

Online Dialogue, co-hosted by the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme and the International Labour Organisation, on the topic: “Measuring the Invisible Work: Tools and Approaches for Measuring Volunteering”.

**Office of the Commissioner for Volunteerism and Non
Governmental Organizations**



Policy Making

The Third Sector include four pillars: Civil Society, Non Governmental Organizations, Active Citizenship and Volunteerism.

Cyprus Policy

For the first time in the history of the Republic of Cyprus the Government has established a comprehensive policy for the third sector. With our policies we measure volunteerism in different ways. Directly and indirectly. Our goal is to create a favourable and enable environment.

Stakeholders:

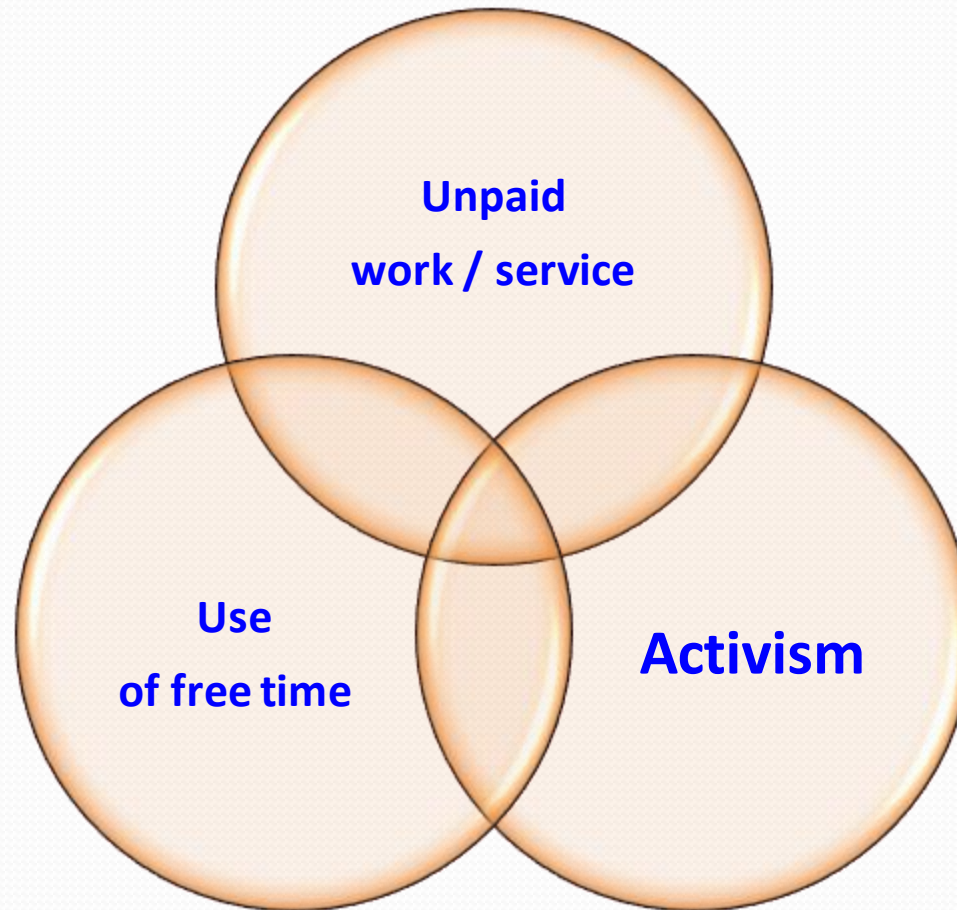
Civil society, Volunteers, Non Governmental Organizations, Local Authorities, Governmental Agencies , Private Sector.

International and European Dimension

During visits to Brussels, but also in a relevant Report / Recommendation, the European Commission and the Council of Europe recognized as a good practice the creation of a State Institution for the sector. We are one of the few Member States that have a comprehensive and up-to-date Policy Framework on NGOs, Volunteering, Active Citizenship and Civil Society.



