The 19th Annual Volonteurope Conference was a resounding success and the Volonteurope Secretariat wishes to thank all of the presenters of the Master Classes, participants and our Greek partner PRAKSIS – and their entire team of committed staff and enthusiastic volunteers – for helping us to deliver such a memorable conference.

Over the course of four days, more than 110 participants, from nearly 20 different countries in Europe and beyond, took part in a range of specialist Master Classes, visits to local volunteering NGOs in Athens, official ceremonies, including the 4th Active Citizens of Europe (ACE) Awards at the British Ambassador’s Residence in Athens, a volunteering activity at Alimos Beach, and other parts of the programme.

During the course of the Conference a Plenary Debate on the European Year of Volunteering 2011 (EYV 2011) was held, to discuss actions at EU and Member State level planned for the Year, as well as how 2011 is to be used to reach out to new volunteers. There was also a Presentation on volunteering in Greece, with input given by representatives of Greek civil society and the Greek government. Prior to the Closing Ceremony, we also held a Plenary Session on how non-profit organisations sector can work effectively with the corporate sector, the input for which was provided by experienced practitioners from the United States and the UK.

On behalf of everyone that was involved in the Conference, the Volonteurope Secretariat wishes to thank all of our supporters, including City of Athens – Health and Social Solidarity Organisation; Europe Direct – City of Athens; Municipality of Alimos; the British Ambassador to Greece and all his staff; Greek Ministry of Labour; CSV; PRAKSIS; the European Commission; and the ‘Europe for Citizens’ Programme which provides a multi-annual operating grant for Volonteurope. The financial and in-kind support of our partners made it possible to deliver such a successful Conference in Athens.
Training for Presenters, Thursday 21st October 2010
Delivered by Dr Jim Kielsmeier, Founder, President and CEO of the National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC), USA, this two-hour fast track session was an opportunity for all the presenters of Volonteurope Master Classes to meet together, share some best practices in engaging with participants and stimulating debate, as well as find out more about the background and experiences of fellow presenters. The aim of the training was to give the Master Class leaders an opportunity to interact with others, share good practice and, as a result, improve their presenting and workshop delivery techniques.

Opening Ceremony, Thursday 21st October 2010
The venue for the opening of the conference was the impressive Athina 9.84 Amphitheatre in the Gazi area of Athens. Gazi, surrounding the old Athens gasworks, is home to the Technopolis of Athens, an industrial museum of modern architecture.

Elisabeth Hoodless, the outgoing President of Volonteurope, opened the Conference. She was followed by impressive contributions from Tzanetos Antypas (President of PRAKSIS), Dr Paul Theodorakis (City of Athens – Health and Social Solidarity Organisation), Dr Urania Kakrida (Europe Direct – City of Athens), Ass. Prof. Theodore N. Tsekos (Ministry of Labour and Social Security) and Ekaterini Karanika (EYV 2011 Task Force at the European Commission). Finally, Dr. David Landsman OBE (British Ambassador of Greece), who closed the Ceremony, remarked that the Volonteurope Conference “demonstrates clearly that volunteering is not a PR stunt or a luxury or an optional extra, but an essential and integrated element in the functioning of a modern and sustainable society.”

An official Conference Photograph was taken, following which the participants were treated to a buffet reception at the Amphitheatre.

Master Classes, Friday 22nd October 2010
The morning began with a Plenary Debate on EYV 2011. The participants had an opportunity to listen and interact with a diverse range of panellists, representing institutions, civil society and the private sector. They included: Ekaterini Karanika (EYV 2011 Task Force at the European Commission); Thomas Leftwich (Office for Civil Society and the EYV 2011 National Coordinating Body for the UK); Angeliki Boura (General Secretariat for Youth and the EYV 2011 National Coordinating Body for Greece); Sladjana Milunović (OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina); and Roisin Murphy (KPMG).

