

National Plan of Activities for the International Year of Volunteering for Sustainable Development 2026 in Slovakia

Main objective of the International Year of Volunteering for Sustainable Development in Slovakia:

To support the implementation of systemic changes aimed at supporting and developing volunteering in Slovakia so that volunteering becomes a natural part of social life, community development, and public policies.

Specific Objective 1:

To emphasize the social dimension of volunteering – to show that it is not only about helping the most vulnerable or providing assistance in times of crisis, but also about building communities and relationships, a form of participation and civic engagement – and to make volunteering more attractive in all its forms and areas through targeted marketing, campaigns, and positive communication towards the public.

Within this objective, a variety of activities will take place in Slovakia at the national, regional, and local levels, organized by various stakeholders. A calendar of these activities will be created and updated throughout the year, and the outputs and results of individual activities will be communicated to the public through various channels. The calendar will also serve the media.

At the same time, the public will be invited to participate in nationwide volunteering-support activities that will serve as the key promotional events throughout the year:

- Week of Volunteering
- Our City
- Heart on the Palm – Award at Regional and National level
- Engaged School Awards
- Dobrobáza (National Volunteering Database)
- 1st National Forum of Volunteer Rescuers
- 4th edition of the Volunteer Rescuers Symposium

A communication strategy will be developed for these activities, including basic communication principles such as political neutrality in the communication of volunteering and volunteer activities.

Specific Objective 2:

To support systemic measures reflecting various aspects of volunteering and the recognition of volunteering experience. Stakeholders from different sectors will cooperate in promoting and implementing these systemic measures reflecting various aspects of volunteering and the recognition of volunteering experience:

1. Granting accreditations in the field of volunteering
2. Analyzing the possibilities of implementing co-financing of projects from public and private sources through volunteer work and preparing proposals for the systemic anchoring of this option and methodologies for practical implementation

3. Analyzing the possibilities of anchoring volunteer centers as a key element of volunteering infrastructure in legislative materials
4. Developing a strategy for the development of education for volunteering in non-formal education and school educational institutions and preparing it for approval as a strategic document
5. Analyzing barriers to the development of volunteering in the healthcare sector and preparing proposals for legislative or non-legislative measures to remove them
6. Incorporating paid leave for the performance of volunteer activities into collective agreements at the level of state administration, regional and local self-government, and the corporate sector
7. Activation of volunteer networks of older volunteers aged 55+ – “Seniors Helping Seniors” (preventive safety programs, education on modern issues aimed at improving the quality of life of seniors), in line with the Programme Slovakia: support for volunteer centers, training of coordinators to work with seniors, and raising awareness of volunteers aged 55+ and for clients aged 55+
8. Continuing support for social innovations in volunteering
9. Promoting the introduction of a financial mechanism to support long-term volunteer programs
10. Proposing a system for releasing volunteers from work and reimbursing their wages to employers in cases of deployment during crises or when they are part of / experts / members of a team or module deployed for humanitarian assistance domestically or abroad
11. Proposing a national system of non-financial rewards/benefits for volunteers (health insurance, pension, paid leave, admission to schools for young people or scholarships, vaccination, etc.) as one of the motivational elements of volunteering
12. Increasing knowledge about the state and trends in volunteering based on volunteering research – publication of popularized research outputs and implementation of webinars for volunteer coordinators
13. Supporting the recognition of volunteering as a form of non-formal education – development of recommendations for universities in Slovakia
14. Analyzing the possibility of waiving the fee for criminal record extracts for volunteers working with youth and, in cooperation with responsible stakeholders, preparing proposals for systemic anchoring of this option and methodologies for practical implementation
15. Opening a discussion on 10 days of leave for volunteers organizing summer camps (e.g. based on the legal regulation in the Czech Republic)
16. Establishing a working group composed of experts from local governments engaged in volunteering within cities to bring examples of good practice and jointly define legislative and other

barriers to volunteering, as well as options for supporting the development of volunteering at the local level (e.g. establishing contact points for volunteering information, cooperation with relevant volunteer centers, approval of local tax reliefs for volunteers, etc.)

17. Operation and promotion of Dobrobáza – the national volunteering database as a platform for connecting people interested in volunteering with organizations seeking volunteers, including placing a link to the database on the websites of public institutions
18. Preparing a proposal for a legislative amendment confirming the status of volunteering as a form of preparation for employment