evaluate more realistically the demands of work, their own competence and successfulness. In accordance with this we can observe the oscillation of the motivation for voluntary work. Realistic expectations contribute to the experience of the work as personally satisfactory and increase the motivation for voluntary work which is reflected in the high motivation after a long-term implementation of voluntary work. An important factor of the motivation of the volunteers is the way in which the work is implemented and the interpersonal relations among the co-workers. These factors can, regardless of the personal satisfaction with the work, essentially increase or decrease the motivation for further work.

11. Most frequently, the volunteers are encouraged by verbal praise. Often, the volunteers are also rewarded for their work with a written attestation or acknowledgement. Frequently, the volunteers are also rewarded with a picnic or trip at the end of the projects or the calendar year. Such forms of rewarding are estimated as appropriate by the volunteers. Besides such rewards there are others which the volunteers see as most appropriate: recommendations for a job of education. The efficiency of the recommendations, of course, depends on the acknowledgement of experience and knowledge gained in the course of the implementation of voluntary work, in the economy and educational system which exceeds the range of voluntary organisations.

12. The most important values of the volunteers are, according to the organisations and the volunteers themselves, reliability and responsibility. Both, the volunteers and the organisations, list among the top ten values tolerance, creativity, confidentiality, sociability and solidarity. These are generally moral and social values which express the concern for the

well-being of others. As organised voluntary work is, in its core, meant to create benefits for other(s), we can conclude that the goal orientation of such work is a point of departure for the formation of the central value orientation of voluntary work. Among the most important values are also certain individual values which direct the individuals towards the realisation of personal potentials at work (e.g. creativity, initiative).

13. The organisations face three types of problems in voluntary work: the lack of financial means, the problems with the motivation of the volunteers (both in enrolling and keeping the volunteers as well as rewarding them) and the organisational problems (the qualification of workers, managing and educating the volunteers). Some problems are inter-related, so the abolishment of one type of problems would contribute to the solving of other types of problems: the improvement of the financial state would, for example, strengthen the work structure of the organisations. This would improve, on the one hand, the training and managing of the volunteers and, on the other hand, the promotion and co-operation among organisations.

14. The secondary school pupils' social representations about voluntary work are in accordance with the majority of the characteristics of voluntary work. According to the pupils, the volunteers do not have a good reputation in the public. They are hard-working, patient, kind, reliable and also responsible, sociable, honest and respectful. Voluntary work is needed the most in the field of health care and human rights and also environment protection, social security and education. Voluntary work mostly has a positive connotation for the secondary school pupils (responsible, demanding, important, needed, accessible, interesting, clearly defined and nice). The secondary school pupils estimate that the most important factors in deciding to volunteer are the facts that it brings novelties (new knowledge and friends), they can choose the work themselves, take responsibility for their work and that such experience enlarge their employability. The perception of voluntary work and its characteristics is mainly connected with the type of secondary school, partially also with the gender and age of an individual. Some evaluations depend on the personal experience with voluntary work. These factors of perception and estimation of voluntary work should be considered in the planning of campaigns focused on a specific segment of young population.

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