SYMPOSIUM

Recognising Youth Volunteering: From Experience to Impact

3-5 November 2026

Dublin, Ireland

Video recording of the onboarding session

28th of Oct



Website: Symposium - Recognising Youth Volunteering: From Experience to Impact | Dublin, Ireland

Agenda of today

- **WELCOME BY SALTO EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS AND LÉARGAS**

  Suzanne Kavanagh, the hosting National Agency Léargas and Christine Weil, SALTO European Solidarity Corps

- **DIVING INTO TOPICS OF RECOGNITION AND VALIDATION**

  Gabriella Civico, Centre for European Volunteering

- **NEXT STEPS TOWARDS THE SYMPOSIUM**

SYMPOSIUM

Recognising Youth Volunteering:
From Experience to Impact

Strengthening Youth
VOLUNTEERING

Christine Weil
SALTO European Solidarity Corps

Suzanne Kavanagh
Acting Head of Programmes for Erasmus+ Youth, Sport and the European Solidarity Corps

Gabriella Civico
Director Centre for European Volunteering



Strengthening Youth
VOLUNTEERING

Discussion Papers and Looking ahead to the Symposium



Gabriella Civico

Director Centre for European Volunteering

Purpose of the Papers

The papers provide a common **starting point for discussion and aim to provoke reflection**. These reflections will feed into the discussions in the **Symposium "Recognising Youth Volunteering: From Experience to Impact"** in Dublin and contribute to our shared work **towards a future in which youth volunteering is recognised for the value it creates**.

RECOGNITION

Focus on the recognition of youth volunteering and its wider value. It explores:

- Different dimensions of recognition
- The contribution, role and impact of youth volunteering.

VALIDATION

Focus on the validation of learning acquired through youth volunteering. It explores:

- Different perspectives and approaches to identifying, documenting, assessing and valuing the skills and competences acquired through volunteering.

Transversal Issues to keep in mind

Three Modalities



Associative

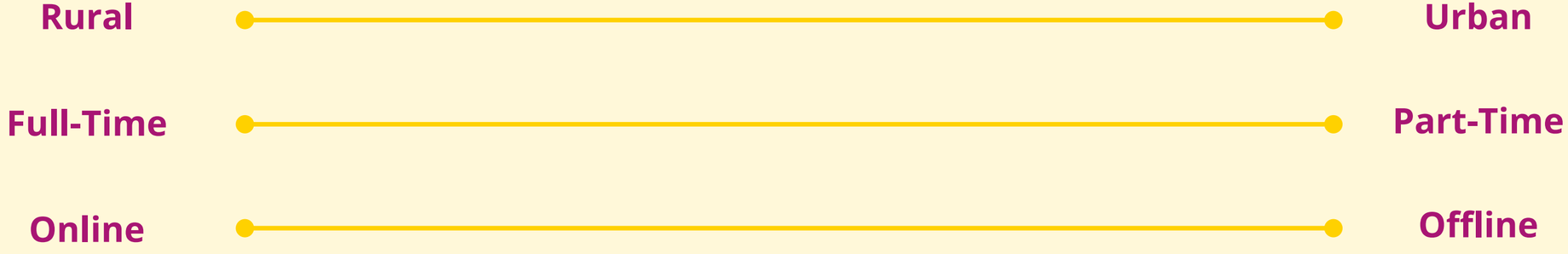


Informal



Third-Party

Transversal issues: Formal/ Informal modalities



Recognition of Youth Volunteering

Introduction

Chapter 2 - Why Recognition of Youth Volunteering Matters Now

2.1. 30th Anniversary of EU Youth and Volunteering Programmes
2.2. Increasing Vulnerabilities & Volunteering Impact
2.3. Contribution to Democracy, Employability & Inclusion

Recognition of Youth Volunteering

Chapter 3 - The Changing Landscape of Youth Volunteering

3.1. What is Youth Volunteering?

3.1.1. Associative volunteering: Traditional organised volunteering
3.1.2. Informal volunteering: Community organising
3.1.3. Third-party volunteering: Public and private entities as organisers of volunteering that takes place in another entity
3.1.4. The European Solidarity Corps

3.2. E-volunteering & Urban and Rural Volunteering

3.2.1. Online Volunteering
3.2.2. Urban and Rural Volunteering

Recognition of Youth Volunteering

Chapter 4 - Understanding Recognition

4.1. National Frameworks and Trends
4.2. Youth Volunteering Contexts
4.3. Motivations and Drivers for Youth Volunteering
4.4. Societal Perception
4.5. Legal Recognition
4.6. Self-recognition
4.7. Media Recognition
4.8. Recognition of Learning
4.9. Investment in Recognition

Recognition of Youth Volunteering

Chapter 5 - Future Challenges and Opportunities

5.1. Self-Recognition
5.2. Recognition of different Volunteering models
5.3. Legal status and the role of the state
5.4. Societal recognition

Symposium Sessions

1) Recognition of the different forms of volunteering

This workshop looks at what models of youth volunteering are well recognised today and what remains overlooked. We will also explore what is needed to better recognise youth volunteering.