Volunteering Model



Volunteering Model

Volunteering can be seen as Combination of :

- Activism and unpaid work / service
- Activism and use of free time
- Use of free time and activism

The sector it's a supportive tool to the governmental agencies.

Charity is the offer of items, materials, food, infrastructure and money to support people in need.

Policies for Successful Management of Emergencies

Effective crisis management by the Office of the Commissioner for Volunteerism & NGOs, due to proper preparation:

- Defined Protocol for the Management of Volunteers in Emergency Situations.
- Creating infrastructure:
 - Nicosia Volunteer House
 - Pancyprian Coordination and humanitarian Management Center



As an Office we are included in all emergency plans of the government in a time of crises, utilizing volunteers.

Policies for Successful Management of Emergencies

Pandemic COVID-19

- Insurance of volunteers based on the Volunteer Management Protocol in Emergency Situations.
- Volunteers comply with two pandemic-specific protocols: (a) General Guidelines and (b) Transportation and Home Guidelines for delivering of essentials items.
- Online training of volunteers in Greek and English.
- Providing volunteers with specialized personal protection equipment.

Policies for Successful Management of Emergencies

Pandemic COVID-19 - The actions with numbers

- 1,650 people enrolled in the Crisis Management Protocol - Individually or by Parties, Educational Organizations, NGOs, Motorcycle Clubs, Reserve Associations, Rescue Teams.
- 850 volunteers were utilized.
- 6,195 people, who were in forced quarantine in hotels, received personal necessities and cleaning items from volunteers.
- 1,180 home deliveries of medicines and basic necessities to the elderly and vulnerable throughout Cyprus. In collaboration with the Commissioner for the Development of Mountain Communities, the Association of Municipalities, the Association of Communities and NGOs for people with disabilities / health problems.
- 67 deliveries of special medication by specialized volunteers, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health.
- 45 volunteers staffed 2 Call Centers of the Ministry of Health

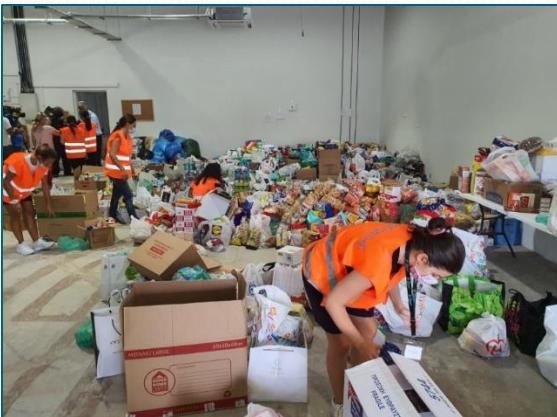
Policies for Successful Management of Emergencies



Policies for Successful Management of Emergencies

Deadly blast in Lebanon - August 2020

- Activation of the Pancyprian Coordination Center for Humanitarian Aid Management at the State Fair, Nicosia.
- Coordination of the pan-Cypriot effort to collect dry food for thousands of homeless people.
- Cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus and communication with the Government of Lebanon .
- **The result was to send 300 tons of food items**



Survey on Volunteering in Cyprus 2015

- The Statistical Service of Cyprus, in the framework of its cooperation with the Office of the Commissioner for Volunteering and Non-Governmental Organizations, included in its survey regarding the Income and Living Conditions of Households for the year 2015, questions concerning the involvement of Cypriots aged 16 and over in voluntary activities, either individually or collectively. The specific survey that in 2015, covered a sample of 4,357 households and 9,984 citizens , aged 16 years

2015 Survey - General results

9.80% participate in volunteer work. 55.15% women and 44.85% men

7.17% participated in voluntary work through an organization or organized group. 7.61% women, while 6.68% men,

2.63%, participated in voluntary work on their own initiative. From women 2.69%, while from men, 2.56%.

