

Volunteering

In this section the following topics will be covered:

What does it mean to be a volunteer?

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Considerations and commitment

The **European Championships Barcelona 2010** will provide everyone who participates with a **unique opportunity** to participate in a sporting event of great magnitude.

The **B10 volunteers' team** will be, without doubt, amongst the major figures making this sporting challenge a great success. Being part of the

volunteer team will allow you to be part of some unforgettable experiences at first hand.

Any person can take part in the **European Championships Barcelona 2010** volunteer team, irrespective of age, gender, or qualifications. It is a personal choice that involves **using part of your free time** to carry out a **volunteering task for free and to do what you enjoy most**, providing you with new experiences and the chance to meet like-minded people.

The **B10 volunteers' team** is formed by sensible, motivated people excited about the prospect of collaborating to make this event a success. To be part of this team also means participating with a **commitment of responsibility**; not under duress, nor out of obligation, but after a personal decision, making it a commitment that is chosen freely and truly.

What values are needed to be a volunteer?

The volunteer offers time, generosity, free service, willingness, freedom, common sense, team spirit, responsibility and commitment. But the volunteer also enjoys his tasks.

"Volunteering is deeply human and it is socially so important and urgent, that to give it a price would mean to despise it" (Cusso, Jordi. Economist)

Volunteering Legislation

The objectives and principles that have been stipulated by the Generalitat de Catalunya, through the Volunteering Catalan Institute, regarding volunteering have been defined in Llei 25/1991 produced by this institute.

The Volunteering Catalan Institute (INCAVOL), bases its activities on strengthening the associative network through joint efforts with different organisations, in order to promote and energise the volunteering initiative and to improve its quality.

• Legal framework

The social recognition of volunteering and the consolidation of associations' organisational structures require the creation of a legal framework.

In Llei 26/85 about social services, it is said that the social services Competent Administration should encourage solidarity through volunteering. In 1991, the Volunteering Catalan Institute (INCAVOL) was established, giving specific intervention tools with regards to volunteering. Without being a volunteering bill, it does establish some answers to basic questions such as the definition of **volunteer** and **volunteering organisation**.

Finally, the creation of **Llei 7/1977, of 18 June** regarding associations, establishes a legal framework exclusively for Catalan associations. This Bill states the importance of the actions of associations that carry out activities of public and social interest in different areas. This reason justifies the fact that governmental institutions give support to activities that represent values such as solidarity and public-spiritedness, and promote participation by citizens and society's ability to respond to its own needs. These organisations, or the activity that they carry out, has been covered in several bills, such as the one created by the Catalan Volunteering Institute.

In the **Volunteering Charter of Catalonia**, which is not a legal text but a Charter that was unanimously adopted by the Parliament of Catalonia in the Resolution 98/V of 29 May 1996, establishes the rights and obligations of volunteers. The Charter was approved during the 1st Catalan Volunteer Congress, on 29 October 1995.

Moreover, the General Directorate of Civic Action is also developing initiatives which aim to raise awareness amongst the population and to develop and promote civil associations and volunteering in Catalonia.

Volunteering Charter of Catalonia

The 1st Catalan Volunteering Congress, which was held in Barcelona on 29 October 1995, drew inspiration from, amongst other things, the Council of Europe and European Parliament recommendations, the European Volunteering Charter proposed by Volonteurope and the Universal Volunteering Declaration, proclaimed during the World Congress for the IAVE initiative, which considers that:

Volunteering is a gesture of solidarity which is carried out by non-profit organisations; all citizens have the right to organise themselves and contribute, according to their own preferences and abilities, to the task carried out by volunteers;

The volunteering commitment to act is based on a free personal decision motivated by solidarity and altruistic principles;

Volunteering contributes to social development for a fairer and more supportive, balanced, peaceful, and environmentally-friendly world through the participation of citizens in society;

Volunteering stimulates the social responsibility of citizens and helps to meet social needs;

Volunteering promotes, with its actions, the principles of association, democratic participation, and respect for people's dignity, equality and freedom;

According to what has been mentioned, and in order to promote the growth of volunteering and maintain legal security, it proposes that all volunteers and volunteering organisations will adjust their activities as follows:

• Volunteers' rights

First- To obtain information from the volunteering organisation where the volunteer collaborates, how it is run, its goals and activities, its support for voluntary activities and its means to organise these activities.

Second- To receive the information necessary to carry out the voluntary activity.

Third- Not to be discriminated against in any way and to be respected irrespective of their appearance and beliefs.

Fourth- To have the necessary identification as a volunteer before third parties and to obtain certification of their participation in volunteering programmes.

