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EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE

WORKING GROUP ON RISK PREVENTION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

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Members of the group :

- Géraldine Libreau ó SOS (Structure of Operational Support for the European Voluntary Service)
Co-ordination of the working group ; production of the final report
- Maria Graça Barbedo ó European Commission ó DG Education and Culture ó Unit D5 ó Youth
- Sarah Nicholas ó UK National Agency
- Paolo Maddonni ó Lunaria ó technical assistance office of the National Agency in Italy

The Working group wishes to dedicate its work to Bernadette, Madelena, Joris and Sacha, who died before the end of their EVS projects in dramatic circumstances.

For further information on this document, please contact :

Géraldine Libreau
SOS
Quai aux Briques 76
1000 Brussels
tel : 00 32 2 549 55 90
fax : 00 32 2 549 55 99
e-m : evs@sosforevs.org

Maria Graça Barbedo
European Commission
DG EAC ó Unit D5
Rue Belliard 5/7
1040 Brussels

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INTRODUCTION

The European Voluntary Service is a programme which was established by the European Union as a 2 years pilot action in 1996 and became a biannual programme in 1998-1999. It has now been joined to the other European Youth programme "Youth for Europe" in the year 2000, to form the global "Youth programme" (2000-2006).

During the four years of implementation of EVS, many European youngsters have successfully participated in projects all around Europe, and hence increased their personal skills, their knowledge of Europe, and their feeling of European citizenship. For most of them, this has been a very happy experience, and they did not meet any bigger problems than culture shock or homesickness. However, a small number of the volunteers were confronted to much bigger problems, than we can qualify as "crisis".

Since 1996, 4 volunteers died, and a number of others have encountered very grave difficulties, such as drug or alcohol addiction, harassment, unwanted pregnancy, etc.

This alone justified the creation of a working group on crisis, in order to reflect on two issues :

How do we prevent crisis from happening ?

What do we do when the crisis happens ?

Objectives and Methodology

Section 1 Objectives

The working group was set up in October 1999, with the aims of thinking on how to prevent crisis, and develop a plan of intervention in case crisis / problems happen.

As a major starting point for reflection, it must be underlined that the European Youth programme operates a non rejection policy, which is based on the belief that everyone has something to give and to gain from volunteering ; therefore, it is important to work on creating the best conditions for everybody to participate, instead of refusing the participation of some people.

It is also important to keep in mind that people should not be identified as disadvantaged, but as people facing up to disadvantages¹. Therefore, if we are to consider that some people might be more "at risk" than other, it is not with the objective to identify them as "potential problems", but to evaluate the particular needs that they might have in order to fulfil them as well and safely as possible.

Another very important point for the working group was that it will be impossible to regulate successfully for all situations and risks. But we want to reduce the likelihood and consequences of young people facing up unacceptable risks. This document shall help in giving guidelines for preparation of a safe and good project.

Finally, another objective of this working group was to raise awareness about the type of problems which can occur, that they can occur at any time, to any one, and that we must be prepared to face them. This is why this document

¹ This was outlined in the report produced by the Working group on Inclusion

is built to be a practical tool to be used by National agencies, sending and host organisations when preparing and implementing projects, and when facing crisis.

NB : this working group did not consider minor problems which can arise in projects, such as relational problems with the tutor, or potential lack of activities, for the treatment of which a certain expertise has already been developed.

Section 2 Methodology

The working group established a list of crisis its members knew about. This list, as well as further thinking, has led to a typology of cases, and to a definition of the crisis (see Chapter II).

For each of the cases identified a member of the group has been reflecting upon the circumstances which led to the crisis, how it could have been prevented (especially looking at some specific issues, such as the selection of volunteers, preparation, training, etc), the potential consequences and how to manage the crisis. The papers produced by each of the members of the group are annexed to this document.

An analysis of these papers showed that whatever the crisis were, many similar conclusions could be drawn, be it on how to prevent or on how to manage the crisis. The Chapter III of this document - "Prevention of accidents and crisis" considers, step by step, how to create the safest conditions possible for an EVS project.

Despite all preventive measures, crisis might happen ; in that case, it is essential that all the actors involved know how to react, who to contact, etc. The Chapter IV helps to establish responsibilities, gives guidelines in terms of insurance, and gives ideas on an action plan to be developed.

The conclusion of this document helps in summarising the group's findings on responsibilities and looks towards the future.

Finally, a bibliography of written material which the group has found about is listed, for those of our readers who wish to go further in this subject.

DEFINING THE CRISIS

Cases identified

The working group started by listing the cases that its members had heard of. This list of cases is of course not exhaustive², but it permitted to have a first idea of what had already happened before, which could help imagining scenario of problems and solutions. These cases are anonymous in order to respect the volunteer's privacy.

Deaths

- Two volunteers died in road accidents (they were on their bikes). It is to be noted that one of them was not cycling on the good side of the road (the traffic rules being different from the volunteer's home country's rules)
- A female volunteer committed suicide short after arrival to the host country, jumping out of the window. She had a depression history but this information had not been given to the sending organisation and hence not to the host organisation. The host organisation mentioned that, had they known the volunteer's past, they would have accepted her all the same, but would have hosted her in a family, and not alone

² A query had been made to all National Agencies for EVS asking to list the crisis which had happened but unfortunately, this did not give much results.

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with another volunteer, in a small apartment at the 10th floor of a building.

- A male volunteer died because of drug abuse. He had a past of drug abuse, but had stopped using drug before leaving. This information was not communicated to the host organisation, which could not warn the sending organisation that the city the project was in was quite difficult, with lots of drug related problems, and could not watch the volunteer's behaviour particularly.