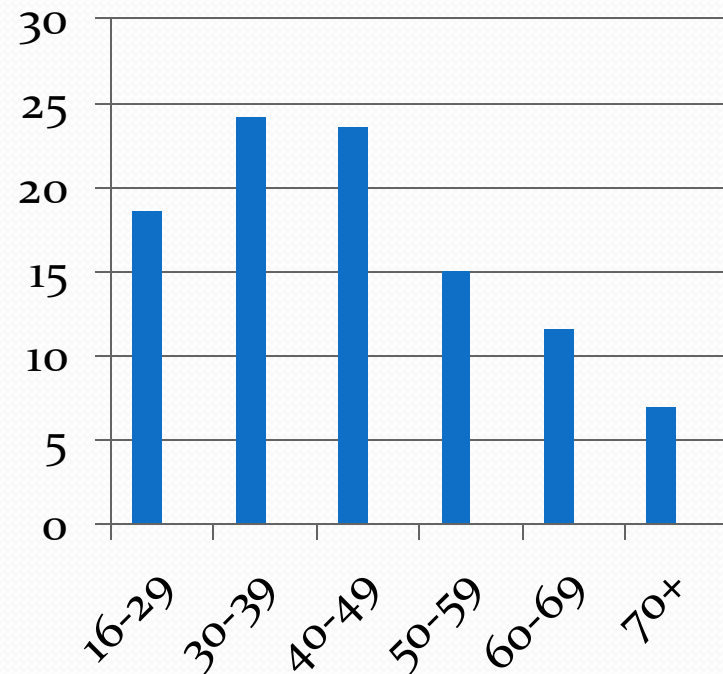
3. 1.79% participated in a public consultation.

Survey on Volunteering in Cyprus 2017

- The Statistical Service of Cyprus included for the second time in its survey regarding the Income and Living Conditions of over 9.640 citizens for the year 2017, questions concerning the involvement of Cypriots aged 16 and over in voluntary activities, either individually or collectively.
- The data of the survey for the year 2017 are not completely comparable with the corresponding data of the first survey of 2015, because there were changes in the categorization. The changes were deemed necessary to give us more accurate research results.

Survey on Volunteering in Cyprus

- The participation of the population in voluntary activities is 12.4% (excluding blood donation, which was not included and was 8.7% in the 2015 survey).
- 43% of active volunteers are 16-39 years old.
- In the age groups 16-49 there are higher rates of participation in voluntary activities, compared to the age groups 50-70 +.
- This shows that the trend towards Volunteering is changing for the better.



Survey on Volunteering in Cyprus

From the population aged 16 and over who took part in the survey:

- 5.2% participated in voluntary work through an organization or organized group.
- 4.4% participated in voluntary work on their own initiative.
- 3.1% participated in a public consultation.

From the population that participated in voluntary work, either through an organization or an organized group, or on its own initiative:

55.5% were women and 44.5% were men.

Participation by Gender



Survey on Volunteering in Cyprus

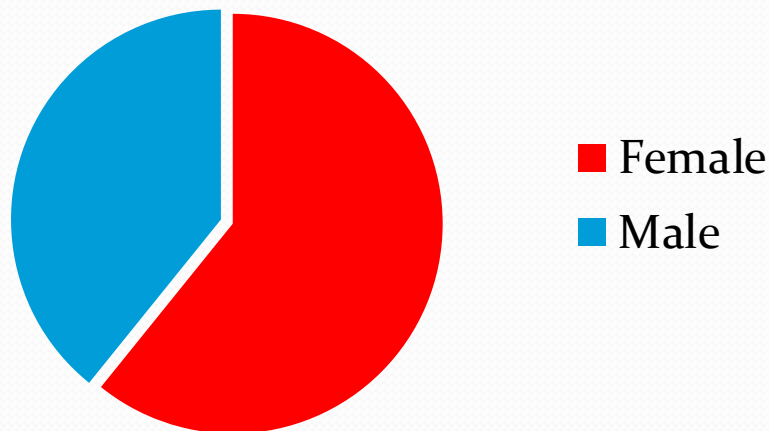
From the population that participated in voluntary work through an organization or an organized group, the following distribution was observed by:

By Gender:

