

Cyprus
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COUNTRY FACT SHEET

Population

The population of Cyprus in the Government controlled area was estimated at 789,300 at the end of 2007. Per district, the population was: 310,900 (Nicosia), 43,700 (Famagusta), 131,900 (Larnaca), 226,700 (Limassol) and 76,100 (Paphos). A proportion of 69.9% resided in the urban areas of Cyprus and a 30.1% resided in rural areas.

Area

Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean, with an area of 9,251 sq. km.

Population density

131.6 per sq. km (the figure refers to the population density in territories controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus).

System of government

Under the 1960 Constitution, Cyprus has a Presidential System of Government. Executive power is exercised by the Council of Ministers (appointed by the President), the Legislative authority is exercised by the House of Representatives and the Judicial power is exercised by the Republic of Cyprus' separate and independent judiciary.

European elections 6 European parliamentarians

Social security and welfare system

The Social Insurance Scheme covers compulsorily all employed or self-employed persons. It is financed by contributions paid by the employers, the insured persons and the state. The Social Insurance Services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance are responsible, among others, for the implementation of the government policy in the area of social insurance. The Social Welfare Services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance are responsible for safeguarding social cohesion, solidarity and social protection and are responsible for addressing the new social problems and challenges of the Cypriot society and the welfare of the population in general.

Public health system

Public health is provided by the Public Health Services and the private health sector. The organisation and provision of public health care is the responsibility of the central government through the Ministry of Health. The Ministry has also the overall responsibility for the formulation of health policy, co-ordination of the activities of the public and the private health sectors, regulation of health standards and enactment of health legislation. Soon, a National Health System will replace the existing system.

Level of education

20-24 years old who have completed secondary schooling 2007: 96.0%
 - Lower secondary education: 10.3%
 - Upper secondary education: 59.2%
 - Tertiary education: 26.6%
 25-64 years old who have completed secondary schooling 2007: 72.1%
 - Upper secondary education: 38.9%
 - Tertiary education: 33.2%

Immigration rate 2007: 7,390 (net migration)

Growth rate

Total fertility rate 2007: 1.39%
 Crude Death rate 2007: 6.8%
 Birth rate 2007: 10.9%

Employment rate

15-64 years old (total - male - female) 2007: 73.9% - 82.9% - 65.4%
 55-59 years old (total - male - female) 2007: 67.4% - 82.9% - 52.8%
 60-64 years old (total - male - female) 2007: 45.6% - 64.7% - 27.7%

Unemployment rate

15-64 years old (total - male - female) 2007: 4% - 3.5% - 4.6%

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VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

1 DEFINITIONS

1.1 VOLUNTEER

“A person who offers, without any reward, financial or other, services or other means to individuals or groups or to the society at large, in order to address social or other needs”. (Source: Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law)

1.2 VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY

Volunteering activity is defined under the term of “not for profit purpose” in Article 2 of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law. Not for profit purpose according to the law is “every voluntary action or act which tends to alleviate or relieve human suffering, human poverty, illness or need and any physical, mental and psychological malfunction, as well as any action which serves the welfare or the protection of children, teenagers, young people, adults and older persons, any action which contributes to the prevention or addresses social problems or needs and generally any action which contributes to the improvement of the welfare of the people residing, permanently or temporarily, in the Republic of Cyprus.” (Source: Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law)

1.3 VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION

“Every organisation which is comprised by volunteers and its main or exclusive purpose is not for profit.” (Source: Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law)

1.4 VOLUNTEER SUPPORT CENTRE

One of the objectives of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, as stated in its law, is the establishment, operation and administration of the Volunteer Centres. The Cyprus Volunteer Centre, founded in 1991, is the coordina-

tive and support centre for the promotion of volunteering in Cyprus. It functions under the responsibility of the District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils. The Volunteer Centres which function at all districts, coordinate, promote, support and facilitate voluntary service, voluntary projects and volunteering in general. The objectives of the Cyprus Volunteer Centre include: identification of social problems and needs, matching of need and demand for voluntary service, registration of volunteers in the district Volunteer Record, training and support, monitoring of the volunteer placements and initiation/implementation of voluntary projects, etc. The work of the Cyprus Volunteer Centre is also complemented by other volunteer support initiatives occurring at a smaller scale within the structures of the voluntary/NGO sector.

2 VOLUNTEERS ON VOLUNTEERING (INTERVIEWS)

Volunteering remains one of the most important tools that facilitate the effective utilisation of social capital in order to meet common goals: to promote social cohesion and solidarity, to build sustainable and healthy societies and to increase public awareness on issues of common and public concern. In Cyprus, volunteering is structured on sound bases and has reached very good levels in terms of effectiveness, organisational structure, etc. Cypriots are very sensitive and keen to engage in voluntary service in an effort to address social or other issues. In general, the levels of volunteering are high in relation to the island's population number.

Historical overview

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

1 BACKGROUND, EVOLUTION AND DISTINCTIVE TRAITS

As in any other country, various forces have shaped the broader and specific policies in Cyprus. Socio-economic, cultural, religious political and other specific circumstances have shaped the organisational arrangements in the history of Cyprus. The systematic and changing dominion of Cyprus by different historical rulers with completely diverse socio-economic, cultural, political, etc. regimes makes it more difficult to link a particular form of development in the voluntary sector¹ to the policies and strategies of the respective governing rulers. An official independent welfare state, in the way that it was experienced in other countries, was only established after the island's independence.

The origins of social welfare and the early philanthropy ("voluntary activity" in the present day) can be traced in religion, especially with the early establishment of the Church of Cyprus and in the early Greek settlement on the island (which brought the altruistic and philanthropic practice into everyday life). Every single philanthropic/voluntary initiative has progressively developed in such a way so as to meet the needs of the population at each point in time. As in many other countries, the voluntary sector in Cyprus developed therefore in order to meet and address the needs or other broader concerns and issues of society which could not be met by the state. The academic sources which can record the historical development of philanthropy and volunteer/involving organisations are focused, to a large extent, on the area of welfare. A close examination of the Registry of the Societies and Institutions Law and other sources can validate though that the activity of volunteer involving organisations extended beyond the strict sense of welfare as early as the 1900 decade.

2 ROOTS: BEFORE 1900

The Greek colonisation on the island, during the ancient years, despite other successive settlers and rulers in Cyprus, mark and shape the island's socio-cultural and ethnic character. The Greek sacred virtue of hospitality, person-

¹Note to the reader: Throughout the historical overview, all references to the third sector will use the term "voluntary sector", not only as recognition of its long historical usage, but also to safeguard a balance with past infrastructures and the socio-cultural historical norms. Also, the historical overview has depended, to a large extent, only on existing academic work which could cover all the historic eras of the voluntary sector in Cyprus as a whole and not its components. To a large extent, therefore, this trajectory covers the "traditional" volunteer/involving organisations in the area of welfare.

al concern, philanthropy and acts of caring not only for relatives but also for destitute and deprived strangers influence the Cypriots during the ancient years to an extent that they adopt such practices in their everyday life. The Christianisation period, which starts from 45 AD onwards, includes the origins and establishment of the Christian Church of Cyprus and marks the beginning of the philanthropic notion and practice. The ancient period in Cyprus is characterised by altruistic expressions of kindness, love and “helping one another” especially in periods of hardship, destitution and deprivation. During the foreign invasions on the island, the Cypriot people show an increasing readiness to help themselves and others and rely on the Church for protection. The Church during these periods undertakes the responsibility for providing comfort and relief to the Cypriots.

The earliest form of private and state philanthropic acts adopted by the Cypriots includes, amongst others, the *Xenones* which give shelter and food to strangers, the brotherhoods of hospitality (known as *Xenoi* or guest-friends) which look after the needs of strangers, while the priests look after the sick and provide shelter to the ill. At the end of the 4th century, Cyprus comes under the Byzantium rule and is further influenced by the Byzantine Empire’s civilisation, especially in the philanthropic thought and practice. Philanthropy and charity are acts exercised by the individual, the State and the Church. During the Byzantine rule period, the philanthropic practice involves the establishment of homes for strangers, for the poor, the aged, etc. Successive attacks and invasions on the island bring poverty and disorganisation and “slow down” the development of philanthropic practice. It is documented that during the Latin rule (1192-1489) philanthropy is also exercised by the Latin monastic orders, in the form of hospitals and *Xenones* (houses for the strangers), mostly open to Latins and foreigners visiting the island. From this period onwards, the philanthropic notion, introduced during the Christianisation period and developed during the Byzantine rule, declines due to successive invaders and rivalries and only revives towards the end of the Ottoman rule in Cyprus. It should be acknowledged, though, that during the Ottoman Empire Period (1578-1878) official documents issued by the Sultan provide proof on instances of philanthropic activity (i.e. the Christians

had the right to give or donate money or goods after their death to the poor or to the churches, etc). Furthermore, the Cyprus Church was granted some authority and privileges, which reinforced its role in philanthropic activity (i.e. relief of the poor, etc). Private philanthropy is furthermore exercised by distinctive figures of the island.

3 THE BRIEF CENTURY: 1900 - 2000

Evidence on voluntary activity during the British Colonial Period (1878-1960) is reported and documented in a number of sources. Although the island has no organised form of welfare at the start of the Colonial period, the British administration gives municipalities the responsibility to provide relief to the poor and to the destitute and to run Relief Committees in order to allocate cash allowances. Voluntary activity is furthermore initiated to collect funds for the support of school infrastructures. The freedom granted to the Cypriots to practise the Christian Orthodox religion, facilitates the establishment of *Philoptochos* associations (friends for the poor). Also during the Colonial period, important social legislation is enacted (i.e. the Charities Law, based on the Charity Law of England and Wales and the Clubs (Registration) Law of 1930) and other major improvements are recorded towards the establishment and development of voluntary initiatives and organisations to address various needs.

During the 1920s - 1930s, Welfare Centres of day care provision and other Leagues, Associations, Societies, Charitable Schemes and ad hoc volunteer initiatives which address general social needs are established. During the 1940s - 1950s, from the end of the World War II onwards, begins a new period for voluntary activity. The *Philoptochos* associations are expanding to mark the development of the *Philoptochos* ‘movement. Voluntary services for vulnerable groups begin to emerge in the Cypriot society, by the initiative and support of Committees chaired by the wives of Colonial administrators. The most prominent voluntary initiatives of this period include the School for the Blind, the Cyprus Society for the Blind, the Cyprus Self-Help Society, the Infant Welfare Centres, Day Nurseries, the Anti-Tuberculosis

League, the St John’s Ambulance Brigade, voluntary homes with the mandate to care and protect children etc.