Other crisis

- A male volunteer who had a past of alcohol abuse went on EVS under the condition that he had stopped drinking. This information had not been communicated to the host organisation. He has been sent to a village where the national alcohol is produced, and hence where alcohol was everywhere. He started drinking again and had to go home.
- A male volunteer who had a past of drug abuse went on EVS under the condition that he had stopped using drugs. But he has been sent to the suburb of a large city where drug was easy to find and he started using drugs again, which also caused him financial problems. Fortunately, his tutor in the host project was informed of his past problems, so she realised quite soon what was happening and was able to help him and he could finish his project safely.
- A volunteer went on EVS and used drug ; he stayed in the hospital for a week in a coma without his mother knowing it (for a matter of confidentiality, the host organisation refused to tell the parents). Fortunately everything went well and he was saved ; he then returned home.
- A volunteer (who had a past of drug abuse, but was cured) had a girl friend left at home and carried on seeing her ; at the same time he started dating another volunteer in his project. Both girls became pregnant at the same time ; both aborted. This situation was very difficult for him too, he left the host project without telling anyone, and unfortunately ran into more drug problems.
- A volunteer went on EVS and discovered, while in his host country, that he was HIV positive ; he did not want to go home as he thought he would be better cured in his host country than in his sending country ; he was also in very bad relationship with his family and had no one and nowhere to go back to. At the same time, the host organisation did not know what to do with him, as he was of course very perturbed by the disease, and could not stay and work in the project. Finally the volunteer stayed in the host organisation till the end of the project.
- A volunteer went on a short term project in a youth centre ; she started offering soft drugs to the youngsters of the club and was immediately sent back home, after getting in trouble with the host organisation and the police.
- A volunteer resident in an EU country but National from a third country went on EVS, and during his EVS time stole a tooth brush in a shop. He has been arrested by the police and as he did not have his papers with him, he was sent back home.
- A volunteer was in an anthropological project and stole a very precious thing from the project that he had found on the ground ; the police arrested him, and two other volunteers who were with him in the project got in trouble as well, and spent a night in jail. He finally has been sent back home.
- In a project which hosted a very large number of volunteers, tensions had been happening between some of them who were sharing an apartment. One night, coming back from a party and being quite drunk, a dispute arose between a boy and a girl and they started fighting, also physically. The guy hurt the girl. The next morning he was sent back home (apparently, without being given any chance to defend himself).
- A volunteer was helping in restoration work ; during some of the activities, she fell through a hole in the floor and hurt herself very badly ; she had to stay in hospital for several months. It was proved later that safety measures were not respected, be it for the equipment of the volunteer or the preventive measures on the work camp.

- A volunteer was in a project in a kindergarten ; he has been accused without any evidence to have stolen money and sexually abused some of the children. He has been thrown out of the project without having any chance to defend himself.

Typology

From this list of known cases, and after further thinking, the group established a listing, if not exhausting, at least very complete, of problems and crisis which could happen during the implementation of an EVS project.

1. Death

- suicide
- accident
- murder
- illness

2. Health problems

- suicidal behaviour
- attempt suicide
- depression
- drug abuse
- alcohol abuse
- unwanted pregnancy / abortion
- illness
- allergies
- accident (e.g. car accident, violence in streets, í)

3. Abuses and crimes by the EVS volunteer

- chronic abuse of alcohol or drugs and possible legal consequences
- police arrest or detention
- pending suits
- risk behaviour
- criminal activities
- disappearance
- psychological or / and physical violence on project's users / on project's staff and volunteers / on people outside the project
- thefts inside the project
- abuse and improprieties towards structure or office stuff/cars, accommodation, etc.
- statements of racist and intolerant attitudes
- no-communication of transmissible sickness

4. Mental and physical abuse of a volunteer

In the implementation of the EVS project :

- Pressure on the volunteers to do / accept things they do not want to do
- Volunteer being forced to perform dangerous activities which s/he does not want to do (e.g. being involved in syringes exchange, having to physically contain violent persons ; having to climb on a roof, etcí)
- Threats of finishing the EVS project if the volunteer does not do / give this or that í , or if the volunteer denounces some practices.
- Host organisation is a sect and tries to brainwash the volunteer
- Extortion / blackmail
- Volunteer is sexually / physically abused
- Sexual harassment
- Racism / xenophobia

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- Bullying
- Unjustified accusations against the volunteer
- Volunteer feeling threatened, in general
- Living with a host family where domestic violence happens
- Living in a place / area where living conditions are not healthy or are insecure

Abuses by :

- a client of the host organisation ;
- a member of the host organisation's team / staff ;
- another EVS volunteer ;
- anyone outside the project

5. Other

- Family / environment pressure to go home
- Kidnapping of the volunteer
- And probably many other cases

Section 3 *Definition of "crisis"*

After reflecting on the typology of crisis which could happen, the working group decided to adopt a large definition, which is the following :

« a crisis can be defined as an extreme situation which would lead to a serious disturbance in the implementation of an EVS project. These crises call for urgent reaction, but should, as far as possible, be prevented. »

This definition gave the main orientation to the group's work : it is at least as important to work on risk prevention than on crisis management. This is why the following chapter is extremely important as it aims to detail, step by step, how to take the necessary measures to avoid as much as possible the happening of the crisis.

Preventing accidents and crisis

Recruitment and selection of the volunteer

1. Selecting a volunteer

Sending organisations should be able to understand if the candidate shows symptoms of personal or social problems. This not in order to exclude him/her from the EVS programme but, on the contrary, to orient the candidate to the right host project or to other more protected / protective social activities.

As a reminder : **It is important to underline that this work does not aim at preventing any youngster from participating in the EVS, but at the contrary to take the appropriate measures to permit all people's participation in the best safety conditions.**

Therefore, it is important to carefully consider the participation of a youngster in EVS. This youngster might not be ready for a challenging experience as EVS. S/he also might have wrong expectations, which must be cleared at the earliest stage.