Fifth- To participate actively in the production, planning, execution and evaluation of programmes and activities where the volunteer collaborates, receiving the social recognition from their activity.

Sixth- Be insured from any risks posed by the voluntary activity and from any damage that, unintentionally, the volunteer could cause to third parties during their voluntary activity.

Seventh- If required, be recompensed for any expenses incurred from the voluntary activity.

Eight- To agree freely to the conditions of their voluntary activity and to the agreement of the defined tasks, the time and schedule that volunteers can work and the responsibilities set out.

• **Volunteers' obligations**

First- To cooperate in achieving the programme's objectives in order to comply with the commitment reached with the organisation.

Second- To carry out the agreed voluntary activity responsibly, freely, with good will, and actively supporting the organisation and respecting the internal rules.

Third- To follow the security and hygiene measures adopted by the volunteering organisation.

Fourth- To refuse any economic or material remuneration which the volunteer might be offered by the beneficiary or by third parties for their volunteering activity.

Fifth- To maintain the confidentiality, without prejudice to the right of the person, of the information obtained while carrying out the volunteering activity regarding the beneficiaries and the volunteering organisation.

Sixth- In case of resignation, the volunteer will need to give prior notice or continue with the volunteering activity until necessary measures can be taken to avoid serious impairment to the service.

The example of Barcelona '92

Catalonia has a long civil association and volunteering tradition. It has a long tradition of social commitment to solve social problems. This tradition has allowed, amongst other things, to keep the identity traits in difficult times, to maintain a pedagogic tradition alive and to promote an important movement of non-profit organisations that provides services and promote a dynamic community.

The case of **Volunteers '92** during the **Barcelona Olympic Games** is a clear example:

The action of **Volunteers '92** was so spectacular than when the Olympic Games finished, J.A. Smaranch said "**the work of volunteers has been the key to success**". Once the games finished, the Barcelona City Council named a square in the Olympic Village **PLAÇA DELS VOLUNTARIS**.

Since then, the volunteers' high standards of activities and organisation in 1992 has become a reference point for many countries around the world.



Plaça dels voluntaris -(photo: Ginger Nut)

Volunteer 92' statement (Clapés, 1995):

Pedro A.: *The most important thing which I will never forget was to be able to participate in the Olympic Games without being an elite sportsman. As a sporting event, it is completely impossible for a normal citizen to participate, and, for the first time, this changed. A lot of people understood that this would be an opportunity to carry out an altruistic activity and to benefit from participating, which would have been impossible otherwise. [...]*

Memories, I have lots! All good ones. The bad ones I forgot with time. Those were days of hard work, but with the ultimate satisfaction of doing a good job. I had the opportunity to meet sportsmen and women, and of holding Olympic medals, etc. I consider myself privileged to have been able to offer my services in the Olympic Stadium. The opening ceremony was very exciting but, for me, the climax was the closing ceremony. During that ceremony, and as a way to round off all the work we had done, we were allowed to participate. We were able to go down to the track during the celebration, along with the sportsmen and women, the most important people in the event, and who for a few minutes mingled with us, the volunteers. We danced together and swapped uniforms, etc. I still have my volunteer uniform as well as the official T-shirt used by the Canadian team. I took this home after the closing ceremony, after having exchanged mine with a sportsman who wanted my volunteer T-shirt. I don't know if we were really important or if we were made to feel important by the organisation, the press or the sportsmen and women. Possibly, for someone who sees sport as just a show, this might not have any importance, but for those like me who believe that the Olympic Games are more than just a show, this is priceless. Moreover, in my case, we "adopted" a volunteer from somewhere in Spain, in my case Malaga, with whom, even today after ten years, we still have a very good relationship.

Used sources and interesting links:

Volunteering legislation

<http://cv.uoc.edu/DBS/a/materials/portada/ambits/vo/introvo.htm>

Catalan Federation of Social Volunteering:

<http://www.federacio.net/ca/>

Catalan Volunteering Service:

<http://www.xarxanet.org/>

<http://www.joves.org/gentgran/volugen.html>

Volunteering '92:

http://olympicstudies.uab.es/b92/web/pdf/herencia_20.pdf

CLAPÉS, ANDREU (1995): *Els voluntaris olímpics als Jocs de Barcelona 1992* (working paper núm. 38). Bellaterra: Centre d'Estudis Olímpics i de l'Esport (UAB).

Del COOB'92:

(1989) *Distribució geogràfica del cos de voluntaris a Catalunya*. Barcelona.

(1989) *Projecte voluntaris*. Barcelona.

(1990) *Los Voluntarios de Barcelona'92*. Barcelona.

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(1991) *Voluntaris'92: els atletes anònims* (enregistrament de vídeo). Barcelona: COOB'92.