Minority communities also establish their philanthropic associations to address the needs of their communities, while international influence develops the Rotary and Lions movement in all major towns. Other statutory arrangements included the establishment of the Social Welfare Advisory Board, later replaced by the Inter-Departmental Committee for Social Services, with a mission to coordinate the programmes and policies of governmental departments and advice on the grants-in-aid allocated to voluntary organisations. The Street and House-to-House Collections Law begins to regulate fundraising, while during the 1960s Philanthropic organisations expand their activity and diversify their action with the support of the governmental services. The expanded activity of organisations included, amongst others, the mental health domain, the children with physical disabilities, the disabled, special education schools, family planning, prevention of crime and treatment of offenders, elderly care, general social and health services, etc. In 1963, the Community Welfare Council of the Nicosia district is established, with the task to act as a coordinating volunteer body.

In 1968, the introduction of a Grants-in-Aid Scheme for voluntary organisations operated by the Department of Social Welfare enables the expansion or the introduction of programmes run by voluntary organisations. During these years there was an official acknowledgement that the engagement of people as volunteers can bring not only an added value to community development but can effectively address the needs of the communities, support social welfare, represent the interests of vulnerable groups and bring change in governmental policies. A further recognition comes with the representation of voluntary organisations, active in the social service provision, on the Social Development Board² established in 1969. The Board’s mandate to coordinate social welfare policies and initiatives greatly enhances the development of voluntary organisations and the coordination with governmental activities.

²The Board is chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance and is composed by representatives from all Ministries.

During the 1970s - 1980s, voluntary initiative is significantly expanding in the field of family supportive services and care for people with physical and mental disabilities. An important expansion in community development comes with the establishment of the Community Welfare Councils, run by volunteers, with a task to provide voluntary services and programmes to community members. In 1972, the Societies and Institutions Law regulates the establishment and registration of associations and foundations. In 1973, a new form of a national umbrella/coordinating organisation is introduced with the establishment of the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council. From this point onwards, there is also an expansion of youth, culture, sport, minority, education, ethnic and environmental organisations. Also, pressure groups, typical and non-typical volunteer groups with the task to alleviate the negative consequences of the 1974 Turkish invasion, emerge in this period. In 1989, the enactment of the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Law 152/89 gives to the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council, a legal personality and more authorities towards the development, coordination and representation of the voluntary sector.

4 WHERE WE STAND: 2001 - 2008

During this period, Cyprus experiences a further expansion of programmes and activities run by volunteer-involving organisations, in more policy fields and ways of engagement. The activities of organisations during this period cover the fields of social inclusion and welfare, environment, culture, human-aid, peace building, human rights, equal opportunities, development, sport, education, community development, empowerment of the social capital, the UN Millennium Development Goals, etc. The invaluable expertise of organisations in identifying needs and problems and in contributing to the design and implementation of policies not only raises their profile status but also strengthens collaboration with public authorities and the government.

Networking and partnership opportunities bring organisations to join forces not only with the structures of the state but with the private sector and civil society at large. Volunteering remains one of the most important tools that facilitate the effective utilisation of social capital in order to meet common goals: to promote social cohesion and solidarity, to build sustainable and healthy societies and to increase public awareness on issues of common and public concern. Through local volunteers, community participation is enhanced and local activities and projects are strengthened.

The Ministries in Cyprus, acknowledging the contribution of volunteer-involving organisations, engage in civil dialogue in a more coherent way and organise more comprehensive funding frameworks to support the work of the organisations. Today organisations in collaboration with Ministries are called upon to address the challenges of the Cypriot society. In 2006, a new legal framework modernises and expands the competences of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council (former Pan Cyprian Welfare Council) and furthermore grants the Council the title of the supreme coordinative body of volunteering. The new legal framework furthermore provides, for the first time, basic definitions, concepts and practical arrangements relevant to the structure and administration of voluntary organisations which are members of the Council. Also in 2007, the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance modernises the Grant-in-aid Scheme (a funding mechanism which allocates funds to voluntary organisations). During this period, other Ministries, semi-governmental and other authorities establish more comprehensive funding mechanisms for not for profit organisations/volunteer-involving organisations.

5 VOLUNTEERING NOW (INTERVIEWS)

There is a large number of voluntary organisations/NGOS which complement the role of the state in various policy areas. Sometimes

volunteer involving organisations implement programs that are exclusively provided by the voluntary sector. Nowadays a growing number of programs run by voluntary organisations depend on voluntary engagement. Cyprus, being a small island/community, retains close ties among its members and communities. There still is a strong willingness among individuals to volunteer and in general people express that they are filled with joy and satisfaction when offering their services to people in need or to address contemporary social problems. Communities, due to their small geographical size, have the capacity to mobilise their members in volunteering, especially younger people. The interviewees suggest that the increasing levels of volunteering demand more supportive measures by the government.

Volunteering in Cyprus is linked with welfare and service provision, active citizenship, democracy, corporate social responsibility, “caring”, “giving” and “helping”, etc. Volunteer activity is utilized as a tool to alleviate the “ills” of the society and the challenges that social groups or communities face. Volunteering is also seen as a measurement tool to assess the levels of culture, cohesion, moral values, etc. and as a mean to address the needs of the society.

Volunteering is an important component in every society. The role of volunteering should not only be in the area of welfare provision but also in other policy areas in order to address problems, needs and issues which cannot be fully addressed by the state. Volunteering should contribute towards the improvement of the lives of all the social or vulnerable groups, meeting the social targets set by the state or meeting the needs of the society in general. Voluntary organisations must be recognised as close partners of the state in all policy areas, but also ensure that the role of the voluntary sector must remain complementary to the work of public authorities. Volunteering can have an extensive role in society, because it has the knowledge, experience and capacity to identify and address current and future challenges, and can extend its action in new activity/policy areas.

Legal framework

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

1 OVERVIEW OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS

As in many other countries, there is no legal framework that provides a definition for the “third sector” although a distinct, separate third sector exists in Cyprus. The same applies to other more contemporary terms used in the everyday language or in European academic debates, such as “not for profit sector”, “voluntary sector”, “civil society” or “NGO sector”. Laws and regulations in Cyprus, as in other countries, define and recognise the legal organisational forms of non-governmental/not for profit organisations, coordinative councils as well as the different components of the sector (examined in more detail below).

Some references in legislation that provide useful definitions on the components, characteristics and concepts of the not for profit organisations are: a) volunteering activity: as described under the “not for profit purpose” definition in Article 2 of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law, b) not for profit purpose: which, according to the law, is “every voluntary action or act which tends to alleviate or relieve human suffering, human poverty, illness or need and any physical, mental and psychological malfunction, as well as any action which serves the welfare or the protection of children, teenagers, young people, adults and old persons, any action which contributes to the prevention or addresses social problems or needs and generally any action which contributes to the improvement of the welfare of the people residing, permanently or temporarily, in the territory of the Republic of Cyprus” and c) voluntary organisations: which are defined as “every organisation which is comprised by volunteers and its main or exclusive purpose is not for profit”, d) organisations: which are defined as any organised group of natural or legal persons, including associations, foundations, institutions, committees and clubs which have an administrative structure and operational autonomy. (Source: Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law)

1.1 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Historical trajectory of legislation/regulations

1925: *Charities Law - Cap 41* (a colonial law)

1930: *The Clubs (Registration) Law - Cap. 112* (a colonial law).

1948: *The Street and House to House Collections Law - Cap. 95* (a colonial law).

1951: *Companies Law/Cap 113* - a legal framework with articles on the establishment and registration of not for profit companies article 20(1).

1962: *Societies Law 3/62*

1968: *The Grants-in-aid Scheme for Voluntary Organisations* (not governed by law - introduced by the Department of Social Welfare).

1972: *The Societies and Institutions Law 57/72*³ - a legal framework with provisions for the establishment and registration of societies and institutions (associations and foundations), under the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior.

1973: *The Societies and Institutions Regulations 118/73*

1980: *The Capital Gains Tax Law 52/80* - a law which states that Capital Gains Tax is not levied on a gift made for educational, instructive or other charitable purposes to a local authority or to any charitable institution in the Republic, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance.

1989: *The Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Law 152/89* - a legal framework which establishes and defines the competences of the coordinative council for the voluntary sector.

1993: *The Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Regulations 290/93* (regulations of the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Law 152/89).

2000: *The VAT Law 246/90* - a law which exempts VAT for the supply of services or goods by not for profit organisations in the fields of welfare, social security, protection of children, young people or the elderly and physical education and culture, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance.

2002: *Income Tax Law 118(1)2002* - the law qualifies voluntary organisations for tax exemptions, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance.

2006: *The Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(I) 2006* - a new legal framework which amends the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Law 152/89.

1.2 LAWS, REGULATIONS AND PROVISIONS IN SUPPORT OF VOLUNTEERING AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

There is a satisfactory body of legislation/regulations that supports volunteering and voluntary organisations in Cyprus, although further improvements can be made. The existing legislation makes provisions for the establishment of different types of organised not for profit entities (i.e. voluntary organisations, associations, foundations, etc). The legal establishment of voluntary organisations provides an opportunity for an increased voluntary engagement in the organised structures of the voluntary sector, although everyday and unsystematic voluntary service takes place outside the established not for profit structures. Volunteering and voluntary organisations are further supported by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law. There is also other legislation which supports voluntary organisations through financial exceptions. More specifically, the laws which support volunteering and voluntary organisations are:

Legislation on the establishment/registration/regulation of voluntary/not for profit organisations

Various laws define the legal organisational forms of non-governmental/voluntary organisations of not for profit nature. (See analysis below)

Legislation which supports volunteering and voluntary organisations

Various articles of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law grant specific roles and competences to the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, which all support volunteering and voluntary organisations. Articles of this law make provisions for:

- The administration and structure of the member organisations to the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council.
- The role of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council in the establishment, operation and administration of the Volunteer Centres in Cyprus.
- The role and competences of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council in specific and general issues on volunteering and welfare such as:
 - Identification and analysis of social problems or needs of the voluntary organisations.
 - Development of volunteering based on best practice.
 - Establishment and administration of the Registry of the Voluntary Organisations (members to the PVCC).
 - Development of the short and long-term strategic policy on volunteering and the voluntary sector.
 - Coordination of the activity of the member organisations in order to safeguard the effective implementation of the voluntary sector policy.
 - Provision of technical or other support and consultative services to the member organisations.
 - Engagement in civil dialogue with the government and public authorities for the formulation and implementation of any policies in the domains of volunteering and social welfare.