2. Interviewing the volunteer

Individual interviews should be led by the sending organisation, to assess the volunteer profile and background ; during these interview(s), young people should feel confident to disclose a great deal about themselves.

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At interview stage it needs to be clear to the young person wishing to participate in a European programme that the information provided will not prevent them from taking part.

The information will be held in the strictest confidence and will only be disclosed on a need to know basis, i.e. the host and sending project. It will also be used to find the appropriate project for the volunteer.

During the interview, a number of issues should be tackled

- past problems such as mental health or emotional problems
- family problems
- serious adjustment problems
- eating disorders
- psychological and psychosocial problems
- difficulties with the police
- any type of difficulties which might be relevant for the programme
- allergies
- food requirements
- other special medical needs

The person responsible for the recruitment of volunteers must be trained by the National Agency in order to be able to find out about all these issues.

It is also important that from the beginning, the sending organisation works in collaboration with the volunteer's family if they feel the family role / pressure can be important and could lead to a potential withdrawal at a later stage of the project's implementation.

Preparing the volunteer

1. About volunteering and living abroad

- Volunteers must attend a pre-departure session, be it organised by the National agency or his / her sending organisation. This training session should include, among other things, intercultural training and an introduction to the concept of volunteering.
- Volunteers should be aware of their rights and duties ; a chart of their rights **and obligations** would be useful for that. The volunteer must be clear before leaving the country that s/he doesn't have to accept unreasonable demands.
- EVS candidates are adults and legally responsible of their actions. Some specific remarks should be introduced in the selection and in the training by the sending organisations. The candidate has to be put in face of the possible consequences on the community of an accidental or voluntary improper action.
- Volunteers must always know in advance the persons they can turn to in case of problems ; they should receive upon arrival all the information on emergency numbers in the host country. **The possibility of include this on the insurance card should be studied.**
- It is to be pointed out that being part of a European programme, and being hosted by an organisation, volunteers cannot disappear for some days without informing their tutor. Volunteers must know that they owe respect to their host organisation, and should inform them and discuss it if they wish to leave.
- Volunteers should be extremely well informed before their departure on the political and security conditions of the country where they will be going, and agree to go all the same. This is particularly accurate for volunteers going to third countries which might be more unstable than EU countries, but is also true for other places (e.g. going to a very disadvantaged area of a large city).

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2. Medical section

As a general rule, it is recommended to young people to have a good medical check up once it is known that they have received acceptance for an EVS placement abroad.

Medical information / training to the volunteer before departure should include :

- advice on unwanted pregnancy and abortion (information to both male and female volunteers)
- STD ó sexually transmitted diseases and how to avoid it
- if a serious illness or allergy comes to light, volunteer must be trained on how to deal with it

Preparing the host organisation for the EVS project

1. The tutorø role and training

In the EVS programme, volunteers are entitled to personal supervision by a specific person in their host organisation : their tutor. This tutor is a key person in the implementation of an EVS project, and should be trained and supported in an appropriate manner. The following statements and guidelines were clearly expressed by the working group :

- Tutors and projects supervisors should be available 24 hours a day and easy to reach. If the volunteer shows serious difficulties (serious personal problems, difficult adaptation to the project and the country, difficulties of integration in the local community, relationship problems, í), tutors and projects supervisors should be able to act quickly in order to prevent any dangerous situation. This may require counselling the volunteer in a more intense manner or to help him/her overcome emotional challenges.

- Tutors and supervisors need to be able to build a supportive relationship with the volunteer ; this can happen thanks to regular, frequent and face-to-face support ; they should encourage young people to speak honestly about their feelings. Tutors should provide young people with a more intense support, help the volunteer to overcome emotional challenges and integrate into the local community if they feel there is a need from the volunteer.
- A good training of the tutors and the responsible persons of the host organisations is absolutely necessary so that they are aware of their responsibilities and duties
- A tutor should be able to detect the signs which show that the volunteer is feeling uncomfortable, and be able to react in an appropriate manner.
- Training should include matters as how to approach young people, how to recognise problems, how to cope with them. A special training should be planned for tutors and supervisors to recognise the symptoms of suicidal behaviour, drug / alcohol abuse and act upon them
- Host organisations and tutors need to be informed on where to go in case of crisis ; they must be aware of where to turn to in case they are not able / competent to solve the volunteerø problem. They could receive a guide on their rights, responsibilities and duties
- National agencies should introduce these issues during their training seminars for local host and sending projectø responsible.

2. Support and monitoring

As a common rule, adequate support should be provided to the volunteer all along the project both by the sending and the host organisation. Regular communication must take place between the host and sending organisations.

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An independent monitoring and evaluation process of the volunteer should be organised, so that the volunteer can feel free to denounce abuses s/he has to endure

In this framework, attendance to mid-term meeting should be compulsory ; these mid-term meetings should be organised by the National agency.

Another person should be available to the volunteer apart from the tutor in case the tutor is personally involved in the crisis.

Section 4 *Preparation of the EVS project*

1. Selection of host organisation and matchmaking

Some organisations might not be appropriate to host volunteers. Each stage of the selection process is the opportunity to carefully check that organisations fulfil the criteria for host EVS volunteers in safe and good conditions and also to evaluate the risks involved :

- assessment of the expression of interest (which is also the opportunity to check the quality of the information to be delivered to the volunteer on a first hand stage)
- selection of the grant application (which is the opportunity to check the quality of the project's preparation, including the support system and the practicalities, e.g. board and lodging)
- appropriate monitoring of the project during the implementation of the project

When the sending organisation and the volunteer are looking for a host organisation, it is important to approach :

- a host project that is adequate to the volunteer's background, desires and needs (special attention should be given to avoid risky situations, mainly to avoid that "fragile" volunteers are hosted by "risky" projects)

- a host project that can give the necessary support to the volunteer if a crisis is to happen

Personal interview at least on the phone should be the rule for the final selection of volunteers by the host organisation.