Female 60,2%

Male 39,8 %

By gender



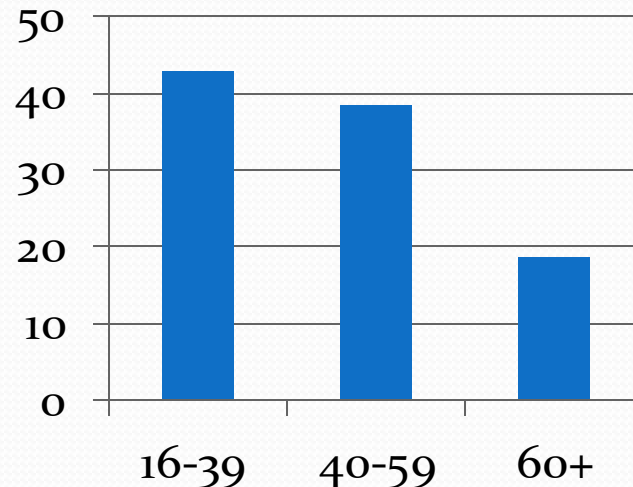
By Age Group:

16-39 42,8 %

40-59 38,6%

60+ 18,6%

By Age Group



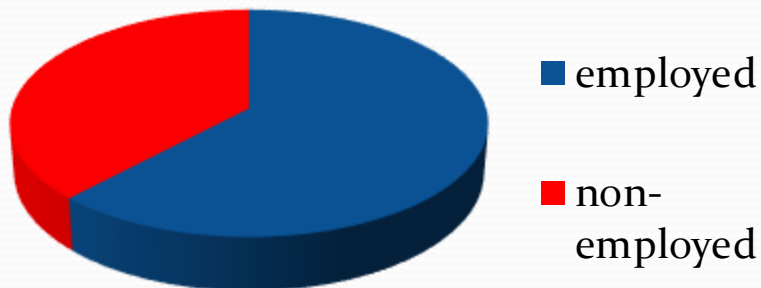
Survey on Volunteering in Cyprus

From the population that participated in voluntary work through an organization or an organized group, the following distribution was observed :

Employment Status :

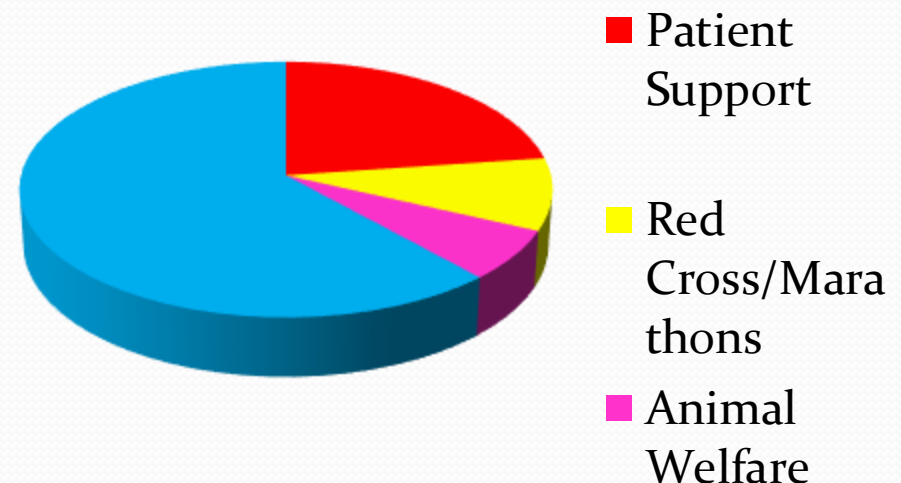
Employed 64.5%
Non-Employed 39.5%

Employment



Type of Volunteer Work:

Patient Support 22.8%
Red Cross / Marathons 9.1%
Animal Welfare 6.4%



Survey on Volunteering in Cyprus

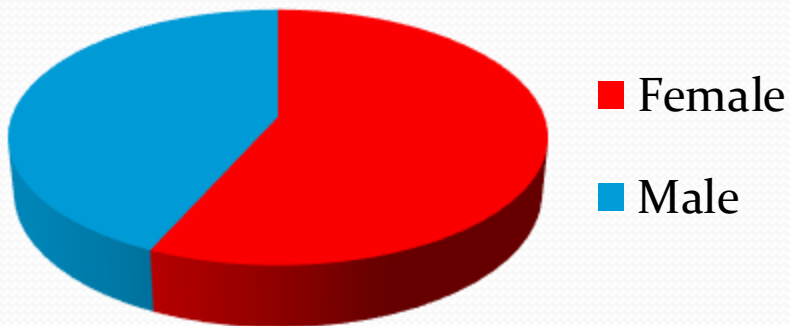
From the population that stated that it participated in voluntary work on its own initiative, the following distribution was observed by:

Gender

Female 56,7%

Men 43,3%

Participation by Gender



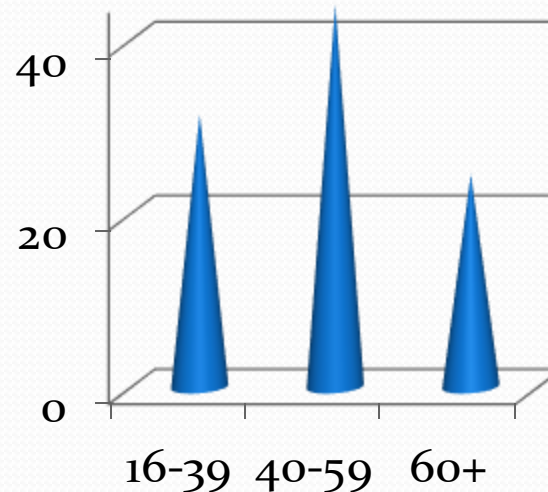
Age Group:

16-39 31,4%

40-59 44,0%

60+ 24,5%

Age Group



Survey on Volunteering in Cyprus

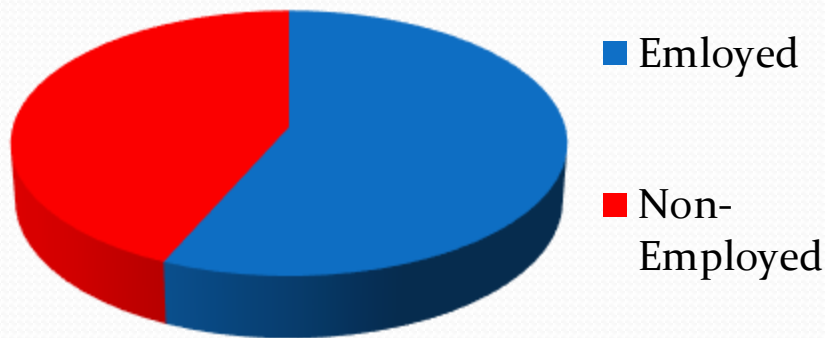
From the population that stated that it participated in voluntary work on its own initiative, the following distribution was observed (%) by:

Employment Status :

Employed 56,6 %

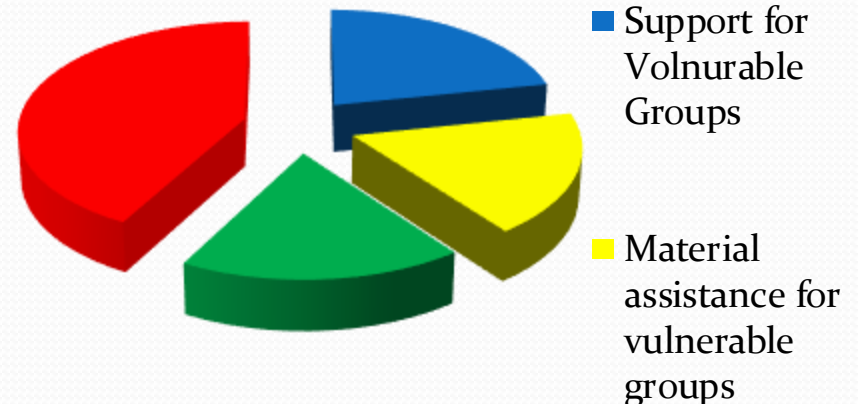
Unemployed 43,4 %

Employment



Type of Volunteer Work :