Legislative Financial support/exemptions

- The Capital Gains Tax Law/1980 (a law which states that Capital Gains Tax is not levied on a gift made for educational, instructive or other charitable purposes to a local authority or to any charitable institution in the Republic).
- The VAT Law/2000 (a law which exempts VAT for the supply of services or goods by not for profit organisations in the fields of welfare, social security, protection of children, young people or the elderly and physical education and culture).

- Income Tax Law/2002 (the law qualifies Voluntary Organisations for tax exemptions).

Other Financial support

- The Grants-in-aid Scheme for voluntary organisations (operated by the Social Welfare Services of the Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance) based on a Decision of the Council of Ministers.
- In 2008, the Scheme subsidised 210 voluntary social welfare organisations for the operation of 292 social care programmes at a local level. The amount allocated in 2008 was € 7,816,885 (figures are up to July 2008).⁴
- Other Grant-in-Aid Schemes/Funding mechanisms operated by other Ministries/Authorities/Semi-Governmental Institutions.
- Funding from private donors and grant-making foundations.

There is no legal framework to define or safeguard the roles, rights or duties of the volunteers, although such an attempt is in process by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council.

2 PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC POLICY MAKING

As in many other contexts, democracy safeguards the participation of citizens in policy making. Furthermore national laws, agreements, Codes, international conventions also facilitate and safeguard the participation of not for profit bodies in policy making. An important piece of legislation which generally safeguards the participation of volunteer involving organisations in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of social policy is the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law of 2006 (which is a continuation of the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Law 152/89). Article 4 of the law states that the Council:

- Is recognised as the supreme coordinating body of volunteering.

³In practice, most written records refer to societies and institutions as associations and foundations respectively. In this research work the terms Associations and Foundations will therefore be maintained.

⁴Source: *National Strategy Reports on Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2008 - 2010*, Social Welfare Services, Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance.

- Actively contributes and engages in the programming and formulation of social policy.
- Coordinates the activities of its member organisations in collaboration with the public authorities.
- Formulates policy, for the achievement of the short and long-term objectives of the volunteering and social welfare domains, in close collaboration with the public authorities.
- Engages in consultation with the government, public or other authorities on state funding for voluntary organisations, etc.

Other, more specialised, pieces of legislation, as for example, the Law regarding the Consultation Procedure between State and other Services on Matters concerning Persons with Disabilities (L143(1)/2006), safeguards that each Service exercising public authority on any subject concerning persons with disabilities is obliged to consult with the Cyprus Confederation of Organisations of the Disabled (which is the official social partner of the state on disability issues).⁵ Also, international conventions promote the participation of specific social groups in the influence of policy. Besides the existing legal provisions, there is also a tradition in Cyprus for not for profit organisations to engage in consultation procedures or to be represented in Inter-ministerial Consultative/Policy making Committees, in Parliamentary Committees, etc. in order to influence policy in their area of expertise, activity or competence. Other examples of ways or measures with which not for profit institutions and associations represent and promote the interests of their social groups include the Elders' Parliament (organised by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council) and the Children's Parliament (organised by the Pan Cyprian Association for the Welfare and the Protection of Children), which are organised respectively once a year at the House of Representatives to discuss issues affecting these groups and to influence policy.

3 FISCAL POLICIES

There are various fiscal policies for the not-for-profit/volunteer involving organisations:

- Grant-in-Aid schemes for voluntary organisations/NGOs administered by Ministries/public or other authorities.
- The Capital Gains Tax Law which states that Capital Gains Tax is not levied on a gift made for educational, instructive or other charitable purposes to a local authority or to any charitable institution in the Republic.
- The VAT Law which exempts VAT for the supply of services or goods by not for profit organisations in the fields of welfare, social security, protection of children, young people or the elderly and physical education and culture.
- The Income Tax Law which specifies that the income of charities, of religious and educational foundations of a public nature is exempted from taxation - Article. 8(13); and that donations to charities approved by the Ministry of Finance are deductible from the taxable income of individuals and companies - Article(9)(f).

4 ROLLS AND REGISTERS

Registers of public authorities

Public registers/records on volunteer involving organisations are kept by the Public Authorities/Registrars which have the responsibility to register not for profit organisations in their area of their competence, as stated in the laws.

Other Registers/Records

The Registry established by Article 10(1) of the Pan Cyprian

Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law registers the member organisations of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, the District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils and their member organisations. The registry of voluntary organisations in the PVCC Register/Record grants organisations the status of the member and furthermore grants a legal personality to the District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils, Community and Committee Volunteerism Councils. The Registry records the member organisations according to their geographical area of activity: pan Cyprian, district and local.

Independent/Internal Registers

Most volunteer involving organisations keep an internal registry or electronic database of their volunteers or members. The Cyprus Volunteer Centre which functions under the responsibility of the District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils in every district also keeps an electronic database/registry on volunteers.

5 LIST OF LAWS AND REGULATIONS

- 1925: *Charities Law* - Cap. 41.
- 1930: *The Clubs (Registration) Law* - Cap. 112.
- 1948: *The Street and House to House Collections Law* - Cap. 95.
- 1951: *Companies Law* - Cap. 113.
- 1962: *Societies Law 3/62*.
- 1972: *The Societies and Institutions Law 57/72*.
- 1973: *The Societies and Institutions Regulations 118/73*.
- 1980: *The Capital Gains Tax Law 52/80*.
- 1989: *The Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Law 152/89*.
- 1993: *The Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Regulations*.
- 2000: *The VAT Law 246/90*.
- 2002: *Income Tax Law 118(1)2002*.
- 2006: *The Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(I)2006*.

1 ORGANISATIONAL FORMS

The legal organisational forms of the not for profit/volunteer involving organisations in Cyprus are: clubs, associations/societies, foundations/institutions, voluntary organisations and not for profit companies. Other legal organisational forms include the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, the District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils and the Community and Committee Volunteering Councils, and a small number of other distinct associations and confederations. Despite the legal distinctions, the conventional language used to describe all the above organisational forms is “voluntary organisations” and lately the term “NGOs”.

Clubs

Clubs, as an organisational form, are registered under the Clubs (Registration Law) Cap. 112. The law defines clubs as a society of persons associated together for social activity or mutual entertainment purposes, or assistance, or for any other purpose as long as it does not involve the acquisition of gain. As stated in the law, organisational forms which are official, ecclesiastical and religious institutions, etc are not considered as Clubs. Examples of Clubs that fall under the articles of this Law are Clubs for youths, or adults, which have a broad purpose or interest such as community or sports groups.

Associations/Societies

Associations/Societies are registered and established under the Societies and Institutions Law/1972. The law defines an association/society as an organised union which has a specific, mutual benefit not for profit making purpose and is composed of at least twenty persons.

Foundations/Institutions

Foundations/Institutions are also established and registered under the Societies and Institutions Law/1972. According to the law, a foundation is the total set of a property which provides services to achieve a specific public benefit purpose.

Not for profit companies

Not for profit companies are established and registered under the Companies Law/Cap 113. Not for profit companies are defined as associations which are formed as a company and which have as a purpose to promote commerce, art, science, religion, charity, etc. Not for profit companies apply their profits, if any, or income for the promo-

tion of their purposes/objectives and do not distribute any surpluses to their members.

Voluntary organisations

Voluntary organisations is a terminology which describes, usually in most cases, all organisational forms of not for profit/volunteer involving organisations in Cyprus. A definition of this terminology is found in the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law of 2006 (which is a continuation of the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Law 152/89), which defines a “voluntary organisation” as any organisation that is comprised by volunteers and whose main or exclusive purpose is a not for profit making one. Article 22 of the law furthermore specifies that nothing in the law affects the status, activities or powers that have been granted to foundations, associations etc, by other laws.

Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council

The Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council (PVCC) is a distinct organisational form, which is granted its legal personality, as well as its establishment and functioning, by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law of 2006 (which is a continuation of the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Law 152/89). The law gives the PVCC a legal personality and recognises it as the supreme coordinating body of volunteering. It is an autonomous Council governed by the administration board which is composed by volunteers. Articles of this law state and regulate the PVCC's objectives, competences/powers, issues of administration and structure, the establishment of a Registry⁶ for Voluntary Organisations (only for the member organisations of the PVCC and the DVCCs) and other internal management affairs, as well as issues regulating the membership of voluntary organisations to the Council.

District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils

The District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils (DVCCs) are another distinct organisational form, which are established under the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law. They function and operate according to internal regulations, as specified in the law, and apply the policies and programmes approved by the Administrative Committee/Board of the PVCC. The PVCC has the administrative and operational responsibility for all DVCCs. Every DVCC, acts as the coordinating body of voluntary organisations in the district of its competence and has as member organisations district and local voluntary organisations and the Community/Committee Volunteerism Councils. They are governed by an administrative board, composed by volunteers.

Community and Committee Volunteerism Councils

The Community and Committee Volunteerism Councils are local organisational forms, established under the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law. They function and operate according to internal regulations of the law and are coordinated and monitored by the District Volunteerism Coordinative Council in which they are registered as members. Every Community or Committee Volunteering Council is governed by an administrative board, composed by volunteers and runs programmes or services to meet the needs of a specific community or geographical territory.

Cyprus Volunteer Centre

As stated in the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council law, the establishment, operation and administration of the Volunteer Centres, is under the responsibility of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council. Although not an autonomous legal entity, the

⁶The Registry established by Article 10(1) of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law of 2006 (which is a continuation of the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Law 152/89) registers the member organizations of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council and the District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils. The registry of voluntary organisations in the PVCC Register grants organisations the status of member and furthermore grants legal status to District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils and Community/Committee Volunteerism Councils.

Cyprus Volunteer Centre, functions under the responsibility of the District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils and has as objectives to coordinate, promote, support and facilitate voluntary service, activities and volunteering in general in the Republic of Cyprus.

Associations/Confederations governed by specific laws

A small number of other organisational forms, which are usually branches of international organisations, have been granted a legal personality under specific laws. For example, following the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus and the accession of Cyprus to the Geneva Conventions, the Cyprus Red Cross was registered as a legal entity under Law 39 of 1967. Furthermore, the Boy Scouts Association is governed by the Boy Scouts Association Law Cap 34 and the Cyprus Girls Guide Association is governed by the Cyprus Girls Guide Association Law 81/1968.

Religious related organisational forms

Philoptochos (friends for the poor) associations, developed since the early years in the history of Cyprus, still function, though in very small numbers, in Cyprus, under a constitutional act issued by the Church of Cyprus, but they are not always registered under any other existing legislation.

