

FOREWORD

This publication is a contribution to the initiative and decision of the EU to designate 2011 as the European Year of Voluntary Activities promoting Active citizenship (European Year of Volunteering) and an outcome of Erasmus intensive international project of Lifelong Learning Programme “Social work and voluntary activities”, which was held at University of Presov from 07 May to 17 May 2012.

Social workers, social educators and pedagogues cooperate and share many common professional fields of interest, areas and activities. Voluntary work creates inseparable part of social policy. According to the Council Recommendation volunteering was recognized as “an important factor in creating the social capital, local and community development and in promoting social and economic cohesion”¹ and because of specific nature of voluntary activities volunteering was certificated as “a tool of recognition, non-discrimination of volunteers in healthcare, social protection and social welfare policies as well as distinguishing volunteering from paid employment. Volunteers were defined as participants of various programmes undertaking an activity which specifically involves solidarity, is non-profit making and unpaid and helps them acquire social and personal skills”.²

One of the aims of the IP LLP Erasmus project “Social work and voluntary activities” is to encourage boarder discussion about volunteering in the connection with the developing of social values and better understanding of a man in the present-day society. “The context of volunteering is recently significantly changing. The trends in society related to the modernization of society such as globalization, technological development, demographical changes, of postmodern values and changes in family and work life have an impact on the relationships of people to volunteering... New trends produce new patterns of volunteering.”³ Volunteering has still a long way to go, but we hope that positive new trends and multidimensional experiences will be much more appreciated and recognized by all types of employers (not only in the social sphere) and volunteering will get more government support as well as support of regional and local authorities.

Viera Zozulakova, Bohuslav Kuzysin

¹ Council Recommendation of 20 November 2008 on the mobility of young volunteers across European Union (2008/C 319/03).

² Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 July 2001 on mobility within the Community for students, persons undergoing training, volunteers, teachers and trainers (2001/613/EC). See also *Mobility of young volunteers across Europe*. European Union. Committee of the Regions.Brussel 2011, pp. 32.

³ Gregorová Brozmanová, A., Matulayová, T. a kol.: *Dobrovoľníctvo na Slovensku. Výskumné reflexie*. Iuventa 2012, annotation.