- Support for vulnerable groups 21.9%
- Material Assistance for vulnerable groups 18.2%
- Patient / Elderly support 17.4%



Public Consultation Day

- The aim of the public consultation day is to give citizens the opportunity to express their suggestions and opinions, exchange views about specific matters in order to influence governmental policies.
- *For this reason the Council of Ministers has approved the establishment of the **4th of December**, as **Public Consultation Day**.*



ACTIVE CITIZEN - INFORMAL MINISTERIAL MEETING

- Participants: STUDENTS from high schools, universities, youth NGOs, informal groups
- Opportunity to watch the functioning of the Ministerial meeting
- Opportunity to discuss with the President of the Cyprus Republic and Ministers about issues that concern young generation.

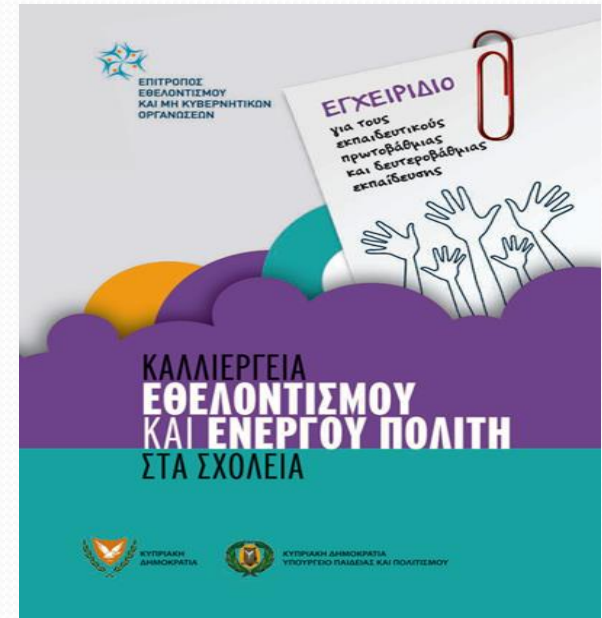


AN ACTIVE CITIZEN - 3 INFORMAL MINISTERIAL MEETING



Volunteering and active citizens in Schools

- Our Office with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education and Culture introduced the policy of volunteering and active citizens in schools.
- In every school unit, a teacher and a student will be appointed for volunteering and active citizenship coordinator.
- A guide for teachers for Active Citizenship and Volunteerism was distributed, that provides good practices activities especially design for schools.
- Programme for the 17 goals for sustainable development of the United Nations will be implemented in all levels of education.



Close Cooperation with Universities



Memoranda of Cooperation with:

- ✓ **University of Nicosia**
- ✓ **European University of Cyprus**
- ✓ **University of Neapolis Paphos**
- ✓ **Theological School of the Church of Cyprus**
- ✓ **Open University of Cyprus**

The Cooperation Framework, among others, includes:

- Granting scholarships to citizens with active action or voluntary offer.
- Co-organization of lectures, seminars and conferences on related topics.
- Placement of students in NGOs for internships.
- Integration of active citizenship issues in University programs.
- Development of digital applications.
- Creation of Volunteer Groups.
- Training of officials and teachers in volunteer management.

Policy Implementation

Declaration of the “Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers”



- The approval by the Council of Ministers, of the Declaration for the “Rights and Responsibilities of Volunteers”, ratifies at a political level, an important document that reinforces and improves the Volunteering Sector (including Non Governmental Organizations).
- Establishment of a common base for the support and improvement of volunteering sector.
- It also serves as a “Code of Conduct”.

Policy Making

Policy Paper on the Empowerment of Civil Society in Cyprus (approved by the Council of Ministers-July 2017)

The paper seeks to promote a discussion on how civil society in Cyprus can be strengthened, especially through measures that can be undertaken by the Government of the Republic of Cyprus and by civil society. In addition to this, it presents the current situation of Civil Society in Cyprus, the international standards and the vision for the empowerment of the organized Civil Society in Cyprus.