Following a short coffee break the participants headed for the first session of the Master Classes. Luca Buffa (Gesavo, Italy) and Rob Lever (CSV RSVP, UK) presented the EVIVA Project, which is an Anglo-Italian experience of senior volunteer exchanges. Maria Moudatsou (PRAKSIS, Greece) and Michael Mavris (Probation Service of...
Piraeus, Ministry of Justice, Greece) delivered a session entitled ‘Prison, Probation, Release in the Greek Criminal Justice System: Reality and Volunteerism’. Len Goss (University of Surrey, UK) spoke about ‘The Silver Academy’ and how it provides volunteering opportunities in the business world, while Adriaan Vonk (MOVISIE, the Netherlands) focused on democracy within volunteer organisations. A team of Greek practitioners, Maria Kaldani (ARSIS), Spiros Psichas (Voluntary Work Athens) and Xenia Koutentaki (Citizens in Action) presented on working voluntarily with refugees and asylum seekers. The second Master Classes session included Roisin Murphy (KPMG, UK) explaining how to build sustainable partnerships with companies. French presenters Elisabeth Laverne (Itinéraire International) and David Lopez (La Ligue de l’Enseignement) spoke about their AMICUS project on European volunteering and citizenship for disadvantaged youth. KETHEA Centre for Dependent Individuals from Athens was represented by Dimitris Giannatos, Maria Panagiotidou and Panagiotis Chaldaios who delivered an interactive Master Class entitled ‘Supporting by a Cross-Cultural Way – Acting Synthetically’. Lior Shohat (Administration for National-Civic Service, Israel) spoke about how the Service works on inclusion of special youth populations, while Vicente Baeza (Movimiento por la Paz, Spain) focused on understanding co-existence in societies.

The third visit was organised by ARSIS, an youth-focused NGO which offers support and advocacy services to young individuals living under conditions of poverty, neglect, victimisation, conflict, exploitation, isolation, racism and other challenges. Finally the fourth group of participants visited BABEL, a day centre for migrants with mental health problems, both adults and children.

ACE Awards, Friday 22nd October 2010

The conference participants were invited by Dr David Landsman OBE, the British Ambassador to Greece, to his Residence, to celebrate the outstanding contributions of individuals and organisations to volunteering, social cohesion and Active Citizenship in Europe.

NGO Visits, Friday 22nd October 2010

PRAKSIS worked closely with local NGOs in Athens to offer conference participants an opportunity to witness first-hand the work of volunteer-involving organisations in the city. A group of delegates visited KETHEA MOSAIC, a project that aims to support immigrants and refugees in psychosocial and multidimensional way, focusing on drug-related problems, prevention and counselling and education, including Greek language classes. A second group of participants went to the PRAKSIS Polyclinic in Athens, where volunteer doctors, nurses, psychologists and other specialists donate their time to offer their services to any socially-excluded group which has not got access to health services and/or social and legal support.

Photo courtesy of PRAKSIS

Photo courtesy of Lior Shohat

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From dozens of nominations received by the Volonteurope Secretariat, an independent panel of judges selected the following winners: Cerebral Palsy Greece (category: ‘Greek NGO’); Anastasia Tsiakalou and Sotiria Goufa (category: ‘Greek Volunteers’); The Children’s Oncology Foundation Enriqueta Villavecchia, Spain (category: 'NGO'); Sally Anne Webb, UK (category: ‘Volunteer’); and Starwood Hotels and Resorts, UK (category: ‘CSR’).

The Mistress of Ceremonies was Alina Kotsovolou, a well‐known Greek actress and a volunteer herself. The Volonteurope Secretariat is very grateful to Alina for MC’ing the Awards and to the British Ambassador, and all his staff, for their generous support of the Ceremony and the Reception held at the Embassy.

Master Classes, Saturday 23rd October 2010
Saturday morning opened with a Plenary Presentation on ‘Volunteering in Greece: Now and in the Future’. The session, chaired by Tamara Flanagan, was an opportunity for participants to listen to Christos Kirkoglou (Greek Ministry of Labour and Social Security) and Theodore Papalexopoulos (Citizens’ Movement for an Open Society in Greece), to find out about volunteering in the country in the context of the European Year of Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010 and the upcoming EYV 2011. After the Plenary, delegates participated in their chosen Master Classes. ‘The Changing Face of Youth Volunteering: Citizenship and Rights’ was the focus of a workshop facilitated by Malcolm Jackson (CSV Consulting, UK) and Becky Taplin (eVolver Volunteers, UK). Doreen Grant‐Oppan (Works 4 U, UK) concentrated on delivering community‐based projects with direct involvement of the business sector. Maria Kouluentianouand Danai Vagia (Centre for Life, Greece) held a Master Class entitled ‘Positive in Life’, during which participants worked on an HIV awareness campaign message. Hannes Jähnert (Academy for Volunteering, Germany) presented on the Internet, social media and their role in volunteering, while George Klonos and Christos Zouras (Organisation EARTH, Greece) elaborated on projects that bridge communities with the environment.