Differences between different organisations involving volunteers

To map volunteer/involving organisations is a difficult task, considering the low research activity in this area. The unique characteristics of the island of Cyprus (i.e. being an island conquered by many rulers since the early years in history and a postcolonial society which was granted its formal independence in 1960) not only influenced the development of volunteering and the voluntary/NGO sector in general, but also its socio-economic development and legislative framework. Considering the unique characteristics of the island, it is important to note that the juridical framework developed according to the specific socio-economic and political circumstances of each era of the history of Cyprus. Today, the wide activity of volunteer involving organisations is presented below:

- Welfare associations and foundations.
- Religious/faith-based associations.
- Cultural/arts associations.
- Advocacy groups.
- Sports clubs (not all sports clubs are not for profit).
- Student and youth organizations.
- Ethnic organisations.
- Environmental organisations.
- Education, training and research associations/foundations.
- Social and recreational organisations.
- Grant-making foundations & fund-raising bodies.
- Women's associations.
- National networks/federations.
- Associations of marginalised groups.
- Social movements.
- Professional not for profit organisations.
- Refugee associations.

In practice, not all not for profit organisations engage great numbers of volunteers. Due to lack of research, no information is available on the total number of volunteers engaged in the various organisational forms of the not for profit organisations. Usually, the "traditional voluntary organisations" have a long history of being volunteer/involving organisations and engage more volunteers.

Structure of voluntary organisations

Voluntary organisations are autonomous and independent although they may have a membership to a broader umbrella organisation, (con)federation, etc. at national, European or international level. They are governed by a board of members (administrative or executive boards composed by volunteers); they have paid staff/professionals, a membership of natural persons or organisations and engage volunteers.

2 RULES AND FUNCTIONING

Juridical obligations of associations/foundations

All organisational forms of volunteer involving/not for profit organisations that wish to obtain legal personality must register and function according to the provisions of the existing national laws. For example, the Societies and Institutions Law/1972 not only requires founders of associations and foundations to submit specific documents (i.e. constitutional act and or/ act of incorporation, etc) but also specifies the minimum requirements and general content of these acts. The law furthermore specifies the responsibilities of founders and members, the basic administration, decision making and the auditing procedures that need to be in place, as well as the competences of public or independent authorities. Also, the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law specifies, in its various articles, the responsibilities of member organisations, general administrative and structural procedures, etc.

Juridical obligations on fundraising

Fundraising is regulated by the Street and House to House Collections Law - Cap. 95, N. 41/73. The law specifies all procedures and measures on the conduct of fund-raising activities including the granting of licences, implementation procedures, measures to be enforced in cases of unlawful acts, the responsibilities of the organisers, procedures on accounts and on the application of the funds, the competences of public or independent authorities, etc.

Powers of governing organs

The power to register volunteer involving/not for profit organisations, rests with public authorities/Ministries as specified in the existing legislation. Other laws, such as the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law, gives powers to the PVCC on issues of registration of the member organisations, as well as structural, administrative and general policy making issues.

Governing organs of not for profit/voluntary organisations

In all organisations the governing organs include the General

Assembly and the Board members (administrative or management /Boards). The procedures, role and obligations of these governing organs are specified and regulated in their acts of constitution.

Decision making procedures

As in all countries, decision making occurs at various levels. Decision making on internal or specific issues relating to the scope of the volunteer/involving organisations occurs at the level of the organisation. Decision making on public policy areas is usually conducted through consultation processes with the participation of all interested parties (governmental, not for profit, etc).

3 RELATIONSHIP WITH PUBLIC SECTOR

3.1 OVERVIEW

Relationship with the government/public institutions

Volunteer involving organisations play an important role in almost every field of social or public policy in Cyprus. The Government of Cyprus has a long history of cooperation with the social partners, non-governmental organisations/volunteer involving organisations, or other important actors in the development and delivery of policies and programmes. Through the participation of representatives of organisations in advisory councils/boards/committees, established by legislation or by decision of the Council of Ministers, the Government and the Legislative Authority (House of Representatives) consult with all interested parties/voluntary organisations/NGOs in nearly all policy areas. Although there are no minimum standards on consultation, a general consultation framework between the state and the voluntary/NGO sector is provided in various laws or Codes. Examples include the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law, the Law regarding the Consultation Procedure between State and other Services on Matters concerning Persons with Disabilities etc. Also, other not for profit organisations (represented, or not by a Federation, etc) also participate in Inter-Ministerial Consultative Committees or in other stages of the pol-

icy making procedure. Active participation in decision making (civil dialogue) is complemented by other measures which reinforce the relationship between the public sector and the volunteer/involving organisations. For example, Ministries/public authorities, semi-governmental institutions or other funding authorities which administer funding schemes for voluntary organisations/NGOs in Cyprus not only acknowledge the importance and contribution of the voluntary sector, but also reinforce the existing relationship culture. Of course, it remains as a fact, as in most countries, that the dependency of a large number of voluntary organisations on state funding increases the organisations' vulnerability, "limits" to some extent their independence and activity and affects, sometimes, the relationship culture with the public sector, especially in periods of major policy shifts, or in periods where there are significant reductions in public finances.

Relationship with the Church

The social mission of the Church of Cyprus and its concern in dealing with social problems is widely and well recorded in the long history of the Church. The protection of human rights, poverty, unemployment, drug abuse, other contemporary problems encountered by social/vulnerable groups of the Cypriot society, remains a high priority on the agenda of the Cyprus Church. In practice, the Church and its religious institutions, have close collaboration with the traditional volunteer/involving organisations in pursuit of general social objectives and to address social contemporary problems.

Relationship with local authorities

Most organisational forms of volunteer/involving organisations have close ties and collaboration with local authorities in Cyprus. Among the other responsibilities of municipalities, as specified in the Municipalities' Law 111 of 1985, include, depending on their finances, to engage in a vast range of activities and events including the arts, education, sport and social services. This develops a favourable collaborative network between local authorities and volunteer/involving organisations in the delivery of welfare, in collaboration with the central public authorities.

Relationship with the private sector

Corporate Social Responsibility activity is increasingly growing in the recent years. It includes financing for the establishment of social services, cultural foundations, etc run by voluntary organisations, financing of charity, cultural and social activities and events, financial contributions to cover the operational expenses of organisations, etc.

3.2 FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW

(INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES)

In Cyprus there is a long tradition of cooperation between the state and the voluntary organisations. Interviewees report that, although the state acknowledges and recognises the voluntary sector as a reliable partner in meeting targets and objectives, it does not always respond promptly or efficiently to the needs of the volunteer involving organisations. Most of them believe that, even though the relationship between volunteer involving organisations and the public sector is good, there is always ground for improvement. The state must provide more supportive measures, especially financial support, to volunteer involving organisations since the organisations complement the work of public authorities.

The responses to the questionnaires described the relationship between volunteer involving organisations and the public sector as very close, to the point of being recognised by the state as key partners in the delivery of welfare: *"Voluntary organisations cooperate closely with all public sector services for the promotion of social policy. Organisations are recognised as the key partner of the state in the delivery of welfare."*

The cooperation is defined by one of the respondent as excellent: *"The relationship between volunteer involving organisations and the public sector is satisfactory. There is an excellent cooperation for issues concerning social policy. The voluntary organisations, though, must increase their role in decision making processes."* The role of the voluntary sector to address social problems is seen as paramount and most respondents are satisfied of the support received from the pub-

lic also financially: *"Even though the public sector has the main responsibility to address social problems, a great responsibility of this goes to the voluntary sector since people from the voluntary sector have direct access to these problems and more efficient ways to deal with them by offering love and support to people in need. The volunteer involving organisations and the public sector have a common role when it comes to social policy and there is a need of good communication and collaboration. The public sector supports volunteer involving organisations with financial support."*

The participation of the voluntary sector in the definition of public policies is seen by the respondents to the questionnaires as extremely important because of the wide range of activities voluntary organisations are involved in and the in-depth knowledge of the problems and needs: *"The voluntary welfare organisations play a very important role in almost every area of social policy. The voluntary sector represents a wide range of interests of citizens and operate social programs, provides services to vulnerable groups and contribute to social cohesion. Problems such as the protection and care*

of children, elderly care, combating racism and xenophobia, the prevention and suppression of juvenile delinquency, the eradication of violence and poverty, find solutions through the determined actions of voluntary organisations."

"The participation of the voluntary sector in the definition of public policies is crucial and vital, since volunteers and representatives of the voluntary sector are familiar of the problems and needs of the voluntary sector from their experience. The thoughts and ideas of the representatives of the voluntary sector are important for the definition of public policies. The Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law gives the power to voluntary organisations to participate in policy making."

The crucial role of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council in empowering the voluntary organisations is mentioned by many of our respondents: *"Under the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law, the voluntary sector plays a significant role in the development of policy and strategy for the achievement of the objectives of the voluntary sector and general social welfare."*

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

1 RESEARCH AND STATISTICS HIGHLIGHTS

Lack of research studies on volunteer involving organisations in Cyprus did not allow the researchers to provide comprehensive data and information. The research and statistical data recorded in this section, present therefore only data which were available before the completion of the research study.

Charitable giving

The behaviour of charitable giving among the population records that 87% of a research sample has engaged in charitable giving (i.e. donated money or goods like clothes, shoes, food, etc) to fund-raising activities of voluntary organisations and generally not for profit organisations in general.⁷

Membership

43% of the population was member of at least one civil society organisation. Health and social welfare associations have been recorded to have the largest membership. Sports associations' members accounted for 18%.⁸

Volunteering

General trend on volunteer engagement: 51% of the population have assisted (without pay) an organisation or provided support to members of a community (on an informal basis) during the previous twelve months of the conduct of the research.⁹

Volunteer engagement by age groups¹⁰ in percentage:

- Age group 14-17: 75%
- Age group 18-30: 58%
- Age group 31-40: 61%
- Age group 41-50: 69%
- Age group 51-60: 75%
- Age group 61+: 69%

⁷Civil Society Index Report for Cyprus, 2005.

⁸Ibidem.

⁹Ibidem.

¹⁰Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, *Research on volunteering*, by RAI Consultants, 2005.

Volunteering in percentage based on socio-economic status:

- High socio-economic status: 75%
- Low socio-economic status: 62%

Size of organisations by category

The size of category/field of organisations is presented in the following ranking.¹¹

- Health/Welfare;
- Sport;
- Education;
- Culture.