SEE CHAPTERS

2. Why Recognition of Youth Volunteering Matters Now
3. The Changing Landscape of Youth Volunteering
4. Understanding Recognition
5. Future Challenges and Opportunities

SEE QUESTIONS

Pages 22 - 28

Symposium Sessions

2) Young people's recognition of youth volunteering cognition of youth volunteering

This workshop explores how young people see themselves as volunteers, and how that self-perception affects who may start, continue or step away from volunteering, especially among young people with fewer opportunities. We will also look at how organisations and young people's environment can strengthen this recognition.

SEE CHAPTERS

4. Understanding Recognition
5. Future Challenges and Opportunities

SEE QUESTIONS

Pages 21 - 22

Symposium Sessions

3) Legal status and the role of the State in the recognition of youth volunteering

This workshop looks at what governments can do beyond and including legislation to strengthen recognition of youth volunteering, from tackling legal barriers to targeted public investment. We will also explore how the State can work more closely with the education system, employers and civil society.

SEE CHAPTERS

4. Understanding Recognition
5. Future Challenges and Opportunities

SEE QUESTIONS

Page 21
Pages 28 - 30

Symposium Sessions

4) Societal recognition of youth volunteering

This workshop explores how society currently sees youth volunteering and what narratives help or hinder its recognition. We will also consider the role of media, employers and the education system in making contributions – that often go unnoticed, more visible.

SEE CHAPTERS

4. Understanding Recognition
5. Future Challenges and Opportunities

SEE QUESTIONS

Page 22
Page 25
Pages 31 -32

Recognition and Validation of Youth Volunteering

Volunteering as a space for the acquisition of skills and competences, learning and personal development.

The **validation** of learning outcomes acquired through volunteering can be a **contributing factor for recognition**.

Recognition must ensure that volunteering is understood as complementary to employment, formal education and training opportunities, not an alternative.

Validation of Learning Acquired by Youth when volunteering

Chapter 1 - Introduction: Validating learning gained through volunteering in Europe

1.1. How has the process developed
1.2. What is Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning

Chapter 2 - Cross Sector Collaboration for Validation

2.1. Validation Standards
2.2. Validation and Formal Education
2.3. Validation and Public Agencies

Validation of Learning Acquired by Youth when volunteering

Chapter 3 - Support, Intergenerational Engagement & Mentoring

3.1. Exchange & Mentoring Across Age Groups

3.1.1. Intergenerational Collaboration Models

3.2. Importance of Interpersonal Connections

Chapter 4 - Making learning visible - how is it important for different groups?

4.1. Quality Validation of Learning Procedures for Young Volunteers

Chapter 5 - Ensuring Quality Validation across Europe

5.1. Validation Frameworks

5.2. Validation Tools

5.3. Validation Instruments

SYMPOSIUM

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Strengthening Youth VOLUNTEERING

Validation of Learning Acquired by Youth when volunteering

World Café

November, 5th, 2026

1. Cross sector collaboration for validation

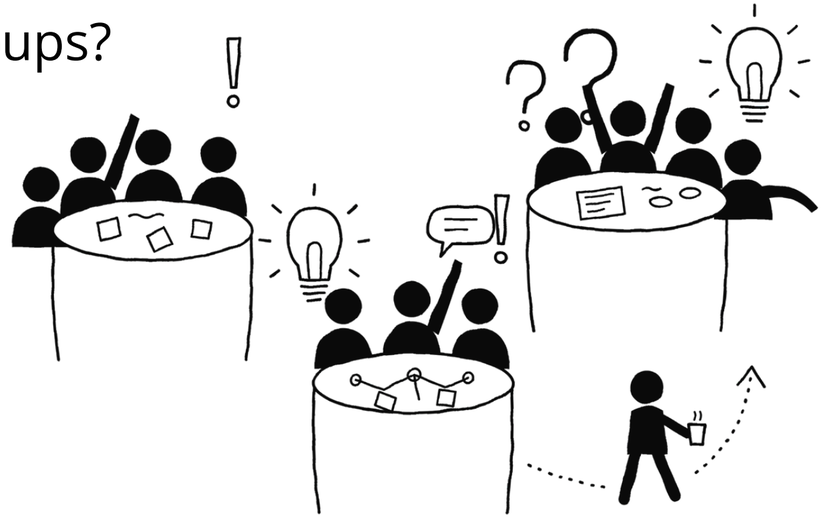
2. Support, intergenerational engagement and mentoring

3. Making learning visible - how is it important for different groups?

4. Ensuring Quality Validation across Europe



All the "Explore Further" Questions will be addressed during the World Café



Key elements of the papers

Illustrative examples

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE FROM SPAIN



The region of Valencia (Spain) where a new Volunteering Law was approved in May 2025 explicitly includes digital volunteering as a recognised modality, alongside measures to ensure proper accreditation, training and insurance coverage in volunteering. Other regions of Spain such as Castilla-La Mancha, Navarra and the Canary Islands are in the process of reforming their own laws and have opened consultations that include e-volunteering as a key element.

Key Information

Intergenerational engagement is increasingly understood as an important key driver of social cohesion, active ageing, and youth empowerment but opportunities for meaningful interaction between age groups remain limited.