The final session of Master Classes, the ESF‐funded Social Activation Model (SAM), represented by Faye Smith, Sally Anne Webb and Jason Clark (Ipswich Media Clubhouse, UK), involved delegates in a role‐play that promoted empowerment in projects. Christiane Richter (Seniorpartner in School, Germany) and Sophie Hope (CSV RSVP, UK) worked together to deliver a Master Class on using mediation as an effective tool for integration. Marion Schumann (Hammersmith and Fulham Volunteer Centre, UK) involved her participants to think beyond volunteer retention, while Dr Dawn Cranswick The conference participants were invited by Dr David Landsman OBE, the British Ambassador to Greece, to his Residence, to celebrate the outstanding contributions of individuals and organisations to volunteering, social cohesion and Active Citizenship in Europe.

Volunteering Activity, Saturday 23rd October 2010
In the afternoon, conference delegates, together with staff and volunteers from PRAKSID, travelled to the Municipality of Alimos for a volunteering clean-up activity on Alipeda Beach. The activity, organised by the Municipality of Alimos, was an excellent opportunity for delegates to spend a couple of hours in an informal setting, getting to know each other better, while at the same time cleaning the beach. It was great to see some local residents, who were sunbathing at the beach, also joining the clean-up!
Dinner and Live Music, Saturday 23rd October 2010

The delights of Greek cuisine were just some of the highlights of a dinner for all Conference participants at a traditional Taverna, ‘Rozalia’ in Exarhia Square in the centre of Athens. The Volonteurope delegates spent a wonderful evening in an informal setting. There was live Greek music, with many of the diners joining in the dancing. We were also celebrating a special day for two of the conference participants – Marion Schumann from the UK and Marisa Ghersi from Italy, whose birthdays fall on 23rd October.

Plenary Debate, Sunday 24th October 2010

Conference participants came together on Sunday morning, the final day of the conference to discuss how the not-for-profit sector, particularly volunteer-involving civil society organisations, can effectively work with the corporate sector. The session was excellently chaired by Dr Jim Kielsmeier, with the panel of experts including Dr Dawn Cranswick, Len Goss and Doreen Grant-Oppan. The panel and the audience discussed a range of key issues which were identified as key components of successful and effective business and not-for-profit relationships – including transparency of business operations, managing staff expectations and tailoring CSR programmes to real community needs. Successful employee-volunteering programmes were also discussed, showing that in order for them to be effective they also need to address community needs, reflect employee interests and skills, and meet business priorities.

Closing Session, Sunday 24th October 2010

The Final Plenary was an opportunity to present a report from the Volonteurope Board which met twice over the course of this four-day Conference, as well as listen to feedback from delegates, who highlighted the best elements of the event, while also suggesting areas for improvement. The plans for the 20th Volonteurope Conference to be held in Edinburgh in 2011, in the framework of EYV 2011, were also presented and the Volonteurope Board was also pleased to inform that our new member, CESVOT (Italy), will work with the Volonteurope Secretariat to deliver the 21st Annual Conference in Florence in 2012.

Finally, the Closing Ceremony was the opportunity to bid farewell to the outgoing President of Volonteurope, Elisabeth Hoodless. Elisabeth was the Network’s President for 23 years and helped to truly put it on the volunteering and Active Citizenship map of Europe. In addition to a collage of photos commemorating her commitment to the work of Volonteurope, Elisabeth was also presented with an olive tree, donated by Organization EARTH, which would then be planted, with her name plaque, in a park in the centre of Athens. On behalf of the entire Volonteurope Network, the Secretariat wishes Elisabeth a happy and enjoyable retirement.

Following the presentations made to Elisabeth, the Conference was officially closed with Certificates and Official Photos distributed to all participants.

We look forward to seeing you in 2011.
CONFERENCE EVALUATION

More than 110 participants took part in the 19th Volonteurope Conference in Athens. The Volonteurope Secretariat, as well as our partner, PRAKSI, were keen to learn about the feedback from delegates on how the event was delivered. We were also looking for any areas for improvement.