Host organisations should consider the on-arrival training session of the volunteer not only from the linguistic preparation but also as a good chance for remarking personal doubtful attitudes.

2. General preparation of the EVS project

a) *In the host organisation*

Before the arrival of the volunteer, a clear explanation is necessary to everybody involved in the host project (staff and clients) of what an EVS volunteer is, why s/he is coming, for how long, and what his / her role and activities will be. This will help the volunteer to integrate, reassure the people in the project who might be afraid or reluctant to the arrival of this new comer and thus have negative reactions to the volunteer.

Young people should not be placed in situations, which expose them to an unacceptable level of risk. Safety must always be the prime consideration. Before the EVS project takes place, an assessment of the risks involved in it must be done by the host organisation. If unacceptable risks can not be contained, then host organisations should consider to suspend the project.

b) *Tasks of the volunteer*

A clear definition of the volunteer's role and tasks, especially in the tripartite agreement is the basic tool for a volunteer to defend him/herself against excessive demands. Therefore it is important that this document is filled carefully and signed by all parties before the departure of the volunteer. The tripartite agreement can play an important role in the sense

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that it includes a clear statement of working hours and holiday periods. It should be made clear to the volunteer from the beginning that the host organisation expects him / her to respect the rules of the organisation (e.g. : giving 2 weeks notice before going on holiday, etcí). When organising the tasks for the volunteer, background / potential problems / illness / allergies of the volunteer should be taken into consideration.

c) *Practicalities*

When planning the board and lodging arrangements, the host organisation should take into consideration as much as possible the needs of each particular volunteer (e.g. particular diets) ; the lodging arrangement must be adequate to the age and gender of the volunteer. The living conditions must respect health and safety regulations.

3. Exchanging information

a) *Information from the Sending organisation to the host organisation*

For a long time, discussions have occurred as to whether the past of a volunteer should be revealed to the host organisation from the sending organisation. Some might think that it is unfair for the volunteer to go to a new country without being given another chance, and that his / her privacy should be respected. However, the working group has come to the conclusion, that confidential information must be disclosed if it can have a potential impact on the health and safety of the volunteer.

Therefore, should a sending organisation know of an important information regarding the health and safety of the volunteer, this information should be disclosed to the host organisation, under the following conditions;

- The communication on the volunteer between the sending and the host organisations should be kept confidential but must happen. Only the

persons who have a direct responsibility over the young person should be kept informed.

- This information can allow for a special attention in case of risky situations.
- The main objective is to provide the host organisation with information on the young people so that adequate support may be provided and help finding the appropriate host project (e.g. : if it is known that the young person has abused of drugs in the past, placement in a town where the drug abuse is high can be avoided).
- Both organisations must feel confident that the potential problems to be met will not affect the volunteer's participation in the programme
- If informed, the host organisation can get prepared, get advice in advance, know where to go in case of relapse, etc í
- Sending organisation must receive confirmation from the host organisation that the relevant person in the host country know about the potential problem, has made investigations as to how to deal with them or / and is trained to recognise the problem and help the volunteer, that the problem can be dealt with if it arises again.
- Particular issues can be looked at in this field : serious illness or allergy ; dietary problems ; past of drug / alcohol abuse ; attempts of suicide ; depression.

b) *Information from the host organisation to the volunteer*

In order to prepare the EVS project carefully, the host organisation must deliver the necessary information to the volunteer, if possible, before arrival in the host country :

- roles and responsibilities of the volunteer and the rest of the staff in the project
- health and safety regulations
- emergency arrangements ; emergency contact persons or services and tutor ; how to report a crime or incident

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A few comments regarding this statement must be made :

- specific information which might be of importance for some projects, such as :
 - dress codes,
 - local customs,
 - what is socially acceptable in the area (cultural differences),
 - behaviour which may be deemed inappropriate in that particular country or region,
 - how to deal with inappropriate behaviour,
 - attitudes to genders,
 - road safety information (rules for pedestrians, cars drive on the other side of the road)
 - local information on risky places or areas,
 - activities not to take part in
- possible consequences of certain improprieties or abuses in connection with the aims and methods of the host project.

Sometimes the volunteer is asked to agree on an informal contract of behaviour in advance of the EVS.

Section 5 Safety rules

All kind of job and work, voluntary or profit making, includes a level of risk for personal safety. In some situation the real possible danger is minimum. Quite often, on the contrary, the possibility of bad accidents is unfortunately underestimated. As far as the prevention of accidents is concerned, volunteers should benefit from the same safety and health preventive measures as those applicable to permanent workers or employees and in this sense, it is important to be sure that all these measures are taken by the organisations and respected by all.

Some participants to EVS programme already had to face very serious consequences of accidents, and appropriate prevention measures have to be encouraged and monitored.

1. References

The European Commission issued a specific letter on the 24th January 2000 addressed to EVS National agencies with the subject: "Health and safety conditions in the host organisations". An extract of this letter mentions :

"stress should be put on prevention. Thus, at the time of the selection of host projects, the attention of the host organisations has to be drawn to the need to have appropriate health and safety arrangements appropriate to the nature of the activities to be carried out by the young volunteers, in particular with regard to EVS projects involving restoration activities or other manual activities.

Because of their nature, these projects can demand a more important technical support of the young volunteers, as well as appropriate safety equipment (shoes, hard hats, harnesses, gloves, etc) or tools and equipment (scaffolding, electric tools, etc.) which have to conform with the national and European standards. In conclusion, any EVS project must conform to the standards of safety in the "workplace" as laid down at national and EU levels.