Policy Making

Charter for Active Citizenship (approved by the Council of Ministers-July 2017):

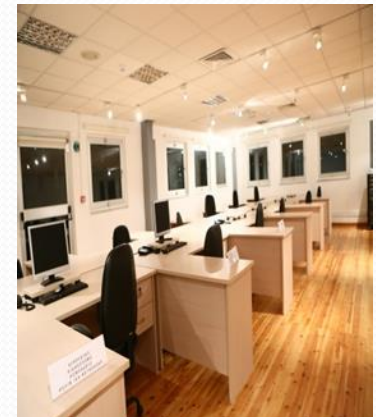
*means people getting involved at all levels of the society, from towns to cities to nationwide activity.

*supports democratic cooperation that is based on the acceptance of universal human rights and the rule of law, values diversity and includes the whole community.



Infrastructure

- Every District in Cyprus should have a **“House for Volunteers”**.
- We By provide to NGOs office, a basic office equipment, a conference hall and a multipurpose hall.
- “House of Volunteers” has already been established in in Nicosia.
- In Troodos and Kofinou area, 2 Houses for Volunteers will be establish in 2021



Act of Heritage - International Conference of Council of Europe

- The Commissioner for Volunteerism and Non-Governmental Organisations of the Republic of Cyprus, in co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Cyprus, the Council of Europe and the European Union is organised a two-day Conference on the Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property (the Nicosia Convention) on 24-26 October 2019. In the conference participated representative of Governments, International Organizations, Non Governmental Organizations and other stakeholders.

The Conference took place to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the Council of Europe, with a view to increasing the Organisation's visibility in Cyprus and in the wider geographic region, based on wide media coverage.



Annual Active Citizenship Awards

- The Active Citizen Awards
- Organized jointly by our Office, OPAP Ltd, Active Radio and the European University.
- The purpose of the award is to promote and give visibility to inspiring initiatives of individuals, students, military service, employees who have made active citizenship into practice, and in doing so have had a positive impact on their community.
- The President of the Republic of Cyprus presents the awards



B P A B E I A
**ΕΘΕΛΟΝΤΩΝ
ΕΡΓΑΖΟΜΕΝΩΝ ΚΑΙ
ΕΝΕΡΓΟΥΣ ΠΟΛΙΤΟΤΗΤΑΣ**

Benefits of Volunteering

- Acquire Knowledge, skills, experiences.
- Get to know new people and create friendship.
- Feel good about themselves (improves mental health).
- Active participation is an important prevention tool against the fight of drugs, alcohol abuse, and crime and violence.
- Strengthen the values of a society.
- All the above are important tools in supporting unemployed young people to find a job or acquire formal learning in Universities or Colleges.
- It is estimate that the financial input of the third sector is estimate from 3% to 13% of the Gross Domestic Product



Policy Making and future planning

- Legislation for Registering and Certifying Non Governmental Organizations. Enhance the financial transparency and good governance.
- Recognition of **informal** and **non - formal** learning (certification of Knowledge and skills acquire throw volunteering). Its important tool to measure volunterism.
- Introduction of tools that encourage the active participation of citizens, targeting the young generation.
- Increase infrastructure for Volunteering and NGOs.
- Public consultation for the National Strategy for Active Citizenship, that it will be present in the Council of Ministers for approval in September of 2021.
- The third survey for the level of volunteers in Cyprus its on the process to be completed.

Policy Making and future planning

- Electronic Platform “Prospero”, that NGOs can use to promote their work and activities for free.
- Soon we will create a platform for the 17 SDGs , that all the stakeholders (Local Authorities, Governmental Agencies, NGOs, Universities and Schools, Private Sector) will input or their initiative that are connected to the SDGs. Through the platform will encourage cooperation.
- With the Social Responsibility Network of Cyprus we have created a guide for “Social Responsibility Volunteerism”.

Thank you for your attention!

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