‘Read More’ QR Codes

READ MORE ON MOBILITY OF YOUNG VOLUNTEERS:

Explore Further Questions



EXPLORING FURTHER

What can be done so that young people are more comfortable and proud to recognise their volunteer experience in at least the same way as a trainee one?

Explore

EXPLORE SERVICE LEARNING

Service-learning is a pedagogical strategy based on including community engagement in students’ curricula. It is normally associated with higher education, where it provides academic credit for education occurring in a traditionally non-formal setting. That way, students contribute to society while they develop academically, civically, and personally, managing to reflect on their experiences in a systematic and critical manner. The three fundamental components of this reciprocal exchange of knowledge are “serving”, “reflecting”, and “learning”. The underlying idea and main achievement of Service-learning is that students become ‘whole humans,’ with social and personal competences on top of solid academic skills, also encouraging them to become responsible and observer citizens. Service Learning is also a recognised pedagogical approach for primary and secondary level education.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS





PADLET

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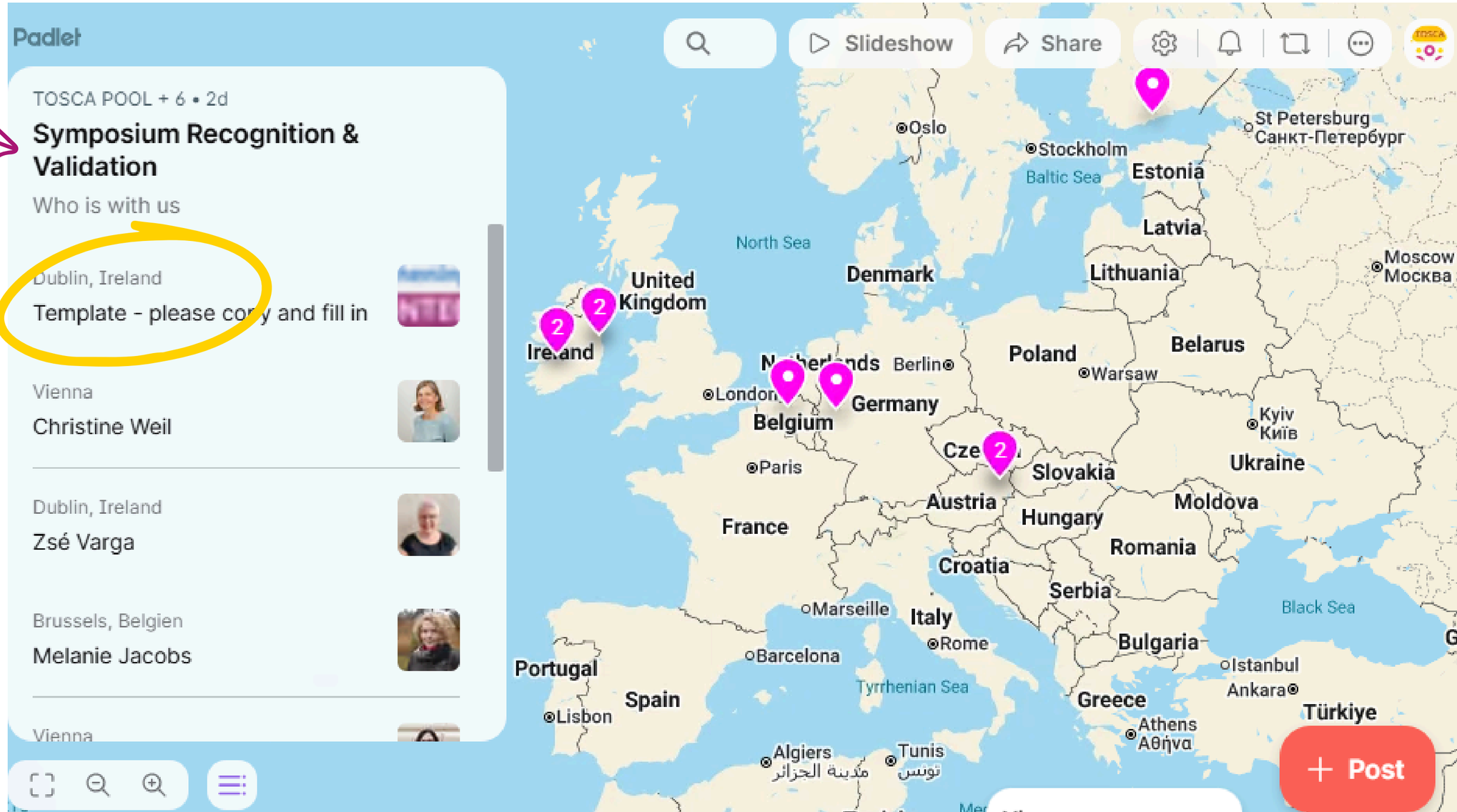
Scan to join the Padlet



TOSCA POOL
16 minutes ago

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Strengthening Youth
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Name:
Organisation:
Country:
Contact:
Tool/Example/Method I want to share:

Location
Dublin, Ireland

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Dublin, Ireland



See you in Dublin!

Thank you