



PAN CYPRIAN VOLUNTEERISM
COORDINATIVE COUNCIL

**NATIONAL SITUATION OF
CROSS-BORDER
VOLUNTEERING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE**

Presentation from the
Pan Cyprian Volunteerism
Coordinative Council (PVCC)
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Presentation:

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**President of European Affairs Committee
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1. CONTEXT OF VOLUNTEERING IN CYPRUS

1.1 Volunteering in Cyprus

(How is volunteering defined/understood?)

1.2 Legal framework

1.3 The key needs in the field of volunteering & the need for cross-border volunteering

1.1 VOLUNTEERING IN CYPRUS

How is volunteering defined

- **Volunteer**

‘A person who offers, without any reward, financial or other, services or other means to individuals or groups or to the society at large, in order to address social or other needs’. *(Source: Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law)*

- **Volunteering activity**

Volunteering activity is defined under the term of ‘non-profit purpose’ in Article 2 of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law.

Non-profit purpose according to the law is ‘every voluntary action or act which tends to alleviate or relieve human suffering, human poverty, illness or need and any physical, mental and psychological malfunction, as well as any action which serves the welfare or the protection of children, teenagers, young people, adults and older persons, any action which contributes to the prevention or addresses social problems or needs and generally any action which contributes to the improvement of the welfare of the people residing, permanently or temporarily, in the Republic of Cyprus’. *(Source: Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law)*

1.2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council Law of 2006

- The PVCC was originally established in 1973 as the Pancyprian Welfare Council. Recognizing the vital role and operation of the Council, the State decided to provide a legal framework [the Pancyprian Welfare Council Law (152/89)].
- In 2006, the House of Representatives passed a new legislation that governs “the establishment and function of the Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council” (PVCC), which represents the continuation of the Pan Cyprian Welfare Council (PWC).
- Under the new legislation the Council has a new operational framework, new responsibilities and a broader role for the coordination and development of the voluntary sector and volunteerism in general.

New responsibilities:

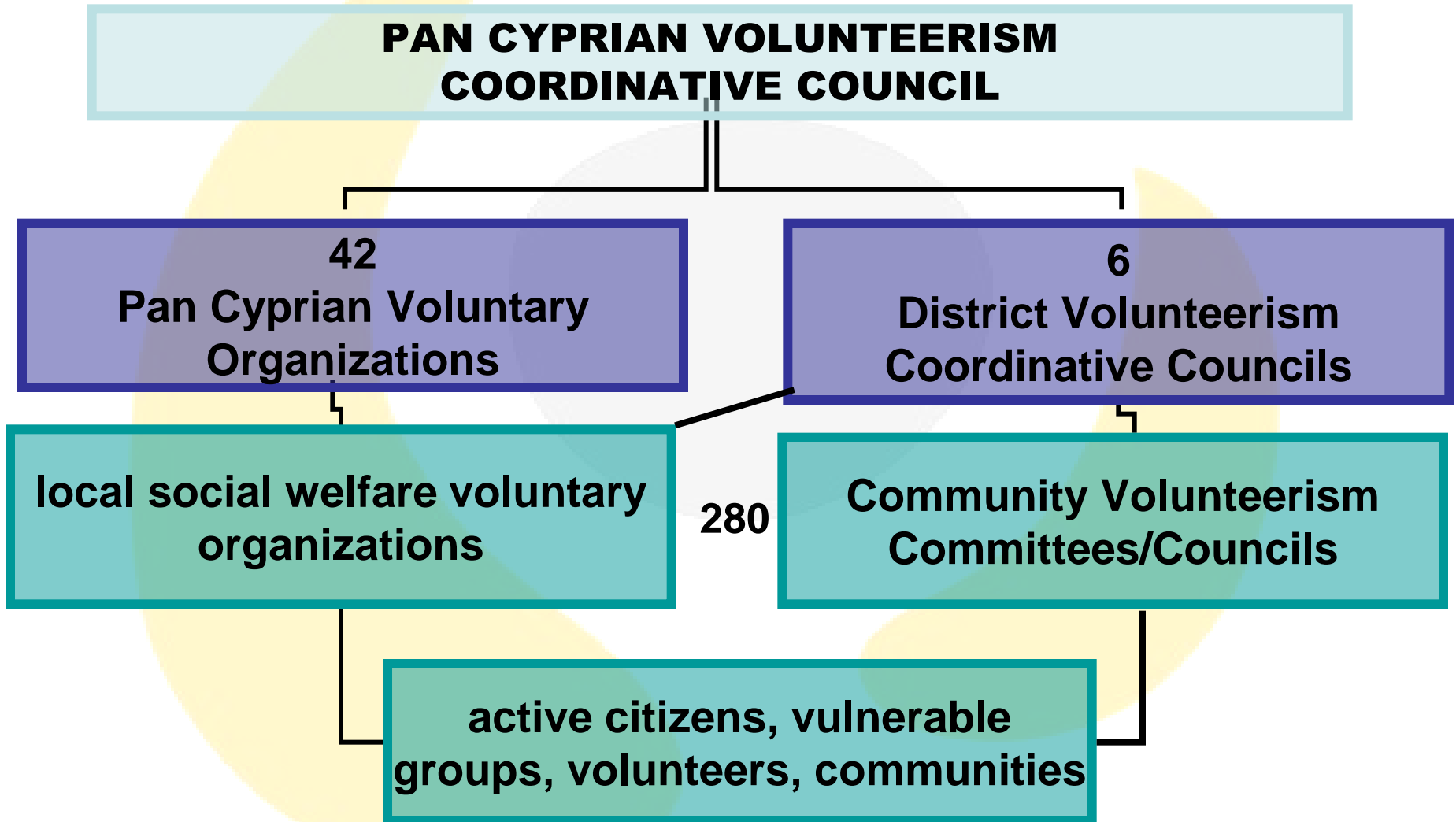
- **It provides a legal framework for the establishment of a coordinative council**
- **it sets a policy for the voluntary sector**
- **It sets the procedures for the coordination of the sector**