Umbrella not for profit bodies

The available data estimates that there are 137 federations, umbrella bodies, networks of civil society organisations (107 of these are registered under the Law on Societies and Institutions).¹²

2 ECONOMIC AND STATISTICAL INDICATORS

The contribution of the sector to the GDP is EUR 24 million (0.03 %).¹³

Programmes of the not for profit sector in general

There are 241 organisations and 357 programmes in operation, mainly of small size.¹⁴

Number of programmes in the welfare domain.¹⁵

- Programmes for pre-school children (provision of day-care to

pre-school children). In 2005, there were 55 community day care centres in operation.

- Centres for school-age children (provision of day-care through community services to school age children). In 2005, there were 75 community day care centres in operation.
- Programmes for persons with special needs (provision of day care, home care services, re-integration into employment, psychological support, summer camps and entertainment to persons with special needs). In 2005 there were 52 registered organisations operating such programmes.
- Programmes for the elderly (provision of day care, home care services, summer camps and entertainment to the elderly). In 2005 there were about 115 organisations operating such programmes.
- Programmes for various groups in need. In 2005 there were 62 organisations operating such programmes.

Grants to not for profit organisations

7,972,334 in 2007¹⁶ (grants in the field of welfare).

309,000 in 2007¹⁷ (grants in the field of equality).

Data from other public bodies were not available before the completion date of this research.

2.1 TYPES AND RANGE OF NOT FOR PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

Percentage of registered societies according to their field of activity

(The figures present the field of activity of societies only and do

¹¹Ibidem.

¹²Ibidem.

¹³Austrian Institute for SME Research, *Study on Practices and Policies in the Social Sector in Europe-Country Fiche-Cyprus*, Vienna, 2007.

¹⁴Ibidem.

¹⁵Ibidem.

¹⁶Annual Report of Social Welfare Services, 2007.

¹⁷Annual Report of Ministry of Justice and Public Order, 2007.

not include registered foundations, clubs or other forms of registered not for profit organisations, etc.)¹⁸

Societies (total no. of registered societies: 3,227)

- Welfare & Health: 33.69% (estimate)
- Sport: 21.02%
- Professional Organisations: 12.17% (estimate)
- Culture/Arts/History: 8.5% (estimate)
- Ethnic/National issues: 4.71% (estimate)
- Entertainment/Other: 4.47% (estimate)
- Religious/Faith based organisations: 3.6% (estimate)
- Education & Student Affairs: 2.8% (estimate)
- Environment: 2.34% (estimate)
- Networking/International Relations: 1.97% (estimate)
- Animal Welfare: 1.38% (estimate)
- Youth: 1.30% (estimate)
- Research/Technology: 1.14% (estimate)

Registered associations and foundations

3,227 associations from 1973-2009 and 289 foundations from 1974-2009.

3 OF VOLUNTEERS AND ORGANISATIONS (INTERVIEWS)

Motivations and barriers

Interviewees suggest that the main motivation for volunteering is that volunteers identify themselves with people in need or with community needs and this is the strongest motivator for them to volunteer and to make a difference in their society/community. Other motivations for volunteering include: the satisfaction, self-fulfilment and joy that people gain when engaging in volunteer service and the notion that through volunteering the quality of life and society can be improved.

All the interviewees believe that there are not any significant barriers to volunteering activity. Of course, they all stress that the increasing workload and responsibilities, lack of time, etc that people have to handle in contemporary societies, as well as limited awareness raising campaigns on voluntary issues, may be identified as barriers to volunteering.

Needs and challenges

The most important future challenges for volunteering, as identified by the interviewees are:

- Organisations face difficulties in effectively motivating people to engage in volunteering, mainly due to limited funding.
- The existence of a large number of organisations sometimes results to duplication of effort, since some organisations engage, to some extent, in similar activities.
- The economic crisis, which constitutes a future challenge for all the sectors in all the countries, is definitely a challenge for volunteering.
- Lack of economic resources in voluntary organisations.
- The slow annual increase of the state grants given to voluntary organisations.

Interviewees suggested a number of ways with which volunteering can develop. The more effective, according to the interviewees are: to introduce a module on volunteering in educational institutions, to reinforce and reward students who participate in voluntary organisations or to establish a prerequisite of a specific amount of time of voluntary work/experience before entry to higher education. It is also important to increase the frequency of awareness raising activities on volunteering and to stress, in innovative ways, its importance and contribution in society. Also important is the introduction of measures by the state in order to support the efforts of voluntary organisations. The levels and quality of volunteering in each country reflects the

level of culture, values and ideals of the country. Volunteering therefore needs to remain high on the policy agenda to ensure its further development in the future.

The most important need of the volunteer involving organisations, as identified by the interviewees, is mainly the lack of adequate funds; limited state funding does not assist voluntary organisation in upgrading existing activities and programmes or to extend their activity in new areas of activity. The most pressing need for organisations is that they do not have adequate funds to employ more professionals and/or paid staff, or to run initiatives that support the work of volunteers.

The greatest difficulties that volunteer involving organisations encounter are financial due to the slow annual increase of funds pro-

vided by the state. Another difficulty is the absence of premises and offices and the general lack of the appropriate infrastructure to run their activities and programmes.

Networking: experience of working with other organisations

Most voluntary organisations collaborate in many different ways with other organisations at national, European, or international level. A growing number of organisations are members of international and European voluntary organisations or other networks. Networking helps organisation to exchange ideas, good practices and assists working towards a common work programme and strategies to strengthen the goals of the voluntary organisations.

¹⁸The figures presented are the result of an internal research conducted by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, based on the Ministry of Interior Registry of Societies and Institutions in 2009. The figures are estimated percentages.

1 OVERVIEW

It is estimated that there are approximately 140 registered federations/umbrella bodies/networks of civil society under the Law on Societies and Institutions. They represent homogeneous organisations which engage in specific areas of activity. Consultation Networks and (Con) Federation Bodies are active in all field areas such as: welfare, health, disability, environment, culture, education, marginalised groups, poverty, human rights, women's rights, etc. Furthermore, there are Coordination Bodies established under legislation.

The Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law establishes and regulates the functioning and aims of the coordination bodies on volunteer-involving/not for profit organisations

2 PAN CYPRIAN VOLUNTEERISM COORDINATIVE COUNCIL

The Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council (PVCC) represents the continuation of the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council (which operated since 1973 under an article of association and since 1989 under the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council Law 152/89). The Council was founded in 1973, when there was a need for: coordination of the voluntary organisations, development of policy on the voluntary sector and volunteering and representation of the voluntary sector on general/horizontal issues at the policy making level. Since 2006 the Council operates under a new legal framework (the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law). Its membership includes non-governmental/voluntary organisations both at national and local level. The Council's structures facilitate the participation of the member organisations in decision making processes and safeguard the members' diversity and independence.

Policy

- Identification, study, analysis of social problems and needs.
- Active contribution in social programming, civil dialogue and policy formulation & implementation.
- Development of volunteering.
- Evaluation, promotion and advancement of the work of the voluntary sector.
- Coordination of the member organisations' activities and planning in collaboration with the state and the voluntary sector.
- Support and reinforcement of the member organisations' activities.

- Development of policy and strategy for the advancement and achievement of the short and long-term objectives of volunteering, the voluntary sector and general welfare.
- Provision of technical and other support to the member organisations for the advancement of programs and projects (i.e. European Affairs Service and other specialised services to members, etc).
- Provision of systematic training and development to the human resources of the member organisations (the PVCC Centre for Training - Development & Research).
- Administration of the Cyprus Volunteer Centre.
- Promotion and advancement of volunteering and voluntary service and welfare in general.
- Establishment, supervision, coordination of the District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils, the Community Volunteerism Councils and the Community Volunteerism Committees and exercise of administrative and financial control.
- Coordination of the activity of the member organisations in order to ensure the effective implementation of the voluntary sector policy.
- Provision of technical and advisory support to the member organisations in order to advance their social programs.
- Engagement in civil dialogue and social policy making through position papers, reports, memoranda and action plans.
- Close collaboration with the governmental/public authorities on issues relevant to the state funding of the voluntary sector.
- Representation of the sector on international/European meetings, conferences and forums which focus on volunteering or welfare issues.
- Organisation of conferences, meetings and other events, which promote the Council's objectives.
- Publication of material which promotes or advances specialised themes/issues, volunteering or general social objectives.

Competences

- Administration of the Registry of the Voluntary/Not for profit Organisations (members to the PVCC).
- Development of the short, medium and long-term volunteering and social welfare policy in collaboration with the governmental or other authorities.

Support bodies

1 SUPPORT MEASURES (QUESTIONNAIRES)

Opinions on measures and/or initiatives for support to volunteering in your country

It is felt that there are many initiatives to support volunteering thanks to the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law which sustains voluntary organisations in general and to the public sector which provides financial support as well as counselling and general assistance, and communicates well with the voluntary sector. The positive measures already in place could be further improved, according to the respondents, with extra and on-going financial help expanded to more and more sectors and by advancing the opportunities for the voluntary sector to put across its suggestions on the development of the sector itself. *“The measures and initiatives for support to the volunteering in Cyprus are satisfactory but there is always the need for improvement. The public sector offers financial support to the voluntary organisations as well as counselling and support on several issues. These measures could improve by giving the chance to representatives of the voluntary sector to express their ideas and proposals for the improvement of the voluntary sector in general.”*

2 VOLUNTEER SUPPORT CENTRES (QUESTIONNAIRES)

One of the objectives of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, as stated in its law, is the establishment, operation and administration of the Volunteer Centres. The Cyprus Volunteer Centre, founded in 1991, is the coordinative and support centre for the promotion of volunteering in Cyprus. It functions under the responsibility of the District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils. The Volunteer Centres which function at all districts, coordinate, promote, support and facilitate voluntary service, voluntary projects and volunteering in general. The objectives of the Cyprus Volunteer Centre include: identification of social problems and needs, matching of need and demand for voluntary service, registration of volunteers in the district Volunteer Record, training and support, monitoring of the volunteer placements and initiation/implementation of voluntary projects, etc. The work of the Cyprus Volunteer Centre is also complemented by other volunteer support initiatives occurring at a smaller scale within the structures of the voluntary/NGO sector.

Focus on support bodies

(Questionnaires)

Volunteer Centre of Nicosia

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Nicosia

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The District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Nicosia is the coordinative centre of voluntary organisations in the district of Nicosia and implements the policy as set in the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(1)/2006. The DVCC identifies and addresses the needs of the voluntary sector, supports voluntary/non-governmental organisations to meet the volunteering and social objectives and builds cooperation and solidarity amongst its member organisations, the government and society. In addition to this the DVCC seeks to advance the shared interests of the voluntary organisations and to deliver a strategic vision for the further development of the voluntary sector. Through its Volunteer Centre it promotes volunteering and facilitates volunteer service.