Furthermore, young volunteers should beforehand participate in preparatory meetings on safety and risk assessment at the level of the host organisation.

The host organisations should also be informed that in the event of accident, they have to contact as quickly as possible the National Agency, for support and assistance."

Another important support document that can be considered as a sort of guide for safety and health of volunteers in service, is the European Council directive issued on 12th June 1989 (89/391/EEC): "On the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers". The text of this Directive is annexed to the present document. The following guidelines are based on this document.

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2. Guidelines

a) Host project's obligations

- Within the context of his responsibilities, the person responsible for the local project shall take the necessary measures for the safety and health protection of the EVS volunteer, including provision of information and training, as well as provision of the necessary organisation and means. This person shall be aware of the need to adjust these measures to take into account changing circumstances and shall aim to improve existing situations.
- In terms of prevention, the person responsible for the project has to follow these principles:
 - avoiding risks
 - evaluating the risks which cannot be avoided
 - combating the risks at source
 - adapting the task to the individual volunteer, especially as regards the design of work places, the choice of work equipment and methods and volunteers' skills, experience and aptitudes
 - planning the duration of daily work activities according to the volunteers' physical sustainable amount of hours
 - giving appropriate and comprehensible instructions to the volunteer
 - ensuring that only volunteers who have received adequate instructions may have access to areas where there is serious and specific danger
 - ensuring the provision of adequate hygienic supports for personal cleanliness after the service
- In terms of emergency measures, the person responsible for the project has to follow these principles:
 - take the necessary measures for first-aid, fire-fighting and evacuation of volunteers, adapted to the nature of the activities and the size of the establishment and taking into account other persons present

- arrange any necessary contacts with external services, particularly as regards first-aid, emergency medical care, rescue work and fire-fighting

b) Volunteer's obligations

It shall be the responsibility of each EVS volunteer to take care as far as possible of his/her own safety and health and that of other persons affected by his/her acts at work in accordance with his/her training and the instructions given by the person responsible. In particular:

- make correct use of machinery, apparatus, tools, dangerous substances, transport equipment
- make correct use of the personal protective equipment supplied and after use return it to its proper place
- refrain from disconnecting, changing or removing arbitrarily safety devices fitted
- immediately inform the person responsible for the project if he/she has reasonable grounds for considering that a given situation represents a serious and immediate danger to safety and health
- co-operate with the local responsible, the other eventual volunteers and/or workers, in accordance with national practice, for the safeguard of common safety and health.

c) General conditions

- Measures related to safety, hygiene and health at work in EVS projects may in no circumstances involve the volunteers in financial costs.
- The persons responsible for the project shall consult as much as possible volunteers and allow them to take part in discussion on all questions relating to safety and health during the service.
- Particularly sensitive risk groups must be protected against the dangers which specifically affect them (allergies, handicaps, etc.).

Crisis management

Insurance

1. What is the first thing to do in an emergency case ?

The following information should be completed with the appropriate contact details, and distributed to every actor involved in the European Voluntary Service, be it the sending organisation, the host organisation, the volunteer or his/her family.

How to reach the insurer ?

- By telephone : Form the number of the international telephone network and follow it by.....
- By fax : Form the number of the international telephone network and follow it by.....
- By e-mail : í í í í í í .

What to do in the event of illness, accident or death ?

- The service of the insurer cannot replace the interventions of the public services, especially as regards emergency help. Local help must first be called (ambulance, hospital, doctor).
- As from the first call to the insurer, he will ask you to provide certain information as a preliminary. It is advised to prepare them before calling :
 - The volunteer's name, his / her address, the address of the host and sending organisations;

- The name and the address of the doctor who looks after the young people;
- In the event of hospitalisation: the name of the hospital and of the service where the young person is; his/her state; his/her current treatment.
- the insurance number (if necessary).
- In the event of hospitalisation, the insurer has to be warned on the same day or, at the latest, within 48 hours. For the assumption of responsibility of the hospital expenses it is essential to contact the insurer beforehand.
- Then, if repatriation of the patient is necessary for medical reasons, one must contact as quickly as possible the insurer and to indicate them the name and telephone number of the doctor who takes care of the patient. Once informed, the medical department of the insurer will contact this doctor. Without preliminary medical contact, the insurer cannot allow for the transport-repatriation of the young volunteer towards his country of origin.
- A preliminary agreement with the insurer can be necessary, for example, in the event of surgical operation. The young person or the person responsible for the organisation has to contact the insurer at least 10 days before the date planned for the surgical operation or hospitalisation to obtain a preliminary agreement to the hospitalisation. In the event of emergency hospitalisation, the young person or the person responsible of the host organisation have to contact the insurer at the latest within 48 hours following his/her admission into the hospital.
- In the event of an accident, it is necessary to indicate to the company the circumstances in which it took place, where it took place, the day and the time, the causes of the accident, as well as the possible witnesses' names.

Intervention of the insurer

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The intervention of the insurer as regards health care comes after exhaustion of the allowances to which the young person - national of a country of the European Union or of Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein - can claim for the same risks to the Social Security of his country of origin (with the form E 111 or another equivalent form). Accordingly, the young person has to do as a preliminary, both in its country of origin and/or abroad - another country of the European Union or of the European Economic area - all the steps required by his/her social security institution in order to obtain from it the refunding to which he can claim.

The insurer will refund the young volunteer within the limits of the amount assured, the balance of his medical outgoing after intervention of his/her social security institution, on presentation of his calculation and of a copy of the notes and expenses invoices. If the social security institution does not intervene, the young person must send to the insurer the refusal certificate and the original documents in proof of his outgoing.