Based on the evaluations handed in by the participants, the following charts reflect the delegates’ assessment of the event:

- **Overall Conference Organisation**
  - Excellent 65%
  - Very Good 32%
  - Good 21%
  - Fair 11%
  - Poor 5%

- **Quality of Master Classes**
  - Excellent 15%
  - Very Good 70%
  - Good 15%

- **Opening Ceremony & Reception**
  - Excellent 21%
  - Very Good 53%
  - Good 21%
  - Fair 5%

- **Visits and Activities**
  - Excellent 36%
  - Very Good 32%
  - Good 21%
  - Fair 11%

- **ACE Awards**
  - Excellent 42%
  - Very Good 21%
  - Good 15%
  - Fair 5%

- **Information Pack**
  - Excellent 50%
  - Very Good 55%
  - Good 5%
  - Fair 5%

- **Catering**
  - Excellent 30%
  - Very Good 55%
  - Good 10%
  - Fair 5%

- **Hotel Accommodation and Meeting Rooms**
  - Excellent 15%
  - Very Good 50%
  - Good 20%
  - Fair 15%

We also captured detailed feedback relating to the 20 conference Master Classes. The participants said that:

- The overall quality of the Master Classes was: **excellent (50%); very good (42%); good (8%)**
- The effectiveness of the presenters was: **excellent (55%); very good (38%); good (7%)**
- The pace of the Master Classes was: **excellent (41%); very good (45%); good (13%); fair (1%)**
- The workshops fulfilled the expectations: **yes (88%); no (4%); no answer (8%)**

Feedback from participants:

“I have gained very useful information on how to communicate better with volunteers.”

“We should work towards having more participants in these Master Classes as I felt they were of great use to all the people that attended”

“I have learned how to work on empowerment, not only to myself but also those around me.”
20th Volonteurop Conference

The Volonteurop Secretariat is delighted to announce that the 20th European Workshop on Voluntary Action will be delivered in partnership with CSV in Scotland.

Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, has been chosen as the location for this event, celebrating not only the 20th anniversary of Volonteurop's European Conferences, but which will also be delivered in the framework of the European Year of Volunteering 2011.

This major international event will take place between 20th and 23rd October 2011. The venue for the conference will be the Best Western Edinburgh Capital Hotel, located just a few miles away from the centre of the city. With excellent views across the west of Edinburgh, the hotel's hilltop location enjoys a tranquil setting without taking conference participants too far away from the sights and sounds of Edinburgh itself. Conference guests are assured to receive a warm Scottish welcome when they arrive at the hotel.

CSV in Scotland...

...works to develop and deliver local volunteering and training projects, as well as large-scale national campaigns. Its projects include volunteer befriending schemes for vulnerable young people, activities for isolated elderly people, patient transport schemes, local footpath monitoring and volunteering to enhance employability and integration of the diverse ethnic groups represented in Scotland. CSV in Scotland is the founding member of the Scottish Volunteering Round Table, a group of national agencies representing the interests of volunteers and volunteering to local & national governments. It is also a member of the Scottish Alliance for EYV 2011.

Edinburgh

Owing to its spectacular, rugged setting and vast collection of Medieval and Georgian architecture, including various stone tenements, the capital city of Scotland is often considered one of the most picturesque cities in Europe. It is the second most-visited tourist destination in the UK after London.

Edinburgh's unique features include two extinct volcanoes, one of them right in the City Centre onto which Edinburgh Castle is built. It is also known as the 'Athens of the North'. Its distinctive and unique skyline follows closely that of Venice and makes for fantastic photography at dusk or dawn. Kirkyard is the Scottish term for 'churchyard' and Edinburgh has plenty of them. Each has countless stories to tell, grave stones and mausoleums in honour of famous individuals such as the economist Adam Smith, the writer/poet Robert Louis Stevenson and more.
Volonteurope Facts:

- Volonteurope is an international network promoting volunteer action across Europe.
- Registered in 1982, it is one of the most well-established European civil society networks.
  - It comprises of hundreds of Members and Partners in Europe and beyond.
  - The network is recognised in the Council of Europe's INGO Group.
  - Volonteurope is one of the founding members of the EYV 2011 Alliance.
- The network's Secretariat is hosted by CSV, the UK's leading volunteering and training charity.
- The work of the Secretariat is supported by the European Commission's 'Europe for Citizens' Programme.