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# Volunteer Centres and Volunteering Infrastructure

## European Examples



KansalaisAreena ry

Helsinki 2010

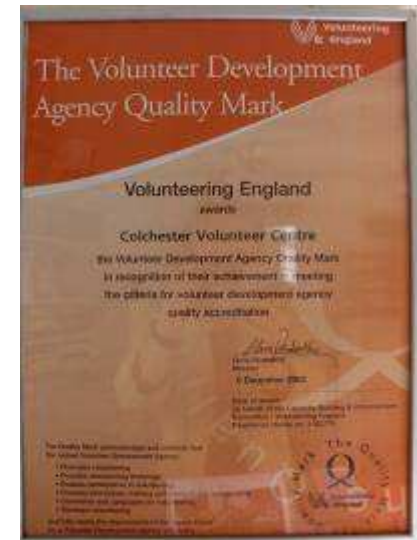
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# England: a unified system

- National and local **compacts** agreed on partnership between public and voluntary sector.
- Significant nationwide support **projects**: ChangeUp, Time-Bank, Millennium Volunteers, Do-It.
- English Volunteer Development Council (**EVDC**) represents voluntary sector.
- **Merger** of umbrella organisations: Volunteering England (VE) with 10-year strategy. Acts as national Volunteer Hub and EVDC secretary.
- **VE**: coordinates and links, disseminates information, supports volunteer involving and matching organisations, accreditation of volunteers centres, hosts research, develops strategy.

# England 2

- **One centre-policy** as municipal infrastructure
- Volunteer Centre **Quality Accreditation** (since 2002): now almost 400 Volunteer Centres.
- **6 Functions** for local Volunteer Centres:
  - Brokerage
  - Marketing
  - Good practice development
  - Developing volunteer opportunities
  - Policy response and campaigning
  - Strategic development
- Volunteer centres are members of VE, receive branding and support,
- VC funding: mostly targeted funding by local governments (>50%), other third sector (25%), national government, NHS and other sources.



# VC Colchester, England

- 100.000 inhabitants.
- **Council of Voluntary Organisation** provides legal advice, accounting, trustees.
- **VC works on the ground** with volunteers, organisations, businesses and public sector
- 5 employees, partly volunteers.
- Located within house of environmental and social initiatives.
- Opening hours Mon.-Wed. 10-16.00.
- Usually "first time volunteers". Additional matching through internet database.
- Matching, training, consultation of organisations, time bank, ...
- Mixed funding. Runs service projects to fill gaps in the community and to receive additional funding.



# Germany: a heterogeneous system

- Regional and national **commissions** on volunteering.
- **Dual** voluntary sector with some large traditional and many smaller organisations. Sectoral peak associations.
- **National Network** for Civil Society (BBE) links public, third and business sector and works strategically (information and lobbying).
- **Umbrella organisation** BAGFA (1999) supports member volunteer centres with coordination, strategic development, quality management and lobbying.
- **Heterogeneous**: The more than 300 local volunteer centres have very different organisational structures: some are part of the municipal administration, some run by one of the big welfare associations, some are a cooperation of welfare association and/or other partners.

# Germany 2

- Quality seal: accreditation system investigates core and additional **functions** (since 2005):
  - Informing/advising volunteers
  - Informing/advising organisations
  - Internal human resource development
  - VC internal work structures
  - Public relations
  - Quality management
  - Additional: cooperation with companies, developing external skills, development of new services, finance, official volunteer services.
- Now about 60 accredited VCs.



# VC Hannover, Germany

- 500.000 inhabitants
- VC established 1999 to combine local capacities as a cooperation of a number of large and smaller local associations. Today members are a large array of local associations.
- **Profile:** Recruitment, matching, training and support of volunteers, information, consulting of organisations, projects.
- Additional matching by internet database.
- 5 employees, partly project based.
- Located in the building of the public transport organisation.
- Open Mon.-Fri. 10-18, Sat. 10-16.



# Netherlands: a semi-public system

- Public sector involved in welfare related volunteering. **Social service act 2007** obliges municipalities to support volunteering.
- National support, provincial and about 300 local support centres.
- The **National Association** of Dutch Voluntary Effort (NOV) acts as spokesperson, mediator and lobbyist for volunteer involving and matching organisations. 350 members.
- The **Centre for Social Development** (MOVISIE) coordinates within the welfare sector and implements NOV's volunteer policy. Half of the budget from the Ministry for Health, Welfare and Sports. Task: Advice, lobbying, projects.



# Netherlands 2

- Municipalities are obliged to develop a policy, support volunteering and review their activity. Usually **local volunteer centres implement** this policy.
- Volunteer Centre Quality Mark since 1999, but other competing quality marks exist.
- NOV's **Quality Award** since 2005 measures:
  - Success of work with volunteers
  - Attractivity for volunteers
  - Improvement of output
- About 50 VC's evaluated.

# VC Arnhem, Netherlands

- 150.000 inhabitants
- VC established in 1972, 7 employees, some part-time
- **Functions:**
  - supply of voluntary care and services
  - expression of active citizenship
  - social participation
  - enhancement of social cohesion and trust
- Advice, consultation, projects for municipality and organisations
- Matching increasingly through internet database.
- Opening hours Mon.-Fri. 12-16.00.
- **Budget** 70% from municipality (50% is structural), rest projects.

# General infrastructure issues

- **Public financial support**, e.g. NL social service act 2001.
- **Formal agreement** on cooperation, e.g. England's Compact of 1998.
- **Tax law**: deduction, exemption, tax-free status of allowances, e.g. NL 1500 Euro/a
- Damage **liability** and **accident** insurance for volunteers
- **Unemployment status** and volunteering, e.g. Germany One-Euro-Jobs.
- **Criminal record** check, e.g. England
- **Research** into volunteering and impact
- **National body** for coordination, **local body** for coordination and implementation
- Matching through **internet data-bases**
- Volunteer centres acquire role of **volunteer development agencies**.