If the insurer made the advance of guaranteed expenses, he will communicate to the young person the care invoices that he will have paid. The young person has then to give them to his/her social security institution and to refund to the insurer the quotas that the social security institution will pay to the young person.

d) What are the documents to be provided to the insurer for refunding :

For the refunding of medical expenses, the following documents must be sent to the insurer:

- the application form for refunding fulfilled and signed;
 - the original of the medical prescription;
 - the original of the detailed and discharged invoice of the costs.
- Attention : under penalty of regulation, the request for refunding of expenses has to be sent to the insurer as quickly as possible and, at the latest, within.... months following the date of the care.

In the event of death, the following documents must be provided:

- extract of the person insured's death certificate;
- supporting documents of quality and of the recipients' rights;
- complete medical certificate indicating the cause of the death and, if necessary, a copy of the police report, the autopsy, the conclusions of the coroner or the official report of the police.

2. What to do in case of loss or theft of documents abroad ?

- In the event of loss or theft of travel documents (identity card, passport, driving license, etc.) which have occurred abroad, one must address first of all to the nearer embassy or consulate of the country of origin. The insurer will be able to give you the details of it.
- In the event of loss or cheque theft, bank cards or credit cards, the insurer will be able to contact the financial institutions to apply the necessary protective measures.
- In the event of loss or theft of travel tickets, the insurer will place at the disposal of the young person the transport notes necessary for the participation in the EVS project.

Parts to be provided to the insurer : statement to the police ; other documents could be asked for, according to the circumstances of each case.

3. Other cases of intervention of insurance

Certain cases of civil liability owing to, material or immaterial consecutive physical injury caused involuntarily by the volunteer to third parties are covered by the group insurance for the young volunteers. Are included, inter alia, under certain conditions, the coverage of the damage of explosion, of fire, of electricity damage engaging the responsibility of a

volunteer, either as a tenant or occupant of a building or part of building, or as neighbour and/or co-occupier.

Attention : This insurance does not apply to the damage that are a consequence of the non-observance of the standards and safety regulations concerning the activity of the volunteer's service, insofar as these violation are tolerated by the persons responsible for the volunteers instructed to take care of the respect of these standards and regulations.

If necessary contact the insurer directly to obtain more information on this complex cover. Company has to be informed in a detailed way of the circumstances, the place, the day and the time, the causes of the accident, as well as the possible witnesses' names.

4. Compulsory insurance of motorised vehicles

- The cover against the risks of motor third party liability is compulsory in all countries of the European Union and of the European Economic Area. This covers material damage and the bodily lesions caused to third parties and also the damage suffered by persons transported in the car for free.
- When for the needs of the project the young volunteer is supposed to drive a car or a motorcycle, it is recommended to take motor insurance covering all the risks, including the theft of the car ("omnium" cover). Similarly, if the young person wishes to use his own car/motorcycle to travel to the host country and during his/her EVS project, it is up to him/her to contract this insurance.
- If the young person obtain or are provided with any form of motor transport (car or motorcycle), he/she is responsible, together with the host organisation, for seeing that it has been insured as comprehensively as possible and that he/she is insured to drive it. Driving uninsured is a serious offence in most countries and the European Commission is not able to protect the young volunteers and the organisations from the consequences.

Attention : These covers are not included in the insurance of group for young volunteers ! In the event of accident, one must therefore address him / herself directly to the insurer of the organisation or of the young person.

Establishing an action plan in case of emergency

Tutors and staff of the host organisations are responsible for ensuring that the best possible health and safety conditions are offered to volunteers. They should not hesitate to act in an emergency situation and to take the necessary actions in an extreme situation.

Emergency procedures are an essential part of an EVS project. All those involved in an EVS project, including host and sending organisations, tutors, young volunteers, should be informed of who will take charge in an emergency and what they are expected to do in an emergency.

1. Evaluation and reporting

The National Agency, the SOS and the Commission should be quickly informed as soon as a crisis happens. The National Agency should go and visit the project to help to solve it or bring assistance to those who need it. The local project's responsible or the tutor of the volunteer, or the National Agency, depending on cases, should prepare a written report and present regular updates of the situation.

At the end of the crisis, a final report should be produced by the National Agency, summarising the circumstances and consequences of the case, and giving an evaluation of what to do in the future (e.g. suspending the hosting organisation, recommendations on how to avoid similar situations, on how to act in a similar crisis, í).

2. Medical emergencies

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We consider as medical emergencies all the situations concerning the health and well being of the volunteers. This category includes, among others, serious illness, allergies, unwanted pregnancy, accident (should they take place during EVS activities or during free time), physical consequences of violence, drug or alcohol abuse.

The first action has to be taken by the person responsible for the local project or the tutor of the volunteer. This person should be able to quickly collect and provide the following information to the National Agency, the SOS and the Commission:

- Exact condition and safety of the volunteer;
- Correct name and birth date of the volunteer;
- Date of arrival in the country and foreseen duration of the project;
- Symptoms and complications;
- Treatment already received and by whom;
- Whether follow-up treatment or repatriation is required;
- Previous medical history, if relevant;
- Specific request or permission of the volunteer to contact next relatives. If patient is unable to make this decision then judgement must be made together with organisation's main responsible or co-ordinating responsible and with host national agency;

In case of death, further points have to be checked:

- Circumstances of death (time, place, event);
- Who has been notified;
- Where is the body;
- Liaison with police officer and coroner involved (names are welcomed);

- Immediate information to main offices and national agencies. The host national agency will inform also the concerned embassy, if necessary. Sending national agency or sending organisation inform next relatives;
- Official request and collection of all medical reports, death certificate and police reports;
- Liaison with insurance company regarding the return of body. In the meanwhile, liaison with local funeral directors regarding the storage of the body.