Mission and goals

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Nicosia

(The DVCC of Nicosia implements the policy set by the administrative board/committee of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, based on the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(1)/2006)

- Identification, study, analysis of social problems and needs.
- Active contribution in social programming, civil dialogue and social policy formulation & implementation.
- Development of volunteerism.
- Evaluation, promotion and advancement of the work of the voluntary sector in their area of competence.
- Coordination of the member organisations' activities and planning in collaboration with the state and the voluntary sector.
- Support and reinforcement of the member organisations' operation and action, on a consultative basis.
- Implementation of policy and strategy for the advancement and achievement of the short and long-term objectives of the voluntary sector and general social welfare.
- Provision of technical support to the member organisations for the advancement of social programs and projects.

- Provision of systematic training and development to the human resources of the member organizations.
- Administration of the Volunteer Centre.
- The promotion and advancement of volunteering and voluntary service and social welfare sector in general.

Volunteer Centre of Nicosia

Its mission is:

- Identify social needs and develop volunteer opportunities.
- Match the needs of volunteers with volunteering needs.
- Recruit and train volunteers.
- Facilitate the placement of volunteers.
- Provide on-going support and guidance.

Activities

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Nicosia

Most activities performed are based on the policy set by the statute. Other activities include:

- Coordination of the Volunteer Centre.
- Coordination of member organizations.
- Service Provision to member organizations.
- Awareness raising campaigns.
- Volunteers Festival.
- Volunteerism Week.
- Training / seminars.
- Annual Conference.
- Annual Events.
- Publications.
- Coordination and implementation of voluntary projects.
- Participation in decision making processes.

Volunteer Centre

- Volunteering with people and families.
- Social projects in the community.
- Humanitarian projects.
- Environmental volunteer projects.
- Cultural volunteer projects.
- Volunteering in social programs run by NGOs and other institutions.
- Corporate Social Responsibility volunteering projects.

Achievements

- Increased enrolment of volunteers at the Volunteer Centre of Nicosia.
- Partner in the implementation of the Community Service Programme (for young offenders) in cooperation with the Nicosia District Court and District Welfare Office.
- Provision of counseling for programs for preschool and school age children run by the member organizations.
- Successful coordination and implementation of innovative volunteer projects in the community.
- Tsunami fundraising: mobilisation of hundreds of volunteers in a fundraising activity to support the tsunami victims.
- Environmental projects.
- Mobilisation of schools for participation in the “Youth and Volunteering” Programme implemented by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.
- Increased networking and collaboration with the member organisations to address the needs of the sector.

In 2007, the Volunteer Centre of Nicosia organised in several communities in the district of Nicosia “Regional Volunteer Teams”. This action helped to promote volunteering in small communities and raise awareness on volunteering. The regional volunteer teams with the support and coordination of the District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Nicosia organised many activities in different fields (environment, culture, social welfare etc) promoting in this way welfare through volunteering in the community.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Volunteer Centre of Nicosia
District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Nicosia

■ Territory covered	Nicosia	
■ Volunteers	585	
■ Staff	2 full time for volunteer support and development. 2 full time for Community Service Programme. 1 part time for guidance counsellor programme for preschool and school age children	
■ Activities	SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	Home assistance Support, relation, animation activities Providing essential goods Providing Food Facilitated transfer service Support for learning Re-education/reintegration
	HEALTH	Health care Psychological help Donation or collection of blood
	ENVIRONMENT - NATURE - ANIMALS	Rubbish collection, beach cleaning etc. Intervention for the protection of the environment
	CULTURE AND CULTURAL GOODS	Social and cultural animation Cultural promotion Training
	CIVIL PROTECTION	Protection in the case of natural disasters Help on the beach and/or on the mountains

QUESTIONNAIRES		
Volunteer of Nicosia		
	SPORTS	Other
	CITIZENS' RIGHTS AND TUTELAGE	Civil rights
■ Volunteering support activities	TRAINING	Courses Individual classes or seminars Long distance training
	PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Publications Meetings and conferences Festivals expositions and fairs Public events Philanthropic events Fundraising activities
	CONSULTING AND ASSISTANCE	Communication Events organisation Fiscal and admin Technology Fundraising International volunteering and networking
	COMMUNICATION	Periodicals, publications, newsletters Production of lecture notes, books, manuals Creation of special communication events Press release Press conferences
	INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION	Videos and CDs Information office Magazines and periodicals Books, manuals, booklets Database Collections of laws, regulations, norms Videos

Volunteer Centre of Limassol District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Limassol

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The District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Limassol is the coordinative centre of voluntary organisations in the district of Limassol and implements the policy as set in the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(1)/2006. The DVCC identifies and addresses the needs of the voluntary sector, supports voluntary/non-governmental organisations to meet the volunteering and social objectives and builds cooperation and solidarity amongst its member organisations, the government and society. In addition to this the DVCC seeks to advance the shared interests of the voluntary organisations and to deliver a strategic vision for the further development of the voluntary sector. Through its Volunteer Centre it promotes volunteering and facilitates volunteer service.

Mission and goals

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Limassol

(The DVCC of Limassol implements the policy set by the administrative board/committee of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, based on the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(1)/2006)

- Identification, study, analysis of social problems and needs.
- Active contribution in social programming, civil dialogue and social policy formulation & implementation.
- Development of volunteerism.
- Evaluation, promotion and advancement of the work of the voluntary sector in their area of competence.
- Coordination of the member organisations' activities and planning in collaboration with the state and the voluntary sector.
- Support and reinforcement of the member organisations' operation and action, on a consultative basis.
- Implementation of policy and strategy for the advancement and achievement of the short and long-term objectives of the voluntary sector and general social welfare.

- Provision of technical support to the member organisations for the advancement of social programs and projects.
- Provision of systematic training and development to the human resources of the member organizations.
- Administration of the Volunteer Centre.
- The promotion and advancement of volunteering and voluntary service and social welfare sector in general.

Volunteer Centre of Limassol

Its mission is:

- Identify social needs and develop volunteer opportunities.
- Match the needs of volunteers with volunteering needs.
- Recruit and train volunteers.
- Facilitate the placement of volunteers.
- Provide on-going support and guidance.

Activities

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Limassol

Most activities performed are based on the policy set by the statute. Other activities include:

- Coordination of the Volunteer Centre.
- Coordination of member organizations.
- Service Provision to member organizations.
- Awareness raising campaigns.
- Volunteerism Week.
- Training / seminars.
- Annual Conference.
- Annual Events.
- Publications.
- Coordination and implementation of voluntary projects.
- Participation in decision making processes.

Volunteer Centre

- Volunteering with people and families.
- Social projects in the community.
- Humanitarian projects.
- Environmental volunteer projects.
- Cultural volunteer projects.
- Volunteering in social programs run by NGOs and other institutions.
- Corporate Social Responsibility volunteering projects.

Achievements

- Increased enrolment of volunteers at the Volunteer Centre of Limassol.
- Partner in the implementation of the Community Service Programme (for young offenders) in cooperation with the Limassol District Court and District Welfare Office.
- Successful coordination and implementation of innovative volunteer projects in the community.
- Tsunami fundraising: mobilisation of hundreds of volunteers in a fundraising activity to support the tsunami victims.
- Environmental projects.
- Mobilisation of schools for participation in the “Youth and Volunteering” Programme implemented by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism
- Coordinative Council in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.
- Increased networking and collaboration with the member organisations to address the needs of the sector.
- Successful coordination of the programme “Occupation Centre of Adults”.

During the year 2007, the Volunteer Support Centre of Limassol managed to organise groups of Volunteers in several communities of Limassol aiming to promote volunteering in the whole district of Limassol. Another important action of the Voluntary Centre of Limassol was the contribution to the reforestation of a large area of the Mountain range of Troodos after a fire that burned big part of the Troodos forest

QUESTIONNAIRES

Volunteer Centre of Limassol
District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Limassol

■ Territory covered	Limassol	
■ Volunteers	315	
■ Staff	1 full time staff for volunteer support and development. 1 full time staff for Community Service programme.	
■ Activities	SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	Home assistance Support, relation, animation activities Providing essential goods Support for learning Facilitated transfer service Providing food Re-education/reintegration Call centre and phone help Research, studies, documentation
	CITIZEN RIGHTS AND TUTELAGE	Legal advice Civil rights
	HEALTH	Health care Donation and/or collection of blood
	ENVIRONMENT NATURE AND ANIMALS	Rubbish collection, beach cleaning, woods, etc.
	CIVIL PROTECTION	Prevention/assistance in case of natural disasters Help on the beach and/or in the mountains
	CULTURE AND CULTURAL GOODS	Culture promotion
	SPORTS	Other

QUESTIONNAIRES

Volunteer Centre of Limassol

■ Volunteering support activities	CONSULTING AND ASSISTANCE	Management Fiscal and administrative Training Processes Events Organisation Communication International volunteering and networking Fund raising
	PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Promotional Campaigns on mass media Publications Philanthropic Events Public Events Meetings and conferences Fundraising activities
	TRAINING	Courses (with or without stage) Long distance training Individual classes or seminars
	COMMUNICATION	Periodical publications or newsletters Creation of special communication events Press Conferences Press Release Presence in local and national newspapers Production of lecture notes, books, manuals
	INFORMATION & DOCUMENTATION	Books, manuals, booklets Magazines and periodicals Information Office

Volunteer Centre of Larnaca

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Larnaca

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The District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Larnaca is the coordinative centre of voluntary organisations in the district of Larnaca and implements the policy as set in the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(1)/2006. The DVCC identifies and addresses the needs of the voluntary sector, supports voluntary/non-governmental organisations to meet the volunteering and social objectives and builds cooperation and solidarity amongst its member organisations, the government and society. In addition to this the DVCC seeks to advance the shared interests of the voluntary organisations and to deliver a strategic vision for the further development of the voluntary sector. Through its Volunteer Centre, it promotes volunteering and facilitates volunteer service.

Mission and goals

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Larnaca

(The DVCC of Larnaca implements the policy set by the administrative board/committee of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, based on the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(1)/2006)

- Identification, study, analysis of social problems and needs.
- Active contribution in social programming, civil dialogue and social policy formulation & implementation.
- Development of volunteerism.
- Evaluation, promotion and advancement of the work of the voluntary sector in their area of competence.
- Coordination of the member organisations' activities and planning in collaboration with the state and the voluntary sector.
- Support and reinforcement of the member organisations' operation and action, on a consultative basis.
- Implementation of policy and strategy for the advancement and achievement of the short and long-term objectives of the voluntary sector and general social welfare.