BASIC PROVISIONS OF THE PVCC LAW -policy

1. Identification, study, analysis of social problems and needs
2. Active contribution in social programming, civil dialogue and social policy formulation & implementation
3. Evaluation, promotion and advancement of the work of the voluntary sector
4. Coordination of the member organisations' activities and planning in collaboration with the state and the voluntary sector
5. Support and reinforcement of the member organisations' operation and action
6. Development of policy and strategy for the achievement of the objectives of the voluntary sector and general social welfare
7. Provision of technical support to the member organizations for the advancement of social programs and projects
8. Provision of systematic training and development of the human resources of the member organizations
9. Operation and further development of the Cyprus Volunteer Centre
10. Promotion and advancement of volunteerism and voluntary service and social welfare sector in the Republic of Cyprus

ORGANISED STRUCTURE OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

– The PVCC constitutes an 'umbrella' or a 'platform' - where the member organisations shape the voluntary sector policy and action





Cyprus Volunteer Centre

The **Volunteer Centre** was founded by PVCC in 1991.

It's role is to coordinate and promotes volunteerism and facilitates volunteer service. It functions under the responsibility of the District Volunteerism Coordinative Councils.

MISSION

- identify social problems and needs
- match need and demand for voluntary service
- register, train and support volunteers
- monitor volunteer placements
- initiate volunteer projects and invest in social capital and community development
- coordination of volunteer help overseas in cases of emergencies (follows suggestion)

1.3 THE KEY NEEDS IN THE FIELD OF VOLUNTEERING & THE NEED FOR CROSS-BORDER VOLUNTEERING

- Although there is an interest for cross-border volunteering in Cyprus, the only opportunities available for cross-border volunteering are through Action 2 offered by the European Program “Youth in Action”
- There is a strong need for cross-border volunteering in the field of Humanitarian Aid volunteering opportunities (ex. Participation in humanitarian campaigns/projects)
- Raising awareness among young people for cross-border volunteering

2. Cross-border volunteering opportunities in Cyprus

2.1 Cross-border volunteering opportunities in Cyprus

2.2 Most notable benefits and challenges

1. Cross-border volunteering opportunities in Cyprus

The only opportunities available for cross-border volunteering are through Action 2 offered by the European Program “Youth in Action”.

The said Action (European Voluntary Service) was implemented in Cyprus for the first time in 2005 and has been the only medium used to promote long-term cross-border volunteerism.

It gives the opportunity to Cypriot volunteers to travel to other European countries, such as Latvia, Portugal, Italy and Spain and at the same time, European volunteers are hosted in Cyprus.

Youth Board of Cyprus

2. The most notable benefits and challenges

- Cross-border volunteerism is a window of opportunity for all Cypriots.
- Through cross-border volunteerism, Cypriots become acquainted with other cultures, civilizations and languages; they develop relevant dexterities; and acquire knowledge and good practices that cannot be obtained otherwise.

Volunteerism, in general, faces numerous challenges.

1. Society puts emphasis on education and employment
2. Young Cypriot men, aged 18 - 20 are obliged to serve the army service for the period of 25 months upon high-school graduation
3. There is a lack of youth infrastructure and a lack of recognition of informal learning activities.
4. We must also point out that volunteering is a challenge for young people because is a perfect and easy way to get well known in the society, their country and even overseas!

3. Good Practice

1. The Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council coordinated fundraising campaigns to offer humanitarian aid overseas (1 million dollar for the victims of earthquake in Shri Lanka on 2004)
2. The Pan Cyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council has created the Volunteering Portal (www.ethelontis.net) with the following functions:
 - Registration of new volunteers/volunteer groups
 - Registration of Needs from organized groups
 - A matching need and demand mechanism
 - Information (Announcements/Events/Volunteer Calendar/Information on Volunteerism/Useful links)
 - Volunteer Information Service (Informs volunteers/volunteer groups on volunteering opportunities / Alerts/Reminders to volunteers/volunteer groups (through email, sms, fax) on their voluntary service schedule)

4. Final Suggestion

PVCC suggests:

1. To consider seriously the creation of a European internet based software application providing:
 - information on cross-border volunteering
 - the opportunity for volunteers to register and state their interest for cross-border volunteering (country, area & type etc)
 - the opportunity for NGO's to register their needs
 - Matching of need and interest mechanism
 - Interest of volunteers for overseas help on emergencies



Questions and Comments

Thank you ALL

**Cyprus is always willing to share ideas
and good practices on volunteerism**

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**President of European Affairs Committee
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PVCC CYPRUS



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