According to the level of the emergency, the person responsible for the project has to inform quickly the potential main office of his/her organisation and the direct responsible for host projects in the national agency.

All the not technical information should be treated as confidential and the volunteer's will kept in high consideration.

Main officers of sending and host agencies should be consulted in case of danger for permanent or very serious consequences for the volunteer's health.

3. Psychological emergencies

Under this category we include situations such as illness, unwanted pregnancy, consequences of violence, drugs and alcohol abuse, religious and/or philosophical pressure, previous family or social conditions, depression, civil unrest or natural disasters concerning the host country or region.

Intervention for problems belonging to this category can be requested by the volunteer him/herself, by his/her family, by the tutor, by the host organisation, by the sending organisation, by the national agency officers, by other volunteers in the same project.

The host national agency has to investigate confidentially, and in close cooperation with the host organisation, the tutor and the volunteer, whether

the state of emergency is to be declared and at which level the intervention should be started. A skilled person should be appointed for the psychological support to the volunteer among the resource persons of the host organisations or among national agency's officer. Then:

- If the situation involves also health trouble or in all cases where there is a serious crisis, the same procedures as for medical emergencies should be started;
- If necessary, transfer of the volunteer to a "safe place" should be arranged immediately;
- Contacting local specific institutions (e.g. rape crisis centres, women centres, alcohol addicted supports centres, etc.) is recommended, with the permission of the young person involved;
- Volunteer's request or permission to contact next relatives should be asked. If victim is unable to make this decision then judgement must be made together with organisation's main responsible or co-ordinating responsible and with host national agency;
- If legal steps towards direct responsible of the psychological and physical crimes have to be taken, this should happen with the permission of the victim. In the positive, national agencies have to support effectively all the procedures requested;
- Victim's wish to stop or continue the EVS project should be respected, except in the cases where the behaviour of the volunteer has already compromised the realisation of the project;
- In case of civil unrest or natural disasters concerning the host country or region, host project and host national agency should operate for facilitate the link between the volunteer and the next relatives, and for recovering the volunteer in a safer place.

4. Legal problems where the volunteer is responsible for the trouble

Under this category we include situations such as violence, drugs and alcohol abuse, accidents, police arrest and detention, previous pending suits.

The first action has to be taken by the local project's responsible or the tutor of the volunteer. This person should be able to quickly collect and provide the following information, as well as take some actions:

- Reasons for arrest or charges appointed.
- Has the volunteer been detained.
- If so, where.
- Details of the police staff involved.
- Liase with volunteer and police.
- Immediate information to main office and national agencies concerned.
- Depending on the nature of the charge, the host agency will inform also the concerned embassy.
- Volunteer's request or permission to contact next relatives should be asked. If the volunteer is unable to make this decision then judgement must be made together with organisation's main responsible or co-ordinating responsible and with host national agency.
- Monitoring of the situation by the national agency. Some action included in the section "psychological emergencies" could become necessary for psychological support to the volunteer in detention or at the exit and/or for his/her family.

5. Possible consequences on host project/community

Some of the events mentioned above can produce consequences at the level of the host organisation or the host community. We can distinguish between two categories of events and conditions, whether the volunteer is the victim or the offender.

When the volunteer is the victim

In this case, the volunteer is the victim of all kinds of violence and abuse, of accidents, of abusive police arrest and detention.

At first sight, this category of issues will have negative consequences only on the volunteer's health or mood. But in certain circumstances, the discovery of certain events can break down the trust in the volunteer by the host community. The people responsible for the project should communicate as soon as possible to the sending organisation and to the host national agency when and if the problem arises. In co-ordination, similar measures as for medical and psychological emergencies should be undertaken.

When the volunteer is responsible

Under this category, we can identify the following events: psychological and physical violence on project's users, staff and volunteers or people outside the project; statements of racist and intolerant attitudes; thefts inside the host organisation, abuse and improprieties towards structure or office stuff/cars, accommodation, etc., no-communication of transmissible sickness, and so on.

These situations provoke immediately reaction in the host community, which takes distance from the volunteer. According to the level of importance of the act, in order to protect the organisation and the community, the local responsible could have the doubt to call the police and/or to send home immediately the volunteer. Before taking any decision, they have to contact confidentially the host national Agency, which will lead any further step also in link with sending organisation and agency. Volunteer's wish to keep the situation confidential or not to alert his/her next relatives should be taken in serious consideration but priority must be given to reducing the negative consequences for the host community. In case of heavy charge on the volunteer, the host agency can support the host organisation's legal actions against the volunteer. Some

official investigation on selection, training and preparation provided by the sending organisation should be undertaken by the sending national agency.

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Conclusions

Establishing roles and responsibilities

This section aims at summarising every actor's responsibility in the preparation and implementation of an EVS project.

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1. Volunteers should

- not take unnecessary risks;
- follow the safety and security regulations and other instructions of the host organisation and the tutor;
- dress and behave sensibly and responsibly;
- be sensitive to local codes and customs (body language, dress codes, attitudes to gender, etc.);
- not look out for anything that may be considered to be a danger to themselves or to the host organisation staff and members;
- give the sending and host organisations and the tutor information about their emotional, psychological and physical health (details on medical conditions: allergies, special dietary requirements; etc.) which might be relevant to the project ;
- contact the insurance in case of emergency;
- give their consent to contact parents in case of emergency.
- Volunteers should provide the host and sending organisations with emergency contact number(s) of their families.

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2. Tutors should í

- review regularly undertaken activities with young people and advise host organisation where adjustments may be necessary;
- be aware of young people protection issues;
- ensure that the organisation have the details of the young people special education or medical needs which will be necessary for them to carry out their tasks effectively;
- contact insurance, in case the volunteer is not in a situation to do it him/herself;
- contact parents, with the consent of the young volunteers. Tutors should act as a link between the host organisation and the family.