- Provision of technical support to the member organisations for the advancement of social programs and projects.
- Provision of systematic training and development to the human resources of the member organizations.
- Administration of the Volunteer Centre.
- The promotion and advancement of volunteering and voluntary service and social welfare sector in general.

Volunteer Centre of Larnaca

Its mission is:

- Identify social needs and develop volunteer opportunities.
- Match the needs of volunteers with volunteering needs.
- Recruit and train volunteers.
- Facilitate the placement of volunteers.
- Provide on-going support and guidance

Activities

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Larnaca

Most activities performed are based on the policy set by the statute. Other activities include:

- Coordination of the Volunteer Centre.
- Coordination of member organizations.
- Service Provision to member organizations.
- Awareness raising campaigns.
- Volunteerism Week.
- Training / seminars.
- Annual Conference.
- Annual Events.
- Publications.
- Coordination and implementation of voluntary projects.
- Participation in decision making processes.

Volunteer Centre

- Volunteering with people and families.
- Social projects in the community.
- Humanitarian projects.
- Environmental volunteer projects.
- Cultural volunteer projects.
- Volunteering in social programs run by NGOs and other institutions.
- Corporate Social Responsibility volunteering projects

Achievements

- Increased enrolment of volunteers at the Volunteer Centre of Larnaca.
- Partner in the implementation of the Community Service Programme (for young offenders) in cooperation with the Larnaca District Court and District Welfare Office.
- Successful coordination and implementation of innovative volunteer projects in the community.
- Tsunami fundraising: mobilisation of hundreds of volunteers in a fundraising activity to support the tsunami victims.
- Environmental projects.
- Mobilisation of schools for participation in the “Youth and Volunteering” Programme implemented by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.
- Increased networking and collaboration with the member organisations to address the needs of the sector.
- Organizing Excursion for Volunteers.

The best thing the Volunteer Centre of Larnaca did in 2007 was the organisation of the Volunteerism Week. During this week, in December, there were organised several activities, like information campaigns, entertainment events for children and elderly people, environmental and cultural projects in order to promote the values of volunteering and raise awareness for the voluntary sector among the public.

QUESTIONNAIRES

**Volunteer Centre of Larnaca
District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Larnaca**

■ Territory covered	Larnaca	
■ Volunteers	295	
■ Staff	2 full time staff for the Community Service Programme. 1 part time for volunteer support and development	
■ Activities	SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	Support, relation, animation activities Home assistance Support for learning Call centre and phone help Re-education/reintegration Providing essential goods Facilitated transfer service Research, studies, documentation Providing food
	ENVIRONMENT NATURE AND ANIMALS	Rubbish collection, beach cleaning, woods, etc.
	CITIZEN RIGHTS AND TUTELAGE	Civil rights Legal advice
	CIVIL PROTECTION	Prevention/assistance in case of natural disasters Help on the beach and/or in the mountains
	HEALTH	Donation and/or collection of blood Psychological help
	CULTURE AND CULTURAL GOODS	Cultural promotion Social cultural animation
	SPORTS	Other

QUESTIONNAIRES		
Volunteer Centre of Larnaca		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Volunteering support activities 	CONSULTING AND ASSISTANCE	Communication Fiscal and administrative International volunteering and networking Management Events organisation Fund raising
	PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Public events Meetings and conferences Philanthropic events Fundraising activities Publications
	INFORMATION & DOCUMENTATION	Information office Books, manuals, booklets Magazines and periodicals
	TRAINING	Courses (with or without stage) Long distance training Individual classes or seminars
	COMMUNICATION	Periodical publications or newsletters Creation of special communication events Production of lecture notes, books, manuals Press conference Press release

Volunteer Centre of Paphos

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Paphos

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The District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Paphos is the coordinative centre of voluntary organisations in the district of Paphos and implements the policy as set in the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(1)/2006. The DVCC identifies and addresses the needs of the voluntary sector, supports voluntary/non-governmental organisations to meet the volunteering and social objectives and builds cooperation and solidarity amongst its member organisations, the government and society. In addition to this the DVCC seeks to advance the shared interests of the voluntary organisations and to deliver a strategic vision for the further development of the voluntary sector. Through its Volunteer Centre it promotes volunteering and facilitates volunteer service.

Mission and goals

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Paphos

(The DVCC of Paphos implements the policy set by the administrative board/committee of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, based on the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(1)/2006)

- Identification, study, analysis of social problems and needs.
- Active contribution in social programming, civil dialogue and social policy formulation & implementation.
- Development of volunteerism.
- Evaluation, promotion and advancement of the work of the voluntary sector in their area of competence.
- Coordination of the member organisations' activities and planning in collaboration with the state and the voluntary sector.
- Support and reinforcement of the member organisations' operation and action, on a consultative basis.
- Implementation of policy and strategy for the advancement and achievement of the short and long-term objectives of the voluntary sector and general social welfare.

- Provision of technical support to the member organisations for the advancement of social programs and projects.
- Provision of systematic training and development to the human resources of the member organizations.
- Administration of the Volunteer Centre.
- The promotion and advancement of volunteering and voluntary service and social welfare sector in general.

Volunteer Centre of Paphos

Its mission is:

- Identify social needs and develop volunteer opportunities.
- Match the needs of volunteers with volunteering needs.
- Recruit and train volunteers.
- Facilitate the placement of volunteers.
- Provide on-going support and guidance.

Activities

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Paphos

Most activities performed are based on the policy set by the statute. Other activities include:

- Coordination of the Volunteer Centre.
- Coordination of member organizations.
- Service Provision to member organizations.
- Awareness raising campaigns.
- Volunteerism Week,
- Training / seminars.
- Annual Conference.
- Annual Events.
- Publications.
- Coordination and implementation of voluntary projects.
- Participation in decision making processes.

Volunteer Centre

- Volunteering with people and families.
- Social projects in the community.
- Humanitarian projects.
- Environmental volunteer projects.
- Cultural volunteer projects.
- Volunteering in social programs run by NGOs and other institutions.
- Corporate Social Responsibility volunteering projects.

Achievements

- Increased enrolment of volunteers at the Volunteer Centre of Paphos.
- Partner in the implementation of the Community Service Programme (for young offenders) in cooperation with the Paphos District Court and District Welfare Office.
- Successful coordination and implementation of innovative volunteer projects in the community.
- Tsunami fundraising: mobilisation of hundreds of volunteers in a fundraising activity to support the tsunami victims.
- Environmental projects.
- Mobilisation of schools for participation in the “Youth and Volunteering” Programme implemented by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.
- Increased networking and collaboration with the member organisations to address the needs of the sector.

The best thing the Volunteer Centre of Paphos did in 2007 was the organisation of the Volunteerism Week. During this week, in December, there were organised several activities, like information campaigns, entertainment events for children and elderly people, environmental and cultural projects in order to promote the values of volunteering and raise awareness for the voluntary sector among the public.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Volunteer Centre of Paphos
District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Paphos

■ Territory covered	Paphos	
■ Volunteers	105	
■ Staff	1 full time for volunteer support and development. 1 full time Community Service Programme.	
■ Activities	SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	Home assistance Providing essential goods Support for learning Facilitated transfer service
	HEALTH	Health care Donation and/or collection of blood
	CITIZEN RIGHTS AND TUTELAGE	Civil rights Legal advice
	CIVIL PROTECTION	Prevention/assistance in case of natural disasters Help on the beach and/or in the mountains
	ENVIRONMENT NATURE AND ANIMALS	Rubbish collection, beach cleaning, woods, etc.
	CULTURE AND CULTURAL GOODS	Culture promotion
	SPORTS	
■ Volunteering Support Activities	PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Philanthropic events Fundraising activities Meetings and conferences

QUESTIONNAIRES

Volunteer Centre of Paphos

		Public events Promotional campaigns on mass media Publications
	CONSULTING AND ASSISTANCE	Fiscal and administrative Fund raising Communication
	TRAINING	Courses (with or without stage) Long distance training
	INFORMATION & DOCUMENTATION	Information office Magazines and periodicals
	COMMUNICATION	Creation of special communication events Periodical publications or newsletters Production of lecture notes, books, manuals Press conferences Press release

Volunteer Centre of Famagusta

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Famagusta

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The District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Famagusta (DVCC) is the coordinative centre of voluntary organisations in the district of Famagusta and implements the policy as set in the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(1)/2006. The DVCC identifies and addresses the needs of the voluntary sector, supports voluntary/non-governmental organisations to meet the volunteering and social objectives and builds cooperation and solidarity amongst its member organisations, the government and society. In addition to this the DVCC seeks to advance the shared interests of the voluntary organisations and to deliver a strategic vision for the further development of the voluntary sector. Through its Volunteer Centre, it promotes volunteering and facilitates volunteer service.

Mission and goals

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Famagusta

(The DVCC of Famagusta implements the policy set by the administrative board/committee of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council, based on the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law 61(1)/2006)

- Identification, study, analysis of social problems and needs.
- Active contribution in social programming, civil dialogue and social policy formulation & implementation.
- Development of volunteerism.
- Evaluation, promotion and advancement of the work of the voluntary sector in their area of competence.
- Coordination of the member organisations' activities and planning in collaboration with the state and the voluntary sector.
- Support and reinforcement of the member organisations' operation and action, on a consultative basis.
- Implementation of policy and strategy for the advancement and achievement of the short and long-term objectives of the voluntary sector and general social welfare.

- Provision of technical support to the member organisations for the advancement of social programs and projects.
- Provision of systematic training and development to the human resources of the member organizations.
- Administration of the Volunteer Centre.
- The promotion and advancement of volunteering and voluntary service and social welfare sector in general.

Volunteer Centre of Famagusta

Its mission is:

- Identify social needs and develop volunteer opportunities.
- Match the needs of volunteers with volunteering needs.
- Recruit and train volunteers.
- Facilitate the placement of volunteers.
- Provide on-going support and guidance.

Activities

District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Famagusta

- Most activities performed are based on the policy set by the statute. Other activities include:
- Coordination of the Volunteer Centre.
- Coordination of member organizations.
- Service Provision to member organizations.
- Awareness raising campaigns.
- Volunteerism Week.
- Training / seminars.
- Annual Conference.
- Annual Events.
- Publications.
- Coordination and implementation of voluntary projects.
- Participation in decision making processes.