3. Host organisations should ensure thatí

- the risk assessment has been completed and appropriate safety measures are in place;
- training needs have been assessed by a competent person and the needs of the young people have been considered;
- adequate first help provision is available;
- an experienced tutor has been designed for the volunteer;
- young people have the address and phone number of the tutor to contact in case of emergency;
- arrangements have been made for the medical needs of the young people and special training needs imposed by the nature of the project (care of older people or of children, renovation of old buildings, for instance)
- consider stopping the project if the risk to the health and safety of the young people is unacceptable;
- host organisations have details of the family and sending organisation contact

- have enough information on the young people proposed for the project to assess their suitability or be satisfied that their suitability has been assessed and confirmed;
- be aware of young people protection issues;
- refer to the National Agency concerned for advice and counselling;
- with the consent of the volunteer, if applicable, contact the family in case of emergency;
- contact insurance, in case the volunteer is not in a situation to do it him/herself;
- be aware that certain young people may require closer support, such as those with special needs.

4. Sending organisations should ensure thatí

- all necessary actions have been completed before the departure of the volunteer;
- young people are fully aware of what the proposed host project involves;
- volunteers are interviewed and trained thoroughly beforehand, specially when volunteers are asked to work with particularly vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly and the handicapped;
- asks for personal references before placing the volunteers.

5. National Agenciesørole

- provide information and advice on risk assessment to the organisations;
- provide sending organisations with training sessions
- provide host organisations with training sessions
- assess host and sending organisations in what concerns security and safety of young people;

- provide organisations and volunteers with emergency telephone contact where necessary;
- ensure training needs for the specific activities of the young people have been addressed, mainly when the activity involves certain risks;
- have in place procedures to monitor and review safety during voluntary activities;
- ensure the host organisation complies with national and EU safety regulations and guidelines;
- refer to the Commission, if necessary, in case of emergency, for advice and support;
- recommends the use of the structured procedure to screen volunteers when they apply to the EVS in order to eliminate offenders and scare away people convicted of certain crimes.

6. The SOSørole ó Structure of Operational Support

- Assists the European Commission and the national Agencies in providing information and establishing guidelines
- Assists the European Commission and the National Agencies in the management of the crisis
- Goes and visits the project if necessary to bring the necessary counselling to all actors involved ; this intervention is quick, informal, and can take place in many different languages
- Keeps record of the crisis which happen, monitor the implementation of the program, and makes recommendation as to how to avoid further crisis

7. The Commissionø role

- proposes recommendations on preventive measures and risks management;
- assists National Agencies in providing information and advice on risk assessment;

- assists National Agencies, organisations, volunteers and their families in case of emergency;
- recommends the use of a structured procedure to screen volunteers when they apply to the EVS.

Where to now ?

1. As a first recommendationí

One of the objectives of this working group was to raise awareness about potential grave crisis, and to give concrete guidelines to project managers as how to prevent a crisis, and to manage it if it happens. Therefore, it is essential to disseminate this document as widely as possible, to all National Agencies, and to all Sending and Host organisations.

2. Some concrete examples of things which could be done í

The working group recommends that a **package of information** be delivered to every volunteer by his / her sending organisation. Theses packages of information should be produced by the national Agencies and delivered to the Sending organisations. They should include :

- Information on health, unwanted pregnancy, Sexually Transmissible Diseases, and why not condoms ; this could be done in consultation with national organisations working in the field of youth health
- Leaflet produced by the Council of the EU, and available from every Euro Info Point, called óConsular Protection for citizens of the European Unionö. This document lists the assistance you can / cannot expect from your embassy when abroad in the EU, and the rules for it.
- A charter of the rights and duties of the volunteer (to be produced by the Commission)
- A charter of the rights and duties of the host organisations (to be produced by the Commission)

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Mid term meetings must be organised by National Agencies and ALL volunteers MUST attend. This meetings must be the occasion for the National Agency to evaluate, on an informal and independent setting if the volunteer is fine in his / her project.

National Agencies should NOT accept any application without making sure that the **tripartite agreement** has been signed by all three parties.

National Agencies MUST NOT approve an application without making sure that the volunteer is properly **insured**.

3. Action plan / strategy for the future

- Researching all information which exists in this field, and the actions plans from other volunteering programmes / organisations, in order not to duplicate work which has already been done, and to gather good practices
- Elaborating guidelines for training the volunteersø tutors from Sending and Host organisations ; Very often the training sessions offered by the national Agencies to the host organisations only focus on the programme rules, but not enough on the qualitative content of the project, and do not give tools on crisis management. The SOHO training module which was created by the Swedish and Dutch National Agencies is an excellent basis for this, and should be used as a model to follow / improve / spread.
- Once these training sessions will exist everywhere, a political decision could be made so that an application for a host project would be rejected if the volunteerø local tutor did not attend one of the training sessions organised by the National agencies.
- Developing common European criteria for a good screening of applications at national level
- Develop local / national / European monitoring of projects

- Make a better / systematic use of mid-term reports and final reports. They are very important tools to monitor the quality of projects.
- A few ideas or questions were mentioned by National Agencies during their meeting in Brussels, on the 5th of July 2000 :
 - Create crisis centres at local / regional or national level
 - Develop counselling structures
 - How to deal with crisis in third countries, where there are no National agencies ?
 - This subject must be enlarged to the whole of the Youth programme, and not only EVS
 - A co-operation could also be developed with SOCRATES and LEONARDO, e.g. thanks to the future Action 4 of the Youth programme (co-operation between programmes)

Conclusion

As a summary, the key words for crisis prevention and management are :

AWARENESS

TRAINING

QUALITY PROJECTS

MONITORING

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