Volunteer Centre

- Volunteering with people and families.
- Social projects in the community.
- Humanitarian projects.
- Environmental volunteer projects.
- Cultural volunteer projects.
- Volunteering in social programs run by NGOs and other institutions.
- Corporate Social Responsibility volunteering projects.

Achievements

- Increased enrolment of volunteers at the Volunteer Centre of Famagusta.
- Partner in the implementation of the Community Service Programme (for young offenders) in cooperation with the Famagusta District Court and District Welfare Office.
- Successful coordination and implementation of innovative volunteer projects in the community.
- Tsunami fundraising: mobilisation of hundreds of volunteers in a fundraising activity to support the tsunami victims.
- Environmental projects.
- Mobilisation of schools for participation in the “Youth and Volunteerism” Programme implemented by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.
- Increased networking and collaboration with the member organisations to address the needs of the sector.
- Contributed to the organisation of the Special Olympic Games of Small States of Europe that took place in Cyprus between 1 -7 November 2008.

Volunteers of the Volunteer Centre of Famagusta contributed to the organisation of the Voluntary Famagusta Football Tournament of Small States of the European Special Olympic Games held from 1-7 November 2008 in Cyprus. The volunteers escorted the athletes and helped on transportation and entertainment issues and procedures.

QUESTIONNAIRES

**Volunteer Centre of Famagusta
District Volunteerism Coordinative Council of Famagusta**

■ Territory covered	Famagusta	
■ Volunteers	155	
■ Staff	1 full time for Community Service Programme. 1 part time for volunteer support and development.	
■ Activities	SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	Support, relation, animation activities Home assistance Support for learning Providing food Providing essential goods Facilitated transfer service Call centre and phone help Research, studies and documentation Re-education/reintegration
	HEALTH	Health care Psychological help Donation and/or collection of blood
	CIVIL PROTECTION	Prevention in case of natural disasters
	CULTURE AND CULTURAL GOODS	Culture and culture protection
	SPORTS	Other
	CITIZEN RIGHTS AND TUTELAGE	Civil rights Tutelage of citizens and participation Legal advice
	ENVIRONMENT NATURE AND ANIMALS	Rubbish collection, beach cleaning, woods, etc. Intervention for the protection of the environment

QUESTIONNAIRES		
Volunteer Centre of Famagusta		
<p>■ Volunteering support activities</p>	CONSULTING AND ASSISTANCE	Communication Events organisation Management Training processes Technology Fiscal and administrative Fund raising Legal and notarial
	COMMUNICATION	Periodical publications or newsletters Production of lecture notes, books, manuals Creation of special communication events Press release Press conferences Videos and CDs
	PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES	Philanthropic events Festivals, expositions, fairs Public events Fundraising activities Meetings and conferences Sports events Publications Promotional campaigns on mass media Cultural events
	TRAINING	Research divulgation Courses (with or without stage) Long distance training Individual classes or seminars
	INFORMATION & DOCUMENTATION	Information office Books, manuals, booklets Magazines and periodicals Videos Collection of laws (regulations, fiscal norms etc.) Database

VOLUNTEERING ACROSS EUROPE

1 PUBLIC INCENTIVES (QUESTIONNAIRES)

1.1 PUBLIC INITIATIVE AND VOLUNTEERING INFRASTRUCTURE: STATE OF THE ART, PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES

The respondents to the questionnaire, while appreciating the rather good coordination between the public and the voluntary sector, identify four major needs listed as follows:

- Finance: *“Welfare targets in Cyprus are addressed by the state, the organised voluntary sector and the private sector. The role of the coordinative councils for voluntary organisations and other federations is vital in the delivery of welfare and in achieving social cohesion. The main problem is that volunteers need more financial support from governmental agencies. Overall, the voluntary sector employs a large number of paid staff and manages a large number of volunteers to meet their goals and objectives. Very few, however, voluntary organisations may be characterised as financially independent, since many of them are based solely on state financial aid.”*
- Infrastructure: *“Even though there are many initiatives from the voluntary sector, there is a need for the further development of the volunteering infrastructure in order to support these initiatives. There is a need for more professional training for the volunteers in order to face the different issues of the voluntary sector. There is a strong willingness from the volunteers to develop their skills in the area of volunteering, so more professional training will improve capacity building.”*
- Communication: *“Public initiatives are important for the development and support of volunteering. There is a need of improving the collaboration and communication between volunteer involving organisations and the public, in order to face the problems and challenges of the contemporary society. The ideas and thoughts of people involved in the voluntary organisations must be taken into consideration by the public sector, since volunteers are in the first line and know the issues that concern the society at large. In general there are good perspectives for the future of volunteering.”*
- Common Action Plan: *“There is a need of the development of a common action plan for the voluntary sector and the public sector. The voluntary sector must increase its role in society. Research studies are needed.”*

1.2 VOLUNTEERISM WEEK

The Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council (PVCC) organises and coordinates the Volunteerism Week (launched and coordinated by the PVCC since 1994) and mobilises voluntary organisations, volunteers, governmental and semi-governmental departments, educational institutions and others to organise voluntary initiatives/projects and to honour volunteers during the Volunteerism Week. The aim of the Week is to promote the values of volunteering and recognise the valuable contribution of volunteers.

- Introduce legal or other measures to safeguard that volunteers are recognised, protected and respected.
- Introduce measures that recognise the work and contribution of volunteers.
- Increase and extend the funding schemes for voluntary organisations in order to assist them in developing new activities, services and programmes in the rural areas or small communities.

2 ON INFRASTRUCTURE FOR VOLUNTEERING (INTERVIEWS AND QUESTIONNAIRES)

2.1 OPINIONS ON MEASURES AND/OR INITIATIVES FOR SUPPORT TO VOLUNTEERING IN CYPRUS

In Cyprus, the most important measures that support volunteering are the various funding/grant schemes for voluntary organisations. Other measures include the services provided by the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council and the fact that its legal framework assists the development and coordination of the voluntary sector's structures.

2.2 DESIRED VOLUNTEERING SUPPORT

Volunteering constitutes an important dimension in every society and reflects the level of civilisation and culture. Volunteering has to be part of the every day life for every individual from a very young age. The interviewees suggested that the following ways can act as supportive measures for volunteering:

- Incorporate the principles and values of volunteering in the educational modules of educational institutions.
- Increase the frequency of awareness raising campaigns on volunteering

3 EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE (INTERVIEWS)

Volunteering in other countries is developed enough to reinforce cohesion and mutual help, civil dialogue, active citizenship, etc. Despite the current level of activity, volunteering should be strengthened so as to increase networking with other organisations and to promote the exchange of new ideas and good practices. Third world countries of course have been identified as having more needs and facing more challenges and therefore more collaboration opportunities should be developed.

- A European initiative could:
- Develop specific training programmes to meet the needs of volunteers.
 - Develop funding opportunities of voluntary projects, not covered by current EU funding, especially the coverage of the operational expenses of national organisations which promote the EU dimension or specific policies.
 - Promote a base for the coordination of activities at EU level.
 - Promote a European awareness raising campaign on the valuable work of volunteers and voluntary organisations.
 - Develop in more substantive ways a base for the exchange of good practices on specific issues of the voluntary sector.

Any European initiative can produce better results simply because it can bring together partners from different European countries. The development of common strategies on the voluntary sector,

through European projects, can bring actors together and address common problems or issues.

Many of the voluntary organisations in Cyprus have engaged in collaborations and participated in several projects with volunteer involving organisations in other European countries. The most impor-

tant motivation was the prospect and opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas as well as the development of common strategies to face common problems. The exchange of good practices, as well as the strengthening of networking with other volunteer involving organisations in EU, can be an important factor to motivate voluntary organisations to engage in EU projects.

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Alice **Hadjigeorgiou**

President of the Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family.

The Association for the Prevention and Handling of Violence in the Family was founded in 1990 in Nicosia. The Association is managed by a board of members. The goals of the Association are the prevention of domestic violence, provision of direct help to victims of violence in the family as well as to perpetrators, provision of shelter and protection to victims of domestic violence, training to volunteers who engage who in the support of victims, engagement in policy making procedures and awareness raising on issues of domestic violence.

Dr Anna **Achileoudi**

President of the Cyprus Association of Cancer Patients and Friends. The Cyprus Association of Cancer Patients and Friends is a voluntary, non-governmental health association, founded in 1986 by a group of cancer patients, their families and friends, a member of international and European cancer organisations. It is dedicated to fighting cancer through education and awareness and improving the quality of life of cancer patients and their families through services offered and advocacy.

Fotini **Papadopoulou**

President of the Cyprus Red Cross Society.

The Cyprus Red Cross (C.R.C.) was founded in 1950 as a Branch of the British Red Cross. Following the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus and the accession of Cyprus to the Geneva Conventions, the Cyprus Red Cross was registered as a legal entity under Law 39 of 1967. Since the beginning it functioned on an island-wide scale with persons from all communities joining its ranks: Greeks, Turks, Armenians, Maronites, Latins, English and foreigners living in Cyprus.

Dr. Charilaos **Kimisis**

President of the Cyprus Family Planning Association.

The Cyprus Family Planning Association (CFPA), was founded in 1971, and is a voluntary, non-governmental and not for profit organisation. The Cyprus Family Planning Association, through its programs and services, advocates and advances the sexual and reproductive health and rights of all people living in Cyprus. Provides high quality informational, educational and clinical services in the sphere of sexual and reproductive health in an accessible and affordable manner to all people, especially the marginalised, including sex education and family planning.

Christos **Theodorou**

President of the Federation of Environmental and Ecological Organisations of Cyprus.

The Federation of Environmental and Ecological Organisations was founded in 1988 and is a network of 17 non-governmental organisations that are active in the areas of the environment and culture. The Federation coordinates and supports the actions of its members as long as those are in accordance with the principles on which the federation was founded and is a body officially recognised by the state (representing no political affiliation) that participates in Councils, Committees and bodies both in Cyprus and abroad.

Michalis **Chatzimichail**

President of the Community Volunteerism Council Pitsilia.

The Council is responsible for several programs that are operated in 12 communities of the geographical area called Pitsilia, representing a wide range of interest of civil society and aims to promote social cohesion and address social needs at a local level.

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Official website of the Ministry of Interior

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Ministry of Justice and Public Order

Official website of the Ministry of Justice and Public Order

www.mjpo.gov.cy

[Greek] [Turkish] [English]

Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance

Official website of Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance

www.mlsi.gov.cy

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The Church of Cyprus

Portal of the Church of Cyprus

www.churchofcyprus.org.cy

[Greek]

Union of Cyprus Municipalities

Website of the main association of Local Authorities in Cyprus

www.ucm.org.cy

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